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and conservation treatment of abandoned or inadequately reclaimed coal-mined lands and water. Where needed, these standards are incorporated in local NRCS technical guides as the NRCS standards and specifications applicable to the program. Special practices as specified in § 632.15(d) are to be developed in cooperation with appropriate State or Federal agencies having the expertise or responsibility for the practices.

(f) NRCS State conservationists, in consultation with the State reclamation committee, are to:

(1) Develop a list of practices that are eligible for cost sharing, and

(2) Maintain, as applicable, lists of average costs of applying conservation treatment to eligible lands and waters.

§ 632.16 Methods of applying planned land use and treatment.

(a) Land users may arrange to apply the planned land uses and conservation treatment specified in the contract by one or more of the following methods:

(1) By performing the required treatment with his own labor and equipment.

(2) By hiring a qualified contractor to install the required treatment.

(3) By requesting NRCS to award and administer a contract to perform the required treatment in accordance with 41 CFR chapters I and IV.

(b) State conservationists are to develop criteria specifying the conditions for which NRCS will award and administer a contract. Criteria will consider: Type of equipment required, type and amount of conservation treatment required, costs of the required reclamation, needs of the land user, and the applicable cost-share rate. If the Federal share is less than 100 percent, a land user must put up his estimated share of the cost before NRCS awards the contract.

§ 632.17 Cost-share rates.

(a) Cost-share rates paid by the Federal Government are to be established and issued as instructions by the NRCS Administrator in accordance with the following criteria:

(1) For 120 acres or less, the cost-share rate is to provide up to 80 percent of the costs of land use and conservation treatment depending on the income-producing potential of the land after reclamation. However, this rate may be increased to a level required to obtain participation if the main benefits of reclamation are offsite (in the public interest) and there is a declaration of financial burden by the participant.

(2) The rate on acreage in excess of 120 acres up to 320 acres maximum is to be reduced by up to 0.5 percent per acre. This reduced rate applies to the entire acreage offered for contract.

§ 632.18 Special projects.

(a) The NRCS State conservationist may approve the following types of special projects subject to the eligibility requirements, funding priorities, and cost-share rates as stated in §§ 632.12, 632.13, 632.14, 632.15, and 632.17:

(1) Field trials or demonstration projects recommended by the State reclamation committee.

(2) Projects to enhance water quality and quantity where past coal-mining practices disturbed local water supplies and where joint action by a group of eligible land users in cooperation with Federal and State agencies is needed to restore the water resource.

§ 632.19 Crop history and allotments.

(a) Most crop history and allotments on eligible lands were discontinued at the time of mining. However, if eligible lands are classified as cropland at the time the contract is signed, the cropland crop history and allotment, if any, may be:

(1) Preserved for a period not to exceed twice the length of the contract as provided in 7 CFR part 719, or

(2) Voluntarily surrendered by the land user.

Subpart C—Participation

§ 632.20 Application for assistance.

(a) Land users must submit an application for program assistance through the local conservation district or NRCS field office. NRCS is to announce dates for receiving applications through local media. Applications are to be reviewed by the conservation district and/or local reclamation committee,