# Part 606 – Working Agreements

## Subpart B – Exhibits

## 606.10 Template Statement of Commitment for Soil Survey and Ecological Site Inventory Projects

**STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**

**Between**

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE**

**And**

_____

**Name of Cooperating Agency**

**FOR**

_____

**Title of Project as Concurred by Management Team or Approved by Regional Director**

_____

**Date of Project Approval**

## 1. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

**Project Description:** This is an executive summary, or abstract, of the project (see Part 610, Subpart B, Exhibits, Section 610.14 – Project Description: First Section for guidance).

**Project Extent:** Total Project Acres

**Project Land Category Acres:**
Breakdown of Acres per Land Category

Insert Map of Project w/ Legend

**Dedicated Project Staff:** List Dedicated Staff and Title
Note: This can include both NRCS-SPSD and cooperator staff that are dedicated to assisting in the completion of the proposed project when the Statement of Commitment is signed. Do not include any additional resources needed. Additional resources should be included in internal project details.

**Soil Resource Inventory Methodology:** List the method(s) that will be used to develop the deliverables.

**Desired Outcome:** List the deliverables (do not include scale, order, resolution).
Example – Initial Soil Survey Mapping, MLRA Soil Survey Update, Ecological Site Development, Raster Soil Survey, Interpretation Review, and etc.

**Project Milestones and Scheduled Dates:** Identify the tasks and their scheduled start and completion dates to outline specifics of an expected project timeline. This includes the field campaign, technical or progress reviews, quality control, quality assurance, and certification. NASIS Pangaea Queries for project templates may provide general assistance with identifying common milestones for specific field projects. Pare down to the most relevant milestones to cooperator. If needed, contact delegated liaison for assistance in completing this portion of the Statement of Commitment.

## 2. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

**The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will:**

A. Provide staff to conduct work for the duration of the project.

B. Coordinate with cooperator to design special and ecological investigations, as applicable, including but not limited to:
   - Dynamic Soil Properties
   - Soil Hydrology
   - Ecological Site Development
   - Dynamic Soil Survey

C. Draft an appropriate safety plan in coordination with cooperating agency to comply with regulations of both agencies named within the Statement of Commitment. Safety training will be a cooperative effort provisioned by and the responsibility of NRCS and partner agency in accordance with OSHA regulations.

D. Collect field documentation according to the standards of the National Cooperative Soil Survey (NCSS) found in approved reference publications such as the Soil Survey Manual (SSM; 2017) and National Soil Survey Handbook (NSSH).

E. Where needed or requested, furnish detailed sampling plans (locations or zones) to cooperating agency contacts with at least/at minimum two weeks' advance notice to facilitate clearance and cooperative work.

F. Conduct operations with care to minimize landscape impact and comply with laws and regulations applicable to the project area.

G. Provide technical review of special interpretive criteria as requested by Cooperating Agency. The criteria must be designed to use existing soil database elements within the structure of the National Soils Information System database (NASIS) and must be delivered through Web Soil Survey (WSS) for correlated map units that have undergone quality control and quality assurance following NSSH standards.

H. Provide quality control and quality assurance of the data collected and posted to Web Soil Survey and other publications means.

I. Periodically (no more than bi-annually in frequency) make available certified soil mapping when complete throughout the term of the project. Where adequate quality control (QC), quality assurance (QA) and data certification has been completed, correlated soil information will be delivered annually through the refresh of official data as part of agency mission to make available data to facilitate practical use.

J. Provide sufficient technology, hardware, software and digital data to produce spatial and tabular databases meeting standards defined in the SSM (2017) and NSSH. Provide field equipment, supplies, vehicles for transportation, and office space for staff assigned to this project.

K. Develop timelines and workload analyses to be maintained and updated annually and attached to progress reviews and/or reports. Report all progress promptly and keep progress records and maps current. Invite personnel from cooperating agency to all progress and final field review. Progress field reviews and final field reviews will be conducted and reported to cooperating agency prior to any final publication.

L. Provide annual review of all information specified in this document and amend annual progress report with adjusted timelines, as needed, to inform cooperating agency points-of-contact.

M. Provide training opportunities (including OJT) in Soil Survey and Ecological Site Inventory.

**The (Name of Cooperating Agency) will:**

A. Make accessible any existing remote sensing data, special studies, research reports, range production data, habitat type data, cover data, pedon descriptions, or other inventory data to enhance and accelerate the soil survey mapping process. Collaborate with NRCS personnel and other cooperators on technology transfer.

B. Furnish background environmental knowledge and provide technical interdisciplinary support in the field and in consultation. This includes, but is not limited to, assistance with inventory, data collection and technical content to support the development of Ecological Site Descriptions (ESDs). Where available, provide seasonal staff or agency staff to assist with field work.

C. Provide technical interdisciplinary support and documentation for any specialized interpretations. Specialized interpretative requests involving ratings, properties, or interpretations must be provided to NRCS.

D. Arrange for cultural, biological or facilities clearance as necessary to implement furnished NRCS sampling plans. Return clearance of furnished sampling plans with adequate planning time for field sampling to be completed.

E. Provide NRCS staff safety training as part of a cooperative effort deemed necessary for completion of project as outlined.

F. Provide assistance with logistics as well as use of lodging or camping facilities on-site, if available, for ecologists and soil scientists during the field mapping portion of the soil survey. This includes assistance with radio communication where deemed necessary, and keys or gate combinations to access areas normally off limits to the public.

G. Provide assistance with access, including trails, roads, locked gates, etc. Where available, provide pack animals and guides, or allow Soil Survey staff to travel on already planned pack trips.

H. Provide information regarding laws and regulations applicable to the jurisdiction or project area.

I. Alert NRCS staff of any existing or potential logging projects taking place, and of any road closures due to washouts, etc.

## 3. KEY POINTS OF CONTACT

All communications and notices regarding this Statement of Commitment shall be directed to the following key administrative and technical points of contact for each party.

**For the "Cooperating Agency":**

**Administrative Point of Contact**:

**Technical Point of Contact:**

**For the NRCS (Servicing Agency):**

**Administrative Point of Contact:**

Soil Survey Regional Director

**Technical Point of Contact:**

MLRA Soil Survey Leader or Local Point of Contact

**Responsible Liaison:**

Soil & Plant Science Division Delegated Liaison

## 4. ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

The following authorized representatives of the parties have signed below, thereby executing this Statement of Commitment.

For the Cooperating Agency:

_____

Administrative Point of Contact

For the Natural Resource Conservation Service:

_____

Soil Survey Regional Director