

## **Part 620, Subpart A**

### **NHCP Exhibit 4**

## **Responsibilities of the Quality Assurance Team**

### **Introduction**

Quality assurance (QA) is an essential part of writing and maintaining the Title 450, National Handbook of Conservation Practices, Part 620 (450-NHCP-620). Although each conservation practice standard (CPS) and associated conservation practice documents (CPDs) are the responsibility of the assigned national discipline lead (NDL), the Quality Assurance Team (QAT) assists the NDL in developing these documents. The QAT review is primarily nontechnical; the technical review of the material in the CPS and CPD is the responsibility of the NDL.

### **Responsibilities**

The QAT is an advisory team to the National Conservation Practice Standard Subcommittee (NCPSS) that—

- Prepares a checklist that defines the elements of the quality assurance review.
- Provides nontechnical reviews on each CPS and CPD.
- Is responsible for ensuring that each CPS and CPD meets all relevant policy requirements.
- Ensures that each of the CPDs (e.g., Practice Overview) are consistent with the CPS and are clear and concise.

### **Implementation**

The QAT is responsible for three reviews of the CPS and one review of the CPDs during the process of a CPS review or development.

#### QA Review 1

The first QA review occurs before the first internal review. This review by the QAT addresses nontechnical content, including compliance with the Plain Language Act, grammar, clarity, and formatting.

The QAT has 10 working days to submit comments to the NTL.

#### QA Review 2

The second QA review occurs before the Federal Register review period. This review ensures compliance with agency writing standards, formatting, and verifying compliance with section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.

The QAT has 5 working days to complete its review.

The QAT and the NDL resolve any issues with the draft. The QAT has jurisdiction over nontechnical content and the NDL has jurisdiction over technical content.

### QA Review 3

The third QA review occurs before the CPS is published to the 450-NHCP-620. The third review is for final style and format. The QAT ensures that the consistency and quality that was incorporated into the Federal Register draft has not been edited or changed due to additions to the CPS.

The QAT has 5 working days to complete its review. If no changes are made based on the Federal Register review, QA review 3 is not necessary.

### QA Review of CPD

Before the CPS can be published, all supporting CPDs must be complete and reviewed by the QAT. The nontechnical review of the supporting CPDs will occur after the second QAT review. Each document will be reviewed for consistency between the CPS and each other, adherence to relevant policy, clarity, and conciseness.