North Carolina Soil and Water Conservation Commission
Policy for Mileage, Subsistence and Per Diem Reimbursements from State-Appropriated District Supervisor Travel Funds
Updated January 6, 2013

I. Guiding Principles

District supervisor travel, as made available through the Division of Soil and Water Conservation (division), supports supervisor mileage, subsistence and per diem for the following functions: monthly local Soil & Water Conservation District (district) board meetings; spot check field reviews required by the NC Agriculture Cost Share Program (ACSP), Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP) and Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP); Soil and Water Conservation Commission (commission) meetings; annual UNC School of Government's *Basic Training for Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisors*; NC Association of Soil & Water Conservation District (NCASWCD) spring and fall area meetings; and the annual NCASWCD state meeting. The following guiding principles, as a general guide and not as an absolute, will be used to manage the allocation of funds to each of the different functions:

II. Local District Board Meetings and Spot Check Field Reviews

A. Regular monthly meetings of the local district board and spot checks related to the ACSP, AgWRAP and CCAP are a high priority. This budget priority is directly tied to statutory responsibilities of supervisors and is directly related to the mission and goals of the NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) and the division.

B. The budget line item to support local district meetings and spot check responsibilities should constitute approximately 50% of the total available funds, preferably more.

III. Commission

A. Meetings and functions of the commission are critical due to statutory responsibilities and the direct relationship with the mission and goals of NCDA&CS and the division.

B. The budget line item to support commission travel should be maintained at a level necessary to support six (6) meetings per year.

IV. School of Government Training

A. *Basic Training for Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisors* annual training at the UNC School of Government in Chapel Hill has high priority due to commission policy regarding required training for appointed supervisors and the division's responsibility to provide adequate supervisor

training to ensure new supervisors are adequately equipped to fulfill their statutory responsibilities.

B. To maximize the use of available funds, supervisor attendance at the School of Government training should be prioritized as follows: (1) supervisors required to attend for appointment, (2) any new supervisor and/or first time attendee, (3) supervisors who have not had the training within the past five years, and (4) all supervisors.

C. Approximately 5% of available funds should be directed to the School of Government training on a yearly basis. Attendance should be approved as per the above priorities when necessary to stay within budget guidelines.

V. NCASWCD Annual State Meeting

A. The annual state meeting is critical to a comprehensive, statewide conservation program and should be conducted on an annual, recurring basis.

VI. Spring and Fall Area Meetings

A. Spring and fall area meetings are important to the effectiveness of local districts and the operation of the NCASWCD. It is desirable to conduct both area meetings but critical that at least one area meeting is held per year in each of the NCASWCD's organizational areas.

B. Of the two area meetings, the fall meeting is the most critical due to resolution consideration, standing committee appointments, nominations and election of officers, etc. In addition, the spring area meetings start less than six weeks after the close of the annual state meeting.

VII. General Budget Planning Guidelines

A. Budget planning should be guided, not as an absolute, by the following as a percentage of available funds:

- District monthly meetings and spot checks 50.0%
- Commission meetings 3.0%
  (based on funding needed to conduct 6 meetings)
- School of Government training 5.5%
- Spring and fall area meetings 5.5%
- Annual state meeting 36.0%

VIII. Reimbursement Guidelines

A. All approvals and authorizations are contingent upon funding availability and are in accordance with the NC Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) statutory rates for reimbursement. Updates to funding availability and reimbursement rates will be posted to the district listserv and at: http://www.ncagr.gov/SWC/districts/forms.html.

B. State employees (or individuals who receive all or part of their income from state appropriations) who also serve as district supervisors are not eligible to receive per diem and are subject to different subsistence and mileage reimbursements per OSBM guidelines. For specific guidance go to: http://www.ncagr.gov/SWC/districts/forms.html

C. Other eligibility requirements:
- Only original receipts will be accepted with travel vouchers
- Travel vouchers must be submitted by the last day of the month following the month in which the travel occurred.

D. Specific policy regarding district supervisor mileage, subsistence and per diem is as follows:

1. **Annual State Meeting**

   a. In accordance with GS 139-7, approval of the commission is hereby given to all qualified supervisors to attend the annual state meeting of the NCASWCD.

   b. All qualified supervisors who attend the annual state meeting are authorized to receive mileage, subsistence and per diem allowances in accordance with the OSBM statutory rates for reimbursement.

   c. The requirement for a quorum of supervisors from an individual district is hereby waived in the case of attendance at an annual state meeting.

2. **Local District Board Meeting**

   a. In accordance with state statutory rates, each supervisor is authorized to receive mileage, subsistence and per diem allowances for a maximum of 12 local district board meetings during the state's fiscal year, where a quorum is present.

   b. Officially adopted minutes of district meetings, duly signed by the board secretary or board chair, are required by the commission to support the payment of travel funds and should be provided to the division as soon as they are available. Travel reimbursement may be processed based on draft minutes of district meetings and such minutes must be submitted with travel vouchers, and followed by officially adopted minutes as soon as possible.

   c. For district supervisors who are not state employees, subsistence will be limited to the equivalent of a dinner allowance only. (*For FY2012-2013, this equivalent is $17.90*)

3. **Area Meetings**

   a. In accordance with GS-139-7, expressed approval of the state commission is hereby given to all qualified supervisors to receive mileage, subsistence and per diem

allowances in accordance with the OSBM statutory rates for reimbursement to attend two NCASWCD semi-annual area meetings within their respective areas.

b. The requirement for a quorum of supervisors from an individual district is hereby waived in the case of attendance at area meetings.

c. An area meeting attendance list must be submitted to the division before travel reimbursements can be made.

d. Subsistence will be limited to the meeting's registration cost not to exceed $30.00. No other meal allowance equivalent is eligible for reimbursement.

4. Other Meetings

a. A Supervisor shall be authorized to receive mileage, subsistence and per diem allowances for any local district board meeting held outside the district in which he or she ordinarily serves, provided **prior written approval** is obtained from the commission or its designee.

b. In addition to the annual state meeting, two area meetings, regularly scheduled monthly district meetings and spot checks, a supervisor shall be authorized to receive mileage, subsistence and per diem allowances for travel directly related to other duties and responsibilities of their position as approved in advance by the commission.

5. N.C. Agriculture Cost-Share Program (ACSP), Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP) and the Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP)

a. Supervisors are authorized to receive mileage, subsistence and per diem for meetings called by the division and approved by the commission in regard to the ACSP, AgWRAP and CCAP.

b. District supervisors are authorized to receive mileage, subsistence and per diem for the required field review of the ACSP, AgWRAP and CCAP contracts and related practices in their county.

c. The requirement for a quorum of supervisors from an individual district is hereby waived in the case of attendance at spot check field reviews.

d. Supervisors are authorized to receive mileage, subsistence and per diem for attendance at commission meetings where the supervisor is called upon to represent his/her respective district before the commission.

This policy shall be in effect on and after November 28, 2012, and shall remain in effect until rescinded, amended, or otherwise altered by the Soil and Water Conservation Commission. Any change in policy shall be effective at the discretion of the Commission. Notice shall not be required.

This policy was adopted by the Soil and Water Conservation Commission in regular session on January 6, 2013.

Vicky Porter

Vicky Porter, Chair
Soil and Water Conservation Commission