Resource Needs Assessment (RNA) process – Rick Orr description 2/14/2018

**Identify Watershed(s) to Include and break out manageable areas to assess**

Determine HUC level to use

Combine or separate units based on complexity

Prioritize watershed order

**Inform your local area about Resource Needs Assessment**

Develop a selected Resource Needs Assessment Committee (community leaders and stakeholders, business/industry/tribes, conservation groups, SG LAWG, city/county, state, federal agencies)

Begin an ongoing process to inform key leaders and public of your intent, what will be accomplished and when and how they will be needed to participate

Build relationships to develop into an ongoing CD-led Local Work Group (LWG)

**Identify and gather information available to inform process,** Sources or contacts to obtain it from and organize it so the information is useful to discussions to follow

Soil survey – NRCS (<https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm>)

Vegetation – NRCS Ecological Site Descriptions, BLM mapping

Weeds – NDA, CWMAs

Habitat designations – NDOW

State water quality standards – NDEP

State air quality standards – NDEP

Ground water basin information – State Water Engineer/Department of Water Resources

Cultural Resources – BLM, SHPO

Recreation – BLM, State Parks, USFS, other

Special land designations – BLM, other

Others

**Gather CD Supervisors, key users and specialists for that area (RNA Technical Team)**

This needs to be a smaller group to be able to work effectively and efficiently

Provide for transcription of meetings to retain information

Analyze watershed area by NRCS Resource Concerns Checklist

Determine what you are going to use for the standards

* Is there an established standard by which we measure this?
* Does the resource concern exceed standards or not? You don’t have to know exactly how much it exceeds
* Do you have the information needed to define the resource concerns using the Team’s baseline knowledge?
* If not, determine where you need to go to get that information and reexamine checklist based on information gained
* Answer: where is the problem coming from, how big is it, what is possibly causing it, and any ideas to fix it

Make it as simple as you can with the known information

**Compile data – look at the data and see what it is telling you for each resource concern**

Is it a problem or is it not a problem?

If there is not a standard, but we know there are concerns, we need to document we recognize a problem and monitor the situation

Depict the information gained by GIS as much as possible

Organize information and store it appropriately

This is an iterative process, repeat for each resource concern in each watershed

**Confer with Resource Needs Assessment Committee and conduct public meetings**

Present the known data you have collected in most effective way for your area (maybe regionalize some watersheds)

Ask: these are the concerns we have identified, we seek your input, are there any concerns we have missed…

Stress this is not about politics; we can’t talk about the politics until we identify the resource concerns

**Conservation Practices Physical Effects (CPPE) matrix**

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/technical/econ/data/?cid=nrcs143_009740>

Identify solutions that may not be documented by the CPPE matrix, such as fall grazing of cheatgrass

**Public Input**

Send out survey developed by UNR

USDA National Agriculture Statistics Service can send to ag producers and nag for return for a fee

**Conservation Practices Physical Effects (CPPE) matrix**

The CPPE may need to be run again after public input is incorporated

**Develop Conservation Action Plans**

CD-led Local Work Group process to take the information gained from the RNA to direct conservation planning and implementation to address resource needs and priorities in your area

* Inform NRCS State Technical Advisory Committee
* Have a plan in place to coordinate and cooperate with federal agency planning per NRS 548.113
* Be able to direct funding from any source toward appropriate conservation projects
* Assist your County with local planning to address local resource concerns
* Creates an understandable mechanism for a LWG to function and fulfill its responsibilities
* Furtherance of partnerships begun by varied sage grouse efforts