



## **DECISION MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSOCIATE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

**TO:** Eric D. Still  
Associate Chief Financial Officer, FPP

**FROM:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBJECT:** Request for Exception to Policy Approval for an Event not on the Annual Conference Plan

### **ISSUE**

The Natural Resources Conservation Service is requesting an exception approval to attend the 7th Annual Soil & Water Conservation Society (SWCS) International Annual Conference in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The conference will be held from February 21 to February 24, 2021.

### **DISCUSSION**

AgCM Policy Memorandum requires agencies and staff offices to obtain an exception approval because the event was not approved on the annual plan, and to submit an approval memorandum and Location Cost Worksheet to the ACFO for an 'exception to policy' approval.

The 7th SWCS International Annual Conference provides a forum for learning about the latest conservation research and practice, enhancing professional relationships, and contributing to solutions to difficult conservation challenges. The conference provides state-of-the-art training information exchange, technology transfer in all disciplines related to NRCS work, and supports USDA's scientific integrity policy. This year's conference theme offers unique opportunities to showcase cutting-edge research and practice developments in soil health, water quality, and resource management through the usual eight general conservation topic areas and three special topic areas of at the intersection of agriculture and conservation, climate-smart agriculture, and on the frontier of conservation in the west.

### **Justification why the event wasn't on the Annual Conference Plan**

The estimated expense for this event is \$xxx,xxx, which include airfare \$xx,xxx; local /TDY transportation expenses \$xx,xxx; miscellaneous travel expenses \$xx,xxx; lodging \$xx,xxx; M&IE \$xx,xxx; audiovisual \$xx,xxx; room rental \$xx,xxx; light refreshments \$xx,xxx; speaker / trainer fees \$xx,xxx; registration fees \$xx,xxx; promotional material \$xx,xxx and other cost \$xx,xxx. The estimated salary and benefits cost are \$xxx,xxx. The projected average cost per attendee without salaries for the event is \$x,xxx or \$xxx per day.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The recommendation is to approve the 7th Annual Soil & Water Conservation Society (SWCS) International Annual Conference in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina to be held February 21 to February 24, 2021, with approximately 106 agency participants with an estimated cost of \$xxx,xxx. Once signed, return the documents to the OCFO FPD at TPM@usda.gov; FPD will forward the approved document to agency conference POC to upload into the AgCMS for final approval processing.

**DECISION BY THE ASSOCIATE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Disapproved: \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss with me: \_\_\_\_\_