DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION

SUBJECT: USDA Dam Safety Committee

OPI: Natural Resources Conservation Service

NUMBER: DR 1043-018
DATE: August 15, 2019
EXPIRATION DATE: August 15, 2024

Section Page
1. Purpose 1
2. Special Instructions/Cancellations 1
3. Policy 2
4. Membership 2
5. Roles and Responsibilities 2
6. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) 3
7. Inquiries 4

1. PURPOSE

This Departmental Regulation (DR) transfers the responsibility for the USDA Dam Safety Committee to the Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) Mission Area. The continued operation of the USDA Dam Safety Committee is in the public’s interest in that it will strengthen dam safety efforts in the Department and support the Executive Branch in the implementation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), FEMA 93, Federal Guidelines for Dam Safety, April 2004.

2. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS/CANCELLATIONS

   a. This revision supersedes DR 1043-018, USDA Dam Safety Committee, dated September 18, 2013.

   b. This policy is effective immediately and remains in effect until it is superseded or expires.
3. POLICY

a. The USDA Dam Safety Committee (the “Committee”) will coordinate and provide leadership to dam safety activities in the Department.

b. The Committee will assist in defining needs and in implementing procedures to enhance the safety of the dams under the agencies’ jurisdiction.

c. The Committee will be concerned with the agencies’ administrative and technical practices related to dam safety including design, construction, operation, maintenance, periodic inspections, and rehabilitation of dams.

d. The Committee will be advisory to the Secretary and to agency heads.

4. MEMBERSHIP

The Committee membership will consist of:

a. The Under Secretary for FPAC – Chair and Member;

b. The Dam Safety Officer, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) – Executive Secretary and Member;

c. The Dam Safety Officer, Rural Housing Service – Member;

d. The Dam Safety Officer, Forest Service – Member;

e. The Dam Safety Officer, Rural Utilities Service – Member; and

f. The Dam Safety Officer, Agricultural Research Service – Member.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

a. The Under Secretary for FPAC will:

   (1) Serve as the Committee Chair; and

   (2) Serve as the primary contact with DHS on dam safety.

b. Heads of the member agencies will appoint a Dam Safety Officer.

c. The NRCS Dam Safety Officer will:

   (1) Serve as the Executive Secretary and a Member of the Committee;
(2) Participate in DHS dam safety activities and represent the Department in the absence of the Chair;

(3) Serve as the contact with DHS on dam safety technical matters; and

(4) Perform the Dam Safety Officer duties as described below in Section 5d.

d. Agency Dam Safety Officers will:

(1) Serve as Members of the Committee;

(2) Ensure that their agency, as a matter of policy and in actual practice, makes every reasonable and prudent effort to enhance the safety of the dams under the agency’s jurisdiction;

(3) Surveil and evaluate their agency’s administrative and technical practices related to dam safety concerning the design and construction of new dams and the operation, maintenance, periodic inspections, or rehabilitation of existing dams;

(4) Make recommendations for strengthening safety practices and procedures and to maintain an inventory of agency dams;

(5) Report directly to the agency head on matters of dam safety;

(6) Function as an advisor to the head of the agency and through the head of the agency to the administrative and technical units; and

(7) Participate in dam safety technical activities with DHS at their agency’s discretion.

6. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS)

a. The Committee Chair is the primary contact with the DHS-FEMA Interagency Committee on Dam Safety (ICODS). The Executive Secretary will participate in DHS activities and represent the Department in the Chair’s absence.

b. The Executive Secretary is the contact with DHS for technical matters.

c. All other agency dam safety officers can fully participate in the technical activities with DHS at their agency’s discretion.
7. INQUIRIES

Inquiries regarding this directive should be directed to the NRCS Conservation Engineering Division at 202-720-2520.

-END-