

## NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICES WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) is a mission area (agency) within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and is comprised of a workforce that possesses technical expertise in a wide range of disciplines to effectively carry out the Agency's mission and strategic goals. As competition for talent continues to increase, NRCS must provide a results-oriented environment where individuals can perform at their best to ensure that NRCS continues to remain an employer of choice. Employees must be held accountable for achieving the desired result making the need for consistent performance measures and standards critical to the success of the Agency.

*Intekras* was contracted by NRCS to facilitate the development of performance standards for three key positions within their mission-critical occupational series. The occupational series for these positions were State Conservationist (series 0301), Soil Conservationist (series 0457), and Administrative Officer (series 0341) which accounts for approximately 50% of current NRCS employees.

The *Intekras* team of experienced workforce development professionals exceeded NRCS expectations by employing proven processes and techniques that included:

- Conducting interview sessions.
- Reviewing the Agency's mission and performance documentation including the position descriptions to identify value-added results, measures and performance standards for the three key positions.
- Performing a six-step process for developing performance standards.
- Determining accomplishments for each position series and converting them into performance elements.
- Identifying performance measures for each accomplishment element at the position level.
- Facilitating the development of performance standards for each position series with NRCS management.
- Documenting the developed standards.

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The *Intekras* team's contribution in identifying measurable performance standards for target mission-critical positions will maximize NRCS's goal of having the capability to focus employee efforts on achieving organizational and group goals and providing a consistent approach to measuring employee and work unit performance. Additionally, the USDA has taken a significant step towards ultimately achieving a “green” score in the Strategic Management of Human Capital on the President's Management Agenda (PMA).

*Intekras* — improving business results through improved employee performance.