

Alabama Civil Rights Advisory Committee (CRAC)

- **Central Team** - Brandon McCray and Norris Hudnall
- **East Team** - Christopher Joe and Joshua Elliott
- **North Team** - Blake Garner and Merry Gaines
- **West Team** - Michele Wood and Duane Andrews
- **State Office** - Rita Johnson and Zona Beaty
- **Leadership Team** - John Hughes

The CRAC serves as an advisory body to the State Conservationist to:

- Identify and bring to management's attention needs, problems, issues, and/or concerns.
- Monitor recruitment practices and make recommendations to ensure under-represented groups are aware of employment opportunities.
- Focus management's attention on specific personnel practices or problems of an EEO nature that could produce dissension and dissatisfaction among employees.
- Participate and take an active role in the development and implementation of the Affirmative Employment Plan (AEP) and monitor the effectiveness of the AEP with regard to recruitment, hiring, promotions, and retention.

- Provide training resources for various civil rights workshops, seminars, and meetings.
- Act as a forum for exchange of ideas and action proposals on sensitive issues, matters, or concerns of a civil rights nature.
- Encourage, support, and assist in development of projects or activities associated with civil rights needs or opportunities.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of strategies designed to improve and increase awareness of and participation in NRCS programs and activities by under-served groups, individuals and communities.
- Promote and communicate efforts of management to achieve and operate a realistic and ongoing civil rights program.
- Participate in civil rights compliance reviews.
- Establish communication between employees and management so employees' views on civil rights issues may be brought to the attention of management.

The CRAC does not receive, investigate, and/or in any way adjudicate individual or class complaints of discrimination.

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Special Emphasis Programs and The Civil Rights Advisory Committee in Alabama



United States Department of Agriculture

What Are Special Emphasis Programs?

The term Special Emphasis Program (SEP) refers to those programs that focus special attention on specific groups as a result of a particular law, regulation, or Executive Order. SEPs were established to address the employment-related concerns of groups not specifically included in other programs where a need for special emphasis or employment concerns of such groups has been demonstrated. NRCS SEPs include:

Alabama Special Emphasis Program Managers

- **Wendy Smith** - American Indian/Alaska Native
- **John Curtis** - Asian American/Pacific Islander
- **Eddie Davis** - Black
- **Wesley Halbrooks** - Disability
- **Luis Cruz-Arroyo** - Hispanic
- **Renea Dyer** - Federal Women's
- **Marshall Colburn** - Veteran's
- **Allison Smith** - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender

Why are Special Emphasis Programs Needed?

Members of these special emphasis groups are substantially underrepresented at all grade levels in technical and professional positions within NRCS. The purpose of each of the SEPs is to provide focus on issues such as employment, retention, promotion, training, career development, and advancement opportunities affecting NRCS applicants and employees.

Special Observances

February	Black History Month
March	Women's History Month
May	Asian American/Pacific Islander Heritage Month
September/October	Hispanic Heritage Month
October	Disability Employment Awareness Month
November	Veterans Day
November	American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month

Duties of Special Emphasis Programs Managers

- Serve on the Alabama NRCS Civil Rights Advisory Committee (CRAC).
- Evaluate and report on the impact of recruitment, selection, placement and promotion, training, career counseling, and career enhancement policies and practices.
- Participate in the development of draft CRAC business plans for approval of the State Conservationist and implement plan.
- Analyze and evaluate statistical reports to identify barriers to the recruitment, employment, and advancement of protected groups; and recommend corrective action, if needed.
- Help develop and implement Affirmative Employment Plans.
- Conduct training and/or provide training resources for equal employment workshops and meetings.
- Provide advice to the State Conservationist regarding fair and equitable service to and employment of the protected group served.
- Develop draft special emphasis program business plans for the approval of the State Conservationist and implement plan.
- Keep employees aware of special emphasis program activities.
- Participate in recruitment efforts in coordination with the Alabama NRCS Human Resources Officer.