

# NHCP Exhibit 5      Developing and Revising NRCS National Conservation Practice Standards

- Step 1**            Development is initiated by the national discipline lead(s) assigning responsibility for development/review of a conservation practice standard to a Team Leader within NRCS from the National Technology Support Centers (NTSCs) or States. The team leader will confer with the national discipline leader on the creation of an interdisciplinary team to develop/review the standard.
- Step 2**            The Interdisciplinary Development Team receives input information and prepares draft 1. If draft 1 is a minor revision to an existing conservation practice standard, it may be submitted to the national discipline leader for release. Otherwise, draft 1 is posted to the FTP server for review and comment.
- Step 3**            Draft 1 is posted to the FTP server on the 15th day of the month that it is available for review. It remains on the server until the end of the following month. All NRCS employees can access the posted standard and post their comments directly to the FTP server; however, States are encouraged to consolidate their comments through the appropriate State discipline leader. All of the comments are available for review.
- Step 4**            The Interdisciplinary Development Team downloads the comments from the FTP server and prepares draft 2. If the Interdisciplinary Development Team and the national discipline leader consider draft 2 an acceptable conservation practice standard, the conservation practice standard is forwarded to the national discipline leader for approval. If significant revisions were made to draft 1 and it is believed that another review and comment period is needed, draft 2 is posted to the FTP server.
- Step 5**            Draft 2 is posted to the FTP server on the 15th day of the month that it is available for review. It remains on the server, available for comment, until the end of the following month.
- Step 6**            The Interdisciplinary Development Team downloads the comments from the FTP server and prepares draft 3. Draft 3 is the last draft prepared by the Interdisciplinary Development Team. If draft 3 is considered a final product, it is submitted to the national discipline leader for approval. If outstanding comments and issues are not resolved, draft 3 is submitted to the national discipline leader as a working draft with a description of the outstanding issues.
- Step 7**            For conservation practice standards submitted to National Headquarters (NHQ) with unresolved issues, the national discipline leader resolves the outstanding issues with other discipline leaders and prepares draft 4.

- Step 8** Draft 4 is distributed among the other discipline leaders at NHQ for final comment.
- Step 9** The national discipline leader receives the final working draft for draft 1, 2, or 3, or completes draft 4. The final draft is submitted to the National Conservation Practice Standard Subcommittee (NCPSS) for release.
- Step 10** The final draft goes through the Federal Register notification process to solicit comment from our partners and customers.
- Step 11** If there are comments that warrant change to the standard, the national discipline leader prepares the final National Conservation Practice Standard. The conservation practice standard is submitted to the Deputy Chief for Science and Technology for release.
- Step 12** The completed conservation practice standard is released and sent to all States by issuing an NHCP Notice. The notice and practice standard are posted on the Internet.

**Process for Developing and Revising NRCS  
National Conservation Practice Standards**

