NHCP Exhibit 6 Development Team Procedure

Step 1 Selection and responsibilities of conservation practice standard team leader
A conservation practice standard team leader (CPSTL) is recruited by the national discipline leader(s) with responsibilities for the conservation practice standard. A team leader may also be a volunteer from an NTSC or from National Headquarters that is developing a new conservation practice standard or revising an existing one. CPSTLs for each conservation practice should form a working group. The working group should be interdisciplinary and form a broad geographic area to ensure that the conservation practice standard is compatible across disciplines and truly national in scope. CPSTLs should contact the national discipline leader assigned for that conservation practice standard and their NCPSS regional representative for guidance. National discipline leaders for each conservation practice are listed in the index to the National Handbook of Conservation Practices. Normally, the current national conservation practice standard is the starting point to revise the standard. Then the team should develop a timeline for the development of the draft conservation practice standard (steps 4, 5 and 6 give an indication of how long the review process might take).

Step 2 Formatting National conservation practice standards
The purpose of updating conservation practice standards is to incorporate new technology that has become available since the current standard was written and to change obsolete or dated terminology. The format for National conservation practice standards is given in NHCP exhibit 3. This formatting can be accomplished by attaching the nhcp.doc template to the document. This template is available at:

ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/NHQ/practice-standards/templates

Step 3 First draft
The working group prepares the first draft of the conservation practice standard and sends it to the practice standards review coordinator (PSRC). This can be accomplished by attaching the document to an email. The coordinator holds all drafts and posts them for review at the appropriate time.

Step 4 Posting draft standards
Draft standards are posted to the FTP server on or about the 15th of each month at:

ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/NHQ/practice-standards/standard-development/draft

After the draft standards are posted, a message is sent to the NHCP mailing list to notify all States that they are available for review. The review period is usually 45 days (from posting date to the end of the following month). Because “anonymous” users can no longer place files on the FTP server, comment files should be attached to an email and sent to:

mailto:psrc@ftw.usda.gov

Each State or other administrative unit is encouraged to consolidate all of the comments from that State or unit to resolve any conflicting comments and to reduce the total number of comments that the team leader must review.

The PSRC will post the comment files on the FTP server to make them available to everyone. The

comment files may be found at:

ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/NHQ/practice-standards/standard-development/review

in the appropriate subfolder. All comments are archived for future reference. These archived comments may be found at:

ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/NHQ/practice-standards/archive/review-comments

Step 5 Review first draft comments

At the end of the review period, the CPSTL can download the comments from the FTP server, distribute them to the team and begin work on the next draft, if needed. If problems are encountered during uploading or downloading files to the server, contact the PSRC. Reviewers need to include their name, telephone number and email address along with their comments. This allows the development team to contact them directly, if needed, to clarify any comments.

Step 6 Repeat process if needed

The process repeats itself until the development team feels they have a final product. The National Practice Standards Subcommittee believes that three (3) draft and review cycles should provide sufficient opportunity for everyone to have input. In some situations, one (1) or two (2) reviews may produce a final product, and in others, more than three cycles may be required. Indications that this process is nearly complete are when very few comments are received on a draft or when only minor or editorial changes are suggested in the comments received.

Step 7 Final draft

The final draft is sent to the PSRC. The PSRC forwards it to the national discipline leader and the chair of the National Practice Standards Subcommittee. They do a final review and post the appropriate notice in the Federal Register.

Contact information for the PSRC:

Practice Standards Review Coordinator
USDA-NRCS
P.O. Box6567
Fort Worth, TX 76115
Telephone: 817-509-3363
Fax: 817-509-3469
Voicemail: 9043-3363

Mail to: psrc@ftw.usda.gov