WISCONSIN STANDARDS OVERSIGHT COUNCIL

NRCS Stream Restoration Standards Team
MEETING NOTES
Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ▲ 9:30am – 12:30pm ▲
Remote meeting

9:30 **Welcome & Notes Approval** (Kate, Team)
Goal: Welcome, meeting goals, adjust 4/21/20 draft meeting notes as necessary and approve.

Most of us are all still mostly at home with the COVID-19 sheltering in-place in varying forms across Wisconsin. We may have found a stride with our new working situation, or we may have even more new distractions. Meetings will continue to be shorter than a typical SOC meeting since we are meeting remotely.

Confirmation of attendance:

Attendance: Kate, Steve, Nate, Bart, Stacy, Mike, Jeff H, Jeff S, Joe, Seth, Ben, Marty, and Bob
Absent: Faith, Ken

As in the past, we know that a remote meeting is harder for all of us to focus and participate.

- You have permission to get into any conversation.
- If you have something you'd like to discuss, please unmute yourself and interject at a pause, or you may use the Chat Box to let me know you'd like to speak and I will call on you.
- I'd like agreement from everyone about setting aside their personal technology and other distractions for the term of this meeting.

Meeting goal: identify the groups of issues and team roles for adjustments to the standards.

A draft of the 4/21/20 Meeting Notes was emailed to the team for review. One clarification was noted under the Dehne presentation regarding 580 being the standard that had cost-sharing so tended to lead the work. No other questions or edits to the

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4/21 meeting notes were raised by the team. ==Kate== will make adjustment, then these notes will be finalized and posted online in about a week.

Action item from last meeting:

- **Marty** shared a prescriptive SOP with Steve. Steve will reference this as needed in a future meeting as the team works through writing details.

Clarify Key Issues (Steve, Team)
Goal: Review the list of key issues and groupings.

Some background:

- Standards were written to be planned, applied, and implemented independently. Program cost-sharing is per individual practice.
- Landowners are often looking at one issue specific to their property and don't always look at the bigger picture or apply the interrelated standards. There is not one comprehensive stream restoration standard and the goal of standards is to be concise and specific.
- NRCS establishes minimum criteria to address a resource concern. Criteria you set should apply statewide.
- When a standard is not concise, it loses credibility. We want the standard to be implemented!
- All 4 standards could refer the user to a separate section on "Additional Requirements for Stream Restoration" that would go under Open Channel. This will contain focused information for stream assessment (like class, geomorphic setting, evolutionary stage, soil investigation, sediment competency). The composite language for 582 will be built by the individual work of the full team.

Before this meeting, Steve took the list of key issues that was created by the team, grouped the like ideas into a few categories, identified the standard(s) for the issues, and identified subgroups to work on the issues. The file was emailed out to the team earlier this week, and we review on-screen together. Some additional points from Steve's presentation and the team discussion:

- Some of the key issues identified by the team were related to policy and restoration philosophy, not appropriate to the tech standard sideboards. The team can incorporate their thoughts and comments throughout the editing process.
- Ecological narrative currently in the standard needs more technical specificity. For example, rather than broad citations referring to the engineering handbook, we can identify the specific method by name. Some other potential

- opportunities for specification: level of H&H analysis, design storm protection, and minimum soil investigation requirements.
- Rather than blanket statement to follow all laws (how it's currently written), list what are the actual laws and regs. This detail is new for NRCS to specify the laws to be more instructive. We can include a disclaimer that the list isn't comprehensive since it may not be all-inclusive.
- The ATCP 50 rule currently only refers to 580 standard for DATCP to cost-share. Cross-referencing 580 to other standards would allow DATCP to include more practices. ATCP 50 changes are contemplated, and timing should be good for the new standards to be included in cost sharing options in the next rule.
- DNR has interest in these standards as well. SWRM and urban grant programs may have eligibility criteria that would need to be considered.
- The 395 standard is a resource standard to address stream habitat. However, it has an engineering aspect in that habitat structures need to be designed and checked for stability under flood flow conditions.
- Standards can reference other standards (e.g. >__ ft of stream then refer to 582).
- "Quality criteria" are currently separate from the standard, under FOTG Section III. These define minimum criteria to define a problem (what would constitute a resource concern). Typically, they are not repeated in the standard but the criteria or the tool can be included here under "Conditions Where The Practice Applies."
- Kate or Steve will email the team both national and WI standards.
- To make headway, we need team leadership on specific issues. Steve identified pairings on the team to match different issues with individual expertise. Summary of points about the group work:
  - Of the key issues, these subgroups should now dig deeper and identify what's good and what needs work in the existing national standards. These subgroups could:

    - ✓ review research, distill existing resources that may help address the issue,
    - ✓ outline needed criteria and/or considerations,
    - ✓ prepare short presentations at a future meeting and/or arrange for other experts to present

  - This new assignment for everyone on the team will result in 3 meetings a month for 3 months--the full team meetings that have been set up already, plus 2 breakout group meetings at date/time of your choosing. The identified **subgroups** of 2 or 3 should email Kate your meeting times to post on the password-protected area of our website so other team members can join if they have availability and interest.

- Groups should start with the current National Standard. <mark>Steve</mark> will email out Word versions of the national standards for starting point for breakout work. Groups can also incorporate the current WI standard adaptations, but the starting point for this exercise should be the national version.
- We can't change the definition and purpose. Groups also shouldn't worry about editorial changes or flow. Steve will address this following the NRCS requirements for formatting, grammar, flow.
- Some issues may need the attention of the full team. In those cases, you can email Kate and Steve and we'll get an additional 30 minutes on that issue for your breakout group or an outside expert. Team has vast networks you've worked with to identify outside experts; however, if you need advice, we have a list of many experts who didn't make it on the team so Steve or I can also guide you in identifying and scheduling an outside person.
- Lead person on the group assignments

  - ✓ puts the 2 meetings per month on the calendar,
  - ✓ keep a working, active draft posted on our website (with periodically updated versions as you work), and
  - ✓ lead presentation at the group SOC meetings.

- Send Kate your meeting dates and email her files to post. The redlined file to be discussed at next meeting should be sent to Kate by 6/16.
- To reach your breakout group partner or others on the team, there is a contact list on the private area of the team website has phone numbers and emails for each team member. Kate can also help connect you if needed.
- At next meeting (and beyond), the full team will have the opportunity to provide feedback to each of the other breakout groups' work.

Prioritize Issues

Goal: Agree on the order in which issues will be addressed and identify steps to tackle first item(s).

The breakout groups each has a subset of topics to address in your edits. The groups can work out how to address their own topics.

While you work, you may also identify areas that may influence other decisions or other aspects of work. Feel free to share with other groups areas of overlap.

Research and Presentation Needs

Goal: Identify specific topics with outside participation needed.

Some issues may need an outside expert. If a breakout group thinks a topic may need discussion from someone outside the team, you can email Kate and Steve and we'll get an additional 30 minutes on that issue at the next team meeting. This team has vast networks of people you've worked with to help identify outside experts; however, if you need advice, Steve and Kate also have a list of many experts who didn't make it on the team. Kate can help identifying and scheduling an outside expert.

Next Meeting Topics and Plan of Action (Kate, Steve)
Goal: Identify priority topics, concerns, and goals for next meeting. Review Action Items and agenda items for next meeting.

Action Items:

- **Kate:** finalize 4/21 notes and post online.
- **Kate**: prepare 5/20 draft meeting notes, reviewed by **Steve,** then reviewed by full **Team**.
- **Steve:** send the team Word versions of the 4 national standards for starting point for the breakout work.
- **Kate:** email team information on WI standards.
- **Team:** Complete the breakout group assignments—see Word doc for details. Meet 2x before 6/24 meeting. Prepare to present on assigned topics at 6/24 meeting. Keep Kate informed about breakout group meeting dates and send her redlined standard files (she'll post both to team website). Version of the file to be discussed at next meeting should be sent to Kate by 6/16. **Kate** will post this information on the password-protected area of the website.
- **Kate** and **Steve**: prepare agenda for next meeting on June 24.
- **Steve**: Follow up with **Ken** (partnered with Seth) **and Faith** (partnered with Bart) on structure of the key issues and assignments.

Next Meeting is Wednesday, June 24. It will again be a remote meeting, online.

11:15 End