

NRCS Stream Restoration Standards Team

MEETING NOTES

Thursday, February 4, 2021 ▲ 9:00am – 12:30 pm ▲

Online Meeting

9:00 Welcome (Kate, Team)

Goal: Welcome, attendance, meeting goal.

Confirmation of attendance:

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

Absent: Faith

Guests: None

Meeting goal: Another pivot, so today we'll start looking at review and discuss the draft text for Conservation Practice Standard (CPS) 395 Stream Habitat Improvement and Management.

I haven't yet recorded any Parking Lot items specific to CPS 395. As always, please remember that this is a collaborative process and we need consensus for the edits. The team members should speak up when you have something to add or you feel should be adjusted.

Review Draft 1 of CPS 395 Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (Steve, Team)

Goal: Review the proposed draft supplemental language and discuss alternate options as a team.

Prior to this meeting, Kate emailed the team a "Draft 1" of the CPS 395 standard for team review. Steve prepared this document from discussions at our previous team meetings. The black text in the file is federal language that went through Federal Register process. Black text can't be changed but we can make additions. Blue and red text are additions.

CPS 395 is an ecological standard, not engineering. Eric Hurley at NRCS manages this standard and will also approve any changes. This practice complements the other engineering standards this team is reviewing. This standard written without knowing what improvement the user has in mind and the language is general.

Steve reviews the standard on-screen and the team discusses and refines the supplemental language together. Some key points of the team discussion on Condition Where Practice Applies:

- Focus on localized scour rather than larger scale impact to geomorphology.
- List of examples not intended to be all-inclusive. Language is from NEH but the terminology is not consistent with other in-state documents (e.g, log deflectors or log vanes; vortex weir vs cross vanes). **Steve** will look into the existing documentation and use parenthesis to combine differing practice names.
- Stream barbs would be completed under 580 and not in 395.
- No referral to 582 as that's not always appropriate—this is a project-specific issue.
- If it's just habitat, this standard applies. However, if there is an engineering purpose, habitat may just be a benefit. CPS 395 doesn't have the same cost sharing as CPS 580 so application of these 2 practices is not managed the same.
- Project will also more easily get a DNR permit (GP) with government agency design if 580 and 395 together.

Some key points of the team discussion on Criteria:

- Habitat needs and objectives specific to a stream should be evaluated. Not necessarily a biologist—this would be someone with 395 job approval authority, but does this referral language match that? Previous WI language: “Note: an interdisciplinary team may be needed...” DNR permits often require consultation with DNR regional fisheries manager before application approval. A substantial majority of the Team agrees that consultation of interdisciplinary team should be left as criteria, though a few want the language adjusted. **Steve** will also consult with Eric Hurley and his biology team to see if they have specific input on this referral.
- Much of the supplemental Criteria provides specific NEH references for details. There are other references (like National Large Wood Manual by BOR and ACOE) we could add, but NEH is consistent with NRCS.
- NEH references include some calculations (e.g., scour depth or buoyancy) but don't require modeling. This is not an engineering standard so team strives to avoid engineering or design type of language.

- Stream navigation and safety are important to maintain. The federal language already includes Criteria to minimize disruption of recreational use; team agrees this is adequate.
- Team discusses how to simplify the draft language related to weir height limitation, possibly getting rid of the formula in text. This could also be moved to a Note on the drawing, converted to a table, or combine the 584 sentence with the equation in a short summary. Team poll indicated varied opinions but preference is to remove the formula and simplify the concept in combination with the 584 referral sentence.
- Similar to 584 referral, a referral to 582 will be added.
- **Steve** will review the comment proposing threshold criteria (e.g., >15% obstruction requires more detailed study) with their NRCS team and propose some language for the next draft of CPS 395.

Some key points of the team discussion on O&M and References:

- Team supports O&M, and have no specific additions to this section.
 - DNR and counties have operations agreements.
 - It protects the public spending and can prevent bigger issues in the future.
 - Useful to restrict vegetative problems (like overgrazing) or if a flow condition is different from anticipated where they can make an adjustment before a catastrophic problem.
- Reference – Add *Non-Game Wildlife Habitat Guide*. **Jeff H** will send full reference to Steve.

NEW AGENDA ITEM with left-over time: Resume discussion on CPS 584 Channel Bed Stabilization

Steve send out some revisions to Draft 1 earlier today. He reviews some of the big changes since Tuesday.

- Site Assessment – there's already discussion in NEH reference and other standards. The updated language was shortened.
- Edited language throughout including information on rock sizing, key in depths, and uplift/boiling.

Team should send Steve comments ASAP as redlined text on revised Draft 1 which was emailed by Kate on 2/4. **Steve** will then work on Draft 2 for CPS 584.

What's left for CPS 395? Discuss Plan of Action (Kate, Team)

Goal: Identify any substantial remaining areas of disagreement, discussion and refinement for subsequent meeting related to CPS 395. Review Action Items.

The team has completed on-screen review of CPS 395. Steve will be further editing some language based on our discussions today and he has some specific action items to prepare new text. Steve will work on Draft 2 of CPS 395 and we'll resume the review at a later meeting.

Next team meeting is Tuesday, February 16, at which we'll focus again on CPS 580.

Action Items:

1. **Team** should send Steve comments ASAP (at least by Feb. 11) on revised Draft 1 of CPS 584 which was emailed by Kate on 2/4. **Steve** will then work on a Draft 2 for CPS 584.
2. **Kate**: prepare 2/4/21 draft meeting notes, **Steve** reviews, then full **Team** reviews.
3. **Kate** and **Steve**: prepare and post agendas for next team meetings on February 16 and 25, 2021. February 16 we will resume focus on CPS 580.
4. **Reiterated Action Item from Tuesday**: **Team** should review and redline text for Draft 3 of CPS 580 and Draft 2 of CPS 582—these were emailed by Kate on 1/31. Send redlined comments and suggested edits **to Steve by Feb. 12**.
5. **Reiterated Action Item from Tuesday**: **Kate** will work with **Steve** to narrow down date options and prepare Doodle poll for additional meeting dates.
6. Follow-up for CPS 395 Discussion today. **Steve** has some editing to clear up language, along with some specifics:
 - For the example list in Conditions Where Practice Applies, **Steve** will look into the existing documentation and use parenthesis to combine NEH language with differing practice names.
 - **Steve** will confirm with Eric Hurley on the Criteria statement to “Consult with interdisciplinary team....” and see if he has specific input on this referral.
 - **Steve** will review the chat box suggestion related to threshold for obstructions with their programs and propose some language for the next draft of CPS 395.
 - **Jeff H** will send Steve the full reference to add reference for *Non-Game Wildlife Habitat Guide*.
7. **Steve** will email Draft 2 of CPS 395 to the Team for further review and comment.

12:00 End