



Standards Oversight Council (SOC)

Developing effective technical standards that protect Wisconsin's natural resources

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NRCS 380 Windbreak-Shelterbelt Establishment and Renovation Standard Update Team MEETING NOTES

Wednesday, April 27, 2022 ▲ 1:00pm – 3:30pm ▲

Online meeting

1:00 Welcome & Introduction (Kate, Allan)

Goal: Welcome and review today's meeting objective.

Welcome everyone!

Attendance: Kate Brunner (SOC Program Manager)
Allan Braun (Team Leader) – NRCS
Mic Armstrong, Jeremiah Auer, Mike Stanek, Shannon Rohde,
Tony Johnson, Matt Wilson

Absent: Drew Zelle, Roy Diver, Michael Demchik, Peter Wisniewski

Guests: None

Notes Review (Kate)

Goal: Review and approve 3/30/2022 draft meeting notes.

Draft meeting notes from February meeting were emailed to the team for review.

- 2 Action Items related to future meetings – Mic and Jeremiah will present on nursery stock and seedlings at a future meeting (May?), and Shannon will host field tour on July 27.
- Clarity added to evergreen shrubs as “pollinator friendly.”
- No other questions or comments to the notes were raised by the team, so Kate will post online as final.

Technical Standard Language Review (Allan, Team)

Goal: Review federal standard language and identify changes for new WI standard.

Team starts looking at the technical standard and prepare specific language. We'll start with the new 2021 federal standard with Tracked Changes showing some preliminary edits from the previous WI version to help our conversation.

Some background on what team will address:

- What can we change?
 - Can't change Definition;
 - We can delete purposes that are not applicable. We can add purposes with a variance;
 - Conditions – can make more restrictive;
 - Criteria – can make more restrictive, can add criteria specific to WI or to support new purpose.
- A few topics were moved from Criteria to Considerations (noise screens, visual screens, enhancing wildlife habitat)
- The previous CPS 650 content was abbreviated and merged into the new federal standard.

Team reviews file on-screen and makes some changes together. Some key points of team discussion:

- Team edits some Purpose statements so it's clearer which resource concern is being addressed.
- Team discusses some possible additional Purposes related to water quality resource concerns, but determines these would not be a driver to install this practice, only secondary benefit.
 - There are trees to provide nitrogen fixation or other species that may benefit the soil. Overall, the opposite is probably true since trees are usually a detriment to crops--they take the water and nutrients, they shade the edges of field.
 - There are other practices (like Alley Cropping or Hedgerows or Critical Area Planting) that are better suited for the resource concerns discussed.
 - Add a Consideration: consider legume trees (for soil health benefit?).
- Conditions Where Practice Applies: "all lands except forest land" clarified on-screen to provide more detail on where it applies (cropland, pasture, farmstead). This would also include urban gardens. Language will be confirmed to be consistent with current NRCS land use terms.
- Previous Wisconsin standard had detailed Criteria for design aspects like number of rows and spacing. This is more appropriate in the guidance document so this updated standard will instead reference a guidance document (to be created by this team). This can build off of the current Technical Note 4: https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/api/CPSFile/2736/380_WI_GD_Windbreak-Shelterbelt_Establishment-Tree_and_Shrub_Species_for_Windbreaks_2011 This Tech Note will need to be updated, including being renamed to be a Guidance Document.
- Windbreaks often use fabric as a weed barrier which can be under Mulching but that could also be considered for the guidance document when the team works on that language.

- NRCS removes reference to CPS 612, though tentatively for now. The tree/shrub establishment should be part of this windbreaks standard though NRCS may look at this more closely.
- Windbreak trees aren't typically irrigated in WI but since it's possible Team agrees to leave in irrigation.

Break

Continue Technical Standard Language Review (Allan, Team)

Goal: Continue discussion on federal standard language to amend for WI.

See notes above.

Next Meeting Topics and Plan of Action (Kate, Allan)

Goal: Identify priority topics and goals for next meeting. Review Action Items.

Next meeting will be online, on May 25 from 1:00 -4:00 pm. Shannon may be out for both May & June due to tree planting schedule. Mike has conflict on May 25th. Mic has some leave in June but expects to still attend the meeting.

Action Items developed today:

1. Team Homework - Review the fed standard focusing on critique of Additional Criteria and Considerations for editing at the next team meeting.
2. Continued from last meeting:
 - a. Mic and Jeremiah prepare presentation on stock and seedlings. This is more related to guidance document so not urgent.
 - b. Shannon will host the team at Hancock ARS on July 27 for field tour for some windbreaks. Kate will assist with planning logistics and provide drinks/snacks.
3. **Kate:** finalize and post meeting notes from 3/30.
4. **Kate:** draft 4/27 meeting notes. Reviewed by **Allan**, then reviewed by full **Team**.
5. **Allan and Kate:** prepare agenda for 5/25 meeting and send to team one week prior to meeting. Agenda expected to include more review of the technical standard language (Additional Criteria and Considerations sections).

3:30 *End* (Meeting ends at 3:05)