



Natural Resources Conservation Service
Denver Federal Center
Bldg. 56, RM. 2604
P.O. Box 25426
Denver, CO 80225-0426

NRCS Colorado Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) State-level Procedures for Content Management

Purpose. To provide state-level procedures for establishing, changing, and maintaining the Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) as directed under the General Manual, Title 450, Part 401 - Technical Guides.

I. New and Revised Technology

- a. All NRCS employees are responsible for identifying the needs for technology improvement. Employees may either contact a member of the State Technical Guide Committee (STGC) or post their needs on the [FOTG SharePoint](#) (CO NRCS\ECS\FOTG).
 - The [STGC member list](#), and their contact information, is provided on the FOTG, Section I. Field and area-level employees should contact their area’s STGC representative.
 - A web based training is offered in AgLearn to assist (course NRCS-NEDC-000149).
- b. Area and field office technical leaders (e.g. district conservationists and area conservationists) may prepare changes to FOTG content. Prepared changes will be submitted to a member of the STGC who will assist, as needed, to submit the content for committee review.
- c. State-level technical leaders will prepare changes to FOTG content when technical and resource needs are identified. Prepared changes will be submitted for committee review. In some cases, the content change will not require committee review (see Section III).

II. FOTG Content Requirements

The following standards will be required of FOTG content to ensure compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and to provide formatting consistency.

- Margins: side margins 0.1 inch, top margin either 0.75 or 0.1 inch, and bottom margin 0.1 inch.
- Fonts of either:
 - Calibri, 11 or 12 font
 - Times New Roman, 11 or 12 font
 - Arial, 10 or 11 font
 - Verdana, 9 or 10 font
 - Helvetica, 11 or 12 font
- Minor modifications to margins and fonts can be made for improved page layout.
- FOTG Footers: will use this format to identify the FOTG location (left) and posting month (right).

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- All documents will meet 508 compliance standards. Information on 508 standards can be found at <http://www.section508.gov/content/learn/best-practice-library>.
- Whenever possible, condense file sizes to less than 500K for improved public access.

III. Procedures for Changing FOTG Content

The following procedures are provided to ensure FOTG content is consistent with policy and with the standards set by the State Conservationist (GM-450-401.1 (D)(xi)).

The [State FOTG Content Manager](#) is appointed by the State Conservationist (FOTG, Section I) to ensure that the STGC approved technical information is maintained and archived in FOTG following policy.

FOTG Editing Permission. The State Resource Conservationist (SRC) is the FOTG Administrator and will maintain the state list of NRCS employees granted FOTG editing permissions.

III (a) ARCHIVE or DELETE CONTENT

The State FOTG Content Manager will archive or delete content following the policy provide in GM-450-401.8 - Archiving FOTG Materials.

State-level Technical Leaders, or others with FOTG editing permission, that need content archived or deleted will obtain review and concurrence from the STGC (Section V) and will make the change in the draft Technical Guide Notice (Section VI). The State FOTG Content Manager will archive or delete the content in FOTG when the Technical Guide Notice is approved for transmittal.

III (b) REPLACE CONTENT

The FOTG Content Manager may replace content only when the content does not require it to be archived (GM-450-401.8). Replacing content does not save it in the archives and is not retrievable once replaced. Revising is only appropriate for general maintenance such as repairing a damaged file.

State-level Technical Leaders, or others with FOTG editing permission, that need content replaced will follow the procedures of Archiving (Section III (a)) and adding New Content (Section III (c)).

EXCEPTION: Content posted as Draft may be replaced or otherwise edited until it is transmitted as a final document.

Fig 1 – Content Replacement

The replace process includes editing existing content by uploading a new file (Fig 1).

III (c) NEW CONTENT

State-level Technical Leaders, or others with FOTG editing permission, may add content to the FOTG following the policy provided in [GM-450-401.3 to 401.7](#). To add content: in FOTG editing mode click on the folder in the left frame where you wish to add content, then click the Add Content button and, in the right frame, enter the following items:

Display Title (required)

The title must be concise due to the limited space provided. Use abbreviations and acronyms if they are common to the public or where the full name is otherwise provided (Fig. 2).

- The display title will automatically be alphabetized in the Table of Contents (TOC). Groups of similar documents should have a naming convention so that all documents are listed together, whenever possible (Fig. 3).

Fig 2 - Title with acronym explained.



Fig 3 - Good naming convention displayed in the TOC

HEL List CO666 Piedra
HEL List CO669 La Plata
HEL List CO671 Cortez
HEL List CO676 Uncompahgre
HEL List CO679 Paonia

III (c). Procedures for Changing FOTG Content, New Content (cont.)

Location (required)

Enter a hyperlink or upload a file. For files, it is important that the file be named carefully before uploading, because this will create the web address. Note: file names cannot include spaces.

- Avoid adding the date to the file name. When the document is revised (with a new file name) the user’s link to the document will be broken.

A good file name example:

<https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/CO/biotechnote4.pdf>

- They system won’t allow two documents to be loaded with the same name, so if adding a file that will be replacing an existing file (i.e. a practice standard); change the Flag to “Internal”.

Abstract (required)

This is otherwise an optional section, but for the STGC review process, it is required to enter your review period and contact information. For example: *“Return comments to Rachel Murph, SRMS at 720-544-2866 or rachel.murph@co.usda.gov by Nov. 16, 2016”*. If the content does not require a review, you may leave this blank or make a comment about its change.

Note: once the document is finalized. The State FOTG Content Manager will remove the ‘review abstract’ and replace it (optionally) with an abstract of the document.

Key Words (required)

This section provides the FOTG search engine with searchable words to find the document. Separate key words with a semicolon: e.g. Agronomy Technical Note 42; Residue Management

Contact Information (required)

Select the state lead for the content. If a name is missing or incorrect, contact the State FOTG Content Manager.

Author(s) (optional)

Content Manager Comments (optional)

This is only viewable by the content editors. You may use this section to leave a note for the FOTG Content Manager on final posting guidance (e.g. if it should be Spotlighted on the front page, and if you have preferred final Abstract to use).

Revision Date (required)

The date will be auto-populated, generally leave as-is.

STGC Review Date (required)

The date will be auto-populated, generally leave as-is.

Flags (required)

The flags will auto-populate, so make the following changes (every time):

Display on Menu and Table of Contents: **NO**

Display on Draft FOTG: **YES**

Fig 4 - Flags for Draft Content

The screenshot shows a form with the following sections and options:

- Accessibility:** Public Internal
- Display on Menu and Table of Contents:** Yes No
- Display on Spotlight - Tools:** Yes No Expiration Date: [calendar icon] (If Yes, default to 30 days)
- Display on Spotlight - Technical Materials:** Yes No Expiration Date: [calendar icon] (If Yes, default to 30 days)
- Display on State Specific Notices:** Yes No Expiration Date: [calendar icon] (If Yes, default to 30 days)
- Display on Draft FOTG:** Yes No Expiration Date: 3/6/2016 [calendar icon] (If Yes, default to 30 days)

III (c). Procedures for Changing FOTG Content, New Content (cont.)

Flags - Accessibility (optional)

You can choose to make your draft content viewable to the public or not. Selecting “Internal” (see Fig 4) will change the web address to the document.

Public: <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/CO/biotechnote4.pdf>

Internal: <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/agency/CO/biotechnote4.pdf>

- This can be also be useful when you are trying to post new content to replace existing content; if the system won't let you because it says content with the same name already exists.

Practices / Document Type (required for CPS)

Only enter this information for practice standards and associated content.

Applicable Counties (optional)

To date, Colorado has not started to use this feature. Contact the State FOTG Content Manager if you have county-specific data to load.

Subject(s) (required)

In addition to the key words, the search engine can locate documents by pre-defined subject categories. Enter one or more subjects where you'd like to have the content found.

Save/Verify. Click the Save button and verify that it was posted accurately. The content should only be viewable on the front page, under Draft FOTG. Confirm that it is not displaying in the file structure.

Remember to update any associated Indexes, such as the Standard and Specifications Index (FOTG, Section IV). Use the procedure of Section III (a) to Archive and Section III (c) to add New Content.

V. STGC Review/Approval of FOTG Content

The State Technical Guide Committee (STGC) will review drafted changes to FOTG content, to ensure the completeness, accuracy and appropriateness of the materials presented. STGC operations are provided in the annually updated STGC member roster and committee operations (FOTG, Section I).

In some cases, a STGC review and approval will not be required. A review will not be required for general maintenance conducted by the FOTG Content Manager, such as repairing broken web links, re-loading corrupted files, and correcting minor errors such as typographical that do not change the intent of the content. A review will also not be required for items that have either gone through a higher level review process (i.e. FOTG, Section I, Cost Data, Regional Payment Details) or where state-level changes may not be made (i.e. FOTG, Section III, CAP Criteria).

STGC Review Procedure:

Draft FOTG



State-level Technical Leaders, or others with FOTG editing permission, will notify the STGC that content has been posted for their review on the Draft FOTG. The notice will be by electronic communication, mainly by email. Alternative methods (such as VTC, webinar, etc.) may be made when needed. The notice will provide the STGC with a review timeframe that is at least three weeks (30 days should be standard). A 30-day review period will be provided for Conservation Practice Standards.

The notice may be sent to other reviewers (i.e. area discipline leads) however it should be clear to the STGC that their review, as a committee member, is necessary.

An example notice:

Subject: STGC review requested by Jan. 13th

State Technical Guide Committee,
The following Draft FOTG content requires your review:

[Protected Species Record Search](#). New. Provided for NRCS conservation planners to help identify when protected species or their habitats may be present in the 'area of potential effect'.

Please return suggestions for improving its usefulness and/or if you find species occurrence information changes that need to be made. Return comments to Chanda Garcia by Wednesday, Jan. 13th, 2016.

It is the responsibility of the State-level Technical Leaders to ensure that STGC comments are addressed, and that corrected material be re-posted to the Draft FOTG. The process of Content Replacement (Section III (b)) is appropriate for easily replacing draft content.

VI. Draft Technical Guide Notice

State-level Technical Leaders, or others with FOTG editing permission, will update the draft Technical Guide Notice (TGN) with any FOTG content changes. The working version of the draft TGN is located on the state office shared drive. Contact the FOTG Content Manager if there are access issues.

(AIOCODEN3FP0\CODEN):\NRCS\ECS-190\FOTG\Section I\[Technical Guide Notices](#)

A folder and draft TGN will be set-up and ready for your content change¹. In the document, add a header to identify the FOTG Section and subfolder where the content was changed. Below the header, provide the "Display Title". Indicate if it is "New/Revised/Superseded/Archived". Then provide a brief, concise note to highlight the materials or to indicate key changes. An example is provided below.

Section II, Special Environmental Concerns, Environmental Justice

[EPA Environmental Justice Mapping Tool](#). New. This tool allows users to access high-resolution environmental and demographic information to compare a selected location to the rest of the state, EPA region, or the nation.

Section I, Technical Notes, Biology

[Biology Tech Note 04 - Wildlife Food](#), Archived. The guidance is no longer relevant, refer to Biology Technical Note 41 for current information.

¹ If a draft TGN is not set-up, a template is provided. Copy the template and rename it to the next sequential TGN number, and label the file as draft. Example: TGN-695_draft.doc

Note: when the TGN is finalized the FOTG Content Manager will ensure that the Display Title is hyperlinked to the document. Archived material will not be hyperlinked.

In the TGN folder, add a copy of the content that was added to the FOTG (if applicable). This is intended to be maintained as a back-up to the FOTG.

VII. Transmitting the Technical Guide Notice

The standard transmittal date will be the 15th of each month, provided there is material to transmit. Notify the State FOTG Content Manager if transmittal is needed earlier or to be postponed. The transmittal process is outlined below (to be started around the 10th of each month).

1. The State FOTG Content Manager will organize obtaining review and approval from whomever transmitted content on the draft TGN. The 'Review TGN' will be in a .pdf format, with hyperlinks active, a DRAFT watermark, and a digital signature review block. Since everyone posted their own content, the review notice will be short (generally 2 days). Once digital approvals are obtained, it will be electronically submitted to the State Resource Conservationist (SRC).

2. The SRC will conduct a review, and upon their approval, will digitally initial/sign the 'Review TGN' and then electronically submit it to the ECS Administrative Assistant.
3. The ECS Administrative Assistant will arrange for the State Conservationist's review and signature on the digital 'Review TGN', and will notify the FOTG Content Manager when approved.
4. The State FOTG Content Manager will prepare and post the web version TGN; will change all transmitted content from Draft to Active; and will distribute the transmittal announcement via email to all NRCS employees and affiliates.
5. The ECS Administrative Assistant will file the fully-signed, hard-copy 'Review TGN' and will print and file all new content in the FOTG hard copy binders (located in the state office library).