

April 19, 2012

TECHNICAL GUIDE NOTICE WY - 97

Purpose: This notice transmits the following changes to conservation practice standards in Section IV eFOTG: Also a notice for updates to a form in Section I eFOTG.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO THESE STANDARDS

Anaerobic Digester (366) Two existing practice standards were combined (Anaerobic Digester – Ambient Temperature (Code 365) and Anaerobic Digester – Controlled Temperature (Code 366)) into a revised 366 Anaerobic Digester standard. Every Section of this standard has been edited to ensure it addresses all types of anaerobic digesters.

Aquatic Organism Passage (396) The title was changed from “Fish Passage” to “Aquatic Organism Passage” to better reflect the full range of passage projects completed under the standard across the United States and its protectorates. Both the Definition and Purpose were modified by removing unnecessary words and two new Criteria were added. References to additional relevant standards were added, and the references cited section was updated to match material presented in the body of the standard. Minor edits were made to improve the readability and clarity of the standard.

Constructed Wetland (656) This standard was formally reviewed and updated to include public comments received through the *Federal Register* review process. An additional consideration for selecting plant materials that provide habitat requirements for desirable wildlife and enhancing pollinator habitat is included in the standard. No other changes have been made to the standard.

Conservation Crop Rotation (328) Two new Purposes of “Reduce Energy Use” and accompanying Criteria were added to (1) Supply plant produced nitrogen to reduce energy use and (2) Manage crop consumptive use of water to conserve water and reduce energy. Where the practice applies was clarified for time basis for annual produced crops. Additional Criteria were added to Improve Soil Quality. The crops grown shall produce a positive OM (Organic Matter) subfactor value over the life of the rotation, as determined by the Soil Conditioning Index procedure, with appropriate adjustments for additions to, or subtractions from, biomass on the field. This addresses the problem in low rainfall areas where producers could not plan a rotation with multiple other purposes and benefits because they are unable to achieve a positive OM subfactor.

Contour Orchard and Other Perennial Crops (331) The revision includes several significant changes. This revision changes the practice name from “Contour Orchard and Other Fruit Areas” to “Contour Orchard and Other Perennial Crops,” and adds reduction in transport of sediment and other associated contaminant as a purpose. Also, this revision removes several statements in the criteria that are not applicable to this conservation practice, adds requirements in “Plans and Specifications,” includes the addition of vegetative ground cover and associated benefits as a consideration, and adds references.

Cover Crop (340) The purpose to produce supplemental forage was removed. A Purpose and accompanying Criteria were added to promote biological nitrogen fixation and “Reduce Energy Use” by using legume cover crops. Additional Operation and Maintenance criteria were added to evaluate the onsite application of the practice to ensure the planned purposes are achieved.

Cross Wind Ridges (588) Substantial changes were made to this standard. The “Purposes” section has been expanded to include providing protection to crops from wind-borne soil particles, and to reduce soil particulate emissions to air. The criteria for design of ridge height and spacing have been changed to reflect changing prediction technologies and additional criteria has been added to address directional placement and minimum spacing. The “Considerations” section has been greatly expanded to optimize use of the standard.

Cross Wind Trap Strips (589c) The purpose is to induce deposition and reduce transport of wind-borne sediment and sediment-borne contaminants downwind changed to induce windborne sediment deposition. Deleted the purpose to provide food and cover for wildlife. Added two new purposes: induce snow deposition and improve air quality by reducing the generations of airborne particulate matter. The existing criteria in the standard were reformatted to be listed under the appropriate additional criteria for the intended purpose.

Dry Hydrant (432) The Criteria section was clarified, Plans and Specification section added a list of items to include, and references were added. Date of national standard - September 2011.

Early Successional Habitat Development/Management (647) This standard was formally reviewed and updated to include public comments received through the *Federal Register* review process. We clarified the definition and purpose to include providing habitat for all or part of a species’ life cycle, added additional planting criteria, added a new requirement to use WinPST if using chemicals, added new criteria on the timing of management actions, and supplemented the references. National update September 2010.

Fishpond Management (399) The Definition was changed. Two issues previously included under "Considerations" have been moved to the "Criteria" section and additional action was added to the "Operation and Maintenance" section. National standard September 2011.

Forest Trails and Landings (655) In NHCP Notice 149 revising this practice, the announcement of the practice unit change from Acres to Feet was omitted and has caused some confusion. The units were changed to align with the units for Access Road (Ft.) (CPS Code 560) and Road/Trail/Landing Closure and Treatment (Ft.) (CPS Code 654). The standard is being reissued to highlight Feet as the primary unit, with Acres as an alternate unit. National standard is dated September 2011.

Herbaceous Wind Barriers (603) This revision adds considerations for: beneficial insects and pollinators; and sequestering of carbon, native plant materials, invasive species, and micro-environment for plant growth. Also, this revision moves “food and cover for wildlife” from the “Purpose” section to “Considerations,” adds “tolerance to soil deposition” as a criterion under “Vegetation,” expands “Conditions where Practice Applies” to include lands where forages are grown, removes instruction statements for preparation of State standards, adds requirements in “Plans and Specifications,” and updates barrier criteria to include the most current technology and references. An additional statement was added for Wyoming – “Follow recommendations for planting rates, methods and dates obtained from Wyoming Plant Material Technical Notice #3. Follow Wyoming Plant Material Technical Notices 14 and 15 for seedbed preparations and implementation.”

Integrated Pest Management (595) The practice was revised to include specific NRCS Integrated Pest Management (IPM) risk reduction techniques to address identified hazards related to cultural, biological, and chemical pest suppression strategies. A technical note has been developed to support the implementation of the NRCS IPM mitigation techniques. The name of the standard was changed to reflect the IPM approach to reduce the risks/hazards related to pest prevention, avoidance, monitoring, and suppression activities, and reference was added to include WY Agronomy Technical Note 22.

Irrigation System, Microirrigation (441) A new purpose was added; reduce energy use. Criteria were added for this purpose. Criteria for maximum efficiency use in capacity analysis and specific state and local laws, rules and regulations were added.

Irrigation System, Sprinkler (442) A new purpose was added; reduce energy use. Criteria were added for this purpose. Criteria for computing system capacity and specific state and local laws, rules and regulations were added.

Irrigation System, Tailwater Recovery (447) A new purpose was added; reduce energy use. Criteria were added for this purpose. Criteria for specific state and local laws, rules and regulations were added.

Karst Sinkhole Treatment (527) This standard was formally reviewed and updated to include public comments received through the *Federal Register* review process. The practice name was changed from Sinkhole and Sinkhole Area Treatment. Practice does not apply to sinkholes with nonkarst origins (structural failures due to piping, etc.), and minor edits were made. National standard dated September 2010.

Pumping Plant (533) A new purpose was added; reduce energy use. Criteria were added for this purpose. Significant changes were made to several areas in the criteria, especially those related to photovoltaic panel/pumps (solar pumps) including removal water storage requirement (criteria set in Water Facility 614); sage grouse, state and local laws, protection of pumping plants from livestock and wildlife.

Salinity Sodic Soil Management (610) Updates clarified the “Conditions Where Practice Applies” and “General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes” sections. Separate sections were added for criteria applicable to irrigated lands and to non-irrigated lands. We expanded the sections for Criteria to Reduce Problems of Crusting, Permeability or Soil Structure on Sodium-Affected Soils, and to Saline Seeps and their Recharge Areas. The “Considerations” section was expanded, detailed requirements were added for “Plans and Specifications,” the “Operation and Maintenance” section was deleted, and the “References” section was reduced. We have added additional references to the standard.

Stripcropping (585) Only minor changes were made to this standard. The “General Criteria” section has been revised to require: (1) equal strip widths for erosion-susceptible strips and erosion resistant strips; (2) that at least 50 percent of the rotation shall consist of erosion-resistant crops or sediment-trapping cover; and (3) that the same rotation shall be followed in each adjacent strip while the year of the rotation is staggered to maintain alternating strips in an erosion-resistant crop or cover. Under the “Additional Criteria for Soil Erosion by Water ...” section, criteria for maximum row grade has been modified to be the same as the Contouring Standard (330), and criteria was added for cover conditions on the field headlands/end rows. The “Considerations” section of the standard was revised to remove the specific considerations for each of the practice purposes. The “Operations and Maintenance” section of the standard was revised to remove the specific operation and maintenance for each purpose and combined into one common list of activities for operation and maintenance.

Vegetative Treatment Area (635) Changes included additions to the criteria that address uncontrolled water, water budget development, contaminated runoff, routing criteria and seeding in accordance with 342, Critical Area Seeding.

Well Water Testing (355) This standard was formally reviewed and updated to include public comments received through the *Federal Register* review process. The “Conditions Where Practice Applies” section was updated to exclude water wells not for agricultural use, and minor edits were made.

MINOR OR NO CHANGES TO THESE STANDARDS

Access Control (472) minor changes.

Alley Cropping (311) A new Purpose of “Develop Renewable Energy Systems” with accompanying additional Criteria was added.

Amendments for Treatment of Agricultural Waste (591)

Bedding (310) Added statement that this practice shall conform to all federal, state, and local laws, etc.

Contour Buffer Strips (332) date change.

Dike (356) Minor changes made. Criteria for specific state and local laws, rules and regulations were added. Additions made to operation and maintenance section.

Field Border (386) Pollinator habitat was added to the wildlife habitat purpose and to the criteria, and other considerations were added to address pollinator habitat.

Forage Harvest Management (511) Revisions are minor in nature with updated references included.

Forest Stand Improvement (666) A new Purpose of “Develop Renewable Energy Systems” with accompanying additional Criteria was added.

Fuel Break (383) Only minor edits are being proposed. National Standard updated September 2011.

Irrigation Water Management (449) A new purpose was added; reduce energy use. Criteria were added for this purpose.

Land Clearing (460) The purpose was rewritten. Criteria was added for soil quality and water quality. National standard September 2011.

Mulching (484) A new Purpose of “Reduce Energy Use” and accompanying additional Criteria was added. Criteria were added to the Operation and Maintenance section of the standard to evaluate the effectiveness of the practice to achieve the planned purpose(s).

Recreation Area Improvement (562) minor changes.

Recreation Land Grading and Shaping (566) minor changes.

Riparian Herbaceous Cover (390) minor changes.

Row Arrangement (557) Date change.

Silvopasture Establishment (381) An additional condition where practice applies was added 1) pasture where trees or shrubs can be added. Other additions include renewable energy criteria and additions to wildlife habitat/pollinators. Considerations concerning invasive potential, native plants and other minor changes.

Tree/Shrub Establishment (612) The update includes additional criteria for renewable energy systems and additional criteria to reduce energy use. A consideration for invasive potential when selecting plant species was also added.

Tree/Shrub Pruning (660) minor changes.

Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (490) minor changes.

Vegetative Barrier (601) The primary revision included the addition to use the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation, Version 2 for the design and spacing of the vegetative barriers. Other revisions included edits to improve clarity.

Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380) minor changes.

NEW STANDARDS

Bivalve Aquaculture Gear and Biofouling Control (400)

Dust Control Animal Activity Open Lot Surfaces (375)

Dust Control Unpaved Roads and Surfaces (373)

Feed Management (592) The units changed from Animal Units (AUs) or Number to only AUs. The Purpose changed to include pathogen, odor, particulate matter, and greenhouse gas mitigation. Additions to Conditions Where Practice Applies, Criteria, Considerations, Operations and Maintenance, and References were made to support the change in Purpose. National updated September 2011.

ENG FORMS

WY-ENG-41 Water Rights Verification Form Added statement for documentation requirements from landowner; "When action is required by Board of Control, documentation from post board meeting, grant letter, copy of petition and map shall be supplied to the NRCS for documentation of water rights." Added statement boxes for State Engineer description of findings and any special conditions.

Effective Date. This notice is effective when received.

Filing Instructions: The revised conservation practice standards and forms are electronically filed in the Wyoming eFOTG at this site:

http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/efotg_locator.aspx?map=US



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