



Standards Oversight Council (SOC)

Supporting Technical Standards for Urban and Rural Soil and Water Conservation

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MEETING NOTES

Wednesday, December 19, 2012 || 9:00 am – 12:30pm || DATCP, Madison, WI, Room 172

Attendees: Jim VandenBrook, Todd Boehne, Gretchen Wheat, Mary Anne Lowndes, Pat Murphy, Richard Castelnuovo, Ken Genskow, Gini Knight, On phone: Perry Lindquist, Bruce Olson

Updates to Agenda / Review of Oct 17th Action Items

All action items from Oct 17th meeting completed. No questions from staff report.

NRCS Move to Nationalize Standards

This fall, NRCS Chief White sent a memo indicating a 3-5 year move to nationalizing NRCS standards. SOC's role will still be to review national standards, identify state-specific issues, and help develop job sheets and tech notes. Nationalizing standards could result in less specificity than current state standards and more specificity than the current national standards, in particular with respect to referencing various ecological or climatic conditions. Incorporating nationalized standards into state rules will be challenging for state agencies referencing the standards.

Action Item: Pat will include this topic on an upcoming agenda for regional NRCS call with other surrounding state offices.

Action Item: Richard will develop a draft position paper on the need for state specific or at least regional standards. Jim will consider proposing a WLWCA resolution.

Website review

The website is live and now accepting the first comments on draft standards. The website was reviewed and feedback collected to be incorporated in early January. The mission statement was revised to the following:

- Our mission is to oversee a collaborative process for developing effective technical standards that ensure the preservation of **protect** Wisconsin's natural resources.

Action Item: Gini to incorporate feedback into new website or ask developers on possibility of suggestions.

Action Item: Pat, Gretchen, and Gini to work further on the format of the Technical Standards Needs Assessment survey. We will explore options for categorizing NRCS standards. Ken Genskow has staff that would be able to help developing survey in Survey Monkey.

2013 Budget

The Council requested a quarterly finance report using the expanded Quickbooks report, ideally after quarterly expenses have been billed. This expanded version of the budget with the prior year's actual numbers will be posted to the website. The management of SOC's reserve funds was discussed. The purpose of the reserve fund and endowment is to keep the programs running in times of short fall. Policy for the use of these reserve funds is in development. SOC prefers advance notice of the use of these

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funds. The Council will continue to explore opportunities for the 2012 surplus that will advance SOC initiatives, which may include training, education, and outreach materials for newly revised or developed standards.

Action Item: Jim will create draft policy for use of the SOC reserve funds and bring back to the Council for review.

Action Item: Gini and Jim to review request for quarterly finance report with Kirsten and ask for clarification regarding net income.

Team Updates

- NRCS has 12 practice standards revised through the EZ process open for public comment until Wednesday, January 2. These standards are associated with the EQIP program.
- DNR's permeable pavement has been productive and continues to make progress.
- NRCS 590 Nutrient Management Revision Team.
 - 23 applications were received to participate in this team.
 - The Council selected a team based on a high level of technical capacity, a balanced geographic representation, and discipline diversity. The rest of the candidates will be encouraged to participate as Initial Reviewers and/or in smaller work groups that will focus on specific topic areas.
- **Action Item:** Gini to contact all 590 team applicants regarding team selection.

Filling DSPS representative & potential DOT representative

DNR is currently working with DOT and DSPS on various projects. The Council decided to hold off on engaging them with SOC participation.

Next Meeting

Action Item: Gini to send out Doodle Poll to schedule the next meeting for the last two weeks of February.

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- Gini to send out Doodle Poll to schedule the next meeting for the last two weeks of February.

Future Agenda Topics:

- Team Updates
- Training Summit review
- Technical Standards Needs Assessment format
- Refining Draft Standard Comment process with goal of increasing feedback/participation
- Introducing new NRCS State Conservationist to SOC activities
- SOC Position Paper to NRCS
- Decision Making Matrix
- Accomplishment Report Review?

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