



## 2013 Technical Standards Needs Survey Summary

The 2013 survey was conducted online and open for responses from June 28<sup>th</sup> to July 31<sup>st</sup> 2013. The responses were compiled and a summary created in August 2013. We appreciated all of the respondents' feedback and carefully reviewed all comments. The technical standards scheduled for revision in the 2014-2016 Work Plan are being prioritized based on the survey results. Additional technical standards have been added to the revision list based on these results. Comments on specific standards will be forwarded to agency staff who are leading specific standard revisions. We are exploring ways to highlight portions of the 2014-2016 Work Plan that specifically resulted from the survey comments to show the impact this survey has on the Work Plan. The Council also acknowledged the numerous comments related to the need for training and are collaborating with multiple entities to improve training opportunities for conservation technicians.

The 2014 - 2016 Work Plan will be available at [www.socwisconsin.org](http://www.socwisconsin.org) in November of 2013.

A summary of the responses with direct comments is listed below.

### 1. Name and Organization/Affiliation

- 60 responses were collected
  - Land & Water Conservation Departments - 40 responses, from ~ 30 counties
  - Agency - 13 responses
    - DNR - 8, NRCS - 3, DATCP - 2
  - University - 1 response
  - Private Sector / Municipality - 6 responses

### 2. Do these comments reflect those of the organization or an individual?

- Organization - 18%, Individual - 82%
- The Council decided this question does not give us useful data and will be deleting it in the next survey.

### 3. Please indicate how well the updates to Wisconsin technical standards are keeping up with improvements in science and technology.

Not keeping up at all -- Many standards I work with seem out-of-date.	0%,	0 responses
Kind of keeping up -- Some of the standards I work with seem out-of-date.	25%,	15 responses
Keeping up -- Most of the standards I work with seem up-to-date.	55%,	33 responses
Doing very well -- All or almost all of the standards I work with seem up-to-date.	20%,	12 responses

#### Other comments

- I only work with a few standards.
- Training does not keep up with the updates
- Barnyard runoff is still an issue with poor solutions. The practices do improve situations but are not effective enough and require major effort in maintenance. The most effective solution too many barnyard runoff sites may be to direct the runoff to a storage structure and rely on proper land spreading on cropland.
- I believe the nutrient management standards will benefit from additional consideration of soil amendment practices
- Urban erosion control and stormwater management

### 4. Have you ever participated on a SOC work team?

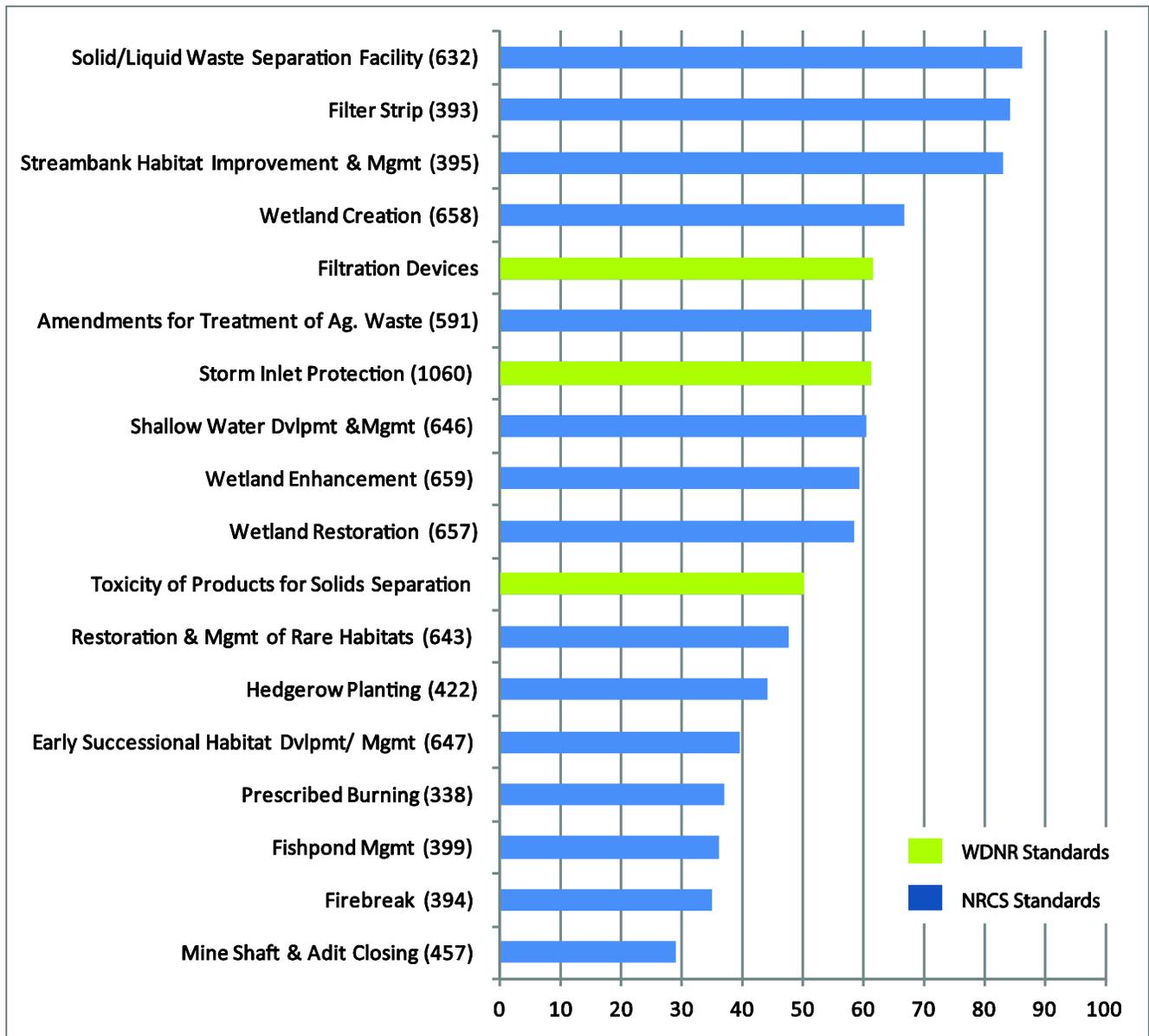
No	66.7%
Yes	33.3%

5. Please rank the standards listed below in their importance in being revised and provide any input on potential revisions for the work teams to use.

To calculate the figure below, the ranking options were assigned a number of points (as listed below), multiplied by the number of respondents that selected that ranking option and then divided by the total number of respondents for the following four ranking options.

Ranking Options:           Very low importance - 1 point  
                                   Moderately low importance - 2 points  
                                   Moderately high importance - 3 points  
                                   Very high importance - 4 points

## Ranking of Importance for Standard Revision



In the space below, please provide any recommendations for revisions to the above standards.

- 393 Filter Strip: Filter strips are being researched and applied to lower the Phosphorous Index (PI) of fields. There are options in SnapPlus for filter strip locations, either field edge or in-field. I would suggest making a reference to SnapPlus and giving standard guidelines for the design field edge or in-field. I know there are standard guidelines for designing filter strips next to surface water. I am not aware of design standards for edge of field in upland fields. SnapPlus allows for giving PI reductions for edge of field filter strips in upland fields.

Another suggestion is to allow for the harvest of the grass vegetation in filter strip next to surface water. Many fields adjacent to surface water are flatter and historically these fields were used for livestock farmers to spread manure especially in the winter because upland fields were not accessible due to snow depth and the grade of the access lanes going to upland fields. Consequently, crop fields adjacent to streams have excessively high soil test phosphorous (P) levels. When areas of fields adjacent to streams are seeded to grass vegetation, the soil test P levels remain constant. The only way to reduce the soil test P levels is to allow for the harvesting of the grass buffer strips more than one time during the year. I would propose that when filter strips are installed to lower the PI and also allow for the opportunity to lower the soil test P levels, then the harvesting of the vegetation would be allowed when the vegetation is the most palatable to livestock as a feed source is some time during the months of May, June or July depending upon location in the State, and this is typically during the nesting season. So I would suggest filter strips where there is a need to reduce soil test P level, then filter strips are exempt from following the nesting season guidelines. When filter strips are installed for wildlife purposes or where harvesting would not take place, then mowing should not take place until after the nesting season.

- For the 393 Standard, hopefully there will be options available for routine cutting and harvesting.
- Dewatering: standard says dirt bags "shall be sized" but doesn't say how. In practice, they are almost always too small if left to the manufacturer to size.  
Bioretention: address leaching of phosphorous from the engineered soil mix
- We have submitted earlier comments on 591 standards as it relates to the use of gypsum as a soil amendment
- Wetland practices need to consider water depth for various plant species development and control. The Shallow 8:1 slopes allow for a large growth of invasive plants not desired for wetland restoration. Discuss more about how to place the barrow site in the wetland to enhance open water habitat. We also need to consider deeper wetlands for diving ducks. Depths up to 6 or more feet.
- How do you implement 591? How is this a specific standard?

**6. Are there standards that are not on the above list that need revision? If so, please write which standards and explain your recommendations for revisions.**

- Shoreland Habitat Restoration - There has been so much learned since this standard was put together not so long ago. It is actually still considered an "interim" standard & really needs to be updated.
- Yes--only minor changes
- Manure Irrigation Systems - DNR is conducting research and a manure irrigation workgroup is currently working to develop some recommendations on this manure application method. The focus is primarily on CAFO permit farms. Given this effort, it may make sense to have a uniform statewide NRCS standard for this technology.
- 313 - need to simplify
- WDNR 1004 should have a more robust maintenance guidance. There is no mention of weeding, or cutting and removing the vegetation in the fall. There should also be an indicator similar to standard 1003

that states that if standing water is noted on 50% of the device 3 days after a rainfall event the device needs to be cleaned.

- Need a standard for level spreader design  
Need a standard for turf reinforcement mat
- I have recently been getting a lot of questions about barnyards and the sizing of the lots. Mainly why a beef cow has so much less space than a dairy cow but their head spacing is the same and they data is from 1987
- 590 Nutrient Management Standards should be updated to include the latest understanding of gypsum use as a soil amendment, similar to what recently has been incorporated into the OH 590 standards and I believe will shortly be under consideration nation-wide
- Composting & Compost Barns need to be added to the list.  
Maintenance and Rehabilitation of Grassed Waterways and Filter Strips is also needed (unless using existing standard for construction of each is felt to be sufficient).  
Rock Chute (through Grade Stabilization standard) may need to be reviewed as well - heard of a couple of them blowing out when geotextile has been used.
- The use of alum for phosphorus treatment in both stormwater systems and direct treatment of waters of the state needs to be either included in the Water Application of Polymers (1051) standard or as a stand alone standard. This has become a big issue in South central Region.
- Bioretention: There is an extremely high risk of failure so this practice should be reanalyzed.
- Dewatering: there are new practices & products that are not addressed in the existing standard. The standard should include a requirement to immediately stop dewatering if the practice is not working. The existing should be revised to eliminate the straw bale basin, which does not work, and require regular monitoring or inspection of active dewatering activities throughout the day.
- Keep standards of measurement consistent across all practices where the practice may apply. ie Aquatic organism passage obstruction and stream crossing for culvert pavements. They have two different ways to measure the culvert size. ie culvert greater than 25 inches in stream crossing and inch/foot for Aquatic organism culvert calculation.
- 1005 Vegetated Infiltration Swales;  
1071 Interim Manufactured Perimeter Control and Slope Interruption Products;

**7. List up to ten technical standards that you most commonly use or reference.**

**Most Commonly Used NRCS Standards**

1. Waste Storage Facility, 313: 53%\*
2. Nutrient Management, 590: 37%
3. Waste Transfer, 634: 37%
4. Grassed Waterway, 412: 30%
5. Waste Treatment, 629: 27%
6. Streambank and Shoreline Protection, 580: 23%
7. Vegetated Treatment Area, 635: 23%
8. Grade Stabilization Structure, 410: 22%
9. Heavy Use Protection Area, 561: 22%
10. Roof Runoff Structure, 558: 20%

**Most Commonly Used DNR Standards**

1. Bioretention for Infiltration, 1004: 15%\*
2. Wet Detention Pond, 1001: 13%
3. Site Evaluation for Stormwater Infiltration, 1002: 13%
4. Infiltration Basin, 1003: 13%
5. Ditch Checks, 1062: 10%
6. Sediment Trap, 1063: 8%
7. Vegetated Infiltration Swales, 1005: 7%
8. Proprietary Storm Water Sedimentation Devices, 1006: 7%
9. Infiltration Trench, 1007: 7%
10. Channel Erosion Mat, 1053: 7%

\* Percentage of respondents

**8. Do you or those you work with need additional training to properly implement NRCS and DNR technical standards? If you select "yes" or "not sure", please add a comment to explain your response in the space below.**

- No - 41%, 23 responses
- Yes - 41%, 23 responses
- Not sure - 18%, 10 responses

Which standards have the greatest need for training? For each standard you list, also tell what aspect of the standard the training is needed for?

- 629- This being a more important practice every year and being fairly new, additional examples/options would be greatly appreciated to understand how to properly manage and implement a practice under this standard.
- 393
- 635 629 395
- 629 and 635
- You never know into run into a problem.
- 313
- I would not say the need is there for implementing a specific standard per se but more training is needed to show the cross-links between the standards and specifications. In addition and what I see is a higher priority is exposure to completed projects to help technicians develop options during the planning and design phases.
- De-watering (1061) - training for laborers on general applicability/methodology/proper installation. I see sites consistency not de-watering appropriately...most of the time directly out of the area to be de-watered into sewer systems or even wetlands.  
Storm Drain Inlet Protection For Construction Sites (1060) - training for laborers on proper installation AND MAINTENANCE. I see installations that are mediocre, but maintenance is either not done at all OR not done appropriately.
- We have a couple newer staff that need training in all aspects. The veteran staff need training on recently updated standards and specs.
- There is a need for training of the crop consultants that we engage through our affiliation with clients and partners in Wisconsin on the use of gypsum as a soil amendment and best practice for nutrient management.
- Reviews and updates on these are usually welcome.
- post development stormwater standards
- When standards are updated it is helpful to have a training session on the new standard to highlight what has changed and answer any questions.
- The standards that apply to WinSlamm and other storm water work do not get updated at the same pace as the "rules"...partly due to the State budget and decisions made at that level.
- Storm water basins: the liner information is either not clear, understood, or used by many people.  
Dewatering: how to determine what practice will work on a specific site.
- When there are major changes due to policy or laws it is good to get update training for proper interpretation.
- 590  
313 - stacking

- As standards are updated, maybe include a summary of the changes with the update. Also, newer employees can use training with or without updates as they occur.
- All standards require experience and training in design and construction. However, time constraints often limit staff from getting trained in all but a few of the standards. Those standards which are more comprehensive and complex should be the top priority for both the trainers and conservation staff.
- 1002 - Report writing/documentation  
1004 - Entire standard
- OJT and continuing education are needed for all standards.
- Training/review is always a good idea.
- 590, Barnyard Runoff systems

**9. Do you have other comments on SOC's process for technical standard revisions or any other technical standard concerns you would like SOC to be aware of?**

- It would be great to finalize the 1071 and get it published....
- Similarly like the new Waste Transfer Pipe Specification the listing of materials that was put together for this is very valuable. I would like to see more of these.
- It seems as if the standards and specs are being revised so much that it is hard to keep current. Minor standard and spec "tweaking" needs to be kept to a minimum so keeping current and aware of changes is possible.
- I am glad to see that Wisconsin still allows conservation professionals from all employment sectors (public and private, conservationist and farmer) to participate on a team and provide comment on proposed changes to the standards. Not every state is like this. Thank you NRCS, WLWCA, DNR, and Gini.
- We appreciate the opportunity to comment here and we offer to assist further by bringing subject experts to your deliberation on consideration of various soil amendments, like gypsum, within a systems approach to nutrient management, especially for treating phosphorous loadings in our priority watersheds.
- I think the process is a very good one. I like that input is accepted from those affected throughout the entire process.
- There should be consistent interpretation and enforcement across the State.
- silt socks / sediment logs are becoming very popular; it would be nice to have something specifically addressing these products, and how they work (or don't work) in different situations. Including polymer-filled logs.
- make sure that the counties that have staff that use the standards are involved with the process
- No. Keep up the good work!!
- Using the blog approach may be advantageous for the younger employees, but the older ones are uncomfortable inputting in this manner, they also prefer a more anonymous comment process. They realize that their emailed comments may contain their name, but don't want it posted on the website. The older employees have a lot of experience and we don't want to discourage their participation.

**10. Would you like to subscribe to SOC's listserve to receive updates on agricultural (NRCS) and/or stormwater (WDNR) technical standards?**

	Already subscribed	No	Yes
NRCS Ag standards	28	5	21
DNR storm water standards	17	11	23