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## 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

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The Standards Oversight Council is an inter-agency effort that facilitates a team approach for developing effective technical practice standards that protect Wisconsin's natural resources.

## 2014 HIGHLIGHTS

38  
revised  
practice standards

15  
full team  
meetings

8%  
more listserv  
subscribers

316  
comments on  
draft standards

370+  
attendees at  
SOC presentations

62%  
of website visitors  
were new

1895  
website  
visits

## 2014 OVERVIEW

With the organizational support of the Standards Oversight Council (SOC), our partner agencies revised 38 technical standards and made significant progress toward revision of several others. SOC was successful in encouraging broader participation in the process, ensuring that standards were developed using the best available science and practical



Attendees at WI Land+Water's Fall Technical Tour visited a fifth generation cranberry operation in Monroe County during the harvest.



While serving on the SOC team for revising the NRCS Filter Strip standard, several technicians, including those from Washington, Waukesha and Ozaukee counties, advocated for harvestable buffers.

experience. Included in federal, state and local programs, SOC-developed standards improve consistency across agency programs and are relied upon by land owners and professionals to design practices that control runoff and storm water from farms, urban areas, and transportation and utility systems. In 2014, SOC facilitated two full standards teams and broad review of four revised standards. During the broad reviews, SOC received more than 370 comments for consideration in the development of standards. SOC also made presentations at several events to do outreach on the SOC process, encourage participation, and collect stakeholder input.



### Agricultural Standards

The SOC team for revising the NRCS 590 Nutrient Management Standard met monthly to review research and recommend changes to this standard, which had not been updated since 2005. The team was charged with improving nutrient utilization (minimizing field loss and maximizing crop uptake) to better protect surface water and groundwater. A representative group of team members including farmers provided diverse perspectives on nitrogen management practices based on soil type, nutrient restrictions in close proximity to direct conduits to groundwater and surface water, and planning criteria needed for safe winter spreading of manure. The SOC team sent the draft proposed 590 standard and its Technical Note to 17 experts for initial feedback, and received more than 30 pages of constructive comments that will be used to improve the next draft of the standard that will be circulated for broad public review in early 2015.

The SOC team reviewing the NRCS 393, Filter Strip Standard has also nearly accomplished its work. The draft proposed standard was circulated for broad review in the fall, and the revised standard is expected to be finalized in early 2015. Among its more notable achievements, the revised standard is expected to allow the biomass of vegetated filter strips to be harvested.

Draft proposed revisions to NRCS 632, Waste Separation Facility, and NRCS 350, Sediment Basin were also posted for broad review in spring 2014. The SOC website has more information about the many technical standards recently revised and published.

## Urban Stormwater Standards

The biggest accomplishment related to urban storm water control was the release of the DNR 1008 Permeable Pavement Standard. This is a fairly new practice in Wisconsin, so the SOC team agreed to subsequent annual meetings to review new research and field experience.

This year, SOC also facilitated broad review of DNR Standards 1060 Storm Drain Inlet Protection for Construction Sites, and 1004 Bioretention for Infiltration. Revisions to these standards were good examples of how new field experience and industry input can positively impact standards development. The revised Storm Drain Inlet Protection Standard added a Type D inlet device developed by a member of the group, Clear Waters Environmental Results, which has a Green Tier Program Charter. This new device allows use of different filter fabrics that can capture smaller soil particles. Driven by county field experience and industry recommendations, the Bioretention Standard revisions include improvements related to planting density, mulch substitutes, soil mix depth and pH range.

## Outreach and Collaboration

The SOC coordinates communication among agency representatives through quarterly meetings. SOC also participates on WI Land+Water's Technical Committee that consists largely of county technicians. These and other interactions help SOC understand the ever changing technical needs for improved conservation and runoff control practices. We delivered presentations at area conferences and events and provided educational materials to attendees at trainings and other networking opportunities. With our updated website and electronic distribution list (updates in 2013) we have more effective communication channels to release standard announcements. For our new outreach project this year, we embarked on making a short video that will highlight the importance of broad engagement in technical standards development.



## LOOKING FORWARD TO 2015

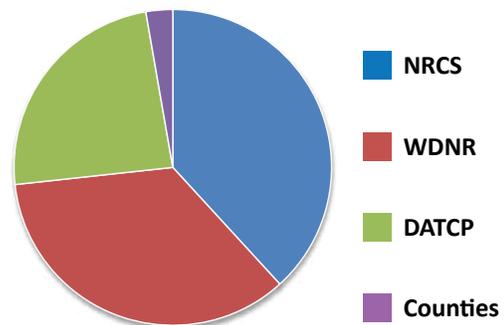
SOC continues to foster consistency and accountability while ensuring flexibility to meet changing resource challenges, technology and public concerns. SOC provides a mechanism to capture those changes that improve the efficacy of conservation practices. As we progress on our current two-year Work Plan, we will conduct our biennial survey this summer to gather input for future priorities. In 2015, we will complete the revision for the NRCS 590 Nutrient Management Standard, form a new team to develop a Vegetated Swales Standard for DNR, and create our first promotional video highlighting SOC's impact over the years, using collaborative action to create high quality conservation practices. SOC turns 20 in 2016!



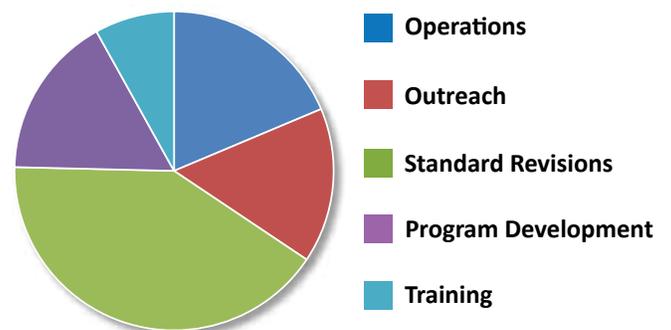
Stormwater control measures by Conservation Design Forum, a firm that was active on the Permeable Pavement team.

## 2014 FINANCIALS

### Income



### Expenses



These graphs provide an annual summary of SOC income and expenses. Staff time is primarily dedicated to standards revisions (54%) and the following activities that contribute to this primary purpose: outreach (18%), program development and management (12%), operations (10%), and training (6%).

## 2014 UPDATED STANDARDS

The following standards were announced through the SOC listserv and website as updates occurred. Several standards were open for public comment. All comments receive careful consideration and review.

### NRCS standards

- 560 - Access Road
- 309 - Agrichemical Handling Facility
- 591 - Amendments for Treatment of Agricultural Waste
- 450 - Anionic Polyacrylamide (PAM) Application (New)
- 672 - Building Envelope Improvement (New)
- 340 - Cover Crop
- 373 - Dust Control on Unpaved Roads and Surfaces – (New)
- 647 - Early Successional Habitat Development/Management
- 382 - Fence
- 383 - Fuel Break (New)
- 355 - Groundwater Testing – (New Name)
- 561 - Heavy Use Area Protection
- 447 - Irrigation System, Tailwater Recovery
- 449 - Irrigation Water Management
- 576 - Livestock Shelter Structure (New)
- 353 - Monitoring Well – (New)
- 319 - On-Farm Secondary Containment Facility – (New)
- 643 - Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitats
- 654 - Road, Trail, Landing Closure and Treatment (New)
- 350 - Sediment Basin
- 574 - Spring Development
- 442 - Sprinkler System (New Name)
- 570 - Stormwater Runoff Control
- 606 - Subsurface Drain
- 575 - Trails and Walkways
- 620 - Underground Outlet
- 635 - Vegetated Treatment Area
- 632 - Waste Separation Facility (New Name)
- 313 - Waste Storage Facility
- 634 - Waste Transfer
- 629 - Waste Treatment
- 642 - Water Well
- 614 - Watering Facility
- 351 - Well Decommissioning – (New Name)

### DNR standards

- 1008 - Permeable Pavement
- 1060 - Storm Drain Inlet Protection
- 1004 - Bioretention for Infiltration
- 1063 - Sediment Trap

*“I am honored for the SOC to solicit my input and appreciate them investing their time for WI agriculture and for our natural resources.” - 2014 Initial Reviewer*

Special thanks to  
our cooperating  
agencies &  
partners



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