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# **TECHNICAL STANDARDS PROCESS ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT**

**January 2007 – December 2007**

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Prepared by the Standards Oversight Council

## **COOPERATING AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS**

WI Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)

WI Department of Commerce (Comm)

WI Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)

USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

University of Wisconsin – Extension (UWEX)

Wisconsin Association of Land Conservation Employees (WALCE)

Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association (WLWCA)



# **Table of Contents**

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<b>I. Introduction</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>II. Evaluation of SOC Accomplishments in 2007</b>	<b>Page 4</b>
• Summary of work team activities over past year	
• Summary of outreach and initiatives undertaken by SOC	
<b>III. Appendix</b>	<b>Page 10</b>
• Technical Standards Overseen by SOC To-Date	

**January 2007**

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# **I. Introduction**

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## **What does the Standards Oversight Council do?**

The Standards Oversight Council (SOC) is assigned the responsibility of overseeing the process used in Wisconsin for the development, maintenance and distribution of technical standards for urban and rural soil and water conservation practices. Essentially, SOC is the “gatekeeper” for the technical standards process, and is responsible for the contents of the Technical Standards Process Handbook (TSPH) that serves as a reference for everyone involved in the SOC process. SOC members represent the primary responsible parties in the technical standards process. They are also authorized to appoint individuals to represent their respective organization for participation in any technical standard activity.

## **The Standards Oversight Council**

SOC is composed of cooperating agency personnel in the state who are involved with developing technical standards for the delivery of soil and water conservation programs, including:

- **Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)**  
Runoff Management Section, Engineering Unit Leader,
- **Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)**  
Conservation Engineering Section Chief,
- **Wisconsin Department of Commerce (Comm)**  
Appointee of the Secretary of the Comm,
- **USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**  
State Resource Conservationist,
- **University of Wisconsin – Extension (UWEX)**  
Appointee of the Dean of University of Wisconsin - Extension,
- **Wisconsin Association of Land Conservation Employees (WALCE)**  
Appointee(s) of the WALCE Board of Directors, and
- **Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association (WLWCA)**  
Executive Director.

For efficiency purposes, many federal, state and local agencies in Wisconsin rely upon the same technical standards to implement numerous conservation programs. This diverse user group must deal with different mandates, goals, policies, deadlines and political pressures. The SOC is the organization charged with working through these inherent difficulties.

To further clarify the intent of SOC, it is important to note what it is not responsible for doing. SOC does not write standards, it oversees an interagency process charged with that task. SOC does not “own” any standards, and no change of custodianship by cooperating agencies is proposed. When a new or revised standard is needed, SOC determines which agency will take the lead, and coordinates the work team activities.

## II. Evaluation of SOC Accomplishments in 2007

There are several levels to the activities and accomplishments performed by the Standards Oversight Council. The most visible means of measuring these accomplishments is to produce a list of the technical standards that SOC work teams devoted effort to create or revise during 2007. Table 1 contains this information for NRCS technical standards; Table 2 for WDNR technical standards; Table 3 for a Joint WDNR-Commerce technical standard; and Table 4 for Commerce technical standards.

<b>Table 1. SOC Technical Standards Work Team Status 2007</b>		
<b>NRCS IS THE CUSTODIAN FOR THESE STANDARDS</b>		
<b>SOC WORK TEAM</b>	<b>STANDARD(S)</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Leachate Team	Livestock Feed Storage Leachate and Runoff Control (777)*	In 2007, the work team completed work on a new NRCS standard addressing leachate, seepage and runoff stemming from livestock feed storage areas. A final draft technical standard was delivered to NRCS, along with a draft outline for a future companion document.
Milking Center Waste Team	Interim - Milking Center Wastewater Treatment System (719)*	A final companion document was readied for team review at the end of 2007. It contains useful guidance on treatment options for milking center wastewater. Publication and distribution will follow. A final standard was completed in 2006 and delivered to NRCS.
Fence Team	Fence (382) ®	A new SOC work team was formed in 2007 to revise the NRCS 382 Fence technical standard. The work team's charge is to bring the standard up-to-date with the current state of fence technology, improve fence integrity and lifespan, incorporate safety elements into certain applications, establish basic requirements for all types of fences, and improve technical drawings.

\* New Standard      ® Revised Standard

**Table 2. SOC Technical Standards Work Team Status 2007**

**WDNR IS THE CUSTODIAN FOR THIS STANDARD**

SOC WORK TEAM	STANDARD	STATUS
Wet Detention Pond Team	Wet Detention Pond (1001) <sup>®</sup>	In 2007, the work team completed a year-long project to update and revise the 1001 Wet Detention Pond technical standard. A new standard was delivered to WDNR and distributed in October 2007.

<sup>®</sup> Revised Standard

**Table 3. SOC Technical Standards Work Team Status 2007**

**WDNR AND COMM HOLD JOINT CUSTODIANSHIP FOR THIS STANDARD**

SOC WORK TEAM	STANDARD	STATUS
Proprietary Stormwater Devices Team	Methods and Procedures for Predicting the Efficiency of Proprietary Stormwater Devices (1006)*	In 2007, the work team finished the Initial Review and Broad Review phases for this joint DNR-Commerce technical standard. The next step is to prepare a final version of the standard, which sets criteria for evaluating and predicting the performance of proprietary devices installed to reduce total suspended solids in stormwater. The work team plans to have a final standard complete in spring 2008. <b>Note:</b> This is the first SOC Work Team developing a standard having joint custodianship.

\* New Standard

**Table 4. SOC Technical Standards Work Team Status 2007**

**COMM IS THE CUSTODIAN FOR THIS STANDARD**

SOC WORK TEAM	STANDARD	STATUS
Infiltration Trench Team	Infiltration Trenches (number to be assigned)*	The work team began its assignment in June 2007 to create a new technical standard for infiltration trenches, which are stormwater management tools primarily appropriate for urban settings. In 2007, the work team conducted research, identified major issues to address, and began to prepare initial drafts of the technical standard.

\* New Standard

In order to gauge the significance of Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4, it is helpful to have an understanding of how much work is involved from the time a technical standard is selected for revision or creation, to the time it is finalized and distributed.

It is not uncommon for the process to take between one to two years to complete. This time frame is often dependent upon whether a team is working on more than one standard, and if the team is developing companion documents to enhance the application of the standards. A typical team may include anywhere from 5 to 12 work team members who commit at least one full day a month to working on the standard and other related tasks. This does not include the preparation time required for these meetings. In addition, the standards are subject to two stringent review processes that expose the drafts to hundreds of people before being finalized.

During 2007, individuals from numerous affiliations participated as SOC work team members. Table 5 illustrates the diversity of backgrounds represented on the work teams.

<b>Table 5. Affiliations of SOC Work Team Members in 2007</b>	
<b>Organization</b>	<b>Number of Work Team Participants</b>
Consultant/Private Industry	14
WDNR*	9
County LCD	9
DATCP	1
NRCS*	9
UWEX*	2
Municipalities*	3
Comm	6
DHFS	1

\* Individuals participating on more than one work team have been counted multiple times because of the different roles they fulfill on each work team.

It is widely acknowledged that given the complexity of the work and the breadth of stakeholders involved, the quality of the technical standards have been dramatically improved when compared with the pre-SOC era. There is also much evidence to suggest that the acceptability of the end product has increased. This means that Wisconsin is able to move closer towards providing a single, uniform set of land and water conservation practices that are consistently used and accepted by all user groups and codifying agencies.

Beyond the SOC process, the custodian of technical standards retains the responsibilities and the right to set the schedule for completion. The custodian maintains the final word regarding the content of the technical standard. Note that to date, no final work team drafts have been refused by a custodian; this should not occur if all parties meet their expected responsibilities.

## **Other SOC-Related Accomplishments 2007**

Over the past year, SOC has been conducting a number of projects. SOC has continued to demonstrate a commitment to improving the accessibility and usability of technical standards by considering new initiatives and improving the general awareness of SOC activities in Wisconsin. In addition, the Council has concentrated on improving the process by evaluating the current structure and considering new ways to conduct business. SOC-related accomplishments in 2007 can be categorized as follows:

- SOC Outreach and New Initiatives
- Maintenance and Upkeep

### **SOC Outreach and New Initiatives**

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***Work Begins on First Dept. of Commerce Technical Standard*** – In 2007, a work team was formed to create a new Wis. Department of Commerce (Comm) technical standard related to post-construction infiltration trenches in urban areas. This is the first SOC technical standard where Comm, which formally joined SOC in 2006, serves as the Custodian. The new standard will be based on existing science, and one of its priorities will be to maximize the longevity of infiltration trenches. Also, the new standard's criteria will integrate with existing requirements in other stormwater technical standards, such as DNR's Site Evaluation for Stormwater Infiltration standard (1002), and will conform to existing stormwater infiltration laws and regulations.

***Technical Standards Assessment Conducted, Input Used for 2008-2009 Work Plan*** – Every two years, SOC queries state and federal agencies, counties, municipalities and other public and private entities about their needs for new and revised technical standards. In 2007, SOC conducted a new assessment, which involved preparing a detailed Technical Standards Needs Assessment form, sending it out to the SOC Distribution List for input, compiling and interpreting responses, and preparing a summary of the feedback. Results of the Technical Standards Needs Assessment then were used by SOC to prioritize projects for the 2008-09 Work Plan. SOC will continue to analyze this information to finalize the new work plan. The entire process of obtaining input from the technical standards user groups, member agencies and interested parties in the conservation community—and then reaching a consensus over work priorities—is very time consuming.

***SOC Website*** [www.socwisconsin.org](http://www.socwisconsin.org) – The SOC website is maintained to provide a single clearinghouse for SOC-related information. This website was developed to ensure that the services of the Standards Oversight Council are fully utilized and recognized by technical standard users in Wisconsin. Standards available for broad review, work team progress and meeting dates, links to relevant sites, and SOC meeting minutes are available online.

***Promoting SOC (Print and Public Speaking)*** – Several informational articles and news briefs were published (Wisconsin Conservation Engineering Newsletter, Thursday Note) to inform the conservation community of ongoing SOC activities and plans. At Farm

Technology Days, the SOC Coordinator manned the WLWCA table exhibit and displayed information about SOC and its projects. In other activities, the SOC Coordinator gave a presentation on the standards development process to a training session for new UW-Extension conservation employees, and hosted a roundtable discussion of SOC topics at the WLWCA annual conference. Also, the SOC Coordinator attended quarterly meetings of the WALCE Technical Committee to update the group on SOC's current projects and to obtain useful feedback from the committee. The technical committee serves as an important voice on technical topics of concern to county conservation employees.

***Exploring Ways to Deal with Minor Revisions to Existing Technical Standards*** – In 2007, SOC explored ways to use the SOC listserv to quickly gather input on relatively minor modifications to existing technical standards. For example, every five years, Wisconsin NRCS must review its existing technical standards to ensure they conform to certain national office requirements. As a result, some standards require revisions that may or may not be appropriate to address using the full SOC process. To help make this assessment, SOC considered employing the listserv to quickly obtain comments from the conservation community on how to deal with such revisions to existing standards. As a pilot case, SOC solicited comments via the listserv on proposed changes to the NRCS Roof Gutter standard and related construction specification. The SOC Coordinator collected all comments and compiled them into a summary document for NRCS managers to evaluate.

***UWEX Partnership*** – With the support of WDNR funding, the UWEX Environmental Resources Center (ERC) for several years has dedicated a part-time staff member to assist SOC in developing companion documents. Late in 2007, UWEX decided it could no longer dedicate a part-time staff member for this work. However, UWEX will continue to act as an editorial resource to help SOC produce companion documents. It's likely that the support will be provided on a case-by-case basis and funding for the services will be negotiated between SOC and the UWEX Environmental Resources Center.

## **SOC Process Maintenance and Upkeep** ~~~~~

***SOC Communications*** – The SOC listserv continues to be used to support SOC's system of distributing draft standards for review, notifying listserv members of new teams being formed to revise or create new standards, soliciting input on important topics and generally communicating with members of the SOC distribution list. Other communication efforts include responding to general requests for information about SOC and the technical standards development process, as well as maintaining telephone and email correspondence with work team leaders and members regarding the progress of various work teams.



***Maintaining the SOC Distribution List*** – In addition to the listserv, the SOC distribution list also includes an extensive Outlook contacts database that the SOC Coordinator continually updates and maintains, as well as a small mailing list for contacts wishing only to receive regular mail. In 2007, the SOC Coordinator focused on expanding the number of urban contacts in the SOC distribution list. Overall, maintaining the SOC contacts database requires a significant amount of the SOC Coordinator’s time.

### III. Appendix

The following Tables provide a list of standards of which SOC has overseen the revision, creation or deletion.

<b>Table 6. Revisions of NRCS Technical Standards Overseen by SOC To-Date</b>		
<b>Code</b>	<b>Revised Standards (20)</b>	<b>Date</b>
575	Animal Trails and Walkways	4/02
327	Conservation Cover	11/01
342	Critical Area Planting	5/00
382	Fence	11/99
393	Filter Strip	1/01
410	Grade Stabilization Structure	7/01
561	Heavy Use Area Protection	3/02
634	Manure Transfer	11/04 & 12/05
590	Nutrient Management	7/02 & 9/05
329A	Residue Management No Till & Strip Till	5/98
329B	Residue Management Mulch Till	5/98
344	Residue Management Seasonal	5/98
378	Pond	7/01
521A	Pond Sealing or Lining - Flexible Membrane Lining	4/99
580	Streambank and Shoreline Protection	2/97 & 12/05
612	Tree/Shrub Establishment	3/01
313	Waste Storage Facility	6/01, 11/04 & 12/05
638	Water and Sediment Control Basin	7/01
642	Well	4/99
657	Wetland Restoration	9/00

<b>Table 7. Creation of New NRCS Technical Standards Overseen by SOC To-Date</b>		
<b>Code</b>	<b>New NRCS Standards (8)</b>	<b>Date</b>
777	Livestock Feed Storage Leachate and Runoff Control	*
634	Manure Transfer	1/99
719	Milking Center Wastewater Treatment System	*
528A	Prescribed Grazing	4/98
391	Riparian Forest Buffer	1/01
I-643A	Shoreland Habitat	7/01
635	Wastewater Treatment Strip	1/02
351	Well Decommissioning	4/99

\* Creation in Progress    I = Interim Technical Standard

<b>Table 8. Creation of New WDNR Technical Standards Overseen by SOC To-Date</b>		
<b>Number</b>	<b>New WDNR Standards (26)</b>	<b>Date</b>
1004	Bioretention for Infiltration	10/04
1066	Construction Site Diversion	6/04
1053	Channel Erosion Mat	8/05
1061	Dewatering	9/06
1062	Ditch Check	8/05
1068	Dust Control on Construction Sites	6/04
1050	Erosion Control Anionic Polyacrylimide	7/01
1003	Infiltration Basin	10/04
1052	Non-Channel Erosion Mat	6/04
1058	Mulching for Construction Sites	6/04
1055	Sediment Bale Barrier (Non-Channel)	6/04
I-1051	Sediment Control Water Application of Polymers	12/02
1059	Seeding for Construction Sites	6/04
1064	Sediment Basin	3/06
1063	Sediment Trap	9/05
1070	Silt Curtain	9/05
1056	Silt Fence	6/04
1002	Site Evaluation for Stormwater Infiltration	3/04
1057	Stone Tracking Pad	6/04
1060	Storm Drain Inlet Protection for Construction Sites	6/04
1067	Temporary Grading Practices for Erosion Control	6/04
1069	Turbidity Barrier	9/05
1100	Turf Nutrient Management	5/06
1005	Vegetated Infiltration Swale	5/07
1054	Vegetated Buffer For Construction Sites	6/04
1001	Wet Detention Pond	10/07
<b>WDNR and Comm Joint Custodianship Standard</b>		
1006	Methods and Procedures for Predicting the Efficiency of Proprietary Stormwater Devices	*

\* Creation in Progress I = Interim Technical Standard

<b>Table 9. Creation of New Comm Technical Standards Overseen by SOC To-Date</b>		
<b>Code</b>	<b>New Comm Standards (1)</b>	<b>Date</b>
TBD	Infiltration Trench	*

\* Creation in Progress

<b>Table 10. Discontinued NRCS Standards</b>		
<b>Code</b>	<b>Discontinued Standards (24)</b>	<b>Date</b>
310	Bedding	7/97
326	Clearing & Snagging	7/97
402	Dam, Floodwater Retarding	7/97
349	Dam, Multiple-Purpose	7/97
356	Dike	7/97
404	Floodway	7/97
Interim	Floodproofing	7/97
388	Irrigation Field Ditch	7/97
552A	Irrigation Pit or Regulating Reservoir – Irrigation Pit	7/97
552B	Irrigation Pit or Regulating Reservoir – Regulating reservoir	7/97
436	Irrigation Storage Reservoir	7/97
442	Irrigation System, Sprinkler	7/97
443	Irrigation System, Surface and Subsurface	7/97
449	Irrigation Water Management	7/97
466	Land Smoothing	7/97
521B	Pond Sealing or Lining, Soil Dispersant	7/97
521D	Pond Sealing or Lining, Cationic Emulsion – Waterborne Sealant	7/97
521E	Pond Sealing or Lining, Asphalt-Sealed Fabric Liner	7/97
462	Precision Land Farming	7/97
566	Recreation Land Grading & Shaping	7/97
554	Regulating Water in Drainage Systems	7/97
312	Waste Management System	6/01
425	Waste Storage Pond	7/97
359	Waste Treatment Lagoon	7/97