



**WISCONSIN
STANDARDS
OVERSIGHT
COUNCIL**

The Standards Oversight Council oversees a collaborative process for developing effective technical practice standards that protect Wisconsin's natural resources.

2024-2025 Technical Standards Work Plan

COOPERATING AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

The Council is composed of representatives from cooperating agencies and organizations in the state who are involved with developing technical standards and the delivery of soil and water conservation programs.

USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

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

WI Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)

WI Department of Transportation (WisDOT)

UW-Madison Division of Extension (Extension)

WI Land and Water Conservation Association (WI Land+Water)

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Note: Custodian agencies' internal priorities for technical standard revisions may not be scheduled through the duration of this Work Plan. Therefore, this Work Plan may be updated occasionally to reflect Custodians' programmatic requirements and priorities.

I. Introduction

The Wisconsin Standards Oversight Council (SOC) is an inter-agency effort that supports a team approach for developing and maintaining technical standards critical to soil and water conservation programs in Wisconsin. SOC prepares a Technical Standards Work Plan biennially to identify priority projects for the next two years. This Work Plan is based on Custodian requirements and recommendations, results of the 2023 Technical Standards Assessment survey, and available resources. Projects include the development or revision of technical standards, outreach, and training.

II. Technical Standard Development & Revisions

SOC uses three different processes to develop or revise a technical standard. The three processes range in complexity, participation, and resource requirements. These processes are fully described on the SOC website (www.socwisconsin.org) and in the [SOC Technical Standards Process Handbook](#). Key elements for each process are briefly described below.

1. Full Process. The Full Process is used to develop a new technical standard (not intended to replicate a standard published at the federal level) or to make *major revisions* to an existing one. A major revision is any revision to an existing technical standard that will significantly alter the planning criteria, performance expectations, or design parameters. The Full Process uses a team approach involving multiple stakeholders and typically takes at least one year, depending on the scientific and practical complexities, stakeholder impact, and availability of staff resources.

2. Modified Process. The Modified Process offers options to streamline the development process while maintaining opportunity for public comment and remaining consistent with guiding principles. This may be appropriate under the following conditions: limited use, time sensitivity, minimal impact, limited involvement, or limited resources.

3. Minor Process. The Minor Process is used to update existing practice standards with revisions that do not significantly alter planning criteria, performance expectations, or design parameters. This process is used to complete regularly scheduled reviews of conservation practices to ensure continued accuracy and compliance with applicable program rules or laws. Draft standards are not posted for a public comment period, but if significant inquiries are received after the new standards are released, SOC may ask the Custodian to use the Modified Process for additional input.

The major steps included in these processes are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 Steps in the SOC Process						
Process	1 Form and support the team	2 Develop draft standard	3 Request and consider outside feedback	4 Conduct broad review and consider comments	5 Finalize and publish revised standard	6 Evaluate team process
Full	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Modified	OPTIONAL	YES	YES	YES	YES	OPTIONAL
Minor		YES			YES	

The SOC Program Manager will conduct the following activities for the current work team projects:

- Facilitate work teams in completing Full Process projects through coordination of meeting logistics, agenda development, meeting facilitation, recording and distributing notes, and maintaining team member and stakeholder communications;
- Coordinate commenting periods and promotion of newly revised practice standards; and
- Maintain communication channels with current team updates, meetings, and resources.

The technical standards that are expected to be updated or created through the SOC Modified Process or Full Process in 2024-2025 are listed in Table 2.

Table 2 2024 & 2025 Priority Standard Projects		
NRCS Standards		
Standard	Number	Process
Nutrient Management	590	Full (In Progress)
Vegetated Treatment Area	635	Full (In Progress)
Conservation Cover	327	TBD
Soil Carbon Amendment	336	Minor/Modified
Critical Area Planting	342	TBD
Wildlife Habitat Planting	420	TBD
Pasture and Hay Planting	512	TBD
Prescribed Grazing	528	TBD
Feed Management	592	Modified
Waste Storage Facility	313	Full
Pond Sealing and Lining, Compacted Soil	520	Full
Pond Sealing or Lining, Geomembrane or Geosynthetic Clay Liner	521	Full
Pond Sealing and Lining, Concrete	522	Full
DNR Standards		
Standard	Number	Process
Sediment Discharge and Treatment	NEW	Full
Filter Strip for Storm Water Treatment	NEW	Full
Underground Detention and Treatment	NEW	Full
DATCP Standards		
None Expected		

III. SOC Team Approach

To best achieve the SOC mission and follow SOC's principles, a team approach for standard Modified Process and Full Process revisions and new standard development are closely followed and continually evaluated. The SOC Program Manager should:

- Ensure adherence to SOC process through team management;
- Uphold transparency through current and broad communication channels, including website, listserv, and newsletters;
- Conduct meetings with small technical stakeholder groups to receive additional feedback on standards in revision or development;
- Evaluate processes through feedback solicitation and implement changes as needed;

- Coordinate quarterly SOC meetings of Council representatives to lead direction of the program and to facilitate continued program development;
- Conduct a biennial Technical Standards Assessment and subsequently develop a Work Plan; and
- Attend trainings and professional development opportunities to assist smooth team functioning and effective standard development.

IV. Outreach

The following outreach and communications activities enhance understanding of SOC's role in Wisconsin conservation programs and increase participation in review processes and stakeholder engagement:

- Maintain website with current information on SOC process, activities, and updated standards;
- Prepare and deliver SOC presentations at conferences, events, or meetings;
- Develop and update promotional materials, including the SOC Annual Report (annually) and SOC brochure (as needed);
- Continue to network and build relationships with various stakeholder groups;
- Write SOC updates for various newsletters, including WI Land+Water newsletter; and
- Promote involvement in SOC process by attending or presenting at relevant conferences, partner events, trainings, and other related activities.

V. Training

SOC is engaged with the Custodians of the standards in the development of training opportunities to encourage proper implementation of practice standards. SOC performs the following activities in this area:

- Assess training needs associated with revised standards, collect information to facilitate training development, particularly in relation to the State Interagency Training Committee (SITCOM);
- Collaborate with Custodians to develop training plans for newly revised or developed standards; and
- Provide in-person or webinar training on DNR, DATCP, and NRCS standards as new standards or substantial revisions are published.

~ For more information visit: <https://www.socwisconsin.org/> ~