

Date: July 01, 2020

To: Soil Standards and Guidelines Consulting Agency Review Committee

From: California Department of Parks and Recreation, Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division

RE: Consulting Agency Review Committee Review of the Draft 2020 Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines.

Purpose and Need of the Soil Standard and Guidelines Update: In October 2017, Senate Bill 249 was enacted, requiring the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division (OHMVR) to review and if necessary, update the 2008 Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines. The objective of this review and update is to ensure a generic and measurable standard founded in best available science and subject to public review. This update was to occur in consultation with the US Natural Resource Conservation Service, US Geological Survey, US Forest Service, US Bureau of Land Management, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the CA Department of Conservation (Public Resources Code, Section 5090.35 (b)). The new standard is required by the Public Resources Code to be adopted by December 31, 2020.

Review and Update Process:

2020 Update Team: OHMVR assembled a multidisciplinary team composed of environmental scientists and engineering geologists, including staff from the California Geologic Survey, and staff from DPR Natural Resources Division, and initiated review of the 2008 Soil Conservation Standards and Guidelines in Fall 2019. This preliminary review, which included specific recommendations provided by the California Geologic Survey, identified a series of refinements to be carried out with relation to best available science, clarifying definitions, and updating sections of the document which provide guidance on a Soil Conservation Plan.

Soil Standard User Survey: To augment the review of the 2020 Update Team, a survey of the users of the 2008 Soil Conservation Standard was conducted in November 2019. This survey requested feedback on clarity of the existing (2008) Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines, terms and definitions, new technologies and best available science. The survey successfully received significant feedback, and more than 220 comments which fell into the following major themes:

- Request for a more clear explanation of the intent and application of the soil standard and guidelines – including compliance and assessments
- Requests for additional technical resources, guidance documents, and practical examples to help with implementation of the standard and project design
- Requests for updates to the BMP Manual

Some comments were outside of the scope of the Soil Conservation Standards and Guidelines, and others required further discussion with the consulting agencies identified above. The survey results were used in conjunction with the Update Team’s review findings to drive the development of the draft 2020 Soil Conservation Standards and Guidelines.

Consulting Agency Review Draft: Based on the review findings and survey results, the Update Team carried out revisions on the 2008 Soil Standard and Guidelines. The key refinements that were undertaken include the following:

- Edits and new content intended to improve the clarity within sections that describe the Soil Standard, where it should be applied, and how compliance is demonstrated.
- Additional work on terms and definitions, and more detail on how these guidelines apply to Projects under the OHV Trust Fund Grant Program, and within State Vehicular Recreation Areas.

- Provided an update to the tools, approaches and models that are available for conducting assessments based on best available science.
- Updates to the technical “how to” sections of the document.
- Soil Conservation Plan concept and application

Next Steps: For context, the following steps, along with an estimated timeline, are planned for the draft document.

July 2020	Consulting Agency Review Committee – review and feedback
August 2020	Document revision based on CARC feedback and input
September-Oct 2020	Public Review
October-Nov 2020	Document Revision, DPR Internal Review
December 2020	Adoption of the 2020 Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines

Consulting Agency Review of the Draft 2020 Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines:

The objective of this review is to leverage the expertise of the Consulting Agency Review Committee and obtain critical and constructive review of the Draft Standard and Guidelines. Feedback will be considered and incorporated through revisions to the document, as appropriate. This consultation fulfills requirements per the Public Resource Code as described above under the Purpose and Need.

Review charge for this Committee:

For this review, the 2020 Update Team seeks feedback on specific aspects of the Draft Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines.

Please focus your review on the following areas:

- Does the draft allow adequate understanding of how to apply the standard and soil conservation plan requirements on grant funded projects and SVRA projects?
- Especially for Agencies that receive grant funding from OHMVR Division, what are your concerns with the compliance requirement of this document, and the overall Guidelines?
- Does the draft apply best available science?
- Are the data resources adequate; are there others that should be included?
- Are there additional reference materials that should be cited?
- Is more needed on Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle (ROV) management?