

ANSI Dimensional Stone Standard

NSC Progress Report – January 2014



The following is an update of the current status of the NSC-funded development of a Sustainability Standard for dimensional Stone. This update includes a brief overview of the wrap up of the NSC 373 and Chain of Custody standards, along with final schedule of events.

NSC 373 Standard for the Production of Dimensional Stone

The formal work of the NSC 373 workgroup was completed this summer and the resulting draft NSC 373 Sustainability Standard for Dimensional Stone was balloted in August and passed by the Joint Committee. However, subsequent pilot testing of the standard, along with the activities of the development group for the companion NSC 373 Conformance Document, identified a number of questions and potential ambiguities within the specific language of the standard. These 'gaps' required clarification within the text of the standard prior to final approval to avoid potential confusion for companies attempting to certify and to prevent potential inconsistency in the auditing and approval process by certifying bodies.

Working together, Ecoform and NSF International undertook a thorough review of the standard with the goal of resolving gaps and clarifying areas of ambiguity. During the review, language for individual criteria were evaluated and modified where necessary, resulting in a much-improved standard with a more clear and concise set of criteria. However, while the majority of modifications involved simple clarifications and slight word changes that did not modify the intent of the criterion, collectively the changes to the standard were considered significant enough that the standard requires re-balloting under the ANSI process.

On January 8, 2014, the revised NSC 373 Standard was posted and circulated to interested parties for review and balloting. Members of the Joint-Committee, the body responsible for approving the standard, have until **January 30th** to submit a ballot for approval of the standard. The public review period will extend to **March 10, 2014**. Should any comments received by the public be considered significant, they will be shared with Committee who will have the option of revising their vote. The standard will be finalized only after all comments have been considered, and it has been approved by ballot. Given the clarifying nature of the revisions, and the fact that the Joint Committee had approved the original standard, the revised standard is expected to win approval without the need for future balloting. If approved in its current form, or if only minor modifications are required, the standard will be finalized by **March 24, 2014**.

NSC 373 Chain of Custody Standard

A development committee concluded work on the development of criteria for the Chain of Custody standard for NSC 373 in November of 2013. The need for a companion document to address the portions of the supply chain outside the scope of the Dimensional Stone standard became apparent during the development of NSC 373. The COC establishes criteria for ensuring that adequate documentation and tracking systems exist in the supply chain of sustainably produced stone, to allow a customer to confirm its custody back to its origin.

On January 23, 2014, the Chain of Custody Standard was posted and circulated to interested parties for review and balloting. Members of the COC Technical Development Committee, the body responsible for approving the Standard,

have until **Friday, Feb 14th** to review and submit ballots for approval of the Standard. Likewise, non-voting interested parties are invited to submit comments on the content of the standard for consideration by the Committee. The standard will be finalized only after all comments have been considered and it has been approved by a 2/3 majority of the Technical Development Committee. Given the nature of the development process and the involved participation of Committee members, the standard is expected to win approval without requiring additional balloting. If approved in its current form, or if only minor modifications are required, the standard will be finalized by **February 28, 2014**. Certification to the Standard can

Draft Conformance Protocol – NSC 373

NSC has sponsored the development of a document designed to provide guidance for industry members interested in certifying to the standard, and to inform all future determinations of compliance. The conformance document serves two purposes; to define and standardize the way the standard is interpreted by various certifying bodies, and to act as a resource for members seeking certification to the NSC 373 standard. Specifically, the conformance protocol defines for each criterion the data and supporting documentation necessary to prove compliance and the method and boundaries of any necessary calculations. In addition, the protocol will provide example forms for organizing and reporting data, and list available resources that members can reference or utilize during the certification process.

Ecoform, in partnership with NSF, has been charged with the development of the conformance protocol. The document, which is nearing completion, has been informed by the experiences gained by several industry members during the pilot testing of the standard. However, development of the document has been slowed by many of the issues (i.e. unclear language, ambiguous requirements) that drove the need for a revision and re-balloting of the standard discussed above. Because document content is specifically keyed to the wording of each individual criterion, the document cannot be finalized until the standards have been balloted and approved. Now that revisions to both the NSC 373 and COC standards are completed and are out for balloting and review, a draft conformance document based on the revised language will be completed and available for limited industry review by **February 14, 2014**. The conformance document will be finalized on **March 24, 2014**, the same date as the finalized NSC 373 standard.