

WSPSS NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2010

WASHINGTON
SOCIETY OF
PROFESSIONAL
SOIL SCIENTISTS



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IN THIS ISSUE

Recent Field Indicators Changes	Page 1-3
WSSEF Winner for WSPSS Award	Page 2
Summer Tour and Board Meeting	Page 2
WSPSS 2010 Summer our Announcement	Page 5
From Volcanoes to Vineyards in the Columbia Rover Gorge.	

Recent *Field Indicator* changes...

As part of their yearly deliberations, the National Technical Committee on Hydric Soils (NTCHS) made some changes to the *Field Indicators of Hydric Soils* Version 6.0. These changes have been incorporated into the latest installment of the *Field Indicators*, Version 7.0, which became widely available in mid March, 2010. Version 7.0 can now be downloaded at the NRCS Soils website (<http://soils.usda.gov/>), or from the NTCHS website (<http://soils.usda.gov/use/hydric/>).

The NTCHS continuously reviews and revises guidance on existing field indicators, makes recommendations and develops new test indicators, and determines if past test indicators should be elevated to full indicators. In this way, the *Field Indicators of Hydric Soils* is a 'living' document, being updated as the science progresses.

Annual changes and edits are posted on the NRCS/NTCHS hydric soil websites, but can be difficult to find if you don't know where to look. There are two links that we recommend reviewing on a yearly basis. The **first** provides the minutes from the yearly committee meetings that take place (found at: <http://soils.usda.gov/use/hydric/ntchs/minutes/minutes.html>). The NTCHS typically meets in the late winter/early spring of each year. The minutes provide insight on the types of studies and changes being contemplated and sponsored by the group.

The **second** place to look for changes would be the errata to the *Field Indicators*, which can be found at ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/NSSC/Hydric_Soils/errata.pdf, or by scrolling down to the *Errata to Field Indicators of Hydric Soil* link from the main NRCS hydric soil website: <http://soils.usda.gov/use/hydric/>. There is no current errata listed because of the recent release of Version 7.0 of the *Field Indicators*; however, when changes are made—we expect errata to be added to the website as in years past.

WSPSS CALENDAR NOTICE FOR 2010

WSPSS Board Meeting for 2010

Meetings start at 9:00 a.m.

WSPSS Summer Tour July 22- & 23, Columbia River Gorge, Hood River Oregon.

Board Meetings: May (Tele-conf.)

Board Meetings: October (Tele-conf.)

Board Meetings: December (Tele-conf.)

ASA-CSSA-SSSA International Annual Meetings

2010 Oct 31-Nov4, Long Beach, CA

2011 Oct. 14-20, San Antonio, TX

April 28-30, 2010—SWS PNW Chapter Annual Meeting, Best Western Lakeway Inn.

WEB SITES

ASA-CSSA-SSSA web sites

www.agronomy.org

www.crops.org

www.soils.org

Pac NW Soils Resources

http://www.or.nrcs.usda.gov/pnw_soil/index.html - general index page

http://www.or.nrcs.usda.gov/pnw_soil/wa_reports.html - tabular and spatial data

Soil Data Mart

<http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/>

Home page for National Soil Survey information. <http://soils.usda.gov/>

National Soil Survey Laboratory Characterization Data

<http://ssldata.nrcs.usda.gov/>

Soil Series Class. Data Access:

<http://ortho.ftw.nrcs.usda.gov/osd/sc.htm>

!

Soil Data Viewer user guides and software downloads

<http://www.itc.nrcs.usda.gov/soildataviewer/>

WA State Depart. Of Ecology's Wetland Home Page:

[Http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/wetlands](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/wetlands)

Unfortunately, the link to the errata on the main hydric soils web page has not included the date the changes were made—so as of right now, users must periodically check to ensure they're up to date on the most current guidance. The WSPSS board will be contacting the NTCHS to see if they will include the date in the link for future errata to Version 7.0 of the *Field Indicators* so that users know when the most recent changes have taken place and thus, when to download the guidance.

Keeping track of these changes is very important given the advent of the US Corps of Engineers (Corps) regional supplements to the 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual. For those of you who are unfamiliar with this development, Corps has developed regional guidance documents that outline regional specific indicators of hydrology, vegetation and *soils* that are to be used for documenting wetland occurrence in particular regions of the country. Many indicators are similar to the original indicators used in the 1987 delineation manual; however, there are some stark differences as well. There are two regional supplements that cover Washington State; the Arid West manual covers the vast majority of Eastern Washington and the Western Mountains Valleys and Coast (WMVC) supplement covers the remainder of the state. All of the regional supplements can be found at the following Corps website:

http://www.usace.army.mil/cecw/pages/reg_supp.aspx; the website includes several other useful links for wetland delineation.

The major change found in the supplements is that the Corps entirely replaced the soil indicators from the 1987 manual and adopted use of the NRCS *Field Indicators of Hydric Soils* (Version 6.0). To be specific, each Corps regional supplement uses the subset of *Field Indicators* that are appropriate for the Land Resource Regions covered by that supplement. For example, the WMVC supplement covers LRR's A and E found in Washington, so any field indicator that is adopted for use within those LRR's by the NTCHS is also found within the WMVC guidance (Chapter 3 of the supplements). In addition, test indicators approved by NTCHS for use within those LRR's would also be included in the WMVC for use in areas with problematic soils (problematic procedures are listed in Chapter 5 of the supplements).

The Corps has not only adopted the *Field Indicators* for use in the regional supplement effort, but each supplement requires use of the most up to date set of indicators—which are now found in the recently released

Version 7.0 of *Field Indicators*. The WMVC supplement (pg. 34) states that: “any change to the NTCHS *Field Indicators of Hydric Soils* represents a change to this subset of indicators for the Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast Region.” Therefore, changes made by NTCHS—which may take place yearly—needs to be tracked by users to ensure they are using correct and current guidance.

WSPSS has recently obtained guidance from Corps that this would include *test* field indicators as well as fully adopted indicators. The correct guidance would be to include all *indicators* listed for the areas covered by the specific supplement into the Chapter 3 list of indicators. Any new *test indicator* would be included within the Chapter 5 problematic soil guidance as long as the test indicator is approved for use within the LRR’s covered by that supplement.

In April of 2009, NTCHS adopted a new test indicator approved for use in all LRR’s, and so it would be included in the problematic guidance outlined in Chapter 5 of both the Arid West and WMVC supplements. The TF12, or Very Shallow Dark Surface indicator is for use in depressions that are shallow to bedrock with very dark surfaces. It is a test F indicator, so can only be used for fine textured soils—Loamy Very Fine Sand and finer. The most current errata, outlines other guidance changes made within the last year.

The WSPSS board will try and track these changes yearly and send out reminders to check the NTCHS and NRCS hydric soil websites on a yearly basis. In addition, be on the lookout for future newsletter articles regarding changes between Version 6.0 and 7.0 of the *Field Indicators*. I will be presenting some of these changes at a technical talk to be given in Bellingham, WA on April 29th at the PNW Chapter of the Society of Wetland Scientists meeting. We have organized two technical sessions at the Bellingham meetings to cover hydric soil related issues. In addition, WSPSS will be sponsoring a table to be staffed by NRCS soil scientists who will provide a demonstration of Web Soil Survey. An in-class introduction to hydric soil identification workshop followed by a ½ day workshop on monitoring procedures will also be offered at the meetings. For more information regarding the PNW SWS meetings, go to: <http://www.sws.org/regional/pacificNW/>

In other news, keep an eye out for information regarding this year’s WSPSS Summer Tour: From Volcanoes to Vineyards in the scenic Columbia River Gorge, July 22-23rd, 2010. Dr. Alan Busacca has graciously offered to help coordinate and lead the tour based out of Hood River, OR. This year’s tour will be a joint tour with the Oregon Society of Soil Scientists; we’re also considering adding a half day session on Saturday the 24th—stay tuned for details!

Dan Ufnar
WSPSS President

**2009 WASHINGTON STATE
LAND JUDGING CONTEST**

The Washington State Land Judging Contest, sponsored by the Spokane County Conservation District (SCCD), was held October 28, 2009 South of Spokane, WA.

Twenty five FFA teams from 12 schools and 6 counties competed in judging four pits, including one home site. The 118 students evaluated the soil for factors such as texture, permeability, slope, soil depth, and erosion, and then determined the best use for the land. The students determine vegetative and mechanical recommendations that should be used on the land.

Soil Scientists Timothy Riebe, Keith Harrington, and Chandra Neils from Natural Resources Conservation Service and Eric Choker, from Spokane County Conservation District, judged the soils. Volunteers: SCCD staff Ben Peterson and Jason Flowers, Stacey Selcho from Franklin County Conservation District, 17 advisors, and bus drivers with the contest. Awards were presented by Sean Neal the State FFA President and assistant. Emtman farms: Randy, Jeff, and Roy provided the location and contributed Piedmont beef for lunch. Donations from AG Enterprises, St. John Hardware and Walters Fruit Ranch ensured this event was a success. The Washington Society of Professional Soil Scientists (WSPSS) President Tim Riebe and WSPSS Eastern Representative Eric Choker presented the Garfield Palouse Team with an award and check to be used for travel expenses to go to Oklahoma.

Congratulations to all the winners! Good Luck in Oklahoma!!!

Schools attending: Garfield Palouse, Tekoa, Lind, Prosser, Rosalia, Ritzville, Harrington, Colfax, Deer Park, Royal, Davenport, and Odessa.

1st Place School/ Team Garfield Palouse
2009 Washington State Land Judging Contest

Winning Team

Garfield Palouse



Left to Right, top to bottom: Tiona Shea, Heidi Jamison, Missy Johnson, Chad Redman, J.B. Lange



From Volcanoes to Vineyards

In the Scenic Columbia River Gorge

Save the dates!
Be on the look out for
registration information
coming in May

**WSPSS & OSSS
Summer Tour 2010
July 22nd & 23rd
Hood River, Oregon**

From Volcanoes to Vineyards

In the Scenic Columbia River Gorge

WA Society of Professional Soil Scientists
&

OR Society of Soil Scientists
Summer Tour 2010

Save the dates!
Be on the look out for
registration information
coming in May

July 22nd

**Technical Session - Wine Tasting - Banquet
Mt. Hood Winery @ 1:00 p.m.**

July 23rd

**Vineyard & Soils Field Tour with box lunch
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

*Extend your stay to explore nearby recreational activities including:
Wine Tasting & Touring · The Fruit Loop Auto Tour
Hiking on nearby Mt. Hood · White Water Rafting · Wind Surfing
Shopping and Dining in Historic Downtown Hood River*

WSPSS

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Mailing Label Area

WSPSS on the web
www.ieway.com/wspss

WSPSS NEWSLETTER is the official newsletter produced and distributed by the Washington Society of Professional Soil Scientist. It is produced and issued 4 times per calendar year (March, June, September, and December).

Deadline for news and other publishable material is the end of the month preceding publication. Articles submitted are subject to editing and are published on a space available basis. We encourage contributions from any of our members. **Send dues, membership applications and other information to WSPSS, P.O. Box 881, Newman Lake, WA 99025. The web page for WSPSS is www.ieway.com/wspss.**

Articles submitted for publishing in the WSPSS Newsletter must meet the following minimum requirements.

1. Use the **Normal, Times New Roman Font**. Use **Font Size 12** for article titles and author names. Use **Font Size 10** for the body of the text and photo captions. Also, justify your article.
2. Indent the first line of each paragraph and have a line spacing of 1.5.
3. Send photos or figures and the captions for them separate from the article. Send photos as JPEG images if at all possible. Be sure to identify your photos so the editor can put the right captions with the right photo.

Submit articles for publication in the WSPSS Newsletter and comments to wdploggy@olyopen.com.

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