

Highlights from the Ad Hoc Soil and Ecosystem Dynamics Committee

June 5, 2012

Lincoln, NE

Chair: Mark Moseley

Co-Chair: Susan Samson-Liebig

- Need better clarification on when a landscape or site might change from one ESD to another. Example: should a reclaimed mine land site be considered a separate state within an ESD or should it be a new ESD.
- There is a need for training/communications regarding protocols for ESD development. Basic understanding of ESD is important for future work.
- Develop/support a database that contains enough data elements to relate vegetation composition to DSP and vice versa.
- To utilize data resources outside of NRCS, develop partnerships to provide data in a format that is compatible, linked to soils, at a useable scale.
- Utilize data analysis tools and skills to analyze data for ESD support.
- Clarify target audience for ESD's – who are our customers – who will use/need this data.
- At this point, the development of “benchmark” ESD's is not as high a priority as other ESD work items.
- Develop a good definition of provisional, approved, and certified criteria for ESD's.
- Develop a progress reporting system to accommodate the long-term nature of ESD development. In addition, include incremental credit for progress through milestones in progress plans.
- Provide tools/training for use at the field level to quantify the impact of various management practices on soil health.

Recommendations from the Soil and Ecosystem Dynamics Committee

June 5, 2012

Lincoln, NE

Co-Chairs: Mark Moseley and Susan Samson-Liebig

- Need better clarification on when a ecological site (ES) might change from one ES to another, as opposed to another state within the same ES. Example: should a reclaimed mine land site be considered a separate state within an ES or should it be a new ES.
- Develop training and improve communication regarding protocols for ES descriptions (ESDs) and dynamic soil properties (DSP) project development. Basic understanding of ESDs and DSPs is important for future work.
- Develop and support a database that contains the correct data elements to relate vegetation composition to DSPs and vice versa. Allow data retrieval and queries.
- To utilize data resources outside of NRCS, develop partnerships to share data in a format that is compatible, linked to soils, and at a useable scale.
- Utilize data analysis tools and skills to analyze data for ESD and DSP interpretations.
- Clarify target audience for ESD's and DSPs– who are our customers? – who will use/need this data? Then design products.
- At this point, the development of “benchmark” ESD's is NOT as high a priority as other ESD work items.
- Review definitions of ‘provisional’ and ‘certified’ ESDs. Develop a good definition of ‘approved’ ESD criteria.
- Review the progress reporting system designed to accommodate the long-term nature of ESD development. Include incremental credit for progress through milestones in progress plans.
- Provide tools/training for use at the field level to quantify the impact of various management practices on soil health.