

Draft Minutes: National Technical Committee for Hydric Soils (NTCHS)  
2010 Annual Meeting, January 12-14, 2010  
Gainesville, Florida

Members Present: Chris Noble (USACE), Steve Monteith (TN, NRCS), Lenore Vasilas (DC, NRCS), Wade Hurt (Univ. of Florida), Cindy Stiles, (National Soil Survey Center, NRCS), Wayne Skaggs (North Carolina State Univ.)(Wed only), Shawn Finn (MA, NRCS), Aaron Miller (NM, NRCS), and Chair, Chris Smith (DC, NRCS).

Note: Shawn Finn Replaced Wade Hurt, Aaron Miller replaced Ed Blake, and Wade Hurt replaced Jimmie Richardson.

Members Absent: Randy Davis (FS), Bill Ypsilantis (BLM), Dave Zuberer (Texas A&M Univ.), Randy Dahlgren (UC, Davis), Ralph Spagnolo (EPA), Mike Vepraskas (North Carolina State Univ.), Richard Griffin (Prairie View A&M Univ.), Chien-Lu Ping (Univ. of Alaska), and Jim Dick, (USFWS),

Resource Personnel Present: Oren Reedy (Consultant SS, FL), Rex Ellis (Univ. of Florida), Chad Rischar (SJRWMD, FL), Scott Franz (Consultant SS, FL) and Ed Dunkinson (National Soil Survey Center, NRCS).

NTCHS Deliberations were conducted 8:25 to 11: 30 am on Tuesday, 8:20 to 11:35 am on Wednesday, and 8:25 to 10:40 am on Thursday in the Education Building on Austin Cary Memorial Forest. Field Activities were conducted on Austin Cary Memorial Forest 1:00 to 4:30 pm on Tuesday and 1:00 to 4:30 on Wednesday.

After calling the meeting to order, Smith asked all members to introduce themselves. After introductions, Smith requested comments on the draft minutes of the previous meeting. Members suggested a few corrections. A motion for approval of the revised draft minutes was made by Hurt and seconded by Noble. The motion passed.

Vasilas led a discussion concerning changes to Field Indicators of Hydric Soils in the United States that were proposed by the review subcommittee as established last year (Noble, Hurt, Griffin, and Vasilas). The changes will be incorporated into version 7.0 of the publication which is scheduled for publication in the spring of 2010. Most changes involved the introductory material and user notes and not the Indicators.

Lengthy discussions revolved around Red Parent Material, the Indicator S6 (Stripped Matrix) and its formation, and the "... 70 percent covered, coated, or similarly masked ..." statement as it appears in several of the Indicators.

Vasilas will write a definition of Red Parent Material for addition to the glossary in Version 7.0, if possible. Vepraskas will be asked to write a Tech. Note concerning the formation of the stripped matrix. Hurt moved that "... 70 percent covered, coated, or similarly masked ..." be replaced with "... 70 percent masked ..." in Indicators A5, A11, A12, S7, S8, and S9. Miller seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Noble provided an update of COE manual Regionalization efforts. Status is as follows:

Region	Status
• Alaska	Implemented 2007
• Arid West	Implemented 2007
• Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast	Interim supplement implemented 2008
• Great Plains	Interim supplement implemented 2008
• Midwest	Interim supplement implemented 2008
• Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plain	Interim supplement implemented 2008
• Caribbean Islands	Interim supplement implemented 2009
• Northcentral and Northeast	Interim supplement release approved
• Eastern Mountains and Piedmont	Interim supplement at editors
• Hawaii and Pacific Islands	Revised draft supplement 2010

About 250 sites were tested across the country, although, no sites were tested in the Hawaii and Pacific Islands area. USACE is currently working on Version 2 of the 1987 COE Wetlands Delineation Manual. Introductory material will be moved from the regional supplements to the revised manual.

Monteith discussed seasonal variation of Indicators F2 and F3 under different vegetative cover.

Vasilas and Noble led a discussion on a proposal from Michigan concerning the adoption of F10 (Marl) and S7 (Dark Surface). Hurt moved that S7 (Dark Surface) be approved for testing in LRRs K, L, and M and that F10 (Marl), since the indicator F3 (Depleted Matrix) was present or absent at the test sites, not be approved for testing or use in LRRs K and L. Noble seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Stiles provided an update of NRCS' IRIS and MRIS tube projects. Currently Alaska, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Texas have projects. There are plans for additional projects in Alaska, California, Delaware, North Dakota, and Oregon.

Skaggs demonstrated Drainmod and provided the background of the development of Drainmod. His conclusions were:

1. It is possible to reliably determine whether a site satisfies wetland hydrology.
2. Best method is a combination of water table observations and modeling.
3. Determinations can be made within one year in most cases.
4. Hydrology criteria are too conservative in that strict use of the criteria would make uplands be called wetlands; however, that is offset because actual field determinations call some wetlands uplands.
5. Best method is to use Hydric Soils as the base.
6. Modeling is the best method to predict the effects of drainage ditches and pits on wetlands.

Skaggs resigned from the NTCHS.

Vasilas updated the committee on NRCS' hydric soil problems. Most are program implementation related.

For many years the NTCHS has discussed the possibility of getting rid of the Hydric Soil Criteria. This year, without debate and by proclamation, the committee decided to get rid of the Hydric Soil Criteria.

Smith made a motion that a Hydric Soil Indicator data field be included in Pedon PC and on the OSD include in the diagnostic properties section information on Field Indicators likely to be found. Finn seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Vasilas led a discussion concerning the web page and Technical Notes and the need for updating them. She assigned various NTCHS members Technical Notes to review and revise if necessary.

Smith provided the committee an overview of an EPA led effort named National Wetland Condition Assessment (NWCA). About 1000 sites will be visited and soils data will be collected at each NWCA site.

Skaggs needs to be replaced. Vepraskas will chair a committee to name a replacement. NTCHS recommends that a pedologist be selected.

It has come to the attention of NTCHS that in the glossary of the draft Version 2 of the 1987 COE Wetlands Delineation Manual that the term “capillary fringe” appears. Motion by Hurt that Smith write a letter to Margaret (Meg) Gaffney-Smith with a carbon copy to Jim Wakeley strongly suggesting that, since a capillary fringe has nothing to do with saturation, all references to capillary fringe be deleted from Version 2 of the 1987 COE Wetlands Delineation Manual. Motion was seconded by Stiles and the motion passes.

Next year’s annual meeting was discussed. It was suggested by Smith and Vasilas that the meeting be split between a field session and a deliberations session in March or April and in August or September in the Mid-Atlantis region or Michigan.

Hurt moved for adjournment, Stiles seconded, and the motion passed at 10: 40 am.

Several examples of the Indicators S5 (Sandy Redox), S6 (Stripped Matrix), S7 (Dark Surface), S8 (Thin Dark Surface), S9 (Polyvalue Below Surface), and A6 (Organic Bodies) were observed during the field sessions.