

Defining NSCC's and States' Roles in Soil Interpretations

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References.

- National Soil Survey Handbook (NSSH) Part 617.00 - 617.10 Interpretations - General
- NSSH Parts 618.00 - 618.02 Soil Properties and Qualities

Introduction

- Soil Interpretations and Technical Soil Services are very closely linked. There is no “hard line” between the two areas - many of these comments pertain to both soil interpretations and technical soil services.

Milton Whitney - 1899 on the purpose of classifying soils

- “We need to be able to transfer experience from research or the use of soils, from the fields or areas where we have experience, to other soils or areas where it is applicable”
- Soil Interpretations - 1 method to “classify” soils (response groups)

Charles Kellogg

- Took over Soil Survey - 1935
- Soil interpretations were again recognized as an essential function of soil survey
- “Of course, soil surveys made for predictions about land use and management..... must be practical” - 1949

NSSC Roles

- Training in developing, maintaining, storing, and retrieving soil interpretations
- Maintaining National Interpretations
- Coordinating with other disciplines and programs in development of soil interpretations and standards for national applications and programs

NSSC Roles - continued

- Developing policy, standards, guidelines and procedures for making soil interpretations
- Preparing and maintaining standard guides for rating soils
- Approving deviations from standard procedures for populating data elements used in soil interpretations

NSSC Roles - continued

- Helping others understand the science and principles of making soil interpretations
- Assuring consistent estimation of data elements (policy - procedures)

States' Roles

- Populate data needed to rate soils for soil interpretations
- Assist customers understand, use and apply soil information -
Training key element
- Coordinate the development of localized soil interpretations
- Validate both national and local soil interpretations

States' roles - continued

- Supplement the state subset of national soil information system data with state/county specific interpretation items
- Ensure the technical content, coordination, and quality of soil information in Field Office Technical Guides (e-FOTG)

Current vision -

- NSSC work with NSIAG to define “new” set of National Interpretations
- NSSC maintain the documentation and criteria for these
- NSSC become more active in assisting States develop custom soil interpretations - (consultant role)

Current Vision - continued

- NSSC spend more time on the science of soil interpretations
- NSSC continue to develop algorithms, validations, and calculations to help populate data elements (atterberg limits, CEC, etc.)
- NSSC provide training to States

Current vision - continued

- NSSC expand soil interpretations - urban, forestland, rangeland, National Park Service needs, etc.
- NSSC spend more time with the modelers as models are refined/developed
- NSSC assure that all models are driven by single source of data

Summary

■ NSSC

- Documentation
- Criteria
- Consultant role
- Algorithms
- Broaden soil interpretations
- Modelers - collaboration and coordination
- Use dependency
- Training

Summary - continued

■ States

- Data population
- Data quality
- Interpretation Validation
- Training
- Local Interpretations - local criteria
- Identify local interps that may be useful in other areas