

2011 NCSSC University/Cooperator Breakout Session

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A stylized silhouette of a mountain range in a darker shade of teal, located at the bottom right of the slide.

- ◆ Cooperators would like to encourage NRCS to support graduate student research related to the soil survey program. Cooperators want to extend an offer to NRCS staff the opportunity to work at the universities for a specific period of time and focus their efforts on soil survey program needs that are difficult to address when heavily involved in on-going soil survey program activities.

- ◆ Make available to NRCS (Larry West) a list of on-line soils courses, on-line degree programs, and soil survey related short courses and work shops. The listing should be posted on a web site or newsletter and distributed through the 18 MO and 31 or 32 state soil scientists to all cooperators in their states.

- ◆ NRCS administration, MO leader and state soil scientist should be encouraged to meet with University Administrators (College and Departmental level) who often lack a soils background to help convey the importance of the soil survey program and make them aware of the employment opportunities for soils, natural resource and environmental science students.

- ◆ It would be helpful to Cooperators seeking if the role of the 18 MO leaders and the 31 or 32 state soil scientists could be more fully explained. Especially as it relates to state inventory, state interpretations, state technical issues and supervision of MLRA soil scientists.

- ◆ Discussion of need for Soil Scientists to consider the strategy or wisdom of becoming a stand alone program. The advantages and risks of such an action were discussed. The fact that most soil survey funds are in discretionary category rather than as formula or mandatory program is of concern. It appears Conservation programs have historically been a good umbrella program but Cooperators would like to see soil survey program remain an NRCS funding priority.

- ◆ Encourage State Conservationists to seek cooperator input (advisory only) when selecting new state soil scientists and MO leaders. Cooperator or universities often involve NRCS administrators when selecting future pedologists and soil scientists.

- ◆ Cooperators are very appreciative of the invitations that individuals and regional committees have received to participate in the NCSS and Regional SS conferences. We appreciate the forum and opportunity to interact with cooperators from other regions. Cooperator successes require a viable and successful soil survey program and we are here to help.