

National Cooperative Soil Survey

Soil Change Working Group

Meeting Minutes

Ashville, NC, May 24, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am by Susan Andrews (co-chair). She introduced co-chair Mike Duniway and all attendees introduced themselves.

Participants:

Susan Andrews (co-chair)	NRCS	susan.andrews@lin.usda.gov
Mike Duniway (co-chair)	USGS	mduniway@usgs.gov
Skye Wills (recorder)	NRCS	skye.wills@lin.usda.gov
George Peacock	NRCS	george.peacock@ftw.usda.gov
Edward Griffin	NRCS	edward.l.griffin@ftw.usda.gov
Michelle Clendenin	NRCS	michelle.clendenin@nc.usda.gov
Stacey Clark	NRCS	stacey.clarck@mn.usda.gov
W. Allen Hayes, Jr.	private	hayes335125@charter.net
Elizabeth Kenney	AAFC-AESB	elizabeth.kenney@agr.gc.ca
Patrick Drohan	Penn State	patdrohan@psu.edu
Joey Shaw	Auburn Univ.	shawjo1@auburn.edu
Rick Robbins	NRCS	rick.a.robbins@fl.usda.gov
Pam Thomas	NRCS	pam.thomas@sc.usda.gov
Maxine Levin	NRCS	maxine.levin@wdc.usda.gov
Micheal Golden	NRCS	michael.golden@wdc.usda.gov

Program:

Susan Andrews gave her presentation from the previous day's Interpretation Committee meeting to introduce the new Soil Ecology Branch at the National Soil Survey Center. Mission areas of the branch include soil change, soil quality and ecological site inventory.

Business:

Stacey Clark moved that the charge of the soil change working group be expanded and that ecological sites be moved from interpretations to this group. Ed Griffin seconded the motion.

Extended discussion followed about what the title of the new committee should be.

Patrick Drohan suggested “Soil change and Ecosystem Science.”

Steve Park moved that we use that suggestion.

Two alternate suggestions came up, including the use Services instead of Science and Pam Thomas’ suggestion for Soil Ecosystems.

A consensus was formed around, ‘Soil and Ecosystem Dynamics.’

Stacey moved that the standing committee be named “Soil and Ecosystem Dynamics.”
Patrick Drohan seconded the motion.

Motion unanimously passed.

Susan Andrews made the suggestion that the working group be made a standing committee. Maxine Levin was invited to provide an explanation of the differences between NCSS standing committee and working groups

Major differences:

Standing committees are assumed to be repeated every year.

The regions are expected to reflect the structure of standing committees of the national level.

Working groups are meant to have an end where they’re addressing a specific issue.

Patrick Drohan moved to recommend a change to standing committee. Ed Griffin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Susan began to go through the recommendations from the 2009 Soil Change Working Group:

Additional new recommendations:

On technical matters, this committee agreed to serve as a source of peer review for national standards on ecological site inventory

National team (NSEB)

1. Put Minimum datasets out for review
 - a. For dynamic soil properties
 - b. For ecological sites

2. Address how to deal with Cropland – Plantation Trees
 - a. Use and management of plantation must be included (with USFS input/buy-in)

Regional Charges – It was agreed that it will be very important to include partners (e.g. ARS, USFS, Wetland Scientists, SRCs (NRCS), USGS, BLM, BIA and others).

1. Recommend minimum datasets (soils and ecological site inventory)
 - a. By region
 - b. By major landscape units
2. Prioritization of ecological site work
 - a. By major landscape units

Time ran out before all charges could be discussed by those present. (Susan has already spoken with Maxine about having more meeting time next year.)

Follow-up from NCSS General Business Meeting of Thursday May 26

Susan Andrews provided a report (slideset attached) on the activities of the Soil Change Working Group and its recommendations to the NCSS body on Thursday, May 26. The report was accepted into the meeting minutes without changes. There were questions from Dave Hoover and Larry West about whether accepting the report was tantamount to accepting the recommendations, which in this case meant creating a new standing committee. There was ensuing discussion and seeming confusion about the bylaws on this matter. Susan accessed the bylaws during the discussion and found that the NCSS Steering Committee is the group that must approve this recommendation from our group. (It was also noted that the bylaws are out of date and in need of revision. For example, Interpretations is not recognized at a Standing Committee in the current bylaws. For your reference, the NCSS Bylaws are section 602 of the Soil Survey Handbook.) The Steering Committee is set to meet in August. Susan will ensure that the proposal for a new Standing Committee for Soil and Ecosystem Dynamics is on their agenda.