

NRCS International Programs Division

December 31, 2012

This is a brief overview of international development activities undertaken by NRCS staff during the second half of 2012. Partnering institutions included the **National Guard** - Department of the Army, the U.S. Agency for International Development (**USAID**), USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (**FAS**), and the Inner Mongolian Agricultural University (**IMAU**) in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, China.

💧 Agribusiness Development Team (ADT) Training – US Army, National Guard

💧 Watershed Rehabilitation Training – USAID/Georgia

💧 Rangeland Health and Monitoring – Inner Mongolian Agricultural University, China

💧 Pilot Soil Survey Capacity Building Project – USAID/Haiti

💧 Worldwide Capacity-Building for Soil Science University Students, using Land and Soil Judging Contests

💧 Agriculture Advisors in Afghanistan

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For additional information on these and other NRCS international activities, please contact IPD:

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National Guard Agribusiness Development Team (ADT) Training – US Army, National Guard

In August, lead trainers Jon Fripp, Stream Mechanics Engineer - National Design, Construction,



Jon observing ADT members constructing gabion baskets in the classroom

and Soil Mechanics Center (NDCSMC), Ft Worth, TX, and Richard Weber, Wetland Hydraulic Engineer - Central National Technology Support Center, Ft. Worth, Texas, led one-week's training in "Small-Scale Watershed-Rehabilitation" for 22 National Guard troops: 14 from Nebraska, five from Wisconsin and three from Georgia. They are scheduled for deployment to Afghanistan in 2013. Jon and Richard were assisted by Phuc Vu, Design Engineer - NDCSMC, Jacob Robison, Design Engineer - Nebraska State Office, Lincoln, NE, and a number of other NRCS technical specialists.

In November, additional watershed training was provided to the Nebraska National Guard unit, by Jacob Robison, Design Engineer - Nebraska State office. The objective was to provide additional,

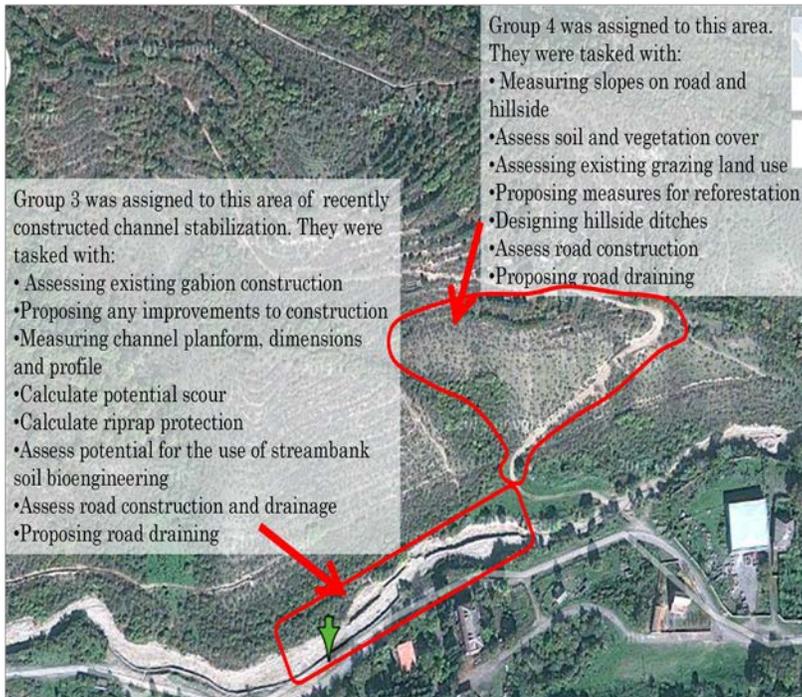
hands-on training and practice at looking at a watershed, identifying the environmental conservation issues and propose remediation actions. As part of the training, the ADT members worked with a basic suite of GIS tools that were developed by USDA’s Foreign Agricultural Service for use by agricultural advisors deployed in Afghanistan.

Watershed Rehabilitation Training – USAID/Georgia

In September, at the invitation of the US Forest Service, Jon Fripp - NDCSMC, participated in an eight day Watershed Protection Workshop in the Republic of Georgia. The training was in support of the USAID-funded “Climate Change



Watershed rehabilitation workshop participants



CCADM training - group study sites and objectives

Adaptation and Disaster Mitigation Project” (CCADM). There were 21 participants from 10 different organizations – including the Caucasus Environmental NGO Network (CCADM implementer and co-sponsor for the training), the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Energy’s Agency of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Adjara Forest Agency, the Georgian Agrarian University, the Armenia Tree Project, and other organizations. Jon was the lead trainer for the watershed component. Joe Myers, US Forest Service Nursery Superintendent -

Coeur d’Alene Nursery, Idaho Panhandle National Forest, was the lead trainer for the nursery management component.

Rangeland Health & Monitoring – Inner Mongolian Agricultural University, Peoples’ Republic of China

At the invitation of the Inner Mongolian Agriculture University (IMAU), Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, China, Dr. Joel Brown, NRCS Range Management Specialist - ARS Jornada Experimental Range, Las Cruces, NM, traveled to Inner Mongolia, China in September for three weeks of



Dr. Brown speaking on using Ecological Site Descriptions to predict changes in ecosystem services in response to climate change

consultations and meetings. Initially he met with officials from the national, provincial and local governments to discuss the application of ecological site technology as a decision-making tool for land use and management decisions and as the basis for rangeland health monitoring programs.

Dr. Brown participated in a three day International Workshop and Forum at IMAU on Grassland Management and Climate Change that emphasized the implementation of land classification systems that could be used to mitigate climate change impacts on grazing lands and their integration at landscape and regional scales. He also worked with range management scientists from China and Australia on the inclusion of ecological sites and GIS technology into on-going projects, and consulted with IMAU faculty, graduate and undergraduate students.

Pilot Soil Survey Capacity Building Project – USAID/Haiti

In September, Dr. Thomas Reinsch, National Leader for World Soil Resources, Dr. Charles Kome, Soil Scientist, World Soil Resources, and Melvin Westbrook, Director for International Programs, all from NRCS, returned to Haiti to conduct a stakeholders’ workshop in Port au Prince for the proposed pilot soil survey project. There were over 90 workshop participants, including: the Minister of Agriculture and ministry staff, faculty from the Department of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine at the Haiti State University, the Secretary of State for the Revitalization in Haiti, the Acting Director for USAID/Haiti, and representatives from other potential stakeholder and partner organizations.



The stakeholders' workshop organizing committee

The workshop sought input on technical components of the project, the objectives, location and scope, the methodological approach, roles and responsibilities, anticipated results, and strategies for the dissemination and utilization of the soil survey information by end users. FAS and NRCS have been invited to prepare and finalize the project agreement for project implementation in 2013.

Worldwide Capacity-Building for University Soil Science Students, using Land and Soil Judging Contests

A pilot international collegiate soil judging contest was held in Hobart City, Tasmania, Australia as part of the joint “Soil Science Australia” and “New Zealand Soil Science Society” meetings in December. Five teams participated with over 40 students and university coaches. The event, meant to encourage the pursuit of soil science as a career, was so successful that Australia, South Korea,



Soil judging contestants at work

and the U.S. plan to organize the first International Collegiate Soil Judging Contest at the 2014 World Soil Congress in Jeju, Korea. Teams from all over the world will be invited to compete, particularly those from developing countries. Based on contests that have been held for over 50 years in the U.S. (since 1961), the pilot was developed through collaboration over a two-year period by Maxine Levin, Liaison to the National Cooperative Soil Survey, NRCS Soil Science Division, and cooperators from the University of Sydney and a number of U.S. Land Grant Universities.

Agriculture Advisors in Afghanistan

As of December 31st two NRCS employees remain in Afghanistan as long-term agriculture advisors. Drew Adam, Soil Scientist, Vermont State Office, began his second long-term detail in Afghanistan in December. In 2005 he served as an agriculture advisor for six months in Parwan Province, north of the capital, Kabul. For his current one-year tour in Logar Province, he will be working on local capacity building and serving as an agriculture advisor.

Charlie McAlpine, RC&D Coordinator, Montgomery, AL, is serving as an agriculture advisor in Ghanzi Province. His activities have included



Afghan landscape in Paktika Province

capacity building and training of local extension staff, developing and improvement of existing irrigation infrastructure, and agribusiness development through wool processing and diverse horticultural activities.

Robert Clauto, District Conservationist, Hollidaysburg, PA completed his 12 month tour and returned to the U.S in December. During his posting in Paktika Province, Robert worked on capacity building and training of local extension staff on watershed improvement. He trained villagers on grassland and grazing



Meeting with local officials and villagers elders

management, construction of irrigation structures for canals, and other activities.

Jonathan Hooper, Soil Scientist, Arcata, CA, completed a 17 month tour in December. He focused on guiding Afghan Government officials and technicians to improve their performance and take greater control of their programs. During his last six months, his priorities were capacity building and management skills development for the Directorates of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (DAIL), first in Paktika Province and then Nangarhar Province.

Related Internet Resources:

National Guard Agribusiness Development Teams (ADT):

http://www.army.mil/aps/08/information_papers/other/ARNG_Agribusiness_Development_Team.html

The NRCS National Design, Construction and Soil Mechanics Center (NDCSMC):

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/ndcsmc>

The NRCS Central National Technology Support Center (CNTSC):

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/cntsc>

USAID/Georgia: <http://georgia.usaid.gov>

The Caucasus Environmental NGO Network (CNN): <http://w3.cenn.org/wssl>

The Inner Mongolia Agriculture University (IMAU): <http://www.at0086.com/imau/>

Jornada Arid Land Research Programs: <http://jornada.nmsu.edu>

USAID/Haiti: <http://haiti.usaid.gov>

NRCS World Soil Resources: <http://soils.usda.gov/use/worldsoils>

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