



United States
Department of
Agriculture



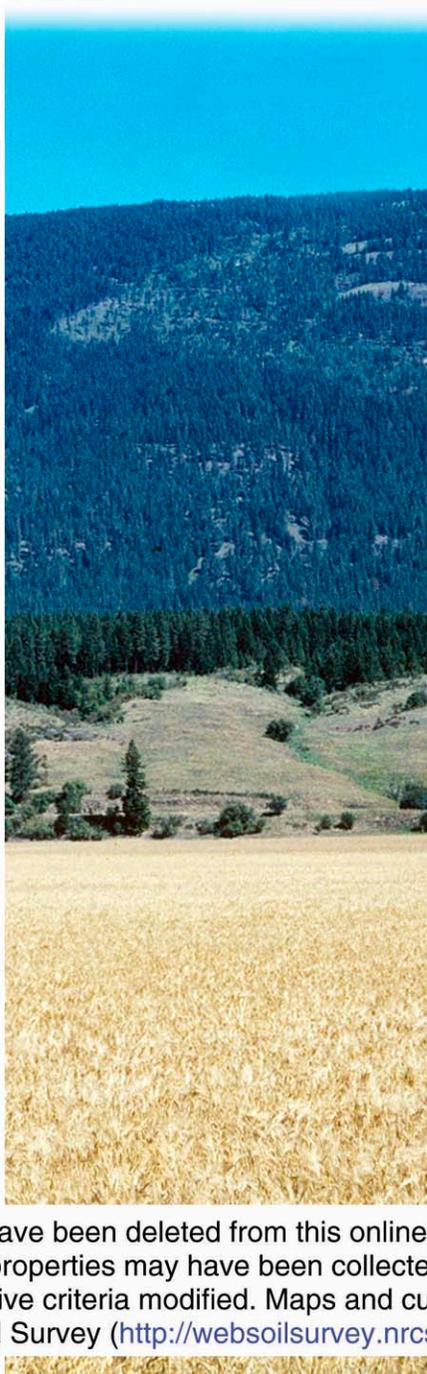
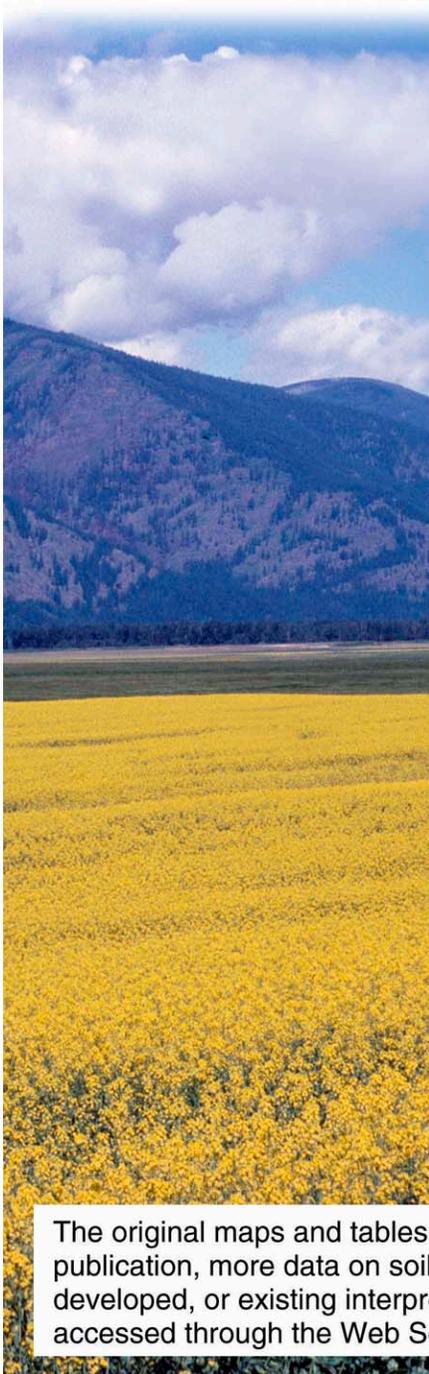
Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service



In cooperation with the United
States Department of the
Interior, Bureau of Land
Management; University of
Idaho, College of Agriculture;
and Idaho Soil Conservation
Commission

ID601—Soil Survey of Boundary County Area, Idaho

Part II



The original maps and tables have been deleted from this online version. Since the soil survey's publication, more data on soil properties may have been collected, new interpretations developed, or existing interpretive criteria modified. Maps and current data tables can be accessed through the Web Soil Survey (<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>).

How to Use This Soil Survey

General Soil Map

The general soil map shows the survey area divided into groups of associated soils called general soil map units. This map is useful in planning the use and management of large areas.

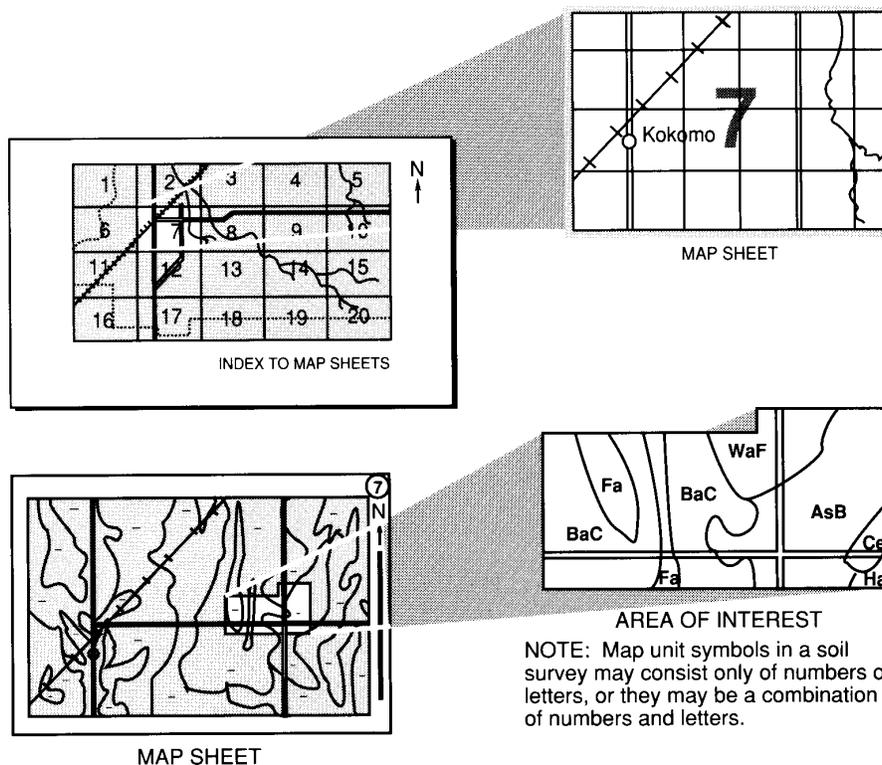
To find information about your area of interest, locate that area on the map, identify the name of the map unit in the area on the color-coded map legend, then refer to the section **General Soil Map Units** for a general description of the soils in your area.

Detailed Soil Maps

The detailed soil maps can be useful in planning the use and management of small areas.

To find information about your area of interest, you can locate that area on the **Index to Map Sheets**. Go to the Web Soil Survey for more information (<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>)

Note the map unit symbols that are in that area. Go to the **Contents**, which lists the map units by symbol and name and shows the page where each map unit is described. See the Contents for sections of this publication that may address your specific needs.



This soil survey is a publication of the National Cooperative Soil Survey, a joint effort of the United States Department of Agriculture and other Federal agencies, State agencies including the Agricultural Experiment Stations, and local agencies. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly the Soil Conservation Service) has leadership for the Federal part of the National Cooperative Soil Survey.

Major fieldwork for this soil survey was completed in 2000. Soil names and descriptions were approved in 2001. Unless otherwise indicated, statements in this publication refer to conditions in the survey area in 2000. This survey was made cooperatively by the Natural Resources Conservation Service; the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management; the University of Idaho, College of Agriculture; and the Idaho Soil Conservation Commission. The survey is part of the technical assistance furnished to the Boundary Soil Conservation District.

The most current official data are available through the NRCS Soil Data Mart website at <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov>. Soil maps in this survey may be copied without permission. Enlargement of these maps, however, could cause misunderstanding of the detail of mapping. If enlarged, maps do not show the small areas of contrasting soils that could have been shown at a larger scale.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice or TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call 202-720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Cover: *Left*—Schnoorson silt loam, protected, drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes, in foreground used for canola and wheat production. Rock outcrop-McArthur, very stony complex, 65 to 100 percent slopes, in background used for timber production and wildlife habitat. *Center*—Schnoorson silt loam, protected, drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes, in foreground used for wheat production. Caboose-Wishbone complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes, in middle ground used for timber production and pasture. Dufort-Rock outcrop-Kriest complex, 35 to 65 percent slopes, in background used for timber production and wildlife habitat. *Right*—Pend Oreille ashy silt loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes, used for timber production and wildlife habitat.

Additional information about the Nation's natural resources is available online from the Natural Resources Conservation Service at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>.

Contents

Part I

How to Use This Soil Survey	i
Alphabetical Index to Map Units	vii
Summary of Tables	x
Foreword	xiii
General Nature of the Survey Area	2
History and Development	2
Geology	2
Natural Resources	3
Agriculture	4
Climate	4
How This Survey Was Made	5
Formation and Classification of the Soils	9
Formation of the Soils	9
Parent Material	9
Climate	10
Topography	10
Living Organisms	11
Time	11
Classification of the Soils	12
Soil Series and Their Morphology	12
General Soil Map Units	73
Detailed Map Units	77
References	131
Glossary	133

Part II

How to Use This Soil Survey	i
Detailed Soil Map Unit Legend	iv

Summary of Tables	vi
Agronomy	5
Crops and Pasture	5
Yields per Acre	6
Land Capability Classification	7
Prime Farmland	8
Grazingland	23
Woodland Understory Vegetation	23
Grazingland Vegetation	23
Woodland Grazing	24
Forestland	51
Forestland Management and Productivity	51
Forestland in the Boundary County Area	53
Recreation	119
Recreation in the Boundary County Area	120
Wildlife Habitat	141
Wildlife of the Boundary County Area	142
Engineering	153
Building Site Development	153
Sanitary Facilities	155
Agricultural Waste Management	156
Construction Materials	158
Water Management	159
Soil Properties	299
Engineering Index Properties	299
Physical Properties	300
Chemical Properties	301
Water Features	302
Soil Features	303
References	439
Glossary	441

Detailed Soil Map Unit Legend

- 103—Artnoc silt loam, 35 to 75 percent slopes
 104—Baldeagle gravelly medial silt loam, 35 to 75 percent slopes
 105—Bane loamy fine sand, 2 to 8 percent slopes
 102—Caboose-Wishbone complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes
 106—Caribouridge ashy silt loam, 0 to 15 percent slopes
 107—Caribouridge ashy silt loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes
 108—Caribouridge ashy silt loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes
 109—Caribouridge, warm-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes
 113—Caribouridge, warm-Rock outcrop complex, 35 to 65 percent slopes
 110—Crash silt loam, 35 to 75 percent slopes
 112—Crash-Artnoc complex, 35 to 75 percent slopes
 115—DeVoignes mucky silt loam, protected, drained, 0 to 1 percent slopes
 117—Dodgecreek ashy silt loam, 2 to 12 percent slopes
 120—Dufort ashy silt loam, 5 to 15 percent slopes
 116—Dufort ashy silt loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes
 114—Dufort ashy silt loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes
 191—Dufort-Rock outcrop-Kriest complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes
 101—Dufort-Rock outcrop-Kriest complex, 35 to 65 percent slopes
 134—Elmira loamy fine sand, 15 to 35 percent slopes
 118—Farnhamton silt loam, protected, drained, 2 to 5 percent slopes
 141—Farnhamton silt loam, unprotected, drained, 0 to 4 percent slopes
 119—Farnhamton silt loam, unprotected, undrained, 0 to 4 percent slopes
 189—Flemingcreek silt loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes
 140—Frycanyon ashy silt loam, 2 to 8 percent slopes
 139—Highfalls gravelly ashy silt loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes
 196—Highfalls gravelly ashy silt loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes
 122—Highfalls stony ashy silt loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes, bouldery
 125—Idamont ashy silt loam, 5 to 15 percent slopes
 126—Idamont ashy silt loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes
 127—Idamont ashy silt loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes
 123—Jaypeak gravelly ashy silt loam, 35 to 75 percent slopes
 121—Katka, very bouldery-Rock outcrop complex, 35 to 65 percent slopes
 124—McArthur, very stony-Rock outcrop complex, 35 to 75 percent slopes
 128—Myrtlecreek ashy sandy loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes
 129—Myrtlecreek ashy sandy loam, 35 to 75 percent slopes
 131—Pearsoncreek ashy loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes
 132—Pearsoncreek ashy silt loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes
 133—Pearsoncreek-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes
 135—Pend Oreille ashy silt loam, 5 to 15 percent slopes
 136—Pend Oreille ashy silt loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes
 137—Pend Oreille ashy silt loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes
 138—Pend Oreille-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes
 197—Pend Oreille-Stien, moist complex, 2 to 8 percent slopes
 146—Porthill silt loam, 2 to 8 percent slopes
 147—Porthill silt loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes
 150—Pywell muck, protected, drained, 0 to 1 percent slopes

-
- 201—Pywell muck, unprotected, undrained, 0 to 1 percent slopes
- 151—Pywell-DeVoignes complex, 0 to 1 percent slopes
- 200—Pywell-DeVoignes complex, partially drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- 154—Redraven medial silt loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes
- 155—Redraven medial silt loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes, bouldery
- 156—Ritz silt loam, protected, drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- 142—Ritz silt loam, unprotected, undrained, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- 143—Ritz-Farnhamton complex, protected, drained, 0 to 5 percent slopes
- 153—Ritz-Farnhamton complex, unprotected, drained, 0 to 5 percent slopes
- 157—Ritz-Schnoorson complex, protected, drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- 148—Riverwash
- 159—Rock outcrop
- 144—Rock outcrop-Jaypeak, very stony complex, 65 to 100 percent slopes
- 149—Rock outcrop-McArthur, very stony complex, 65 to 100 percent slopes
- 162—Rock outcrop-Treble, very stony complex, 5 to 35 percent slopes
- 163—Rock outcrop-Treble, very stony complex, 35 to 65 percent slopes
- 158—Roman, extremely bouldery-Rock outcrop complex, 35 to 65 percent slopes
- 165—Rubson ashy silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- 166—Rubson ashy silt loam, 2 to 8 percent slopes
- 167—Rubson ashy silt loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes
- 168—Rubycreek medial silt loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very bouldery
- 169—Rubycreek medial silt loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes, very bouldery
- 164—Rubycreek medial silt loam, moist, 30 to 55 percent slopes, very bouldery
- 170—Schnoorson silt loam, protected, drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- 173—Schnoorson silty clay loam, protected, drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- 187—Schnoorson-DeVoignes complex, protected, drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- 171—Seelovers silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- 172—Seelovers silt loam, drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- 199—Seelovers-Typic Fluvaquents-Aquic Udifluvents complex, 0 to 4 percent slopes
- 174—Selle ashy fine sandy loam, 0 to 7 percent slopes
- 175—Selle-Elmira complex, 0 to 20 percent slopes
- 176—Snowlake ashy sandy loam, 12 to 35 percent slopes
- 177—Snowlake ashy sandy loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes
- 188—Stien ashy silt loam, 2 to 8 percent slopes
- 182—Stien cobbly ashy silt loam, 2 to 8 percent slopes
- 179—Stien gravelly ashy silt loam, 2 to 8 percent slopes
- 198—Stien gravelly ashy silt loam, moist, 2 to 8 percent slopes
- 186—Treble gravelly ashy sandy loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes
- 185—Treble gravelly ashy sandy loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes
- 184—Treble, very bouldery-Rock outcrop complex, 35 to 65 percent slopes
- 202—Water
- 190—Wishbone-Caboose complex, 35 to 75 percent slopes
- 193—Zee ashy silt loam, 2 to 15 percent slopes
- 194—Zee ashy silt loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes
- 192—Zioncreek-Porthill complex, 2 to 8 percent slopes
- 195—Zioncreek-Porthill complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes

Summary of Tables

Temperature and Precipitation	6
Freeze Dates in Spring and Fall	7
Growing Season	8

For tables with the most current data, please visit the
Soil Data Mart at <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/>.

Soil Survey of Boundary County Area, Idaho

Use and Management of the Soils

This soil survey is an inventory and evaluation of the soils in the survey area. It can be used to adjust land uses to the limitations and potentials of natural resources and the environment. Also, it can help to prevent soil-related failures in land uses.

In preparing a soil survey, soil scientists, conservationists, engineers, and others collect extensive field data about the nature and behavioral characteristics of the soils. They collect data on erosion, droughtiness, flooding, and other factors that affect various soil uses and management. Field experience and collected data on soil properties and performance are used as a basis in predicting soil behavior.

Information in this section can be used to plan the use and management of soils for crops and pasture; as forestland; as sites for buildings, sanitary facilities, highways and other transportation systems, and parks and other recreational facilities; for agricultural waste management; and as wildlife habitat. It can be used to identify the potentials and limitations of each soil for specific land uses and to help prevent construction failures caused by unfavorable soil properties.

Planners and others using soil survey information can evaluate the effect of specific land uses on productivity and on the environment in all or part of the survey area. The survey can help planners to maintain or create a land use pattern in harmony with the natural soil.

Contractors can use this survey to locate sources of sand and gravel, roadfill, and topsoil. They can use it to identify areas where bedrock, wetness, or very firm soil layers can cause difficulty in excavation.

Health officials, highway officials, engineers, and others may also find this survey useful. The survey

can help them plan the safe disposal of wastes and locate sites for pavements, sidewalks, campgrounds, playgrounds, lawns, and trees and shrubs.

Interpretive Ratings

The interpretive tables in this survey rate the soils in the survey area for various uses. Many of the tables identify the limitations that affect specified uses and indicate the severity of those limitations. The ratings in these tables are both verbal and numerical.

Rating Class Terms

Rating classes are expressed in the tables in terms that indicate the extent to which the soils are limited by all of the soil features that affect a specified use or in terms that indicate the suitability of the soils for the use. Thus, the tables may show limitation classes or suitability classes. Terms for the limitation classes are *not limited*, *somewhat limited*, and *very limited*. The suitability ratings are expressed as *well suited*, *moderately suited*, *poorly suited*, and *unsuited* or as *good*, *fair*, and *poor*.

Numerical Ratings

Numerical ratings in the tables indicate the relative severity of individual limitations. The ratings are shown as decimal fractions ranging from 0.00 to 1.00. They indicate gradations between the point at which a soil feature has the greatest negative impact on the use and the point at which the soil feature is not a limitation. The limitations appear in order from the most limiting to the least limiting. Thus, if more than one limitation is identified, the most severe limitation is listed first and the least severe one is listed last.

Agronomy

General management needed for crops and pasture is suggested in this section. The estimated yields of the main crops and pasture plants are listed, the system of land capability classification used by the Natural Resources Conservation Service is explained, and prime farmland is described.

Planners of management systems for individual fields or farms should consider the detailed information given in the description of each soil under the heading "Detailed Soil Map Units." Specific information can be obtained from the local office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service or the Cooperative Extension Service.

Crops and Pasture

Michael Gondek, District Conservationist, NRCS, prepared this section.

The Boundary County Area contains approximately 60,000 acres of nonirrigated cropland, pasture, and hayland (figs. 9 and 10). The majority of land used for crops, pasture, and hay is located adjacent to the Kootenai River.

The main crops grown in the survey area are spring wheat, winter wheat, oats, barley, alfalfa hay, clover seed, timothy seed, canola, and hops. A small, but significant acreage is used for ornamental nursery production of both deciduous and coniferous plants. Most of the soils in the bottomland along the Kootenai River are drained by a system of open ditches and pumps and protected from flooding by a system of levees. Maintaining these systems is essential for crop production.

The soils on the high benches and terraces are subject to erosion where they are sloping. When grain is grown, crop residue should be left on the surface to maintain the organic matter content and tilth of the soil and to control erosion. Conservation tillage systems are essential in the management of these soils. Crop residue on the soil surface is most important during the fall and winter months to protect the soil from erosion. Use of minimum tillage, no-till practices, cross-slope farming, or conservation-cropping systems is advisable.

Grain generally responds to nitrogen and sulfur fertilizer, and legumes respond to phosphorus. A good fertilization program, including soil testing, is essential for the highest grain production.

Hay crops consist of alfalfa and alfalfa-grass mixed. With correct harvest management, two cuttings can be obtained in most years. During wetter years, a third cutting can also be made. A significant acreage of timothy hay is grown in the area. Oats and barley are also grown as a hay crop when they are used in rotation to renew alfalfa stands. Hayland management can be improved by using proper fertilizers as needed, cutting hay when it is at the proper growth stage, and leaving an adequate amount of fall stubble to protect the plants during the winter.

Pastures in the survey area are relatively small. A combination of adapted grasses and legumes are generally used. Because of the small acreage, pasture can be susceptible to overgrazing. When fields are continually overgrazed throughout the year, the production of good forage is reduced; the fields are invaded by less palatable or weedy plants; and soil erosion occurs on sloping areas. Overgrazing fields adjacent to creeks and streams can cause streambank degradation, damage riparian vegetation, and reduce water quality downstream.

Improved management practices are needed to obtain high level yields of pasture. Suggested practices are controlled grazing systems, cross-fencing, water developments, and allowing adequate periods for regrowth. The use of high-producing adapted plants and a fertilizer program are essential to achieve high yields. A fertilizer program should include the application of nitrogen, phosphorus, and sulfur according to soil test results.

Livestock grazing should be carefully controlled. Animals should not be allowed to graze too early in the spring before plants have reached adequate growth and the soils are firm enough to withstand trampling. Grasses should not be grazed so close that they start regrowth from root-stored food reserves. For most grasses, leaving a stubble height of 4 inches at the end of the grazing period will allow

for rapid recovery. These practices will help limit soil compaction and protect the soil from erosion.

Yields per Acre

The average yields per acre that can be expected of the principal crops under a high level of management are shown in the “Land Capability and Yields per Acre of Crops and Pasture” tables. In any given year, yields may be higher or lower than those indicated in the tables because of variations in rainfall and other climatic factors. The land capability classification of each map unit in the survey area is shown in the tables.

Yields are estimates based mainly on the experience and records of farmers, conservationists, and extension agents. Available yield data from nearby counties and results of field trials and demonstrations are also considered.

The management needed to obtain the indicated yields of the various crops depends on the kind of

soil and the crop. Management practices can include improving drainage, controlling erosion, and protecting areas from flooding; selecting proper planting and seeding rates; choosing suitable high-yielding crop varieties; appropriately and timely tilling; controlling weeds, plant diseases, and harmful insects; ensuring favorable soil reaction and optimum levels of nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, and trace elements for each crop; effectively using crop residue, barnyard manure, and green-manure crops; and harvesting to ensure the smallest possible loss.

The estimated yields reflect the productive capacity of each soil for each of the principal crops. Yields are likely to increase as new production technology is developed. The productivity of a given soil compared with that of other soils, however, is not likely to change.

Crops other than those shown in the tables are grown in the survey area, but estimated yields are not listed because the acreage of such crops is small.



Figure 9.—In the Kootenai Valley, in the foreground, is an area of Rubson ashy silt loam, 2 to 8 percent slopes, that is used for hay, pasture, and timber production. Along the Kootenai River flood plain, in the middle ground, is an area of Schnoorson silt loam, protected, drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes, that is used for wheat, barley, and canola production.



Figure 10.—In the foreground is an area of Ritz-Schnoorson complex, protected, drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes, that is used for wheat production. In the middle ground is an area of Caboose-Wishbone complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes, that is used for timber production and pasture. In the background is an area of Dufort ashy silt loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes, that is used for timber production and wildlife habitat.

Local offices of the Natural Resources Conservation Service or the Cooperative Extension Service can provide information about the management and productivity of the soils for those crops.

Land Capability Classification

Land capability classification shows, in a general way, the suitability of soils for most kinds of field crops (USDA, 1961). Crops that require special management are excluded. The soils are grouped according to their limitations for field crops, the risk of damage if they are used for crops, and the way they respond to management. The criteria used in grouping the soils do not include major and generally expensive landforming that would change slope, depth, or other characteristics of the soils, nor do they include possible but unlikely major reclamation projects. Capability classification is not a substitute

for interpretations designed to show suitability and limitations of groups of soils for grazingland, for forestland, or for engineering purposes.

In the capability system, soils are generally grouped at three levels—capability class, subclass, and unit.

Capability classes, the broadest groups, are designated by the numbers 1 through 8. The numbers indicate progressively greater limitations and narrower choices for practical use. The classes are defined as follows:

Class 1 soils have slight limitations that restrict their use.

Class 2 soils have moderate limitations that restrict the choice of plants or that require moderate conservation practices.

Class 3 soils have severe limitations that restrict the choice of plants or that require special conservation practices, or both.

Class 4 soils have very severe limitations that restrict the choice of plants or that require very careful management, or both.

Class 5 soils are subject to little or no erosion but have other limitations, impractical to remove, that restrict their use mainly to pasture, grazingland, forestland, or wildlife habitat.

Class 6 soils have severe limitations that make them generally unsuitable for cultivation and that restrict their use mainly to pasture, grazingland, forestland, or wildlife habitat.

Class 7 soils have very severe limitations that make them unsuitable for cultivation and that restrict their use mainly to grazingland, forestland, or wildlife habitat.

Class 8 soils and miscellaneous areas have limitations that preclude commercial plant production and that restrict their use to recreational purposes, wildlife habitat, watershed, or esthetic purposes.

Capability subclasses are soil groups within one class. They are designated by adding a small letter, *e*, *w*, *s*, or *c*, to the class numeral, for example, 2e. The letter *e* shows that the main hazard is the risk of erosion unless close-growing plant cover is maintained; *w* shows that water in or on the soil interferes with plant growth or cultivation (in some soils the wetness can be partly corrected by artificial drainage); *s* shows that the soil is limited mainly because it is shallow, droughty, or stony; and *c*, used in only some parts of the United States, shows that the chief limitation is climate that is very cold or very dry.

In class 1 there are no subclasses because the soils of this class have few limitations. Class 5 contains only the subclasses indicated by *w*, *s*, or *c* because the soils in class 5 are subject to little or no erosion. They have other limitations that restrict their use to pasture, grazingland, forestland, wildlife habitat, or recreation.

Capability units are soil groups within a subclass. The soils in a capability unit are enough alike to be suited to the same crops and pasture plants, to require similar management, and to have similar productivity. Capability units are generally designated by adding an Arabic numeral to the subclass symbol, for example, 2e-4 and 3e-6. These units are not given in all soil surveys.

The capability classification of map units in this survey area is given in the "Land Capability and Yields per Acre of Crops and Pasture" tables.

Prime Farmland

Prime farmland is one of several kinds of important farmland defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It is of major importance in meeting the Nation's short- and long-range needs for food and fiber. Because the supply of high-quality farmland is limited, the U.S. Department of Agriculture recognizes that responsible levels of government, as well as individuals, should encourage and facilitate the wise use of our Nation's prime farmland.

Prime farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses. It could be cultivated land, pasture, forestland, or other land, but it is not urban or built-up land or water areas. The soil qualities, growing season, and moisture supply are those needed for the soil to economically produce sustained high yields of crops when proper management, including water management, and acceptable farming methods are applied. In general, prime farmland has an adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, an acceptable salt and sodium content, and few or no rocks. It is permeable to water and air. It is not excessively erodible or saturated with water for long periods, and it either is not frequently flooded during the growing season or is protected from flooding. Slope ranges mainly from 0 to 6 percent. More detailed information about the criteria for prime farmland is available at the local office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The map units in the survey area that are considered prime farmland are listed in the "Prime Farmland" table. This list does not constitute a recommendation for a particular land use. On some soils included in the list, measures that overcome a hazard or limitation, such as flooding, wetness, and droughtiness, are needed. Onsite evaluation is needed to determine whether or not the hazard or limitation has been overcome by corrective measures. The extent of each listed map unit is shown in the "Acreage and Proportionate Extent of the Soils" table. The location is shown on the detailed soil maps. The soil qualities that affect use and management are described in the section "Detailed Soil Map Units."

Grazingland

In areas that have similar climate and topography, differences in the kind and amount of grazeable vegetation are closely related to the kind of soil. Effective management is based on the relationship between the soils and vegetation and water.

The “Grazingland and Grazeable Understory-Productivity and Characteristic Plant Communities” table shows, for each soil that supports understory vegetation and for each soil that supports vegetation suitable for grazing, the ecological site; the total annual production of vegetation in favorable, normal, and unfavorable years; the characteristic native vegetation; and the composition, by percentage of air-dry weight, of each species.

An *ecological site* is the product of all the environmental factors responsible for its development. It has characteristic soils that have developed over time throughout the soil development process; a characteristic hydrology, particularly infiltration and runoff, that has developed over time; and a characteristic plant community (kind and amount of vegetation). The hydrology of the site is influenced by development of the soil and plant community. The vegetation, soils, and hydrology are all interrelated. Each is influenced by the others and influences the development of the others. The plant community on an ecological site is typified by an association of species that differs from that of other ecological sites in the kind and/or proportion of species or in total production (Cooper and others, 1991). Descriptions of ecological sites are provided in the Field Office Technical Guide, which is available in local offices of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Woodland Understory Vegetation

The table shows, for each soil suitable for woodland, the potential for producing understory vegetation. The *total dry-weight production* for understory vegetation includes the herbaceous plants and the leaves, twigs, and fruit of woody plants up to a height of 4.5 feet. It is expressed in pounds per acre of air-dry vegetation in favorable, normal, and

unfavorable years. In a favorable year, soil moisture is above average during the optimum part of the growing season; in a normal year, soil moisture is average; and in an unfavorable year, it is below average. Yields are adjusted to a common percent of air-dry moisture content.

Characteristic native vegetation—the grasses, forbs, shrubs, and other plants that make up the understory natural plant community on each soil—is listed by common name. *Forestland composition* shows the expected percentage of the total annual production for each understory plant species under a canopy density that is most nearly typical of woodland in which the production of wood crops is highest.

The amount of characteristic native vegetation that can be used as forage depends on the kinds of grazing animals and on the grazing season. If well managed, some woodland can produce enough understory vegetation to support grazing of livestock or wildlife, or both, without damage to the trees.

The quantity and quality of understory vegetation vary with the kind of soil, the age and kind of trees in the canopy, the density of the canopy, and the depth and condition of the litter. The density of the canopy determines the amount of light that understory plants receive.

Grazingland Vegetation

Total dry-weight production is the amount of vegetation that can be expected to grow annually in a well-managed opened area that is supporting the open natural plant community. It includes all vegetation, whether or not it is palatable to grazing animals. It includes the current year’s growth of leaves, twigs, and fruits of woody plants. It does not include the increase in stem diameter of trees and shrubs. It is expressed in pounds per acre of air-dry vegetation for favorable, normal, and unfavorable years. In a favorable year, the amount and distribution of precipitation and the temperatures make growing conditions substantially better than average. In a normal year, growing conditions are about average. In

an unfavorable year, growing conditions are well below average, generally because of low available soil moisture. Yields are adjusted to a common percent of air-dry moisture content.

Characteristic native vegetation—the grasses, forbs, and shrubs that make up most of the open natural plant community on each soil—is listed by common name. *Grazingland composition* shows the expected percentage of the total annual production for each grazeable plant species making up the characteristic native vegetation. The amount that can be used as forage depends on the kinds of grazing animals and on the grazing season.

Woodland Grazing

Frank Gariglio, Forester, NRCS, and Michael Gondek, District Conservationist, NRCS, prepared this section.

Many of the native plants that occur in the forest understory can provide grazing opportunities for

livestock and big game animals (fig. 11). Introduced plants, generally grasses and legumes, that have been seeded on road cuts and fill slopes and on harvested or disturbed areas within the forest are additional forage sources for livestock. Livestock grazing is usually a lower priority for private landowners when compared to timber production on forestlands. Yet, managed understory and forest grazing can provide significant annual economic benefits for the private forestland user and landowner.

Forested soils found at lower elevations in the survey area are usually warmer and drier but offer a longer grazing season for livestock when compared to those soils found in higher elevations. Additionally, soils identified at the higher elevations of the survey area often have less livestock grazing use because of the very steep terrain and the higher percentage of tall brush species in the understory.

The amount and quality of light that reaches the ground affects plants growing beneath the tree

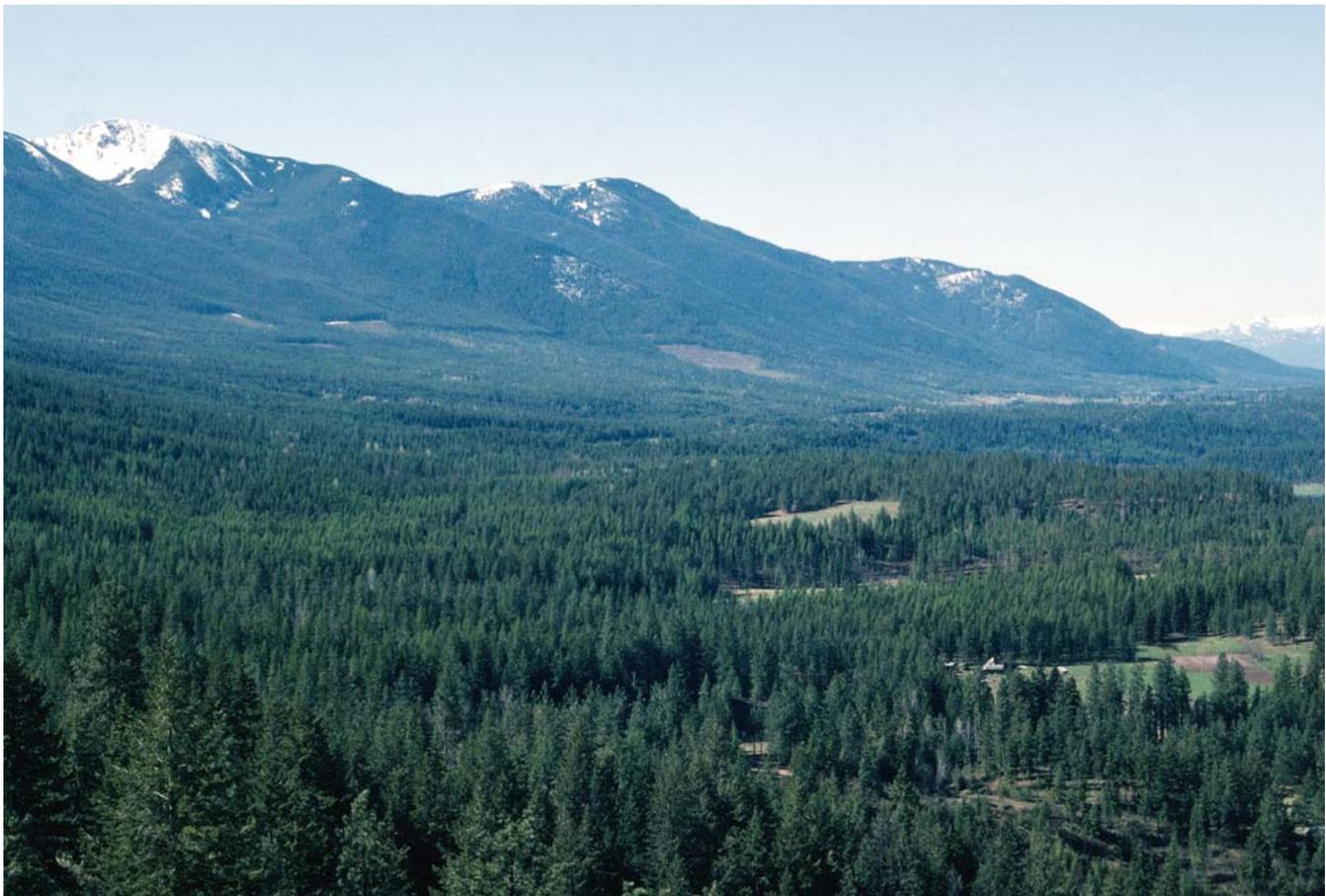


Figure 11.—In the foreground is an area of Stien gravelly ashy silt loam, 2 to 8 percent slopes, that is used for timber production and pasture. In the middle ground is an area of Pend Oreille ashy silt loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes, that is used for timber production. In the background is an area of Jaypeak gravelly ashy silt loam, 35 to 75 percent slopes, that is used for timber production and wildlife habitat.

canopy. In general, under the dense canopy of a fully stocked, mature forest, usable livestock forage is at the lowest level for the rotation of the stand. In contrast, where logging, fire, or other similar disturbance reduces the density of the forest canopy, the amount and kind of usable livestock forage increase because of the increase in sunlight and moisture that reaches the forest floor. The length of time required to complete the rotation from open seedling/sapling stage to older, mature, dense canopy stands and the corresponding variability in available forage depends on the specific plant community (Cooper and others, 1991), soil, climate, and other factors, such as management actions that are taken on the site. The potential for forage production for opened canopy forests in a well-managed condition is shown in the "Grazingland and Grazeable Understory-Productivity and Characteristic Plant Communities" table.

Cattle tend to concentrate in those areas within the forest that are the easiest to access and travel through, or that provide for all of their daily needs for

feed, water, and shelter within a short distance. For these reasons, riparian zones, meadows, and forest roads are all common areas for heavy cattle usage. Any concentration of livestock can result in overgrazing and other damage to the more palatable or sensitive plants. This in turn can lead to a corresponding increase in potential damage to riparian areas, road banks, or other soil resources. Using salt to encourage cattle to use areas further away from concentration zones, livestock herding, strategic water placement, establishing trails, and fence usage are all common livestock management practices utilized in woodland grazing systems. Seeding mixtures used in stabilizing road cut and fill slopes should be selected to minimize overuse by livestock.

Livestock grazing management should be balanced with other resource concerns within the forest. Some of the other resource concerns to address include water quality, wildlife habitat, aesthetic values, and the silvicultural goals of the landowner.

Forestland

Forestland Management and Productivity

The tables in this section can help forest owners or managers plan the use of soils for wood crops. They show the potential productivity of the soils for wood crops and rate the soils according to the limitations that affect various aspects of forest management.

Forestland Management

In the “Forestland Management” tables, interpretive ratings are given for various aspects of forestland management. The ratings are both verbal and numerical.

Some rating class terms indicate the degree to which the soils are suited to a specified forest management practice. *Well suited* indicates that the soil has features that are favorable for the specified practice and has no limitations. Good performance can be expected, and little or no maintenance is needed. *Moderately suited* indicates that the soil has features that are moderately favorable for the specified practice. One or more soil properties are less than desirable, and fair performance can be expected. Some maintenance is needed. *Poorly suited* indicates that the soil has one or more properties that are unfavorable for the specified practice. Overcoming the unfavorable properties requires special design, extra maintenance, and costly alteration. *Unsuited* indicates that the expected performance of the soil is unacceptable for the specified practice or that extreme measures are needed to overcome the undesirable soil properties.

Numerical ratings in the tables indicate the severity of individual limitations. The ratings are shown as decimal fractions ranging from 0.00 to 1.00. They indicate gradations between the point at which a soil feature has the greatest negative impact on the specified forest management practice (1.00) and the point at which the soil feature is not a limitation (0.00).

Rating class terms for fire damage and seedling mortality are expressed as *low*, *moderate*, and *high*. Where these terms are used, the numerical ratings indicate gradations between the point at which the potential for fire damage or seedling mortality is highest (1.00) and the point at which the potential is lowest (0.00).

The paragraphs that follow indicate the soil properties considered in rating the soils for forest management practices. More detailed information about the criteria used in the ratings is available in the “National Forestry Handbook.”

For *limitations affecting construction of haul roads and log landings*, the ratings are based on slope, flooding, permafrost, plasticity index, the hazard of soil slippage, content of sand, the Unified classification, rock fragments on or below the surface, depth to a restrictive layer that is indurated, depth to a water table, and ponding. The limitations are described as slight, moderate, or severe. A rating of *slight* indicates that no significant limitations affect construction activities, *moderate* indicates that one or more limitations can cause some difficulty in construction, and *severe* indicates that one or more limitations can make construction very difficult or very costly.

The ratings of *suitability for log landings* are based on slope, rock fragments on the surface, plasticity index, content of sand, the Unified classification, depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, and the hazard of soil slippage. The soils are described as well suited, moderately suited, or poorly suited to use as log landings.

Ratings in the column *soil rutting hazard* are based on depth to a water table, rock fragments on or below the surface, the Unified classification, depth to a restrictive layer, and slope. Ruts form as a result of the operation of forest equipment. The hazard is described as slight, moderate, or severe. A rating of *slight* indicates that the soil is subject to little or no rutting; *moderate* indicates that rutting is likely; and *severe* indicates that ruts form readily.

Ratings in the column *hazard of off-road or off-trail erosion* are based on slope and on soil erodibility

factor K. The soil loss is caused by sheet or rill erosion in off-road or off-trail areas where 50 to 75 percent of the surface has been exposed by logging, grazing, mining, or other kinds of disturbance. The hazard is described as slight, moderate, severe, or very severe. A rating of *slight* indicates that erosion is unlikely under ordinary climatic conditions; *moderate* indicates that some erosion is likely and that erosion-control measures may be needed; *severe* indicates that erosion is very likely and that erosion-control measures, including revegetation of bare areas, are advised; and *very severe* indicates that significant erosion is expected, loss of soil productivity and off-site damage are likely, and erosion-control measures are costly and generally impractical.

Ratings in the column *hazard of erosion on roads and trails* are based on the soil erodibility factor K, slope, and content of rock fragments. The ratings apply to unsurfaced roads and trails. The hazard is described as slight, moderate, or severe. A rating of *slight* indicates that little or no erosion is likely; *moderate* indicates that some erosion is likely, that the roads or trails may require occasional maintenance, and that simple erosion-control measures are needed; and *severe* indicates that significant erosion is expected, that the roads or trails require frequent maintenance, and that costly erosion-control measures are needed.

Ratings in the column *suitability for roads (natural surface)* are based on slope, rock fragments on the surface, plasticity index, content of sand, the Unified classification, depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, and the hazard of soil slippage. The ratings indicate the suitability for using the natural surface of the soil for roads. The soils are described as well suited, moderately suited, or poorly suited to this use.

Ratings in the columns *suitability for hand planting* and *suitability for mechanical planting* are based on slope, depth to a restrictive layer, content of sand, plasticity index, rock fragments on or below the surface, depth to a water table, and ponding. The soils are described as well suited, moderately suited, poorly suited, or unsuited to these methods of planting. It is assumed that necessary site preparation is completed before seedlings are planted.

Ratings in the column *suitability for use of harvesting equipment* are based on slope, rock fragments on the surface, plasticity index, content of sand, the Unified classification, depth to a water table, and ponding. The soils are described as well suited, moderately suited, or poorly suited to this use.

Ratings in the column *suitability for mechanical site preparation (surface)* are based on slope, depth to a restrictive layer, plasticity index, rock fragments on or below the surface, depth to a water table, and ponding. The soils are described as well suited, poorly suited, or unsuited to this management activity. The part of the soil from the surface to a depth of about 1 foot is considered in the ratings.

Ratings in the column *suitability for mechanical site preparation (deep)* are based on slope, depth to a restrictive layer, rock fragments on or below the surface, depth to a water table, and ponding. The soils are described as well suited, poorly suited, or unsuited to this management activity. The part of the soil from the surface to a depth of about 3 feet is considered in the ratings.

Ratings in the column *potential for damage to soil by fire* are based on texture of the surface layer, content of rock fragments and organic matter in the surface layer, thickness of the surface layer, and slope. The soils are described as having a low, moderate, or high potential for this kind of damage. The ratings indicate an evaluation of the potential impact of prescribed fires or wildfires that are intense enough to remove the duff layer and consume organic matter in the surface layer.

Ratings in the column *potential for seedling mortality* are based on flooding, ponding, depth to a water table, content of lime, reaction, salinity, available water capacity, soil moisture regime, soil temperature regime, aspect, and slope. The soils are described as having a low, moderate, or high potential for seedling mortality.

Forestland Productivity

In the "Forestland Productivity" table, the *potential productivity* of merchantable or *common trees* on a soil is expressed as a site index and as a volume number. The *site index* is the average height, in feet, that dominant and codominant trees of a given species attain in a specified number of years (Alexander, 1967; Cochran, 1979a; Cochran, 1979b; Cochran, 1979c; Haig, 1932; Meyer, 1961; Schmidt and others, 1976). The site index applies to fully stocked, even-aged, unmanaged stands. Commonly grown trees are those that forest managers generally favor in intermediate or improvement cuttings. They are selected on the basis of growth rate, quality, value, and marketability. More detailed information regarding site index is available in the "National Forestry Handbook" (USDA, 1998), which is available in local offices of the Natural

Resources Conservation Service or on the Internet (<http://soils.usda.gov/technical/>).

The *volume of wood fiber*, a number, is the yield likely to be produced by the most important tree species. This number, expressed as cubic feet per acre per year and calculated at the age of culmination of the mean annual increment (CMAI), indicates the amount of fiber produced in a fully stocked, even-aged, unmanaged stand.

Trees to manage are those that are preferred for planting, seeding, or natural regeneration and those that remain in the stand after thinning or partial harvest.

Forestland in the Boundary County Area

Frank Gariglio, Forester, NRCS, and Michael Gondek, District Conservationist, NRCS, prepared this section.

The forest product industry began in Boundary County around 1890 with limited logging of the local forests and the corresponding establishment of small sawmill operations. Within a few years, more mills were established throughout the area and a variety of forest products were being manufactured. Despite many up- and downturns in the demand for wood products during the past century, the forest products industry continues to be a dominant economic force in the soil survey area (fig. 12).

The most extensive conifer species in the soil survey area are ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, grand fir, western white pine, lodgepole pine, western hemlock, western red cedar, western larch, subalpine fir, and Engelmann spruce. Other species of lesser extent include subalpine larch and mountain hemlock. Cottonwood, quaking aspen, and birch occur on the wetter soils and along riparian zones.

Tree growth rates and the species of trees that grow on a particular site vary according to soil types. Soil depth, chemistry, texture, and available water-holding capacity in combination with aspect, elevation, and precipitation are some of the major environmental factors that influence tree species occurrences and growth rates.

This soil survey provides more detailed interpretations of the forested soils identified in the soil survey area. However, the following table is useful in identifying general soil and climatic influences on the common trees in the area.

Relative Silvical Characteristics of the Common Forest Trees in the Boundary County Soil Survey Area¹

Tolerance to:	Low	Moderate	High
Shade	WL LP	PP WP DF ES GF AF	WC
Frost	WH WC GF	PP WL DF WP AF ES	LP
Drought	WH WC AF	ES WP GF WL LP DF	PP
Fire resistance	WH WC AF	ES WP GF WL LP DF	PP
Excess water	PP DF WL	GF WP AF WH ES	WC LP
AF	Subalpine fir	PP	Ponderosa pine
DF	Douglas-fir	WC	Western red cedar
ES	Engelmann spruce	WH	Western hemlock
GF	Grand fir	WL	Western larch
LP	Lodgepole pine	WP	Western white pine

¹Adapted from Fiedler, Carl E., and Lloyd, Dennis A. 1995. Autecology and synecology of western larch. *In* ecology and management of larch forests: a look ahead." Proceedings of an international symposium, Whitefish, Montana, U.S.A. October 5-9, 1992. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Intermountain Research Station GTR-INT-319.

The historic occurrence of wildfires in the soil survey area heavily influenced the composition of the forests prior to the turn of the last century. Since that time, the makeup of the trees found on most of the forest stands has been altered by fire suppression, as well as by preferential harvest of the higher value trees during logging. In addition, western white pine is further compromised as a viable stand component over its historic range because of the devastation caused by white pine blister rust.

The topography of much of the forestlands in the soil survey area consists of steep and very steep mountain slopes. The remainder of the area consists of nearly level bottomlands on the Kootenai River flood plain and adjacent gently sloping benches in the valley. Forest soils are also very steep on the dissected landforms and escarpments in the Kootenai Valley. Forest harvesting methods are influenced by the steepness of the terrain. Slopes that exceed 35 percent are generally not suitable for ground machine skidding. On any ground-based system, erosion, compaction, and displacement of the soil must be carefully managed. On slopes steeper than 35 percent, highlead or skyline systems are utilized for harvesting timber.

Aspect, elevation, silvicultural history, seedbed condition, and soil characteristics influence the success of natural seedling germination, survival, and eventual establishment of mature trees within a



Figure 12.—An area of Redraven medial silt loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes, bouldery, that is used for timber production and wildlife habitat.

forest stand. Most of the soils in the soil survey area have a surface layer of varying thicknesses that has a high content of volcanic ash. The content of volcanic ash adds to the moisture and nutrient-holding capacity of the soils, which influences tree growth rates. Brackenfern and alder brush competition is present on many of the higher elevation forest soils. In many instances, the removal of the tree canopy has resulted in long-term suppression of the potential tree regeneration on these sites because of the severe brush competition.

Careful placement and construction of logging roads and skidtrails, with erosion stabilization practices installed prior to use, are necessary to prevent erosion and sedimentation on many of the forest soils in the soil survey area, especially for soils

on steeper landforms. This soil survey identifies several soils with subsoil material that can erode rapidly when exposed during road building. Soil slippage and landslides can also be a problem on some of the steep soils, especially those identified on the terrace escarpments found in the Kootenai River valley. Other forested soils in the valleys have a high water table that makes the soil wetter for longer periods throughout the year, leading to a higher compaction and displacement hazard.

The “Forestland Management” and “Forestland Productivity” tables and the map unit descriptions in the section, “Detailed Soil Map Units,” provide more information on soil-related management interpretations and limitations.

Recreation

The soils of the survey area are rated in the “Recreation” tables according to limitations that affect their suitability for recreation. The ratings are both verbal and numerical. Rating class terms indicate the extent to which the soils are limited by all of the soil features that affect the recreational uses. *Not limited* indicates that the soil has features that are very favorable for the specified use. Good performance and very low maintenance can be expected. *Somewhat limited* indicates that the soil has features that are moderately favorable for the specified use. The limitations can be overcome or minimized by special planning, design, or installation. Fair performance and moderate maintenance can be expected. *Very limited* indicates that the soil has one or more features that are unfavorable for the specified use. The limitations generally cannot be overcome without major soil reclamation, special design, or expensive installation procedures. Poor performance and high maintenance can be expected.

Numerical ratings in the tables indicate the severity of individual limitations. The ratings are shown as decimal fractions ranging from 0.00 to 1.00. They indicate gradations between the point at which a soil feature has the greatest negative impact on the use (1.00) and the point at which the soil feature is not a limitation (0.00).

The ratings in the tables are based on restrictive soil features, such as wetness, slope, and texture of the surface layer. Susceptibility to flooding is considered. Not considered in the ratings, but important in evaluating a site, are the location and accessibility of the area, the size and shape of the area and its scenic quality, vegetation, access to water, potential water impoundment sites, and access to public sewer lines. The capacity of the soil to absorb septic tank effluent and the ability of the soil to support vegetation also are important. Soils that are subject to flooding are limited for recreational uses by the duration and intensity of flooding and the season when flooding occurs. In planning recreational facilities, onsite assessment of the

height, duration, intensity, and frequency of flooding is essential. The information in the “Recreation” tables can be supplemented by other information in this survey, for example, interpretations for building site development, construction materials, sanitary facilities, and water management.

Camp areas require site preparation, such as shaping and leveling the tent and parking areas, stabilizing roads and intensively used areas, and installing sanitary facilities and utility lines. Camp areas are subject to heavy foot traffic and some vehicular traffic. The ratings are based on the soil properties that affect the ease of developing camp areas and the performance of the areas after development. Slope, stoniness, and depth to bedrock or a cemented pan are the main concerns affecting the development of camp areas. The soil properties that affect the performance of the areas after development are those that influence trafficability and promote the growth of vegetation, especially in heavily used areas. For good trafficability, the surface of camp areas should absorb rainfall readily, remain firm under heavy foot traffic, and not be dusty when dry. The soil properties that influence trafficability are texture of the surface layer, depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, permeability, and large stones. The soil properties that affect the growth of plants are depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, permeability, and toxic substances in the soil.

Picnic areas are subject to heavy foot traffic. Most vehicular traffic is confined to access roads and parking areas. The ratings are based on the soil properties that affect the ease of developing picnic areas and that influence trafficability and the growth of vegetation after development. Slope and stoniness are the main concerns affecting the development of picnic areas. For good trafficability, the surface of picnic areas should absorb rainfall readily, remain firm under heavy foot traffic, and not be dusty when dry. The soil properties that influence trafficability are texture of the surface layer, depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, permeability, and large stones. The

soil properties that affect the growth of plants are depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, permeability, and toxic substances in the soil.

Playgrounds require soils that are nearly level, are free of stones, and can withstand intensive foot traffic. The ratings are based on the soil properties that affect the ease of developing playgrounds and that influence trafficability and the growth of vegetation after development. Slope and stoniness are the main concerns affecting the development of playgrounds. For good trafficability, the surface of the playgrounds should absorb rainfall readily, remain firm under heavy foot traffic, and not be dusty when dry. The soil properties that influence trafficability are texture of the surface layer, depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, permeability, and large stones. The soil properties that affect the growth of plants are depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, permeability, and toxic substances in the soil.

Paths and trails for hiking and horseback riding should require little or no slope modification through cutting and filling. The ratings are based on the soil properties that affect trafficability and erodibility. These properties are stoniness, depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, slope, and texture of the surface layer.

Off-road motorcycle trails require little or no site preparation. They are not covered with surfacing material or vegetation. Considerable compaction of the soil material is likely. The ratings are based on the soil properties that influence erodibility, trafficability, dustiness, and the ease of revegetation. These properties are stoniness, slope, depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, and texture of the surface layer.

Golf fairways are subject to heavy foot traffic and some light vehicular traffic. Cutting or filling may be required. Irrigation is not considered in the ratings. The ratings are based on the soil properties that

affect plant growth and trafficability after vegetation is established. The properties that affect plant growth are reaction; depth to a water table; ponding; depth to bedrock or a cemented pan; the available water capacity in the upper 40 inches; the content of salts, sodium, or calcium carbonate; and sulfidic materials. The properties that affect trafficability are flooding, depth to a water table, ponding, slope, stoniness, and the amount of sand, clay, or organic matter in the surface layer. The suitability of the soil for traps, tees, roughs, and greens is not considered in the ratings.

Recreation in the Boundary County Area

The soil survey area is located in an exceptional scenic and recreational part of Idaho. It includes forested mountains; two major rivers, the Kootenai and Moyie; McArthur Lake; and many smaller lakes and streams. Fishing is good for all types of trout and other sport fishes. Deer, elk, moose, bear, and cougar inhabit the area, and big-game hunting is excellent. Grouse are plentiful in the forested, upland areas. The Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge and the McArthur Lake State Wildlife Management Area provide important waterfowl habitat. Other wetland areas along the Kootenai River and the many other ponds and streams throughout the area supply additional waterfowl habitat.

Many public and private campgrounds, resorts, and recreation areas offer excellent facilities for boating, fishing, and other outdoor activities. Opportunities exist for hiking and mountain biking during the summer and cross-country skiing and snowmobiling during the winter. The increased demand for land to provide recreational facilities is expected to continue for many years.

Wildlife Habitat

Soils affect the kind and amount of vegetation that is available to wildlife as food and cover. Soils also affect the construction of water impoundments. The kind and abundance of wildlife depend largely on the amount and distribution of food, cover, and water. Wildlife habitat can be created or improved by planting appropriate vegetation, by maintaining the existing plant cover, or by promoting the natural establishment of desirable plants.

In the "Wildlife Habitat" table, the soils in the survey area are rated according to their potential for providing habitat for various kinds of wildlife. This information can be used in planning parks, wildlife refuges, nature study areas, and other developments for wildlife; in selecting soils that are suitable for establishing, improving, or maintaining specific elements of wildlife habitat; and in determining the intensity of management needed for each element of the habitat.

The potential of the soil is rated good, fair, poor, or very poor. A rating of *good* indicates that the element or kind of habitat is easily established, improved, or maintained. Few or no limitations affect management, and satisfactory results can be expected. A rating of *fair* indicates that the element or kind of habitat can be established, improved, or maintained in most places. Moderately intensive management is required for satisfactory results. A rating of *poor* indicates that limitations are severe for the designated element or kind of habitat. Habitat can be created, improved, or maintained in most places, but management is difficult and must be intensive. A rating of *very poor* indicates that restrictions for the element or kind of habitat are very severe and that unsatisfactory results can be expected. Creating, improving, or maintaining habitat is impractical or impossible.

The elements of wildlife habitat are described in the following paragraphs.

Grain and seed crops are domestic grains and seed-producing herbaceous plants. Soil properties and features that affect the growth of grain and seed crops are depth of the root zone, texture of the

surface layer, available water capacity, wetness, slope, surface stoniness, and flooding. Soil temperature and soil moisture also are considerations. Examples of grain and seed crops are barley, canola, hops, oats, and wheat.

Grasses and legumes are domestic perennial grasses and herbaceous legumes. Soil properties and features that affect the growth of grasses and legumes are depth of the root zone, texture of the surface layer, available water capacity, wetness, surface stoniness, flooding, and slope. Soil temperature and soil moisture also are considerations. Examples of grasses and legumes are alfalfa, brome, clover, and fescue.

Wild herbaceous plants are native or naturally established grasses and forbs, including weeds. Soil properties and features that affect the growth of these plants are depth of the root zone, texture of the surface layer, available water capacity, wetness, surface stoniness, and flooding. Soil temperature and soil moisture also are considerations. Examples of wild herbaceous plants are false Solomon's seal, pinegrass, showy aster, and wheatgrass.

Deciduous trees and woody understory produce nuts or other fruit, buds, catkins, twigs, bark, and foliage. Soil properties and features that affect the growth of deciduous trees and shrubs are depth of the root zone, available water capacity, and wetness. Examples of these plants are aspen, chokecherry, huckleberry, and red osier dogwood. Examples of fruit-producing shrubs that are suitable for planting on soils rated good are Russian-olive and crabapple.

Coniferous plants furnish browse and seeds. Soil properties and features that affect the growth of coniferous trees, shrubs, and ground cover are depth of the root zone, available water capacity, and wetness. Examples of coniferous plants are common juniper, Engelmann spruce, lodgepole pine, subalpine fir, western red cedar, and western white pine.

Shrubs are bushy woody plants that produce fruit, buds, twigs, bark, and foliage. Soil properties and

features that affect the growth of shrubs are depth of the root zone, available water capacity, salinity, and soil moisture. Examples of shrubs are mallow ninebark, redstem ceanothus, and snowberry.

Wetland plants are annual and perennial wild herbaceous plants that grow on moist or wet sites. Submerged or floating aquatic plants are excluded. Soil properties and features affecting wetland plants are texture of the surface layer, wetness, reaction, salinity, slope, and surface stoniness. Examples of wetland plants are cattail, rush, and sedge.

Shallow water areas have an average depth of less than 5 feet. Some are naturally wet areas. Others are created by dams, levees, or other water-control structures. Soil properties and features affecting shallow water areas are depth to bedrock, wetness, surface stoniness, slope, and permeability. Examples of shallow water areas are marshes, ponds, and waterfowl feeding areas.

Habitat for openland wildlife consists of cropland, pasture, meadows, and areas that are overgrown with grasses, herbs, shrubs, and vines. These areas produce grain and seed crops, grasses and legumes, and wild herbaceous plants. Wildlife attracted to these areas include cottontail, meadowlark, pheasant, red fox, and savannah sparrow.

Habitat for woodland wildlife consists of areas of deciduous and/or coniferous plants and associated grasses, legumes, and wild herbaceous plants. Wildlife attracted to these areas include bear, deer, elk, ruffed grouse, squirrel, thrush, wild turkey, and woodpecker.

Habitat for wetland wildlife consists of open, marshy or swampy shallow water areas. Wildlife attracted to these areas include beaver, duck, geese, heron, mink, muskrat, and shore birds.

Wildlife of the Boundary County Area

Michael Gondek, District Conservationist, NRCS, and Frank J. Fink, Biologist, NRCS, prepared this section.

This section relates to the various uses that wildlife make of the soils in the survey area. Locations of different wildlife species and their activities are referenced to soil map unit numbers. The Boundary County soil survey area supports a variety of game and nongame fish and wildlife populations. The quality of wildlife habitat depends on the soil, kind and amount of vegetation, and past management.

Big game animals in the survey area consist of elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, black bear, and moose. Elk are well suited to the habitat of the area. Most of

the soil map units below 4,800-foot elevation provide summer and winter range for elk. These soil map units include 116, 126, 136, and 185. Elk migrate to winter range on south- and west-facing slopes below 4,000-foot elevation along the major river valleys. Creating new brush fields and rehabilitating existing brush fields on these winter ranges is critical to maintaining elk herds at current levels. Above 4,800-foot elevation, soil map units, including 104, 155, 164, and 168, are used strictly for summer range.

Deer in the survey area include both white-tailed deer and mule deer. White-tailed deer comprise more than half of the total deer population. White-tailed deer occupy the lower elevations, including soil map units 126, 166, 175, 179, and 190, along the valleys and river systems. Mule deer are more widely spread and occupy areas including soil map units 104, 108, 123, 124, 155, 164, 176, and 184.

A variety of upland game bird species use all of the different habitat types in the survey area. Three species of forest grouse—ruffed, blue, and spruce—inhabit forestland areas. Grouse occupy areas in soil map units such as 107, 116, 117, 126, 136, 155, 166, and 174. Ruffed grouse spend the summer in open clearings within wooded areas and then winter in conifer forests. Blue grouse move to higher elevations for wintering, but their nesting habitat is usually at lower elevations on more open, grassy, or brush-covered slopes and ridges.

Furbearers, such as beaver, mink, muskrat, and otter, live in and around creeks, wetlands, and lakes in the survey area. Soil map units 171, 142, and 199 comprise the major riparian zones in the area, but small creeks extend up into the foothills and mountains and provide additional riparian areas for these furbearers.

Where appropriate conditions permit, bobcat, coyote, fisher, lynx, marten, mountain lion, and wolverine inhabit in the survey area.

Open water areas and wetlands exist throughout the survey area, making it a major waterfowl area. Nesting occurs mainly along rivers, streams, and small lakes or ponds. Most waterfowl activity occurs in soil map units 151, 201, 142, 199, and 171. Peak fall migration of waterfowl occurs from mid October through November. These migrating waterfowl will hold over at the Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge, McArthur Lake Wildlife Management Area, the Kootenai River, and the many sloughs and ponds along the valley. The major migrating species are bufflehead, Canada geese, gadwall, goldeneye, mallard, pintail, swan, teal, wigeon, and wood duck.

Several raptors use the entire survey area for either all or part of their range. Some of the more

common and highly visible raptors are bald eagle, red-tailed hawk, goshawk osprey, and a variety of owls. The bald eagle is listed as a threatened species in the survey area, where there are active nesting sites. The bald eagle is mostly a winter visitor and feeds along the rivers and ponds associated with soil map units 119, 151, 142, 201, 199, and 171.

The main sport fisheries in the major rivers and streams of the survey area are rainbow trout, cutthroat trout, and mountain whitefish. Tributary streams contain significant spawning and rearing habitats for Kokanee salmon, rainbow trout, cutthroat trout, and brook trout. The Kootenai River has bull trout, white sturgeon, and ling (burbot). Bull trout and white sturgeon are listed as threatened and endangered under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. There are numerous small lakes containing largemouth bass, crappie, perch, bluegill, and various trout species.

The wildlife population in the survey area is largely determined by habitat suitability, including the food supply, amount of cover, and water availability. Habitats differ in their capacity to provide these essential needs. Some of these deficiencies are because of the characteristics of the soils, and others are the result of management.

Populations of game and nongame species can be enhanced by using conservation practices to improve their habitat. These practices include development of odd or irregularly shaped areas in and adjacent to farmland to provide food and cover, protection of habitat from fire or grazing, and establishment of woody vegetation to provide winter shelter. Wildlife habitat may also be enhanced through application of commonly employed conservation practices including minimum tillage, planned grazing systems, pond construction, shelterbelts and field windbreaks, and stripcropping.

Engineering

This section provides information for planning land uses related to urban development and to water management. Soils are rated for various uses, and the most limiting features are identified. Ratings are given for building site development, sanitary facilities, construction materials, and water management. The ratings are based on observed performance of the soils and on the estimated data and test data in the “Soil Properties” section.

Information in this section is intended for land use planning, for evaluating land use alternatives, and for planning site investigations prior to design and construction. The information, however, has limitations. For example, estimates and other data generally apply only to that part of the soil between the surface and a depth of 5 to 7 feet. Because of the map scale, small areas of different soils may be included within the mapped areas of a specific soil.

The information is not site specific and does not eliminate the need for onsite investigation of the soils or for testing and analysis by personnel experienced in the design and construction of engineering works.

Government ordinances and regulations that restrict certain land uses or impose specific design criteria were not considered in preparing the information in this section. Local ordinances and regulations should be considered in planning, in site selection, and in design.

Soil properties, site features, and observed performance were considered in determining the ratings in this section. During the fieldwork for this soil survey, determinations were made about particle-size distribution, liquid limit, plasticity index, soil reaction, depth to bedrock, hardness of bedrock within 5 to 7 feet of the surface, soil wetness, depth to a water table, ponding, slope, likelihood of flooding, natural soil structure aggregation, and soil density. Data were collected about kinds of clay minerals, mineralogy of the sand and silt fractions, and the kinds of adsorbed cations. Estimates were made for erodibility, permeability, corrosivity, shrink-swell potential, available water capacity, and other behavioral characteristics affecting engineering uses.

This information can be used to evaluate the potential of areas for residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational uses; make preliminary estimates of construction conditions; evaluate alternative routes for roads, streets, highways, pipelines, and underground cables; evaluate alternative sites for sanitary landfills, septic tank absorption fields, and sewage lagoons; plan detailed onsite investigations of soils and geology; locate potential sources of gravel, sand, earthfill, and topsoil; plan drainage systems, irrigation systems, ponds, terraces, and other structures for soil and water conservation; and predict performance of proposed small structures and pavements by comparing the performance of existing similar structures on the same or similar soils.

Additional interpretations can be made using the information in the tables, along with soil maps, soil descriptions, and other data provided in this survey.

Some of the terms used in this soil survey have a special meaning in soil science and are defined in the “Glossary.”

Building Site Development

Soil properties influence the development of building sites, including the selection of the site, the design of the structure, construction, performance after construction, and maintenance. The “Building Site Development” tables show the degree and kind of soil limitations that affect dwellings with and without basements, small commercial buildings, local roads and streets, shallow excavations, and lawns and landscaping.

The ratings in the tables are both verbal and numerical. Rating class terms indicate the extent to which the soils are limited by all of the soil features that affect building site development. *Not limited* indicates that the soil has features that are very favorable for the specified use. Good performance and very low maintenance can be expected. *Somewhat limited* indicates that the soil has features that are moderately favorable for the specified use.

The limitations can be overcome or minimized by special planning, design, or installation. Fair performance and moderate maintenance can be expected. *Very limited* indicates that the soil has one or more features that are unfavorable for the specified use. The limitations generally cannot be overcome without major soil reclamation, special design, or expensive installation procedures. Poor performance and high maintenance can be expected.

Numerical ratings in the tables indicate the severity of individual limitations. The ratings are shown as decimal fractions ranging from 0.00 to 1.00. They indicate gradations between the point at which a soil feature has the greatest negative impact on the use (1.00) and the point at which the soil feature is not a limitation (0.00).

Dwellings are single-family houses of three stories or less. For dwellings without basements, the foundation is assumed to consist of spread footings of reinforced concrete built on undisturbed soil at a depth of 2 feet or at the depth of maximum frost penetration, whichever is deeper. For dwellings with basements, the foundation is assumed to consist of spread footings of reinforced concrete built on undisturbed soil at a depth of about 7 feet. The ratings for dwellings are based on the soil properties that affect the capacity of the soil to support a load without movement and on the properties that affect excavation and construction costs. The properties that affect the load-supporting capacity include depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, subsidence, linear extensibility (shrink-swell potential), and compressibility. Compressibility is inferred from the Unified classification. The properties that affect the ease and amount of excavation include depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, slope, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, hardness of bedrock or a cemented pan, and the amount and size of rock fragments.

Small commercial buildings are structures that are less than three stories high and do not have basements. The foundation is assumed to consist of spread footings of reinforced concrete built on undisturbed soil at a depth of 2 feet or at the depth of maximum frost penetration, whichever is deeper. The ratings are based on the soil properties that affect the capacity of the soil to support a load without movement and on the properties that affect excavation and construction costs. The properties that affect the load-supporting capacity include depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, subsidence, linear extensibility (shrink-swell potential), and compressibility (which is inferred from the Unified

classification). The properties that affect the ease and amount of excavation include flooding, depth to a water table, ponding, slope, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, hardness of bedrock or a cemented pan, and the amount and size of rock fragments.

Local roads and streets have an all-weather surface and carry automobile and light truck traffic all year. They have a subgrade of cut or fill soil material; a base of gravel, crushed rock, or soil material stabilized by lime or cement; and a surface of flexible material (asphalt), rigid material (concrete), or gravel with a binder. The ratings are based on the soil properties that affect the ease of excavation and grading and the traffic-supporting capacity. The properties that affect the ease of excavation and grading are depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, hardness of bedrock or a cemented pan, depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, the amount of large stones, and slope. The properties that affect the traffic-supporting capacity are soil strength (as inferred from the AASHTO group index number), subsidence, linear extensibility (shrink-swell potential), the potential for frost action, depth to a water table, and ponding.

Shallow excavations are trenches or holes dug to a maximum depth of 5 or 6 feet for graves, utility lines, open ditches, or other purposes. The ratings are based on the soil properties that influence the ease of digging and the resistance to sloughing. Depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, hardness of bedrock or a cemented pan, the amount of large stones, and dense layers influence the ease of digging, filling, and compacting. Depth to the seasonal high water table, flooding, and ponding may restrict the period when excavations can be made. Slope influences the ease of using machinery. Soil texture, depth to the water table, and linear extensibility (shrink-swell potential) influence the resistance to sloughing.

Lawns and landscaping require soils on which turf and ornamental trees and shrubs can be established and maintained. Irrigation is not considered in the ratings. The ratings are based on the soil properties that affect plant growth and trafficability after vegetation is established. The properties that affect plant growth are reaction; depth to a water table; ponding; depth to bedrock or a cemented pan; available water capacity in the upper 40 inches; content of salts, sodium, or calcium carbonate; and sulfidic materials. The properties that affect trafficability are flooding; depth to a water table; ponding; slope; stoniness; and the amount of sand, clay, or organic matter in the surface layer.

Sanitary Facilities

The “Sanitary Facilities” tables show the degree and kind of soil limitations that affect septic tank absorption fields, sewage lagoons, sanitary landfills, and daily cover for landfill. The ratings are both verbal and numerical. Rating class terms indicate the extent to which the soils are limited by all of the soil features that affect these uses. *Not limited* indicates that the soil has features that are very favorable for the specified use. Good performance and very low maintenance can be expected. *Somewhat limited* indicates that the soil has features that are moderately favorable for the specified use. The limitations can be overcome or minimized by special planning, design, or installation. Fair performance and moderate maintenance can be expected. *Very limited* indicates that the soil has one or more features that are unfavorable for the specified use. The limitations generally cannot be overcome without major soil reclamation, special design, or expensive installation procedures. Poor performance and high maintenance can be expected.

Numerical ratings in the tables indicate the severity of individual limitations. The ratings are shown as decimal fractions ranging from 0.00 to 1.00. They indicate gradations between the point at which a soil feature has the greatest negative impact on the use (1.00) and the point at which the soil feature is not a limitation (0.00).

Septic tank absorption fields are areas in which effluent from a septic tank is distributed into the soil through subsurface tiles or perforated pipe. Only that part of the soil between depths of 24 and 60 inches is evaluated. The ratings are based on the soil properties that affect absorption of the effluent, construction and maintenance of the system, and public health. Permeability, depth to a water table, ponding, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, and flooding affect absorption of the effluent. Stones and boulders, ice, and bedrock or a cemented pan interfere with installation. Subsidence interferes with installation and maintenance. Excessive slope may cause lateral seepage and surfacing of the effluent in downslope areas.

Some soils are underlain by loose sand and gravel or fractured bedrock at a depth of less than 4 feet below the distribution lines. In these soils the absorption field may not adequately filter the effluent, particularly when the system is new. As a result, the ground water may become contaminated.

Sewage lagoons are shallow ponds constructed to hold sewage while aerobic bacteria decompose the

solid and liquid wastes. Lagoons should have a nearly level floor surrounded by cut slopes or embankments of compacted soil. Nearly impervious soil material for the lagoon floor and sides is required to minimize seepage and contamination of ground water. Considered in the ratings are slope, permeability, depth to a water table, ponding, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, flooding, large stones, and content of organic matter.

Soil permeability is a critical property affecting the suitability for sewage lagoons. Most porous soils eventually become sealed when they are used as sites for sewage lagoons. Until sealing occurs, however, the hazard of pollution is severe. Soils that have a permeability rate of more than 2 inches per hour are too porous for the proper functioning of sewage lagoons. In these soils, seepage of the effluent can result in contamination of the ground water. Ground-water contamination is also a hazard if fractured bedrock is within a depth of 40 inches, if the water table is high enough to raise the level of sewage in the lagoon, or if floodwater overtops the lagoon.

A high content of organic matter is detrimental to proper functioning of the lagoon because it inhibits aerobic activity. Slope, bedrock, and cemented pans can cause construction problems, and large stones can hinder compaction of the lagoon floor. If the lagoon is to be uniformly deep throughout, the slope must be gentle enough and the soil material must be thick enough over bedrock or a cemented pan to make land smoothing practical.

A *trench sanitary landfill* is an area where solid waste is placed in successive layers in an excavated trench. The waste is spread, compacted, and covered daily with a thin layer of soil excavated at the site. When the trench is full, a final cover of soil material at least 2-feet thick is placed over the landfill. The ratings in the tables are based on the soil properties that affect the risk of pollution, the ease of excavation, trafficability, and revegetation. These properties include permeability, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, depth to a water table, ponding, slope, flooding, texture, stones and boulders, highly organic layers, soil reaction, and content of salts and sodium. Unless otherwise stated, the ratings apply only to that part of the soil within a depth of about 6 feet. For deeper trenches, onsite investigation may be needed.

Hard, nonrippable bedrock, reviced bedrock, or highly permeable strata in or directly below the proposed trench bottom can affect the ease of excavation and the hazard of ground-water pollution. Slope affects construction of the trenches and the

movement of surface water around the landfill. It also affects the construction and performance of roads in areas of the landfill.

Soil texture and consistence affect the ease with which the trench is dug and the ease with which the soil can be used as daily or final cover. They determine the workability of the soil when dry and when wet. Soils that are plastic and sticky when wet are difficult to excavate, grade, or compact and are difficult to place as a uniformly thick cover over a layer of refuse.

The soil material used as the final cover for a trench landfill should be suitable for plants. It should not have excess sodium or salts and should not be too acid. The surface layer generally has the best workability, the highest content of organic matter, and the best potential for plants. Material from the surface layer should be stockpiled for use as the final cover.

In an *area sanitary landfill*, solid waste is placed in successive layers on the surface of the soil. The waste is spread, compacted, and covered daily with a thin layer of soil from a source away from the site. A final cover of soil material at least 2-feet thick is placed over the completed landfill. The ratings in the tables are based on the soil properties that affect trafficability and the risk of pollution. These properties include flooding, permeability, depth to a water table, ponding, slope, and depth to bedrock or a cemented pan.

Flooding is a serious problem because it can result in pollution in areas downstream from the landfill. If permeability is too rapid or if fractured bedrock, a fractured cemented pan, or the water table is close to the surface, the leachate can contaminate the water supply. Slope is a consideration because of the extra grading required to maintain roads in the steeper areas of the landfill. Also, leachate may flow along the surface of the soils in the steeper areas and cause difficult seepage problems.

Daily cover for landfill is the soil material that is used to cover compacted solid waste in an area sanitary landfill. The soil material is obtained offsite, transported to the landfill, and spread over the waste. The ratings in the tables also apply to the final cover for a landfill. They are based on the soil properties that affect workability, the ease of digging, and the ease of moving and spreading the material over the refuse daily during wet and dry periods. These properties include soil texture; depth to a water table; ponding; rock fragments; slope; depth to bedrock or a cemented pan; reaction; and content of salts, sodium, or lime.

Loamy or silty soils that are free of large stones and excess gravel are the best cover for a landfill.

Clayey soils may be sticky and difficult to spread; sandy soils are subject to wind erosion.

Slope affects the ease of excavation and of moving the cover material. Also, it can influence runoff, erosion, and reclamation of the borrow area.

After soil material has been removed, the soil material remaining in the borrow area must be thick enough over bedrock, a cemented pan, or the water table to permit revegetation. The soil material used as the final cover for a landfill should be suitable for plants. It should not have excess sodium, salts, or lime and should not be too acid.

Agricultural Waste Management

Soil properties are important considerations in areas where soils are used as sites for the treatment and disposal of organic waste and wastewater. Selection of soils with properties that favor waste management can help to prevent environmental damage.

The "Agricultural Waste Management" tables show the degree and kind of soil limitations affecting the treatment of agricultural waste, including municipal and food-processing wastewater and effluent from lagoons or storage ponds. Municipal wastewater is the waste stream from a municipality. It contains domestic waste and may contain industrial waste. It may have received primary or secondary treatment. It is rarely untreated sewage. Food-processing wastewater results from the preparation of fruits, vegetables, milk, cheese, and meats for public consumption. In places it is high in content of sodium and chloride. In the context of these tables, the effluent in lagoons and storage ponds is from facilities used to treat or store food-processing wastewater or domestic or animal waste. Domestic and food-processing wastewater is very dilute, and the effluent from the facilities that treat or store it commonly is very low in content of carbonaceous and nitrogenous material; the content of nitrogen commonly ranges from 10 to 30 milligrams per liter. The wastewater from animal waste treatment lagoons or storage ponds, however, has much higher concentrations of these materials, mainly because the manure has not been diluted as much as the domestic waste. The content of nitrogen in this wastewater generally ranges from 50 to 2,000 milligrams per liter. When wastewater is applied, checks should be made to ensure that nitrogen, heavy metals, and salts are not added in excessive amounts.

The ratings in the tables are for waste management systems that not only dispose of and

treat organic waste or wastewater but also are beneficial to crops (application of manure and food-processing waste, application of sewage sludge, and disposal of wastewater by irrigation) and for waste management systems that are designed only for the purpose of wastewater disposal and treatment (overland flow of wastewater, rapid infiltration of wastewater, and slow rate treatment of wastewater).

The ratings are both verbal and numerical. Rating class terms indicate the extent to which the soils are limited by all of the soil features that affect agricultural waste management. *Not limited* indicates that the soil has features that are very favorable for the specified use. Good performance and very low maintenance can be expected. *Somewhat limited* indicates that the soil has features that are moderately favorable for the specified use. The limitations can be overcome or minimized by special planning, design, or installation. Fair performance and moderate maintenance can be expected. *Very limited* indicates that the soil has one or more features that are unfavorable for the specified use. The limitations generally cannot be overcome without major soil reclamation, special design, or expensive installation procedures. Poor performance and high maintenance can be expected.

Numerical ratings in the tables indicate the severity of individual limitations. The ratings are shown as decimal fractions ranging from 0.01 to 1.00. They indicate gradations between the point at which a soil feature has the greatest negative impact on the use (1.00) and the point at which the soil feature is not a limitation (0.00).

Application of manure and food-processing waste not only disposes of waste material but also can improve crop production by increasing the supply of nutrients in the soils where the material is applied. Manure is the excrement of livestock and poultry, and food-processing waste is damaged fruit and vegetables and the peelings, stems, leaves, pits, and soil particles removed in food preparation. The manure and food-processing waste are either solid, slurry, or liquid. Their nitrogen content varies. A high content of nitrogen limits the application rate. Toxic or otherwise dangerous wastes, such as those mixed with the lye used in food processing, are not considered in the ratings.

The ratings are based on the soil properties that affect absorption, plant growth, microbial activity, erodibility, the rate at which the waste is applied, and the method by which the waste is applied. The properties that affect absorption include permeability, depth to a water table, ponding, the sodium adsorption ratio, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, and available water capacity. The properties that

affect plant growth and microbial activity include reaction, the sodium adsorption ratio, salinity, and bulk density. The wind erodibility group, the soil erodibility factor K, and slope are considered in estimating the likelihood that wind erosion or water erosion will transport the waste material from the application site. Stones, cobbles, a water table, ponding, and flooding can hinder the application of waste. Permanently frozen soils are unsuitable for waste treatment.

Application of sewage sludge not only disposes of waste material but also can improve crop production by increasing the supply of nutrients in the soils where the material is applied. In the context of this table, sewage sludge is the residual product of the treatment of municipal sewage. The solid component consists mainly of cell mass, primarily bacteria cells that developed during secondary treatment and have incorporated soluble organics into their own bodies. The sludge has small amounts of sand, silt, and other solid debris. The content of nitrogen varies. Some sludge has constituents that are toxic to plants or hazardous to the food chain, such as heavy metals and exotic organic compounds, and should be analyzed chemically prior to use.

The content of water in the sludge ranges from about 98 percent to less than 40 percent. The sludge is considered liquid if it is more than about 90 percent water, slurry if it is about 50 to 90 percent water, and solid if it is less than about 50 percent water.

The ratings in the table are based on the soil properties that affect absorption, plant growth, microbial activity, erodibility, the rate at which the sludge is applied, and the method by which the sludge is applied. The properties that affect absorption, plant growth, and microbial activity include permeability, depth to a water table, ponding, the sodium adsorption ratio, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, available water capacity, reaction, salinity, and bulk density. The wind erodibility group, the soil erodibility factor K, and slope are considered in estimating the likelihood that wind erosion or water erosion will transport the waste material from the application site. Stones, cobbles, a water table, ponding, and flooding can hinder the application of sludge. Permanently frozen soils are unsuitable for waste treatment.

Disposal of wastewater by irrigation not only disposes of municipal wastewater and wastewater from food-processing plants, lagoons, and storage ponds but also can improve crop production by increasing the amount of water available to crops. The ratings in the table are based on the soil properties that affect the design, construction,

management, and performance of the irrigation system. The properties that affect design and management include the sodium adsorption ratio, depth to a water table, ponding, available water capacity, permeability, slope, and flooding. The properties that affect construction include stones, cobbles, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, depth to a water table, and ponding. The properties that affect performance include depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, bulk density, the sodium adsorption ratio, salinity, reaction, and the cation-exchange capacity, which is used to estimate the capacity of a soil to adsorb heavy metals. Permanently frozen soils are not suitable for disposal of wastewater by irrigation.

Overland flow of wastewater is a process in which wastewater is applied to the upper reaches of sloped land and allowed to flow across vegetated surfaces, sometimes called terraces, to runoff-collection ditches. The length of the run generally is 150 to 300 feet. The application rate ranges from 2.5 to 16.0 inches per week. It commonly exceeds the rate needed for irrigation of cropland. The wastewater leaves solids and nutrients on the vegetated surfaces as it flows downslope in a thin film. Most of the water reaches the collection ditch, some is lost through evapotranspiration, and a small amount may percolate to the ground water.

The ratings in the table are based on the soil properties that affect absorption, plant growth, microbial activity, and the design and construction of the system. Reaction and the cation-exchange capacity affect absorption. Reaction, salinity, and the sodium adsorption ratio affect plant growth and microbial activity. Slope, permeability, depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, stones, and cobbles affect design and construction. Permanently frozen soils are unsuitable for waste treatment.

Rapid infiltration of wastewater is a process in which wastewater applied in a level basin at a rate of 4 to 120 inches per week percolates through the soil. The wastewater may eventually reach the ground water. The application rate commonly exceeds the rate needed for irrigation of cropland. Vegetation is not a necessary part of the treatment; hence, the basins may or may not be vegetated. The thickness of the soil material needed for proper treatment of the wastewater is more than 72 inches. As a result, geologic and hydrologic investigation is needed to ensure proper design and performance and to determine the risk of ground-water pollution.

The ratings in the table are based on the soil properties that affect the risk of pollution and the

design, construction, and performance of the system. Depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, and depth to bedrock or a cemented pan affect the risk of pollution and the design and construction of the system. Slope, stones, and cobbles also affect design and construction. Permeability and reaction affect performance. Permanently frozen soils are unsuitable for waste treatment.

Slow rate treatment of wastewater is a process in which wastewater is applied to land at a rate normally between 0.5 inch and 4.0 inches per week. The application rate commonly exceeds the rate needed for irrigation of cropland. The applied wastewater is treated as it moves through the soil. Much of the treated water may percolate to the ground water, and some enters the atmosphere through evapotranspiration. The applied water generally is not allowed to run off the surface. Waterlogging is prevented either through control of the application rate or through the use of tile drains, or both.

The ratings in the table are based on the soil properties that affect absorption, plant growth, microbial activity, erodibility, and the application of waste. The properties that affect absorption include the sodium adsorption ratio, depth to a water table, ponding, available water capacity, permeability, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, reaction, the cation-exchange capacity, and slope. Reaction, the sodium adsorption ratio, salinity, and bulk density affect plant growth and microbial activity. The wind erodibility group, the soil erodibility factor K, and slope are considered in estimating the likelihood of wind erosion or water erosion. Stones, cobbles, a water table, ponding, and flooding can hinder the application of waste. Permanently frozen soils are unsuitable for waste treatment.

Construction Materials

The “Construction Materials” tables give information about the soils as potential sources of gravel, sand, topsoil, reclamation material, and roadfill. Normal compaction, minor processing, and other standard construction practices are assumed.

The soils are rated *good*, *fair*, or *poor* as potential sources of topsoil, reclamation material, and roadfill. The features that limit the soils as sources of these materials are specified in the tables. The numerical ratings given after the specified features indicate the degree to which the features limit the soils as sources of topsoil, reclamation material, or roadfill—the lower the number, the greater the limitation. The soils are rated as a probable or improbable source of sand and gravel. A rating of probable means that the

source material is likely to be in or below the soil. The numerical ratings in these columns indicate the degree of probability. The number 0.00 indicates that the soil is an improbable source. A number between 0.00 and 1.00 indicates the degree to which the soil is a probable source of sand or gravel.

Gravel and *sand* are natural aggregates suitable for commercial use with a minimum of processing. They are used in many kinds of construction. Specifications for each use vary widely. In the first "Construction Materials" table, only the probability of finding material in suitable quantity is evaluated. The suitability of the material for specific purposes is not evaluated, nor are factors that affect excavation of the material. The properties used to evaluate the soil as a source of gravel or sand are gradation of grain sizes (as indicated by the Unified classification of the soil), the thickness of suitable material, and the content of rock fragments. If the lowest layer of the soil contains gravel or sand, the soil is rated as a probable source regardless of thickness. The assumption is that the gravel or sand layer below the depth of observation exceeds the minimum thickness.

Reclamation material is used in areas that have been drastically disturbed by surface mining or similar activities. When these areas are reclaimed, layers of soil material or unconsolidated geological material, or both, are replaced in a vertical sequence. The reconstructed soil favors plant growth. The ratings in the tables do not apply to quarries and other mined areas that require an offsite source of reconstruction material. The ratings are based on the soil properties that affect erosion and stability of the surface and the productive potential of the reconstructed soil. These properties include the content of sodium, salts, and calcium carbonate; reaction; available water capacity; erodibility; texture; content of rock fragments; and content of organic matter and other features that affect fertility.

Roadfill is soil material that is excavated in one place and used in road embankments in another place. In these tables, the soils are rated as a source of roadfill for low embankments, generally less than 6-feet high and less exacting in design than higher embankments.

The ratings are for the whole soil, from the surface to a depth of about 5 feet. It is assumed that soil layers will be mixed when the soil material is excavated and spread.

The ratings are based on the amount of suitable material and on soil properties that affect the ease of excavation and the performance of the material after it is in place. The thickness of the suitable material is a major consideration. The ease of excavation is

affected by large stones, depth to a water table, and slope. How well the soil performs in place after it has been compacted and drained is determined by its strength (as inferred from the AASHTO classification of the soil) and linear extensibility (shrink-swell potential).

Topsoil is used to cover an area so that vegetation can be established and maintained. The upper 40 inches of a soil is evaluated for use as topsoil. Also evaluated is the reclamation potential of the borrow area. The ratings are based on the soil properties that affect plant growth; the ease of excavating, loading, and spreading the material; and reclamation of the borrow area. Toxic substances, soil reaction, and the properties that are inferred from soil texture, such as available water capacity and fertility, affect plant growth. The ease of excavating, loading, and spreading is affected by rock fragments, slope, depth to a water table, soil texture, and thickness of suitable material. Reclamation of the borrow area is affected by slope, depth to a water table, rock fragments, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, and toxic material.

The surface layer of most soils is generally preferred for topsoil because of its organic matter content. Organic matter greatly increases the absorption and retention of moisture and nutrients for plant growth.

Water Management

The "Water Management" tables give information on the soil properties and site features that affect water management. The degree and kind of soil limitations are given for pond reservoir areas; embankments, dikes, and levees; and aquifer-fed excavated ponds. The limitations are considered *slight* if soil properties and site features are generally favorable for the indicated use and limitations are minor and are easily overcome; *moderate* if soil properties or site features are not favorable for the indicated use and special planning, design, or maintenance is needed to overcome or minimize the limitations; and *severe* if soil properties or site features are so unfavorable or so difficult to overcome that special design, significant increase in construction costs, and possibly increased maintenance are required.

These tables also give for each soil the restrictive features that affect drainage, irrigation, terraces and diversions, and grassed waterways.

Pond reservoir areas hold water behind a dam or embankment. Soils best suited to this use have low seepage potential in the upper 60 inches. The

seepage potential is determined by the permeability of the soil and the depth to fractured bedrock or other permeable material. Excessive slope can affect the storage capacity of the reservoir area.

Embankments, dikes, and levees are raised structures of soil material, generally less than 20-feet high, constructed to impound water or to protect land against overflow. In these tables, the soils are rated as a source of material for embankment fill. The ratings apply to the soil material below the surface layer to a depth of about 5 feet. It is assumed that soil layers will be uniformly mixed and compacted during construction.

The ratings do not indicate the ability of the natural soil to support an embankment. Soil properties to a depth even greater than the height of the embankment can affect performance and safety of the embankment. Generally, deeper onsite investigation is needed to determine these properties.

Soil material in embankments must be resistant to seepage, piping, and erosion and have favorable compaction characteristics. Unfavorable features include less than 5 feet of suitable material and a high content of stones or boulders, organic matter, or salts or sodium. A high water table affects the amount of usable material. It also affects trafficability.

Aquifer-fed excavated ponds are pits or dugouts that extend to a ground-water aquifer or to a depth below a permanent water table. Excluded are ponds that are fed only by surface runoff and embankment ponds that impound water 3 feet or more above the original surface. Excavated ponds are affected by depth to a permanent water table, permeability of the aquifer, and quality of the water as inferred from the salinity of the soil. Depth to bedrock and the content of large stones affect the ease of excavation.

Drainage is the removal of excess surface and subsurface water from the soil. How easily and effectively the soil is drained depends on the depth to bedrock, a cemented pan, or other layers that affect the rate of water movement; permeability; depth to a

high water table or depth of standing water if the soil is subject to ponding; slope; susceptibility to flooding; subsidence of organic layers; and the potential for frost action. Excavating and grading and the stability of ditchbanks are affected by depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, large stones, slope, and the hazard of cutbanks caving. The productivity of the soil after drainage is adversely affected by extreme acidity or by toxic substances in the root zone, such as salts, sodium, and sulfur. Availability of drainage outlets is not considered in the ratings.

Irrigation is the controlled application of water to supplement rainfall and support plant growth. The design and management of an irrigation system are affected by depth to the water table, the need for drainage, flooding, available water capacity, intake rate, permeability, erosion hazard, and slope. The construction of a system is affected by large stones and depth to bedrock or a cemented pan. The performance of a system is affected by the depth of the root zone, the amount of salts or sodium, and soil reaction.

Terraces and diversions are embankments or a combination of channels and ridges constructed across a slope to control erosion and conserve moisture by intercepting runoff. Slope, wetness, large stones, and depth to bedrock or a cemented pan affect the construction of terraces and diversions. A restricted rooting depth, a severe hazard of wind erosion or water erosion, an excessively coarse texture, and restricted permeability adversely affect maintenance.

Grassed waterways are natural or constructed channels, generally broad and shallow, that conduct surface water to outlets at a nonerosive velocity. Large stones, wetness, slope, and depth to bedrock or a cemented pan affect the construction of grassed waterways. A hazard of wind erosion, low available water capacity, restricted rooting depth, toxic substances such as salts and sodium, and restricted permeability adversely affect the growth and maintenance of the grass after construction.

Soil Properties

Data relating to soil properties are collected during the course of the soil survey. Data and estimates of soil and water features, listed in the tables, are explained on the following pages.

Soil properties are ascertained by field examination of the soils and by laboratory index testing of some benchmark soils. Established standard procedures are followed. During the survey, many shallow borings are made and examined to identify and classify the soils and to delineate them on the soil maps. Samples are taken from some typical profiles and tested in the laboratory to determine particle-size distribution, plasticity, and compaction characteristics.

Estimates of soil properties are based on field examinations, on laboratory tests of samples from the survey area, and on laboratory tests of samples of similar soils in nearby areas. Tests verify field observations, verify properties that cannot be estimated accurately by field observation, and help to characterize key soils.

Estimates of soil properties shown in the tables include the range of grain-size distribution and Atterberg limits, the engineering classification, and the physical and chemical properties of the major layers of each soil. Pertinent soil and water features also are given.

Engineering Index Properties

The "Engineering Index Properties" table gives the engineering classifications and the range of index properties for the layers of each soil in the survey area.

Depth to the upper and lower boundaries of each layer is indicated.

Texture is given in the standard terms used by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These terms are defined according to percentages of sand, silt, and clay in the fraction of the soil that is less than 2 millimeters in diameter. "Loam," for example, is soil that is 7 to 27 percent clay, 28 to 50 percent silt, and less than 52 percent sand. If the content of particles coarser than sand is 15 percent or more, an

appropriate modifier is added, for example, "gravelly." Textural terms are defined in the "Glossary."

Classification of the soils is determined according to the Unified soil classification system (ASTM, 1998) and the system adopted by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO, 1998).

The Unified system classifies soils according to properties that affect their use as construction material (Portland Cement Association, 1973). Soils are classified according to particle-size distribution of the fraction less than 3 inches in diameter and according to plasticity index, liquid limit, and organic matter content. Sandy and gravelly soils are identified as GW, GP, GM, GC, SW, SP, SM, and SC; silty and clayey soils as ML, CL, OL, MH, CH, and OH; and highly organic soils as PT. Soils exhibiting engineering properties of two groups can have a dual classification, for example, CL-ML.

The AASHTO system classifies soils according to those properties that affect roadway construction and maintenance. In this system, the fraction of a mineral soil that is less than 3 inches in diameter is classified in one of seven groups from A-1 through A-7 on the basis of particle-size distribution, liquid limit, and plasticity index. Soils in group A-1 are coarse grained and low in content of fines (silt and clay). At the other extreme, soils in group A-7 are fine grained. Highly organic soils are classified in group A-8 on the basis of visual inspection.

If laboratory data are available, the A-1, A-2, and A-7 groups are further classified as A-1-a, A-1-b, A-2-4, A-2-5, A-2-6, A-2-7, A-7-5, or A-7-6. As an additional refinement, the suitability of a soil as subgrade material can be indicated by a group index number. Group index numbers range from 0 for the best subgrade material to 20 or higher for the poorest.

Rock fragments larger than 10 inches in diameter and 3 to 10 inches in diameter are indicated as a percentage of the total soil on a dry-weight basis. The percentages are estimates determined mainly by converting volume percentage in the field to weight percentage.

Percentage (of soil particles) passing designated sieves is the percentage of the soil fraction less than 3 inches in diameter based on an oven-dry weight. The sieves, numbers 4, 10, 40, and 200 (USA Standard Series), have openings of 4.76, 2.00, 0.420, and 0.074 millimeters, respectively. Estimates are based on laboratory tests of soils sampled in the survey area and in nearby areas and on estimates made in the field.

Liquid limit and plasticity index (Atterberg limits) indicate the plasticity characteristics of a soil. The estimates are based on test data from the survey area or from nearby areas and on field examination.

The estimates of particle-size distribution, liquid limit, and plasticity index are generally rounded to the nearest 5 percent. Thus, if the ranges of gradation and Atterberg limits extend a marginal amount (1 or 2 percentage points) across classification boundaries, the classification in the marginal zone is generally omitted in the table.

Physical Properties

The "Physical Properties of the Soils" table shows estimates of some physical characteristics and features that affect soil behavior. These estimates are given for the layers of each soil in the survey area. The estimates are based on field observations and on test data for these and similar soils.

Depth to the upper and lower boundaries of each layer is indicated.

Particle size is the effective diameter of a soil particle as measured by sedimentation, sieving, or micrometric methods. Particle sizes are expressed as classes with specific effective diameter class limits. The broad classes are sand, silt, and clay, ranging from the larger to the smaller.

Sand as a soil separate consists of mineral soil particles that are 0.05 millimeter to 2 millimeters in diameter. *Silt* as a soil separate consists of mineral soil particles that are 0.002 to 0.05 millimeter in diameter. *Clay* as a soil separate consists of mineral soil particles that are less than 0.002 millimeter in diameter. In the "Physical Properties of the Soils" table, the estimated clay content of each soil layer is given as a percentage, by weight, of the soil material that is less than 2 millimeters in diameter.

The content of sand, silt, and clay affects the physical behavior of a soil. Particle size is important for engineering and agronomic interpretations, for determination of soil hydrologic qualities, and for soil classification.

The amount and kind of clay affect the fertility and physical condition of the soil and the ability of the soil

to adsorb cations and to retain moisture. They influence shrink-swell potential, permeability, plasticity, the ease of soil dispersion, and other soil properties. The amount and kind of clay in a soil also affect tillage and earthmoving operations.

Moist bulk density is the weight of soil (oven-dry) per unit volume. Volume is measured when the soil is at field moisture capacity, that is, the moisture content at $1/3$ - or $1/10$ -bar (33kPa or 10kPa) moisture tension. Weight is determined after the soil is dried at 105 degrees C. In the table, the estimated moist bulk density of each soil horizon is expressed in grams per cubic centimeter of soil material that is less than 2 millimeters in diameter. Bulk density data are used to compute shrink-swell potential, available water capacity, total pore space, and other soil properties. The moist bulk density of a soil indicates the pore space available for water and roots. Depending on soil texture, a bulk density of more than 1.4 can restrict water storage and root penetration. Moist bulk density is influenced by texture, kind of clay, content of organic matter, and soil structure.

Permeability (K_{sat}) refers to the ability of a soil to transmit water or air. The term "permeability," as used in soil surveys, indicates saturated hydraulic conductivity (K_{sat}). The estimates in the table indicate the rate of water movement, in inches per hour, when the soil is saturated. They are based on soil characteristics observed in the field, particularly structure, porosity, and texture. Permeability is considered in the design of soil drainage systems and septic tank absorption fields.

Available water capacity refers to the quantity of water that the soil is capable of storing for use by plants. The capacity for water storage is given in inches of water per inch of soil for each soil layer. The capacity varies, depending on soil properties that affect retention of water. The most important properties are the content of organic matter, soil texture, bulk density, and soil structure. Available water capacity is an important factor in the choice of plants or crops to be grown and in the design and management of irrigation systems. Available water capacity is not an estimate of the quantity of water actually available to plants at any given time.

Linear extensibility refers to the change in length of an unconfined clod as moisture content is decreased from a moist to a dry state. It is an expression of the volume change between the water content of the clod at $1/3$ - or $1/10$ -bar tension (33kPa or 10kPa tension) and oven dryness. The volume change is reported in the table as percent change for the whole soil. Volume change is influenced by the amount and type of clay minerals in the soil.

Linear extensibility is used to determine the shrink-swell potential of soils. The shrink-swell potential is low if the soil has a linear extensibility of less than 3 percent, moderate if 3 to 6 percent, high if 6 to 9 percent, and very high if more than 9 percent. If the linear extensibility is more than 3, shrinking and swelling can cause damage to buildings, roads, and other structures and to plant roots. Special design commonly is needed.

Organic matter is the plant and animal residue in the soil at various stages of decomposition. In the “Physical Properties of the Soils” table, the estimated content of organic matter is expressed as a percentage, by weight, of the soil material that is less than 2 millimeters in diameter.

The content of organic matter in a soil can be maintained by returning crop residue to the soil. Organic matter has a positive effect on available water capacity, water infiltration, soil organism activity, and tilth. It is a source of nitrogen and other nutrients for crops and soil organisms.

Erosion factors are shown in the “Physical Properties of the Soils” table as the K factor (Kw and Kf) and the T factor. Erosion factor K indicates the susceptibility of a soil to sheet and rill erosion by water. Factor K is one of several factors used in the Universal Soil Loss Equation (USLE) and the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE) to predict the average annual rate of soil loss by sheet and rill erosion in tons per acre per year. The estimates are based primarily on percentage of silt, sand, and organic matter and on soil structure and permeability. Values of K range from 0.02 to 0.69. Other factors being equal, the higher the value, the more susceptible the soil is to sheet and rill erosion by water.

Erosion factor Kw indicates the erodibility of the whole soil. The estimates are modified by the presence of rock fragments.

Erosion factor Kf indicates the erodibility of the fine-earth fraction, or the material less than 2 millimeters in size.

Erosion factor T is an estimate of the maximum average annual rate of soil erosion by wind or water that can occur without affecting crop productivity over a sustained period. The rate is in tons per acre per year.

Wind erodibility groups are made up of soils that have similar properties affecting their susceptibility to wind erosion in cultivated areas. The soils assigned to group 1 are the most susceptible to wind erosion, and those assigned to group 8 are the least susceptible. The groups are as follows:

1. Coarse sands, sands, fine sands, and very fine sands.
2. Loamy coarse sands, loamy sands, loamy fine sands, loamy very fine sands, ash material, and sapric soil material.
3. Coarse sandy loams, sandy loams, fine sandy loams, and very fine sandy loams.
- 4L. Calcareous loams, silt loams, clay loams, and silty clay loams.
4. Clays, silty clays, noncalcareous clay loams, and silty clay loams that are more than 35 percent clay.
5. Noncalcareous loams and silt loams that are less than 20 percent clay and sandy clay loams, sandy clays, and hemic soil material.
6. Noncalcareous loams and silt loams that are more than 20 percent clay and noncalcareous clay loams that are less than 35 percent clay.
7. Silts, noncalcareous silty clay loams that are less than 35 percent clay, and fibric soil material.
8. Soils that are not subject to wind erosion because of coarse fragments on the surface or because of surface wetness.

Wind erodibility index is a numerical value indicating the susceptibility of soil to wind erosion, or the tons per acre per year that can be expected to be lost to wind erosion. There is a close correlation between wind erosion and the texture of the surface layer, the size and durability of surface clods, rock fragments, organic matter, and a calcareous reaction. Soil moisture and frozen soil layers also influence wind erosion.

Chemical Properties

The “Chemical Properties of the Soils” table shows estimates of some chemical characteristics and features that affect soil behavior. These estimates are given for the layers of each soil in the survey area. The estimates are based on field observations and on test data for these and similar soils.

Depth to the upper and lower boundaries of each layer is indicated.

Cation-exchange capacity is the total amount of extractable bases that can be held by the soil, expressed in terms of milliequivalents per 100 grams of soil at neutrality (pH 7.0) or at some other stated pH value. Soils having a low cation-exchange capacity hold fewer cations and may require more

frequent applications of fertilizer than soils having a high cation-exchange capacity. The ability to retain cations reduces the hazard of ground-water pollution.

Effective cation-exchange capacity refers to the sum of extractable bases plus aluminum expressed in terms of milliequivalents per 100 grams of soil. It is determined for soils that have pH of less than 5.5.

Soil reaction is a measure of acidity or alkalinity. The pH of each soil horizon is based on many field tests. For many soils, values have been verified by laboratory analyses. Soil reaction is important in selecting crops and other plants, in evaluating soil amendments for fertility and stabilization, and in determining the risk of corrosion.

Calcium carbonate equivalent is the percent of carbonates, by weight, in the fraction of the soil less than 2 millimeters in size. The availability of plant nutrients is influenced by the amount of carbonates in the soil. Incorporating nitrogen fertilizer into calcareous soils helps to prevent nitrite accumulation and ammonium-N volatilization.

Gypsum is expressed as a percent, by weight, of hydrated calcium sulfates in the fraction of the soil less than 20 millimeters in size. Gypsum is partially soluble in water. Soils that have a high content of gypsum may collapse if the gypsum is removed by percolating water.

Salinity is a measure of soluble salts in the soil at saturation. It is expressed as the electrical conductivity of the saturation extract, in millimhos per centimeter at 25 degrees C. Estimates are based on field and laboratory measurements at representative sites of nonirrigated soils. The salinity of irrigated soils is affected by the quality of the irrigation water and by the frequency of water application. Hence, the salinity of soils in individual fields can differ greatly from the value given in the table. Salinity affects the suitability of a soil for crop production, the stability of soil if used as construction material, and the potential of the soil to corrode metal and concrete.

Sodium adsorption ratio (SAR) is a measure of the amount of sodium (Na) relative to calcium (Ca) and magnesium (Mg) in the water extract from saturated soil paste. It is the ratio of the Na concentration divided by the square root of one-half of the Ca + Mg concentration. Soils that have SAR values of 13 or more may be characterized by an increased dispersion of organic matter and clay particles, reduced permeability and aeration, and a general degradation of soil structure.

Water Features

The "Water Features" table gives estimates of various water features. The estimates are used in land use planning that involves engineering considerations.

Hydrologic soil groups are based on estimates of runoff potential. Soils are assigned to one of four groups according to the rate of water infiltration when the soils are not protected by vegetation, are thoroughly wet, and receive precipitation from long-duration storms.

The four hydrologic soil groups are:

Group A. Soils having a high infiltration rate (low runoff potential) when thoroughly wet. Mainly deep, well-drained to excessively drained sands or gravelly sands. These soils have a high rate of water transmission.

Group B. Soils having a moderate infiltration rate when thoroughly wet. Chiefly moderately deep or deep, moderately well-drained or well-drained soils that have moderately fine texture to moderately coarse texture. These soils have a moderate rate of water transmission.

Group C. Soils having a slow infiltration rate when thoroughly wet. Chiefly, soils having a layer that impedes the downward movement of water or soils of moderately fine texture or fine texture. These soils have a slow rate of water transmission.

Group D. Soils having a very slow infiltration rate (high runoff potential) when thoroughly wet. Chiefly, clays that have a high shrink-swell potential, soils that have a high water table, soils that have a claypan or clay layer at or near the surface, and soils that are shallow over nearly impervious material. These soils have a very slow rate of water transmission.

If a soil is assigned to a dual hydrologic group (A/D, B/D, or C/D), the first letter is for drained areas and the second is for undrained areas.

The *month* column in the table indicates the portion of the year in which the feature is most likely to be a concern.

Water table refers to a saturated zone in the soil. The "Water Features" table indicates, by month, depth to the top (*upper limit*) and base (*lower limit*) of the saturated zone in most years. Estimates of the upper and lower limits are based mainly on observations of

the water table at selected sites and on evidence of a saturated zone, namely grayish colors or mottles (redox features) in the soil. A saturated zone that lasts for less than a month is not considered a water table.

Ponding is standing water in a closed depression. Unless a drainage system is installed, the water is removed only by percolation, transpiration, or evaporation. *Frequency* is expressed as none, rare, occasional, and frequent. *None* means that ponding is not probable; *rare* that it is unlikely but possible under unusual weather conditions (the chance of ponding is nearly 0 percent to 5 percent in any year); *occasional* that it occurs, on the average, once or less in 2 years (the chance of ponding is 5 to 50 percent in any year); and *frequent* that it occurs, on the average, more than once in 2 years (the chance of ponding is more than 50 percent in any year).

Flooding is the temporary inundation of an area caused by overflowing streams, by runoff from adjacent slopes, or by tides. Water standing for short periods after rainfall or snowmelt is not considered flooding, and water standing in swamps and marshes is considered ponding rather than flooding.

Duration and frequency are estimated. Duration is expressed as *extremely brief* if 0.1 hour to 4 hours, *very brief* if 4 hours to 2 days, *brief* if 2 to 7 days, *long* if 7 to 30 days, and *very long* if more than 30 days. Frequency is expressed as none, very rare, rare, occasional, frequent, and very frequent. *None* means that flooding is not probable; *very rare* that it is very unlikely but possible under extremely unusual weather conditions (the chance of flooding is less than 1 percent in any year); *rare* that it is unlikely but possible under unusual weather conditions (the chance of flooding is 1 to 5 percent in any year); *occasional* that it occurs infrequently under normal weather conditions (the chance of flooding is 5 to 50 percent in any year); *frequent* that it is likely to occur often under normal weather conditions (the chance of flooding is more than 50 percent in any year but is less than 50 percent in all months in any year); and *very frequent* that it is likely to occur very often under normal weather conditions (the chance of flooding is more than 50 percent in all months of any year).

The information is based on evidence in the soil profile, namely thin strata of gravel, sand, silt, or clay deposited by floodwater; irregular decrease in organic matter content with increasing depth; and little or no horizon development.

Also considered is local information about the extent and levels of flooding and the relation of each soil on the landscape to historic floods. Information

on the extent of flooding based on soil data is less specific than that provided by detailed engineering surveys that delineate flood-prone areas at specific flood frequency levels.

Soil Features

The “Soil Features” table gives estimates of various soil features. The estimates are used in land use planning that involves engineering considerations.

A *restrictive layer* is a nearly continuous layer that has one or more physical, chemical, or thermal properties that significantly impede the movement of water and air through the soil or that restrict roots or otherwise provide an unfavorable root environment. Examples are bedrock, cemented layers, dense layers, and frozen layers. The table indicates the *thickness* and *hardness* of the restrictive layer, both of which significantly affect the ease of excavation. *Depth to top* is the vertical distance from the soil surface to the upper boundary of the restrictive layer.

Subsidence is the settlement of organic soils or of saturated mineral soils of very low density. Subsidence generally results from either desiccation and shrinkage or oxidation of organic material, or both, following drainage. Subsidence takes place gradually, usually over a period of several years. The table shows the expected *initial* subsidence, which usually is a result of drainage, and *total* subsidence, which results from a combination of factors.

Potential for frost action is the likelihood of upward or lateral expansion of the soil caused by the formation of segregated ice lenses (frost heave) and the subsequent collapse of the soil and loss of strength on thawing. Frost action occurs when moisture moves into the freezing zone of the soil. Temperature, texture, density, permeability, content of organic matter, and depth to the water table are the most important factors considered in evaluating the potential for frost action. It is assumed that the soil is not insulated by vegetation or snow and is not artificially drained. Silty and highly structured, clayey soils that have a high water table in winter are the most susceptible to frost action. Well drained, very gravelly, or very sandy soils are the least susceptible. Frost heave and low soil strength during thawing cause damage to pavements and other rigid structures.

Risk of corrosion pertains to potential soil-induced electrochemical or chemical action that corrodes or weakens uncoated steel or concrete. The rate of corrosion of uncoated steel is related to such factors as soil moisture, particle-size distribution, acidity, and

electrical conductivity of the soil. The rate of corrosion of concrete is based mainly on the sulfate and sodium content, texture, moisture content, and acidity of the soil. Special site examination and design may be needed if the combination of factors results in a severe hazard of corrosion. The steel or concrete in installations that intersect soil boundaries or soil layers is more susceptible to corrosion than the steel or concrete in installations that are entirely within one kind of soil or within one soil layer.

For *uncoated steel*, the risk of corrosion, expressed as *low*, *moderate*, or *high*, is based on soil drainage class, total acidity, electrical resistivity near field capacity, and electrical conductivity of the saturation extract.

For *concrete*, the risk of corrosion also is expressed as *low*, *moderate*, or *high*. It is based on soil texture, acidity, and amount of sulfates in the saturation extract.

References

- Aadland, R.K., and E.H. Bennett. 1979. Geologic map of the Sandpoint quadrangle, Idaho and Washington. Idaho Geological Survey Geologic Map 16.
- Alexander, R.R. 1967. Site indexes for Engelmann spruce. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station Research Paper, RP-32.
- Alt, D.D., and D.W. Hyndman. 1989. Roadside geology of Idaho. Mountain Press Publishing, Missoula, Montana.
- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). 1998. Standard specifications for transportation materials and methods of sampling and testing. 19th edition, 2 volumes.
- American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM). 1998. Standard classification of soils for engineering purposes. ASTM Standard D 2487-00.
- Bennett, E.H., R.S. Kopp, and J.H. Galbraith. 1975. Reconnaissance geology and geochemistry of the Mt. Pend Oreille quadrangle and surrounding areas. Idaho Geological Survey Pamphlet 163.
- Bond, J.G. 1978. Geologic map of Idaho. Idaho Geological Survey Geologic Map 1.
- Bush, J.H. 1989. The Cambrian System of Northern Idaho and Northwestern Montana. *In* Chamberlain, V.E., R.M. Breckenridge, and B. Bonnicksen, editors. Guidebook to the geology of Northern and Western Idaho and surrounding area. Idaho Geological Survey Bulletin 28.
- Cochran, P.H. 1979a. Site index and height growth curves for managed, even-aged stands of Douglas-fir east of the Cascades in Oregon and Washington. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Forest and Range Experiment Station Research Paper PNW-251.
- Cochran, P.H. 1979b. Site index and height growth curves for managed, even-aged stands of white or grand fir east of the Cascades in Oregon and Washington. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Forest and Range Experiment Station Research Paper PNW-252.
- Cochran, P.H. 1979c. Gross yields for even-aged stands of Douglas-fir and white or grand fir east of the Cascades in Oregon and Washington. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Forest and Range Experiment Station Research Paper PNW-263.

- Cooper, S.V., K.E. Neiman, and D.W. Roberts. 1991. Forest habitat types of northern Idaho: a second approximation. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, General Technical Report INT-236.
- Haig, I.T. 1932. Second-growth yield, stand and volume tables for the western white pine type. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. Northern Rocky Mountain Forest Experiment Station Technical Bulletin 323.
- Kirkham, V.R.D., and E.W. Ellis. 1926. Geology and ore deposits of Boundary County, Idaho. Idaho Geological Survey Bulletin 10.
- Meyer, W.H. 1961. Yield of even-aged stands of ponderosa pine. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Technical Bulletin 630. Washington, DC.
- Portland Cement Association. 1973. PCA soil primer.
- Ross, C.P., and J.D. Forrester. 1958. Outline of the geology of Idaho. Idaho Geological Survey Bulletin 15.
- Schmidt, W.C., R.C. Shearer, and A.L. Roe. 1976. Ecology and silviculture of western larch forests. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service Technical Bulletin 1520.
- Soil Survey Division Staff. 1993. Soil survey manual. Soil Conservation Service. U.S. Department of Agriculture Handbook 18.
(<http://soils.usda.gov/technical/manual/>)
- Soil Survey Staff. 1998. Keys to soil taxonomy. 8th edition. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service.
(http://soils.usda.gov/technical/classification/tax_keys/)
- Soil Survey Staff. 1999. Soil taxonomy: A basic system of soil classification for making and interpreting soil surveys. 2nd edition. Natural Resources Conservation Service. U.S. Department of Agriculture Handbook 436.
(<http://soils.usda.gov/technical/classification/taxonomy/>)
- United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. National forestry handbook, title 190.
(<http://soils.usda.gov/technical/nfhandbook/>)
- United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. National soil survey handbook, title 430-VI.
(<http://soils.usda.gov/technical/handbook/>)
- United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. 1961. Land capability classification. U.S. Department of Agriculture Handbook 210.
- United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. 1980. Soil survey of Boundary County area, Idaho.
- United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. 1984. Glossary of selected geomorphic terms for western soil surveys.
- United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. 1942. Preliminary report of water resources, Kootenai River Drainage, Boundary County, Idaho.

Glossary

Aeration, soil. The exchange of air in soil with air from the atmosphere. The air in a well-aerated soil is similar to that in the atmosphere; the air in a poorly aerated soil is considerably higher in carbon dioxide and lower in oxygen.

Aggregate, soil. Many fine particles held in a single mass or cluster. Natural soil aggregates, such as granules, blocks, or prisms, are called peds. Clods are aggregates produced by tillage or logging.

Alluvial fan. A body of alluvium, with overflow of water and debris flow deposits, whose surface forms a segment of a cone that radiates downslope from the point where the stream emerges from a narrow valley onto a less sloping surface. Source uplands range in relief and areal extent from mountains to gullied terrains on hillslopes.

Alluvium. Material, such as sand, silt, or clay, deposited on land by streams.

Alpha,alpha-dipyridyl. A dye that when dissolved in 1N ammonium acetate is used to detect the presence of reduced iron (Fe II) in the soil. A positive reaction indicates a type of redox feature.

Animal-unit-month (AUM). The amount of forage required by one mature cow of approximately 1,000 pounds weight, with or without a calf, for 1 month.

Aquic conditions. Current soil wetness characterized by saturation, reduction, and redox features.

Argillic horizon. A subsoil horizon characterized by an accumulation of illuvial clay.

Aspect. The direction in which a slope faces.

Association, soil. A group of soils or miscellaneous areas geographically associated in a characteristic repeating pattern and defined and delineated as a single map unit.

Available water capacity (available moisture capacity). The capacity of soils to hold water available for use by most plants. It is commonly defined as the difference between the amount of soil water at field moisture capacity and the amount at wilting point. It is commonly expressed as inches of water per inch of soil. The capacity,

in inches, in a 60-inch profile or to a limiting layer is expressed as:

Very low	0 to 3.75
Low	3.75 to 5.0
Moderate	5.0 to 7.5
High	more than 7.5

Backslope. The geomorphic component that forms the steepest inclined surface and principal element of many hillslopes. Backslopes in profile are commonly steep and linear and descend to a footslope. In terms of gradational process, backslopes are erosional forms produced mainly by mass wasting and running water.

Basal till. Compact glacial till deposited beneath the ice.

Base saturation. The degree to which material having cation-exchange properties is saturated with exchangeable bases (sum of Ca, Mg, Na, and K), expressed as a percentage of the total cation-exchange capacity.

Bedrock. The solid rock that underlies the soil and other unconsolidated material or that is exposed at the surface.

Benchland. The nearly level to gently sloping land on a high terrace separated from a lower bottomland by a steep escarpment.

Bottom land. The normal flood plain of a stream, subject to flooding.

Boulders. Rock fragments larger than 2 feet (60 centimeters) in diameter.

Bouldery. Refers to a soil with .01 to 0.1 percent of the surface covered with boulders.

Boundary, horizon. A zone or transitional layer between two adjoining horizons or layers, roughly parallel to the soil surface. Boundaries vary in distinctness and topography.

Breakland. The steep and very steep broken land at the border of an upland summit that is dissected by ravines.

Calcareous soil. A soil containing enough calcium carbonate (commonly combined with magnesium carbonate) to effervesce visibly when treated with cold, dilute hydrochloric acid.

- Canopy.** The leafy crown of trees or shrubs. (See Crown.)
- Canyon.** A long, deep, narrow, very steep sided valley with high, precipitous walls in an area of high local relief.
- Cation.** An ion carrying a positive charge of electricity. The common soil cations are calcium, potassium, magnesium, sodium, and hydrogen.
- Cation-exchange capacity.** The total amount of exchangeable cations that can be held by the soil, expressed in terms of milliequivalents per 100 grams of soil at neutrality (pH 7.0) or at some other stated pH value. The term, as applied to soils, is synonymous with base-exchange capacity but is more precise in meaning.
- Chroma, soil color.** (See Munsell notation.)
- Clay.** As a soil separate, the mineral soil particles less than 0.002 millimeters in diameter. As a soil textural class, soil material that is 40 percent or more clay, less than 45 percent sand, and less than 40 percent silt.
- Clay film.** A thin coating of oriented clay on the surface of a soil aggregate or lining pores or root channels. Synonyms: clay coating, clay skin.
- Claypan.** A slowly permeable soil horizon that contains much more clay than the horizons above it. A claypan is commonly hard when dry and plastic or stiff when wet.
- Closed depression.** A low area completely surrounded by higher ground and having no natural outlet.
- Coarse textured soil.** Sand or loamy sand.
- Cobble (or cobblestone).** A rounded or partly rounded fragment of rock 3 to 10 inches (7.6 to 25 centimeters) in diameter.
- Cobbly soil material.** Material that has 15 to 35 percent, by volume, rounded or partially rounded rock fragments 3 to 10 inches (7.6 to 25 centimeters) in diameter. Very cobbly soil material has 35 to 60 percent of these rock fragments, and extremely cobbly soil material has more than 60 percent.
- Codominant trees.** Trees whose crowns form the general level of the forest canopy and that receive full light from above but comparatively little from the sides.
- COLE (coefficient of linear extensibility).** (See Linear extensibility.)
- Colluvium.** Soil material or rock fragments, or both, moved by creep, slide, or local wash and deposited at the base of steep slopes.
- Complex, soil.** A map unit of two or more kinds of soil or miscellaneous areas in such an intricate pattern or so small in area that it is not practical to map them separately at the selected scale of mapping. The pattern and proportion of the soils or miscellaneous areas are somewhat similar in all areas.
- Concretions.** Grains, pellets, or nodules of various sizes, shapes, and colors consisting of concentrated compounds or cemented soil grains. The composition of most concretions is unlike that of the surrounding soil. Calcium carbonate and iron oxide are common compounds in concretions.
- Conglomerate.** A coarse-grained, clastic rock composed of rounded or subangular rock fragments more than 2 millimeters in diameter. It commonly has a matrix of sand and finer-textured material. Conglomerate is the consolidated equivalent of gravel.
- Conservation tillage.** Any tillage and planting system in which a cover of crop residue is maintained on at least 30 percent of the soil surface after planting in order to reduce the hazard of water erosion. In areas where soil blowing is the primary concern, a system that maintains a cover of at least 1,000 pounds of flat residue of small grain or the equivalent during the critical erosion period.
- Consistence, soil.** Refers to the degree of cohesion and adhesion of soil material and its resistance to deformation when ruptured. Consistence includes resistance of soil material to rupture and to penetration; plasticity, toughness, and stickiness of puddled soil material; and the manner in which the soil material behaves when subject to compression. Terms describing consistence are defined in the "Soil Survey Manual" (Soil Survey Division Staff, 1993).
- Consolidated sandstone.** Sandstone that disperses within a few hours when fragments are placed in water. The fragments are extremely hard or very hard when dry, are not easily crushed, and cannot be textured by the usual field method.
- Consolidated shale.** Shale that disperses within a few hours when fragments are placed in water. The fragments are extremely hard or very hard when dry and are not easily crushed.
- Control section.** The part of the soil on which classification is based. The thickness varies among different kinds of soil, but for many it is that part of the soil profile between depths of 10 inches and 40 or 80 inches.
- Corrosion.** Soil-induced electrochemical or chemical action that dissolves or weakens concrete or uncoated steel.

Conservation cropping system. Growing crops in combination with needed cultural and management practices. In a good conservation cropping system, the soil-improving crops and practices more than offset the effects of the soil-depleting crops and practices. Cropping systems are needed on all tilled soils. Soil-improving practices in a conservation cropping system include the use of rotations that contain grasses and legumes and the return of crop residue to the soil. Other practices include the use of green manure crops of grasses and legumes, proper tillage, adequate fertilization, and weed and pest control.

Cropping system. Growing crops according to a planned system of rotation and management practices.

Cross-slope farming. Deliberately conducting farming operations on sloping farmland in such a way that tillage is across the general slope.

Crown. The upper part of a tree or shrub, including the living branches and their foliage.

Culmination of the mean annual increment (CMAI).

The average annual increase per acre in the volume of a stand. Computed by dividing the total volume of the stand by its age. As the stand increases in age, the mean annual increment continues to increase until mortality begins to reduce the rate of increase. The point where the stand reaches its maximum annual rate of growth is called the culmination of the mean annual increment.

Cutbanks cave (in tables). The walls of excavations tend to cave in or slough.

Depth class. Depth to a restrictive or contrasting layer defined as a range of depth. The nature of the restricting or contrasting layer is specified, unless it is consolidated bedrock which is understood. The following classes are used:

Very shallow	less than 10 inches
Shallow	10 to 20 inches
Moderately deep	20 to 40 inches
Deep	40 to 60 inches
Very deep	more than 60 inches

Depth, soil. Generally, the thickness of the soil over bedrock. Very deep soils are more than 60 inches deep over bedrock; deep soils, 40 to 60 inches; moderately deep, 20 to 40 inches; shallow, 10 to 20 inches; and very shallow, less than 10 inches.

Diversion (or diversion terrace). A ridge of earth, generally a terrace, built to protect downslope areas by diverting runoff from its natural course.

Dominant trees. Trees whose crowns form the general level of the forest canopy and that receive full light from above and from the sides.

Drainage class (natural). Refers to the frequency and duration of periods of saturation or partial saturation during soil formation, as opposed to altered drainage, which is commonly the result of artificial drainage or irrigation but may be caused by the sudden deepening of channels or the blocking of drainage outlets. Seven classes of natural soil drainage are recognized:

Excessively drained.—These soils have very high and high hydraulic conductivity and a low water-holding capacity. They are not suited to crop production unless irrigated.

Somewhat excessively drained.—These soils have high hydraulic conductivity and a low water-holding capacity. Without irrigation, only a narrow range of crops can be grown, and yields are low.

Well drained.—These soils have an intermediate water-holding capacity. They retain optimum amounts of moisture, but they are not wet close enough to the surface or long enough during the growing season to adversely affect yields.

Moderately well drained.—These soils are wet close enough to the surface or long enough that planting or harvesting operations or yields of some field crops are adversely affected unless a drainage system is installed. Moderately well-drained soils commonly have a layer with low hydraulic conductivity, a wet layer relatively high in the profile, additions of water by seepage, or some combination of these.

Somewhat poorly drained.—These soils are wet close enough to the surface or long enough that planting or harvesting operations or crop growth is markedly restricted unless a drainage system is installed. Somewhat poorly drained soils commonly have a layer with low hydraulic conductivity, a wet layer high in the profile, additions of water through seepage, or a combination of these.

Poorly drained.—These soils commonly are so wet, at or near the surface, during a considerable part of the year that field crops cannot be grown under natural conditions. Poorly drained conditions are caused by a saturated zone, a layer with low hydraulic conductivity, seepage, or a combination of these.

Very poorly drained.—These soils are wet to the surface most of the time. The wetness prevents the growth of important crops (except rice) unless a drainage system is installed.

Drainage, surface. Runoff, or surface flow of water, from an area.

Drainageway. An area of ground at a lower elevation than the surrounding ground and in which water collects and is drained to a closed depression or lake or to a drainageway at a lower elevation. A drainageway may or may not have distinctly incised channels at its upper reaches or throughout its course.

Droughty (in tables). The soil holds too little water (very low available water capacity) for plants during dry periods.

Duff. A generally firm organic layer on the surface of mineral soils. It consists of fallen plant material that is in the process of decomposition and includes everything from the litter on the surface to underlying pure humus.

Dune. A mound, ridge, or hill of loose, windblown granular material (generally sand), either bare or covered with vegetation.

Ecological site. An area where climate, soil, and relief are sufficiently uniform to produce a distinct natural plant community. An ecological site is the product of all the environmental factors responsible for its development. It is typified by an association of species that differ from those on other ecological sites in kind and/or proportion of species or in total production.

Eluviation. The movement of material in true solution or colloidal suspension from one place to another within the soil. Soil horizons that have lost material through eluviation are eluvial; those that have received material are illuvial.

Endosaturation. A type of saturation of the soil in which all horizons between the upper boundary of saturation and a depth of 2 meters are saturated.

Eolian soil material. Earthy parent material accumulated through wind action; commonly refers to sandy material in dunes or to loess in blankets on the surface.

Episaturation. A type of saturation indicating a perched water table in a soil in which saturated layers are underlain by one or more unsaturated layers within 2 meters of the surface.

Erosion. The wearing away of the land surface by water, wind, ice, or other geologic agents and by such processes as gravitational creep.
Erosion (geologic). Erosion caused by geologic processes acting over long geologic periods and resulting in the wearing away of mountains and the building up of such landscape features as flood plains and coastal plains. Synonym: natural erosion.

Erosion (accelerated). Erosion much more rapid than geologic erosion, mainly as a result of human or animal activities or of a catastrophe in nature, such as fire, that exposes the surface.

Erosion hazard. An estimation of the severity of soil loss that could occur on a bare, disturbed soil without benefit of cover for protection. Classes are slight, moderate, severe, and very severe.

Escarpment. A relatively continuous and steep slope or cliff breaking the general continuity of more gently sloping land surfaces and resulting from erosion or faulting. Synonym: scarp.

Esker. A long, narrow, sinuous, steep-sided ridge composed of irregularly stratified sand and gravel that were deposited by a subsurface stream flowing between ice walls or through ice tunnels of a retreating glacier and that were left behind when the ice melted. Eskers range from less than a mile to more than 100 miles in length and from 10 to 100 feet in height.

Even aged. Refers to a stand of trees in which only small differences in age occur between individual trees. A range of 20 years is allowed.

Fast intake (in tables). The rapid movement of water into the soil.

Fertility, soil. The quality that enables a soil to provide plant nutrients, in adequate amounts and in proper balance, for the growth of specified plants when light, moisture, temperature, tilth, and other growth factors are favorable.

Fibric soil material (peat). The least decomposed of all organic soil material. Peat contains a large amount of well-preserved fiber that is readily identifiable according to botanical origin. Peat has the lowest bulk density and the highest water content at saturation of all organic soil material.

Field moisture capacity. The moisture content of a soil, expressed as a percentage of the oven-dry weight, after the gravitational, or free, water has drained away; the field moisture content 2 or 3 days after a soaking rain; also called *normal field capacity*, *normal moisture capacity*, or *capillary capacity*.

Fill slope. A sloping surface consisting of excavated soil material from a road cut. It commonly is on the downhill side of the road.

Fine textured soil. Sandy clay, silty clay, or clay.

Flood plain. A nearly level alluvial plain that borders a stream and is subject to flooding unless protected artificially.

Fluvial. Of or pertaining to rivers; produced by river action, as a fluvial plain.

Foothill. A steeply sloping upland that has relief of as much as 1,000 feet (300 meters) and fringes a mountain range or high-plateau escarpment.

Footslope. The geomorphic component that forms the inner, gently inclined surface at the base of a hillslope. The surface profile is dominantly concave. In terms of gradational processes, a footslope is a transitional zone between an upslope site of erosion (backslope) and a downslope site of deposition (toeslope).

Forb. Any herbaceous plant not a grass or a sedge.

Forest cover. All trees and other woody plants (underbrush) covering the ground in a forest.

Forest habitat type. A stand of trees similar in composition and development because of given physical and biological factors by which it may be differentiated from other stands.

Frost action (in tables). Freezing and thawing of soil moisture. Frost action can damage roads, buildings and other structures, and plant roots.

Genesis, soil. The mode of origin of the soil. Refers especially to the processes or soil-forming factors responsible for the formation of the solum, or true soil, from the unconsolidated parent material.

Glacial drift. Pulverized and other rock material transported by glacial ice and then deposited. Also, the sorted and unsorted material deposited by streams flowing from glaciers.

Glacial outwash. Gravel, sand, and silt, commonly stratified, deposited by glacial meltwater.

Glacial till. Unsorted, nonstratified glacial drift consisting of clay, silt, sand, and boulders transported and deposited by glacial ice.

Glacial trough. A broad, elongate U-shaped valley developed by glacial movement.

Glaciofluvial deposits. Material moved by glaciers and subsequently sorted and deposited by streams flowing from the melting ice. The deposits are stratified and occur as kames, eskers, deltas, and outwash plains.

Glaciolacustrine deposits. Material ranging from fine clay to sand derived from glaciers and deposited in glacial lakes mainly by glacial meltwater. Many deposits are interbedded or laminated.

Gleyed soil. Soil that formed under poor drainage, resulting in the reduction of iron and other elements in the profile and in gray colors.

Grassed waterway. A natural or constructed waterway, typically broad and shallow, seeded to grass as protection against erosion. Conducts surface water away from cropland.

Gravel. Rounded or angular fragments of rock as much as 3 inches (2 millimeters to

7.6 centimeters) in diameter. An individual piece is a pebble.

Gravelly soil material. Soil that is 15 to 35 percent, by volume, rounded or angular rock fragments up to 3 inches (7.6 centimeters) in diameter. Very gravelly soil is 35 to 60 percent gravel, and extremely gravelly soil is more than 60 percent gravel by volume.

Green manure crop (agronomy). A soil-improving crop grown to be plowed under in an early stage of maturity or soon after maturity.

Ground water. Water filling all the unblocked pores of the material below the water table.

Gully. A miniature valley with steep sides cut by running water and through which water ordinarily runs only after rainfall. The distinction between a gully and a rill is one of depth. A gully generally is an obstacle to farm machinery and is too deep to be obliterated by ordinary tillage; a rill is of lesser depth and can be smoothed over by ordinary tillage.

Gypsum. A mineral consisting of hydrous calcium sulfate.

Habitat type. An aggregation of all land areas capable of producing similar climax plant communities.

Hard bedrock. Bedrock that cannot be excavated except by blasting or by the use of special equipment that is not commonly used in construction.

Hardpan. A hardened or cemented soil horizon, or layer. The soil material is sandy, loamy, or clayey and is cemented by iron oxide, silica, calcium carbonate, or other substance.

Heavy metal. Inorganic substances that are solid at ordinary temperatures and are not soluble in water. They form oxides and hydroxides that are basic. Examples are copper, iron, cadmium, zinc, manganese, lead, and arsenic.

Hemic soil material (mucky peat). Organic soil material intermediate in degree of decomposition between the less decomposed fibric material and the more decomposed sapric material.

Hill. A natural elevation of the land surface, rising as much as 1,000 feet above surrounding lowlands, commonly of limited summit area and having a well-defined outline; hillsides generally have slopes of more than 8 percent. The distinction between a hill and a mountain is arbitrary and is dependent on local usage.

Horizon, soil. A layer of soil, approximately parallel to the surface, having distinct characteristics produced by soil-forming processes. In the identification of soil horizons, an uppercase letter

represents the major horizons. Numbers or lowercase letters that follow represent subdivisions of the major horizons. An explanation of the subdivisions is given in the "Soil Survey Manual" (Soil Survey Division Staff, 1993). The major horizons of mineral soil are as follows:

O horizon.—An organic layer of fresh and decaying plant residue.

A horizon.—The mineral horizon at or near the surface in which an accumulation of humified organic matter is mixed with the mineral material. Also, a plowed surface horizon, most of which was originally part of a B horizon.

E horizon.—The mineral horizon in which the main feature is loss of silicate clay, iron, aluminum, or some combination of these.

B horizon.—The mineral horizon below an A or E horizon. The B horizon is in part a layer of transition from the overlying A to the underlying C horizon. The B horizon also has distinctive characteristics, such as (1) accumulation of clay, sesquioxides, humus, or a combination of these; (2) prismatic or blocky structure; (3) redder or browner colors than those in the A horizon; or (4) a combination of these.

C horizon.—The mineral horizon or layer, excluding indurated bedrock, that is little affected by soil-forming processes and does not have the properties typical of the overlying soil material. The material of a C horizon may be either like or unlike that in which the solum formed. If the material is known to differ from that in the solum, an Arabic numeral, commonly a 2, precedes the letter C.

Cr horizon.—Sedimentary beds of consolidated sandstone and semiconsolidated and consolidated shale. Generally, roots can penetrate this horizon only along fracture planes.

R layer.—Consolidated bedrock beneath the soil. The bedrock commonly underlies a C horizon, but it can be directly below an A or a B horizon.

Hue, soil color. (See Munsell notation.)

Humus. The well-decomposed, more or less stable part of the organic matter in mineral soils.

Hydrologic soil groups. Refers to soils grouped according to their runoff-producing characteristics. The chief consideration is the inherent capacity of soil bare of vegetation to permit infiltration. The slope and the kind of plant cover are not considered but are separate factors in predicting runoff. Soils are assigned to four groups. In group A are soils having a high infiltration rate when thoroughly wet and having a

low runoff potential. They are mainly deep, well drained, and sandy or gravelly. In group D, at the other extreme, are soils having a very slow infiltration rate and thus a high runoff potential. They have a claypan or clay layer at or near the surface, have a permanent high water table, or are shallow over nearly impervious bedrock or other material. A soil is assigned to two hydrologic groups if part of the acreage is artificially drained and part is undrained.

Igneous rock. Rock formed by solidification from a molten or partially molten state. Major varieties include plutonic and volcanic rock. Examples are andesite, basalt, and granite.

Illuviation. The movement of soil material from one horizon to another in the soil profile. Generally, material is removed from an upper horizon and deposited in a lower horizon.

Impervious soil. A soil through which water, air, or roots penetrate slowly or not at all. No soil is absolutely impervious to air and water all the time.

Infiltration. The downward entry of water into the immediate surface of soil or other material, as contrasted with percolation, which is movement of water through soil layers or material.

Infiltration rate. The rate at which water penetrates the surface of the soil at any given instant, usually expressed in inches per hour. The rate can be limited by the infiltration capacity of the soil or the rate at which water is applied at the surface.

Intake rate. The average rate of water entering the soil under irrigation. Most soils have a fast initial rate; the rate decreases with application time. Therefore, intake rate for design purposes is not a constant but is a variable depending on the net irrigation application. The rate of water intake, in inches per hour, is expressed as follows:

Less than 0.2	very low
0.2 to 0.4	low
0.4 to 0.75	moderately low
0.75 to 1.25	moderate
1.25 to 1.75	moderately high
1.75 to 2.5	high
More than 2.5	very high

Irrigation. Application of water to soils to assist in production of crops. Methods of irrigation are:
Basin.—Water is applied rapidly to nearly level plains surrounded by levees or dikes.
Border.—Water is applied at the upper end of a strip in which the lateral flow of water is controlled

by small earth ridges called border dikes, or borders.

Controlled flooding.—Water is released at intervals from closely spaced field ditches and distributed uniformly over the field.

Corrugation.—Water is applied to small, closely spaced furrows or ditches in fields of close-growing crops or in orchards so that it flows in only one direction.

Drip (or trickle).—Water is applied slowly and under low pressure to the surface of the soil or into the soil through such applicators as emitters, porous tubing, or perforated pipe.

Furrow.—Water is applied in small ditches made by cultivation implements. Furrows are used for tree and row crops.

Sprinkler.—Water is sprayed over the soil surface through pipes or nozzles from a pressure system.

Subirrigation.—Water is applied in open ditches or tile lines until the water table is raised enough to wet the soil.

Wild flooding.—Water, released at high points, is allowed to flow onto an area without controlled distribution.

K_{sat} , Saturated hydraulic conductivity. (See Permeability.)

Kame. A moundlike hill of glacial drift, composed chiefly of stratified sand and gravel.

Landslide. The rapid downhill movement of a mass of soil and loose rock, generally when wet or saturated. The speed and distance of movement, as well as the amount of soil and rock material, vary greatly.

Large stones (in tables). Rock fragments 3 inches (7.6 centimeters) or more across. Large stones adversely affect the specified use of the soil.

Lateral moraine. A ridgelike moraine carried on and deposited at the side margin of a valley glacier. It is composed chiefly of rock fragments derived from the valley walls by glacial abrasion and plucking or by mass wasting.

Leaching. The removal of soluble material from soil or other material by percolating water.

Linear extensibility. Refers to the change in length of an unconfined clod as moisture content is decreased from a moist to a dry state. Linear extensibility is used to determine the shrink-swell potential of soils. It is an expression of the volume change between the water content of the clod at $1/3$ - or $1/10$ -bar tension (33kPa or 10kPa tension) and oven dryness. Volume change is influenced by the amount and type of clay minerals in the soil. The volume change is the percent change for the whole soil. If it is expressed as a fraction, the

resulting value is COLE, coefficient of linear extensibility.

Liquid limit. The moisture content at which the soil passes from a plastic to a liquid state.

Loam. Soil material that is 7 to 27 percent clay particles, 28 to 50 percent silt particles, and less than 52 percent sand particles.

Loess. Fine-grained material, dominantly of silt-sized particles, deposited by wind.

Low strength. The soil is not strong enough to support loads.

Masses. Concentrations of substances in the soil matrix that do not have a clearly defined boundary with the surrounding soil material and cannot be removed as a discrete unit. Common compounds making up masses are calcium carbonate, gypsum or other soluble salts, iron oxide, and manganese oxide. Masses consisting of iron oxide or manganese oxide generally are considered a type of redox concentration.

Mean annual increment (MAI). The average annual increase in volume of a tree during its entire life.

Medium textured soil. Very fine sandy loam, loam, silt loam, or silt.

Metamorphic rock. Rock of any origin altered in mineralogical composition, chemical composition, or structure by heat, pressure, and movement. Nearly all such rocks are crystalline.

Metasedimentary rock. Sedimentary rock of any origin that is partially altered in mineralogical composition, chemical composition, or structure by heat, pressure, and movement. Examples are the Belt series of rocks which include siltite, argillite, and quartzite.

Mineral soil. Soil that is mainly mineral material and low in organic material. Its bulk density is more than that of organic soil.

Minimum tillage. Only the tillage essential to crop production and prevention of soil damage.

Miscellaneous area. An area that has little or no natural soil and supports little or no vegetation.

Moderately coarse textured soil. Coarse sandy loam, sandy loam, or fine sandy loam.

Moderately fine textured soil. Clay loam, sandy clay loam, or silty clay loam.

Mollic epipedon. A thick, dark, humus-rich surface horizon (or horizons) that has high base saturation and pedogenic soil structure. It may include the upper part of the subsoil.

Moraine. An accumulation of glacial drift in a topographic landform of its own, resulting chiefly from the direct action of glacial ice. Some types are lateral, recessional, and terminal.

Morphology, soil. The physical makeup of the soil, including the texture, structure, porosity, consistence, color, and other physical, mineral, and biological properties of the various horizons, and the thickness and arrangement of those horizons in the soil profile.

Mottling, soil. Areas of color that differ from the matrix color. These colors are commonly attributes retained from the geologic parent material. (See Redox features for indications of poor aeration and impeded drainage.)

Mountain. A natural elevation of the land surface, rising more than 1,000 feet above surrounding lowlands, commonly of restricted summit area (relative to a plateau) and generally having steep sides. A mountain can occur as a single, isolated mass or in a group forming a chain or range.

Muck. Dark, finely divided, well-decomposed organic soil material. (See Sapric soil material.)

Mudstone. Sedimentary rock formed by induration of silt and clay in approximately equal amounts.

Munsell notation. A designation of color by degrees of three simple variables—hue, value, and chroma. For example, a notation of 10YR 6/4 is a color with hue of 10YR, value of 6, and chroma of 4.

Nutrient, plant. Any element taken in by a plant essential to its growth. Plant nutrients are mainly nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, sulfur, iron, manganese, copper, boron, and zinc obtained from the soil and carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen obtained from the air and water.

Organic matter. Plant and animal residue in the soil in various stages of decomposition. The content of organic matter in the surface layer is described as follows:

Very low	less than 0.5 percent
Low	0.5 to 1.0 percent
Moderately low	1.0 to 2.0 percent
Moderate	2.0 to 4.0 percent
High	4.0 to 8.0 percent
Very high	more than 8.0 percent

Outwash plain. An extensive area of glaciofluvial material that was deposited by meltwater streams.

Pan. A compact, dense layer in a soil that impedes the movement of water and the growth of roots. For example, *hardpan*, *fragipan*, *claypan*, *plowpan*, and *traffic pan*.

Parent material. The unconsolidated organic and mineral material in which soil forms.

Peat. Unconsolidated material, largely undecomposed organic matter, that has accumulated under excess moisture. (See Fibric soil material.)

Ped. An individual natural soil aggregate, such as a granule, a prism, or a block.

Pedon. The smallest volume that can be called “a soil.” A pedon is three dimensional and large enough to permit study of all horizons. Its area ranges from about 10 to 100 square feet (1 square meter to 10 square meters), depending on the variability of the soil.

Percolation. The movement of water through the soil.

Percs slowly (in tables). The slow movement of water through the soil, adversely affecting the specified use.

Permeability. The quality of the soil that enables water or air to move downward through the profile.

Terms describing permeability are:

Very slow	less than 0.06 inch
Slow	0.06 to 0.2 inch
Moderately slow	0.2 to 0.6 inch
Moderate	0.6 to 2.0 inches
Moderately rapid	2.0 to 6.0 inches
Rapid	6.0 to 20 inches
Very rapid	more than 20 inches

pH value. A numerical designation of acidity and alkalinity in soil. (See Reaction, soil.)

Phase, soil. A subdivision of a soil series based on features that affect its use and management, such as slope, stoniness, and flooding.

Piping (in tables). Formation of subsurface tunnels or pipelike cavities by water moving through the soil.

Plastic limit. The moisture content at which a soil changes from semisolid to plastic.

Plasticity index. The numerical difference between the liquid limit and the plastic limit. The range of moisture content within which the soil remains plastic.

Ponding. Standing water on soils in closed depressions. Unless the soils are artificially drained, the water can be removed only by percolation or evapotranspiration.

Potential natural community (PNC). The biotic community that would become established on an ecological site if all successional sequences were completed without interferences by man under the present environmental conditions. Natural disturbances are inherent in its development. The PNC may include acclimatized or naturalized nonnative species.

Potential rooting depth (effective rooting depth).

Depth to which roots could penetrate if the content of moisture in the soil were adequate. The soil has no properties restricting the penetration of roots to this depth.

Productivity, soil. The capability of a soil for producing a specified plant or sequence of plants under specific management.

Profile, soil. A vertical section of the soil extending through all its horizons and into the parent material.

Quartzite, metamorphic. Rock consisting mainly of quartz that formed through recrystallization of quartz-rich sandstone or chert.

Quartzite, sedimentary. Very hard but unmetamorphosed sandstone consisting chiefly of quartz grains.

Reaction, soil. A measure of acidity or alkalinity of a soil, expressed in pH values. A soil that tests to pH 7.0 is described as precisely neutral in reaction because it is neither acid nor alkaline. The degrees of acidity or alkalinity, expressed as pH values, are:

Ultra acid	less than 3.5
Extremely acid	3.5 to 4.4
Very strongly acid	4.5 to 5.0
Strongly acid	5.1 to 5.5
Moderately acid	5.6 to 6.0
Slightly acid	6.1 to 6.5
Neutral	6.6 to 7.3
Slightly alkaline	7.4 to 7.8
Moderately alkaline	7.9 to 8.4
Strongly alkaline	8.5 to 9.0
Very strongly alkaline	9.1 and higher

Redox concentrations. Nodules, concretions, soft masses, pore linings, and other features resulting from the accumulation of iron or manganese oxide. An indication of chemical reduction and oxidation resulting from saturation.

Redox depletions. Low-chroma zones from which iron and manganese oxide or a combination of iron and manganese oxide and clay has been removed. These zones are indications of the chemical reduction of iron resulting from saturation.

Redox features. Redox concentrations, redox depletions, reduced matrices, a positive reaction to alpha,alpha-dipyridyl, and other features indicating the chemical reduction and oxidation of iron and manganese compounds resulting from saturation.

Regeneration. The new growth of a natural plant community, developing from seed.

Relief. The elevations or inequalities of a land surface, considered collectively.

Residuum (residual soil material). Unconsolidated, weathered or partly weathered mineral material that accumulated as consolidated rock disintegrated in place.

Rill. A steep-sided channel resulting from accelerated erosion. A rill generally is a few inches deep and not wide enough to be an obstacle to farm machinery.

Riverwash. Unstable areas of sandy, silty, clayey, or gravelly sediments. These areas are flooded, washed, and reworked by rivers so frequently that they support little or no vegetation.

Road cut. A sloping surface produced by mechanical means during road construction. It is commonly on the uphill side of the road.

Rock fragments. Rock or mineral fragments having a diameter of 2 millimeters or more; for example, boulders, stones, cobbles, and gravel.

Rock outcrop. Exposures of bare bedrock other than lava flows and rock-lined pits.

Root zone. The part of the soil that can be penetrated by plant roots.

Rooting depth (in tables). Shallow root zone. The soil is shallow over a layer that greatly restricts roots.

Runoff. The precipitation discharged into stream channels from an area. The water that flows off the surface of the land without sinking into the soil is called surface runoff. Water that enters the soil before reaching surface streams is called ground-water runoff or seepage flow from ground water.

Salinity. The electrical conductivity of a saline soil. It is expressed, in millimhos per centimeter, as follows:

Nonsaline	0 to 4
Slightly saline	4 to 8
Moderately saline	8 to 16
Strongly saline	more than 16

Sand. As a soil separate, individual rock or mineral fragments from 0.05 to 2.0 millimeters in diameter. Most sand grains consist of quartz. As a soil textural class, a soil that is 85 percent or more sand and not more than 10 percent clay.

Sandstone. Sedimentary rock containing dominantly sand-sized particles.

Sandy soil. Sand or loamy sand.

Sapric soil material (muck). The most highly decomposed of all organic soil material. Muck has the least amount of plant fiber, the highest

bulk density, and the lowest water content at saturation of all organic soil material.

Saturation. Wetness characterized by zero or positive pressure of the soil water. Under conditions of saturation, the water will flow from the soil matrix into an unlined auger hole.

Sedimentary rock. Rock made up of particles deposited from suspension in water. The chief kinds of sedimentary rock are conglomerate, formed from gravel; sandstone, formed from sand; shale, formed from clay; and limestone, formed from soft masses of calcium carbonate. There are many intermediate types. Some wind-deposited sand is consolidated into sandstone.

Seepage (in tables). The movement of water through soil. Seepage adversely affects the specified use.

Series, soil. A group of soils that have profiles that are almost alike, except for differences in texture of the surface layer or of the underlying material. All the soils of a series have horizons that are similar in composition, thickness, and arrangement.

Shale. Sedimentary rock formed by the hardening of a clay deposit.

Shrink-swell (in tables). The shrinking of soil when dry and the swelling when wet. Shrinking and swelling can damage roads, dams, building foundations, and other structures. It can also damage plant roots.

Side slope. A geomorphic component of hills consisting of a laterally planar area of a hillside. The overland waterflow is predominantly parallel.

Silica. A combination of silicon and oxygen. The mineral form is called quartz.

Silt. As a soil separate, individual mineral particles that range in diameter from the upper limit of clay (0.002 millimeters) to the lower limit of very fine sand (0.05 millimeters). As a soil textural class, soil that is 80 percent or more silt and less than 12 percent clay.

Siltstone. Sedimentary rock made up of dominantly silt-sized particles.

Similar soils. Soils that share limits of diagnostic criteria, behave and perform in a similar manner, and have similar conservation needs or management requirements for the major land uses in the survey area.

Site index. A designation of the quality of a forest site based on the height of the dominant stand at an arbitrarily chosen age. For example, if the average height attained by dominant or dominant and codominant trees in a fully stocked stand at the age of 50 years is 75 feet, the site index is 75.

Slippage. Soil mass susceptible to movement downslope when loaded, excavated, or wet. (See Slumping.)

Slope. The inclination of the land surface from the horizontal. Percentage of slope is the vertical distance divided by horizontal distance, then multiplied by 100. Thus, a slope of 20 percent is a drop of 20 feet in 100 feet of horizontal distance. In this survey the following slope classes are recognized:

Nearly level	0 to 2 percent
Gently sloping	2 to 4 percent
Moderately sloping	4 to 8 percent
Strongly sloping	8 to 15 percent
Moderately steep	15 to 25 percent
Steep	25 to 45 percent
Very steep	more than 45 percent

Slope (in tables). Slope is great enough that special practices are required to ensure satisfactory performance of the soil for a specific use.

Slow refill (in tables). The slow filling of ponds, resulting from restricted permeability in the soil.

Slumping. The soil mass is susceptible to movement downslope, usually with a backward rotation, when loaded, excavated, or wet. (See Slippage)

Sodium adsorption ratio (SAR). A measure of the amount of sodium (Na) relative to calcium (Ca) and magnesium (Mg) in the water extract from saturated soil paste. It is the ratio of the Na concentration divided by the square root of one-half of the Ca + Mg concentration.

Soft bedrock. Bedrock that can be excavated with trenching machines, backhoes, small rippers, and other equipment commonly used in construction.

Soil. A natural, three-dimensional body at the earth's surface. It is capable of supporting plants and has properties resulting from the integrated effect of climate and living matter acting on earthy parent material, as conditioned by relief over time.

Solum. The upper part of a soil profile, above the C horizon, in which the processes of soil formation are active. The solum in soil consists of the A, E, and B horizons. Generally, the characteristics of the material in these horizons are unlike those of the material below the solum. The living roots and plant and animal activities are largely confined to the solum.

Species. A single, distinct kind of plant or animal having certain distinguishing characteristics.

Stones. Rock fragments 10 to 24 inches (25 to 60 centimeters) in diameter if rounded or 15 to 24 inches (38 to 60 centimeters) in length if flat.

- Stony.** Refers to a soil containing stones in numbers that interfere with tillage, or stones cover .01 to 0.1 percent of the surface. Very stony means that 0.1 to 3.0 percent of the surface is covered with stones. Extremely stony means that 3 to 15 percent of the surface is covered with stones.
- Stream channel.** The hollow bed where a natural stream of surface water flows or may flow; the deepest or central part of the bed, formed by the main current and covered more or less continuously by water.
- Stream terrace.** One of a series of platforms in a stream valley, flanking and more or less parallel to the stream channel. It originally formed near the level of the stream and is the dissected remnants of an abandoned flood plain, streambed, or valley floor that were produced during a former stage of erosion or deposition.
- Stripcropping.** Growing crops in a systematic arrangement of strips or bands that provide vegetative barriers to soil blowing and water erosion.
- Structure, soil.** The arrangement of primary soil particles into compound particles or aggregates. The principal forms of soil structure are *platy* (laminated), *prismatic* (vertical axis of aggregates longer than horizontal), *columnar* (prisms with rounded tops), *blocky* (angular or subangular), and *granular*. *Structureless* soils are either *single grain* (each grain by itself, as in dune sand) or *massive* (the particles adhering without any regular cleavage, as in many hardpans).
- Subsoil.** Technically, the B horizon; roughly, the part of the solum below plow depth.
- Substratum.** The part of the soil below the solum.
- Subsurface layer.** Any surface soil horizon (A, E, AB, or EB) below the surface layer.
- Summit.** A general term for the top, or highest level, of an upland feature, such as a hill or mountain. It commonly refers to a higher area that has a gentle slope and is flanked by steeper slopes.
- Surface layer.** The soil ordinarily moved in tillage, or its equivalent in uncultivated soil, ranging in depth from 4 to 10 inches (10 to 25 centimeters). Frequently designated as the “plow layer,” or the “Ap horizon.”
- Terrace.** An embankment, or ridge, constructed across sloping soils on the contour or at a slight angle to the contour. The terrace intercepts surface runoff so that water soaks into the soil or flows slowly to a prepared outlet. A terrace in a field generally is built so that the field can be farmed. A terrace intended mainly for drainage has a deep channel that is maintained in permanent sod.
- Terrace (geologic).** An old alluvial plain, ordinarily flat or undulating, bordering a river, a lake, or the sea.
- Texture, soil.** The relative proportions of sand, silt, and clay particles in a mass of soil. The basic textural classes, in order of increasing proportion of fine particles, are *sand*, *loamy sand*, *sandy loam*, *loam*, *silt loam*, *silt*, *sandy clay loam*, *clay loam*, *silty clay loam*, *sandy clay*, *silty clay*, and *clay*. The sand, loamy sand, and sandy loam classes may be further divided by specifying “coarse,” “fine,” or “very fine.”
- Thin layer (in tables).** A layer of otherwise suitable soil material that is too thin for the specified use.
- Tilth, soil.** The physical condition of the soil as related to tillage, seedbed preparation, seedling emergence, and root penetration.
- Toeslope.** The outermost inclined surface at the base of a hill. Toeslopes are commonly gentle and linear in profile.
- Topsoil.** The upper part of the soil, which is the most favorable material for plant growth. It is ordinarily rich in organic matter and is used to topdress roadbanks, lawns, and land affected by mining.
- Trace elements.** Chemical elements, for example, zinc, cobalt, manganese, copper, and iron, in soils in extremely small amounts. They are essential to plant growth.
- Trafficability.** The degree to which a soil is capable of supporting vehicular traffic across a wide range in soil moisture conditions.
- Understory.** Any plants in a forest community that grow to a height of less than 5 feet.
- Upland.** Land at a higher elevation, in general, than the alluvial plain or stream terrace; land above the lowlands along streams.
- Valley.** An elongated depressional area primarily developed by stream action.
- Valley fill.** In glaciated regions, material deposited in stream valleys by glacial meltwater. In nonglaciated regions, alluvium deposited by heavily loaded streams.
- Value, soil color.** (See Munsell notation.)
- Variation.** Refers to patterns of contrasting colors assumed to be inherited from the parent material rather than to be the result of poor drainage.
- Volcanic ash mantle.** A surface layer of soil that contains 30 percent or more volcanic glass, covering older soil material. It has low bulk density and high water holding capacity.

Water table. A saturated zone of free water in the soil.

Weathering. All physical and chemical changes produced in rocks or other deposits at or near the earth's surface by atmospheric agents. These changes result in disintegration and decomposition of the material.

Wetness (in tables). The soil is wet from saturation by a high water table during the period of use.

Wilting point (or permanent wilting point). The moisture content of soil, on an oven-dry basis, at which a plant (specifically a sunflower) wilts so much that it does not recover when placed in a humid, dark chamber.

NRCS Accessibility Statement

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is committed to making its information accessible to all of its customers and employees. If you are experiencing accessibility issues and need assistance, please contact our Helpdesk by phone at 1-800-457-3642 or by e-mail at ServiceDesk-FTC@ftc.usda.gov. For assistance with publications that include maps, graphs, or similar forms of information, you may also wish to contact our State or local office. You can locate the correct office and phone number at <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.