

## SOIL AND PLANT SCIENCE DIVISION

# Technical Soil Services

## South Central Region



### **Woodward, Oklahoma, Major Land Resource Area Soil Survey Office**

### **Woodward Major Land Resource Area Soil Survey Office Supports the 2023 National Collegiate Soil Judging Contest**

#### **Purpose**

During the last two weeks of March 2023, staff from the Woodward Major Land Resource Area (MLRA) Soil Survey Office assisted Oklahoma State University (OSU) Department of Plant and Soil Sciences with the setup of the practice and contest sites for the 2023 National Collegiate Soil Judging Contest. Fifteen practice sites were available for the contestants from March 25-29, and the contest occurred on March 30 and 31 in Woodward and Harper Counties, Oklahoma.

#### **Key Outcomes**

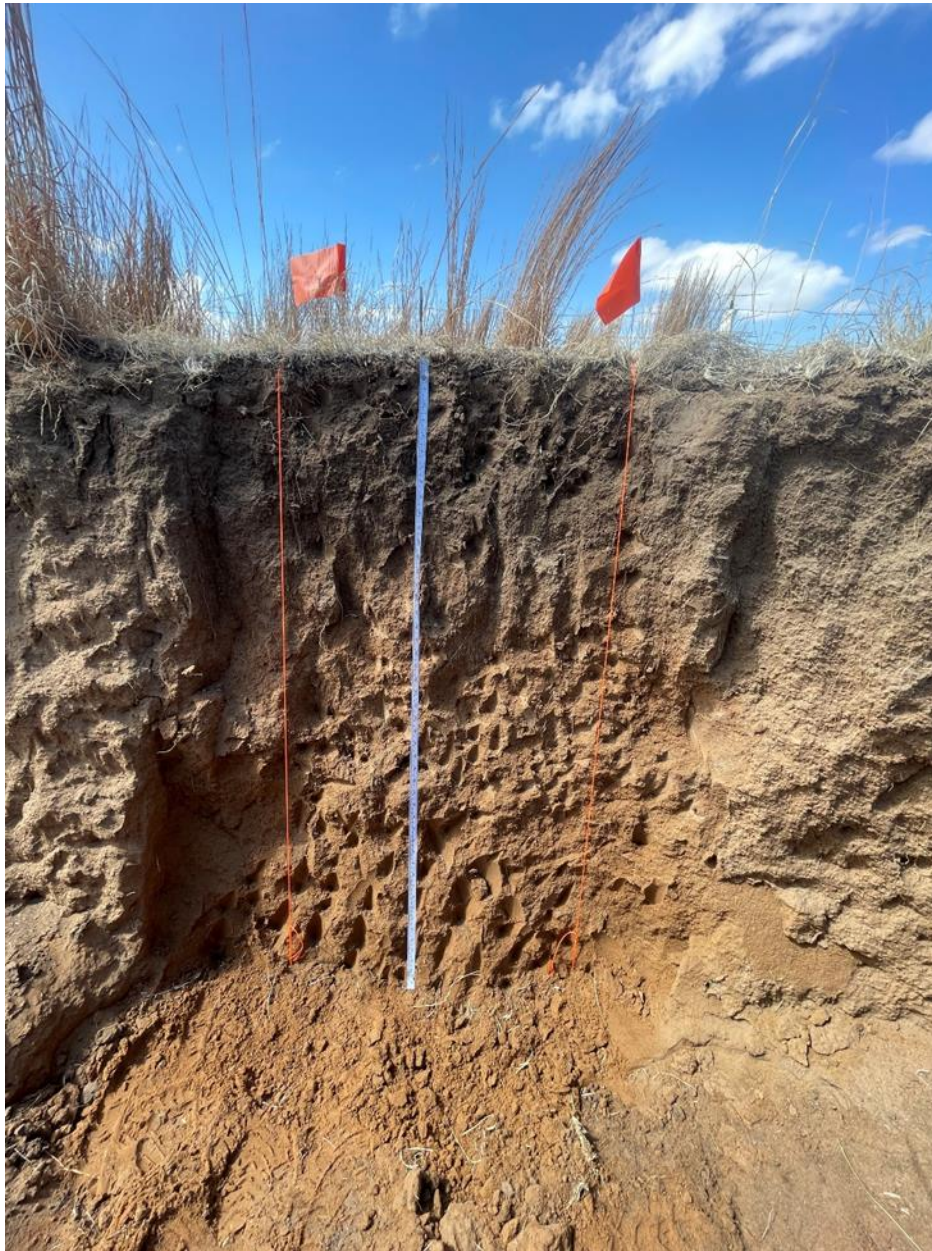
Steven McGowen (MLRA Soil Survey Leader), Brandon Vaverka (Soil Scientist), and Yanuel Charriez (Soil Scientist) assisted Jason Warren (Extension Specialist for Soil and Water Conservation and professor of soil science at OSU) with many aspects of the contest (see figure 1). They obtained landowner permissions, pre-screened practice sites and contest sites, obtained clearance for excavation through 811 utility locate services, completed site reconnaissance, dug soil trenches, and collected samples for lab analyses. In addition, they assisted in describing soil properties, marking the control areas in the soil pits (see figure 2), and evaluating soil analysis results and interpretations used on the practice and official contest scorecards.

Connections with universities through collegiate soil judging contests is an important part of recruitment for the Soil and Plant Science Division (SPSD). Many current Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) SPSP employees were former soil judging contestants, and the event serves as a gateway for prospective employees.



*Figure 1. Yanuel Charriez (Soil Scientist) and Brandon Vaverka (Soil Scientist) prepare the control section of a soil profile for a contest site while Jason Warren (Extension Specialist for Soil and Water Conservation and professor of soil science at OSU) looks on.*





*Figure 2. A prepared soil profile at one of the official contest sites.*