



National Technical Committee for Hydric Soils (NTCHS) Bylaws

Authority

Per 7 CFR 12.30(a)(1), the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) shall oversee the development and application of criteria to identify hydric soils in consultation with the National Technical Committee for Hydric Soils and make available to the public an approved county list of hydric soil map units, which is based on the National List of Hydric Soils.

General Membership

The committee will consist of a standing membership of 15 permanent roles as follows:

- Chairperson, who is a USDA NRCS soil scientist with national responsibilities. The chair will be appointed by the Director of the Soil and Plant Sciences Division (SPSD).
- Four USDA NRCS soil scientists from either the SPSP staff or from among the State soil scientists or designee.
- One member each from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management.
- At least five scientists who serve as subject matter experts (SMEs) representing disciplines doing research in hydric soils. Typically, they will be from universities, but they may also be from other research institutions or disciplines targeted by the committee to address current or future committee needs. Other representatives and temporary or permanent members may be designated by the committee to fill roles or accomplish tasks as needed.

Term of membership is determined by the agency represented. Members may resign by submitting a letter of resignation to the NTCHS chairperson.

Subject Matter Expert Membership

SME membership is voluntary, and such members should have a proven research record in hydric soils or related disciplines as targeted by the committee. SME member vacancies will be advertised as needed. Potential applicants can submit qualifications to the NTCHS for consideration. The SME membership or a subcommittee consisting of three or more SME members will evaluate the nominations to fill these vacancies. The standing SME members approve the new SME members, following solicitation for feedback from the full NTCHS.

Deliberations – Business Meetings

- The committee shall meet at least once a year to conduct business.
- Business shall be conducted using the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order.



- Substitutes may attend for members with advance notice to the chairperson. Proxy votes may be bestowed upon the substitutes or another NTCHS member with advance notice to the chairperson.
- Subcommittees of the NTCHS may be assembled and charged with handling specific issues. These subcommittees will produce a report with recommendations for consideration by the entire NTCHS. Subcommittees may seek assistance from outside experts who are not members of the NTCHS.
- All members are responsible for their own travel costs to attend meetings.
- The minutes of each business meeting are recorded by any present member as designated by the chairperson and are formally drafted and maintained by the chairperson. The minutes will be available to the public on the hydric soils web page (see link below).

Duties

USDA NRCS will be responsible for notification of changes to the hydric soil definition and the criteria used to produce the National List of Hydric Soils. The National List of Hydric Soils, or subsets of this list by State or soil survey area, can be accessed as a query of the official soil survey data from the NTCHS website. The hydric soil definition and the criteria used to produce the National List of Hydric Soils, along with any updates to it, are published in the Federal Register.

Additional duties of the NTCHS include the following:

1. Provide continuing technical leadership in the formulation, evaluation, and application of hydric soil definition, criteria, indicators, and glossary.
2. Annually update and distribute a National List of Hydric Soils, as necessary.
3. Publish and maintain the "Field Indicators of Hydric Soils in the United States." The subcommittee will recommend changes to the "Field Indicators of Hydric Soils in the United States" to the entire NTCHS, and the changes must be reviewed and approved before adopting.
4. Communicate and respond to public comment regarding suggested changes in hydric soil definition, criteria, lists, and field indicators.
5. Determine soil, hydrologic, and climatic data necessary to more accurately define and identify hydric soils using technical methodologies and standards.

Changes in the NTCHS committee membership, hydric soils glossary, operating procedures, or any other committee business shall be distributed via the NRCS – National Technical Committee for Hydric Soils (NTCHS) webpage [National Technical Committee for Hydric Soils \(NTCHS\) | Natural Resources Conservation Service \(usda.gov\)](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/ntchs/).