

Soil Survey in Vermont

Updating soil maps in the Lake Champlain Basin



NRCS is updating the soil mapping within selected areas of Vermont's Lake Champlain Basin. The goal is to use new information and technologies to bring the soil survey for the Basin up to a consistent common standard. Currently, the soil survey in the area is made up of many different vintages and is in need of updating to improve accuracy, and therefore land use decisions.

What is soil survey?

Soil survey is the inventory of an area's soil resources. It includes maps depicting the boundaries of predominant soil types, data about soil properties, and interpretations regarding soil suitability for land use and management.

This project will focus on improving soil map accuracy. The mapping work conducted by the Soil Survey Offices in Vermont and New York will involve high resolution elevation data, aerial photography, and other digital data to form a model of the soils in the Basin.

This will be verified in the field April through November. Much of the soils data in the Lake Champlain Basin is currently outdated, and this project will help enable improved, more accurate land use planning decisions

Why is updated soil mapping data important for the Lake Champlain Basin?

The updated information for the Basin can be used by farmers and

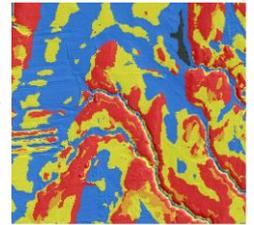
landowners to help determine whether a particular soil type is suited for crops or livestock and what type of soil management might be required. An architect or engineer might use the engineering properties of a soil to determine suitability and limitations for a certain type of construction. A homeowner may consult the information when thinking about maintaining or constructing their garden, yard, or home.

What is the process and timeline for the Lake Champlain soil mapping project?

Field investigations will consist of many small auger holes (4-inches in diameter) as well as some hand-dug small pits (2X2 feet), to a depth of about 40 inches to enable observation and recording of soil properties. All holes will be filled back in.

The first phase will include high level investigation in a small (about 1000 acres) pilot area. This will ensure a clearer understanding of the soil-landscape relationship and applicability throughout the Basin.

Detailed soil mapping
Mapped at a scale of 1:12,000.



More limited field checking could be necessary.

Project completion is estimated at around ten years, with completed sections of the project published as they are finalized. The information will be published to the [Web Soil Survey](#)

Want to stay in the loop on the Lake Champlain Basin soil mapping project?

Sign up for Vermont NRCS email updates via GovDelivery at <http://bit.ly/VTNRCSGovDelivery> and follow us on Twitter @VermontNRCS. Questions? gerald.smith@ny.usda.gov or call 518-327-3774.



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