

# Soil Science Division

## Soil Survey Region 3

### Richmond, Virginia, MLRA Soil Survey Office

## Region 3 Soil Scientist Assists NRCS Virginia with Workload

### Purpose

Although NRCS State and regional soil scientists receive their annual priorities from different agency leaders, the overall agency goal remains the same. The goal is to help the American landowner best utilize, and care for, the soil resources that are vital to the health of the Nation. Therefore, regional soil scientists heed the call to assist their State counterparts in the timely completion of technical soil survey (TSS) services.

Over the past 2 years, the Richmond MLRA Soil Survey Office (MSSO) has assisted the Area IV Chesapeake Field Office in Virginia with their wetland determination workload. The determinations are required any time an individual enrolled in a NRCS-sponsored program wants to “put into production” or clear land. The protection of wetland habitat combined with the importance of water quality makes these determinations essential in safeguarding our Nation’s natural resources.

Due to the decrease in soils staff within NRCS, soil scientists now cover larger areas than ever before. Traveling across multiple counties, and even State lines, is now commonplace. The time involved traveling the long distances often makes it difficult to efficiently meet the workload needs of an area. In most situations, people working together can achieve a common goal.

### Key Outcomes

By jointly working together towards a common goal, NRCS staff can ultimately achieve the agency’s top priorities of assisting our customers and protecting our Nation’s natural resources. The time of both NRCS staff and our customers was saved by a simple sharing of services. In addition, the time saved directly correlates to money saved by the reduction of fuel costs and vehicle maintenance and by increased staff efficiency. Because of these savings, finite agency resources can be utilized to their greatest extent and, as a result, go towards helping even more customers.

Ultimately, everyone wins. Agency conservation practices are completed in a timely and efficient manner. These practices conserve our Nation’s soil, water, and agricultural resources, ensuring they will be shared and enjoyed by future generations. At a time where the number of Americans involved in agriculture is declining, support and assistance from agencies like NRCS is vital. We all understand the reality of finite resources and time. Working together in a simple, common-sense manner can make the difference needed to protect and sustain our Nation’s natural treasures.





*A scientist checks soil colors, looking for hydric soil indicators, in Spotsylvania County, Virginia.*



*A soil sample used to record soil textures colors, and organic matter in Chesterfield County, Virginia.*