

**Soil Societies/Associations National Teleconference**  
**Hosted by the United States Consortium of Soil Science Associations**  
Thursday, March 29, 2007

**Participants:**

B.J. Shoup -- Arizona  
Cathy McGuire -- Arizona  
Kerry Arroues -- Professional Soil Scientists Association of California  
Thomas Macfie -- Soil Science Society of Georgia  
Dana Marshall -- Indiana Association of Professional Soil Scientists & Association of Women Soil Scientists  
Tom Fenton -- Professional Soil Classifiers of Iowa  
Rogey Risley -- Minnesota Association of Professional Soil Scientists  
Bryan Mayhan -- Missouri Association of Professional Soil Scientists  
Patrick Cowser -- Nebraska Society of Professional soil Scientists  
C.J. Heidt -- Professional Soil Classifiers Association of North Dakota  
Larry Edland -- Professional Soil Classifiers Association of North Dakota  
Clay Salisbury -- Professional Soil Scientists Association of Oklahoma  
Will Austin -- Oregon Society of Soil Scientists  
Bruce Willman -- Pennsylvania Association of Professional Soil Scientists  
Kelly Attebury -- Professional Soil Scientists Association of Texas  
Tim Riebe -- Washington Society of Professional Soil Scientists  
John Campbell -- Wisconsin Society of Professional Soil Scientists  
Phil Small -- National Society of Consulting Soil Scientists  
Luther Smith -- Soil Science Society of America  
Paul Kamps -- Soil Science Society of America  
David McMillen -- Soil Scientist Association of Tennessee -- Not present but sent conference notes  
Judy Kisch -- Conference Manager -- National Soil Survey Center -- Lincoln, NE  
Jim Culver -- Advisory Group -- United States Consortium of Soil Science Associations

The USCSSA was first initiated in January 2001 to promote communications, coordination and networking nationally among soil societies and associations. One of the main functions is to maintain a list of officers and keep it updated on the website. We want to use this teleconference to share information and to promote soil science.

We appreciate the good participation for this teleconference. Busy time of the year for all. Several conflicts, i.e., Soil Science Society of Southern New England -- Board of Directors meeting, Wyoming -- Kelly Counts in field, Chad McGrath visiting in Texas, Fred Gilbert New York - first day in field -- Snow, Bob Eppintee, South Carolina -- retired yesterday - last day for NRCS and 5 or more states had planned to call in but were unable to do so. An agenda was prepared, sent out for review and additions prior to the teleconference. This agenda served as a guide for the conference discussion.

We compliment soil societies/association for excellent work and accomplishments this past year. Many quality web sites, annual meetings, field trips, etc. Our agenda centers around three very active areas this past year: 1) Smithsonian Soils Exhibit, 2) State Soils Certification and 3) World Congress of Soil Science meeting.

We appreciate the excellent assistance of Judy Kisch, Administrative Assistant at the National Soil Survey Center, in management of the teleconference.

## **1 -- Status of Smithsonian Soils Exhibit and Fund Raising Activities --- Paul Kamps and others.**

This has been a link effort, and the states are progressing nicely. 2007 is a key year. Hope to have design and funding completed by the end of 2007. The Smithsonian has tentatively set the opening date as July 2008. So it is full speed ahead. Two point one to two point two million dollars has been raised to date, with almost one half million dollars directly from the states. Twenty six states are over the benchmark \$10,000 figure, but we need more corporate sponsors from each state contact to reach what remains (\$300,000) of the larger goal by October. The Smithsonian exhibit is scheduled to run from July 2008 through January 2010, and will be in the Museum of Natural History at the Smithsonian. Will work with SSSA design committee; the April edition of CSA News on page 27 includes a description of design milestones for the exhibit. Thirty-five percent done with design, so still a long way to go, but will be at 95% by October so need your help to initiate corporate contacts this month. The funds for the remaining goal will come from corporate sponsorships - Engineering firms, land developers, petroleum industry, organic or sustainable groups that might want sponsorships. Traveling exhibit will spin off the main DC exhibit.

Larry Edland: Keith Anderson approached the state legislature recently for funds from North Dakota.

Paul Kamps: Both North Dakota and Arkansas have been active recently. Have your state liaison contact me.

Dena Marshall: Do you have corporate folks yet?

Paul Kamps: Not many, not enough. Fertilizer group is the largest contributor; others have been at the 5 figure level. Ten thousand dollars from the National Society of Consulting Soil Scientists. My list is fairly lengthy as far as corporations to approach, but short as to actual names to get us inside the door. We need to get inside the door or have a contact name for engineering firms, turf businesses, petroleum industry, etc. We don't necessarily need the CEO but someone down the ladder to begin talking with. You may reach me via email at [pkamps@soils.org](mailto:pkamps@soils.org) or by phone at 608-268-4975 at SSSA Headquarters. Whom do you or your colleagues know at major companies in your state who I could contact about the project? Please let me know this month.

Jim Culver: Each person needs to take 5-10 minutes and think of potential contacts.

Paul Kamps: It was estimated that the traveling exhibit would cost 1.5 million dollars. However, the Smithsonian has expressed an interest in using Smithsonian-associated museums across the country. That would drop the cost to \$750,000.

## **2 --State Certification, Licensing of Soil Scientists -- Luther Smith and participants.**

Working on licensing efforts in Washington State, at committee level, haven't heard anything recently. Looking at doing state-based certification and will be testing in Ohio and Florida. If it looks promising, we will open up to other states. Licensing is highly political and costs money. To increase awareness we need to involve soil scientists with the regulators.

Jim Culver: Anything going on in Tennessee? Proposed bills in senate and house.

C.J. Heidt: How does state certification tie into states that already have licensing?

Luther Smith: Either or – if you have licensing, it would supersede certification.

Kelley Attebury – Texas related to some of their experiences. An excellent reference is the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists web site. The website for the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists is <http://www.tbpg.state.tx.us/>. A long, expensive battle preceded the passage of this act and I can certainly sympathize with the struggles and obstacles other states are encountering. Dr. Maury H. Milford, P.G. is an outgoing Board Member and retired soils professor at Texas A&M University and was in the fight from the beginning and instrumental in representing soil scientist's interest. Dr. Milford would be a wealth of knowledge for someone engaged in a licensing effort...and he is a very nice guy. I believe you will find this site very informative.

Notes provided by David McMillen – Tennessee

Near the end of the 2006 legislative session, a bill was proposed to require bonding for soil scientists. Members of Soil Scientists Association of Tennessee (SSAT) showed up at the hearing and gave testimony. This prompted dialog with the legislative committee which simply asked "What do soil scientists want?". SSAT immediately formed a committee that drafted requirements for licensing.

In this legislative session we now have a bill proposed that will create licensing ([Senate Bill 1888](#) and [House Bill 2118](#)).

Here is a summary of the proposed bill:

- We are licensing the ability to classify soils
  - Education requirements matching NRCS 470 series
  - 16 annual hours of continuing ed (8 required in the field)
  - Written test (ARCPACS?)
  - Administrative functions will be handled by the Registered Land Surveyors board (lists, continuing ed, answering phone complaints, etc) -- Technical functions will be handled by an advisory board of professional soil scientists
  - We currently have a requirement of \$250,000 of E&O insurance for \$30,000 bond. This will probably be removed in the next round of amendments.
  - All currently practicing soil scientists will be grandfathered
- Realistically, the bill will probably not pass this year as we hammer out details with the state agencies, existing boards and legislators.

I would be interested in hearing criticism or comments or, I would gladly share our journey so far with anyone that is interested.

### **3 --Consulting Services on USCSSA and other web sites -- Phil Small, National Society of Consulting Soil Scientists.**

The section "consulting services" in getting more traffic from the general public and others who need consulting soil services. This is a good time to review what is currently listed and to update how we refer others to potential users of soil consultants. Currently the USCSSA web site links to some other web sites such as the NSCSS web site for those who are listed as soil consultants.

Jim Culver: There are currently about 16 different organizations or states listed as potential contacts for those looking for soil consultants. About at least half of those are in need of major update. We need to keep current. We'll work with states that are already listed to get updated information. Maybe we should reference the association and then you can go back into the association website so we don't try to keep two lists.

Phil Small: How to do? Anyone have suggestions? I'll give Jim some mockups.

#### **4 --World Congress of Soil Science – John Havlin, Soil Science Society of America (Unable to exit teaching obligation in time)**

Tom Fenton: Well attended. The sessions were very good. The Society did make money on it – not as much as we thought but still made some.

Dena Marshall: It was a very good conference. A little disappointed in the attendance but still a success. Field trip was good. There was interest from the Australians (half are women). Next international congress will be held in Australia and will be a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Bruce Williman – the Pennsylvania Association of Professional Soil Scientists and others sent a considerable amount of time in assisting with a large number of local field and bus tour. Several positive comments on the quality organization and interest of tours.

#### **5 --Survey of dates state soil societies/associations were organized. – Jim Culver**

North Carolina Society had 50 year celebration this past spring. Received a request from Maurice Cook in North Carolina about when state soils societies/associations were first started. Sent out a request to all soil organizations to get this information. Some follow-up. Thirty one different societies responded with about 13 left to respond. Three fourths were started in the 1970s to 1980s.

- Will make another effort to get information from the remaining soils organizations.
- Will send out results of survey to all as general information.
- Will post results of survey on USCSSA web site.

#### **6 --New business -- Culver**

The council set up Bylaws. Need to take a look at. Who we are, where we want to go? Do we want to try to do something at the upcoming meeting in New Orleans? Try to keep information current.

#### **7 -State Reports**

Cathy McGuire from Arizona: SWCS in AZ will host international meeting in 2008. Lot of work.

B.J. Shoup from Arizona: Moved to Arizona recently from New Mexico. Interested in working with Cathy on discussion and opportunity to have a soils organization in AZ or a multi state soil organization.

Kerry Arroues (Professional Soil Scientists Association of California): Looking forward to annual meeting at Santa Catalina Island. Terry Cook in charge of accommodations – 45 seats now available. Soil survey of the island taking place right now. We have a bunch of new surveys that were just completed – Yosemite, Kern Co., etc. Organization considering opening up on membership, making it broader.

Thomas Macfie (Soil Science Society of Georgia): Busy this year. Licensing went through general assembly two times and passed unanimously, but the governor vetoed two times. Bill 226 in the House is a new effort expands what soil scientists can do, under Department of Health certification. Overall process is expensive – over the past 5 years about 20,000 dollars have been spent to employee assistance –soil consultants have been very positive in making contribution to keep this work before the general assembly and moving forward. State meetings and field trips planned.

Dena Marshall (Indiana Association of Professional Soil Scientists): The Association of Professional Classifiers had a winter meeting in January, had a good turnout. The Health Department talked to us about what we can do to make things easier for them. Planning for annual fall tour. Association of Women Soil Scientists – geared up for the meetings in New Orleans, planning on giving away two \$500 scholarships a year. Working hard on Smithsonian Soils exhibit. Little over a 100 members now and trying to boost membership as much as possible. I plan to contact Dr. Schulz at Purdue to see how

things are going as far as fundraising in Indiana. Don't know if SWCS has been very active? The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Desert Soils Morphology Tour will be held in May.

Tom Fenton (Professional Soil Classifiers of Iowa): Selling soil textural kits. If you are interested, contact me or the website (cost is \$25/sample). Planning field trip in conjunction with soil judging trip. Will utilize pits in southwest Iowa on September 28-29 (36 beds reserved at the Creighton Retreat Center if anyone is interested).

Roger Risley (Minnesota Association of Professional Soil Scientists): We are licensed here in Minnesota which is a good thing but is also controversial. On site treatment done by people who are not licensed. Discussion on What soil science is and what they can do. For example on determination of high water table – not enough soil scientists available to meet demand.

Bryan Mayhan (Missouri Association of Professional Soil Scientists): Working on state soil “Menfro” soil educational program. Soil certification being looked on quite critically by Geologists and Engineers. Plan to work with Department of Health and geosciences people in certification process.

Larry Edland (Professional Soil Classifiers Association of North Dakota): Some recent joint successful meetings of soils organization with SWCS and South Dakota Department of Range Management. Working of field tour of Lewis and Clark area as part of the National Cooperative Soil Survey meeting this year in ND. More active this past year with 7 new members. Interest and activity of organization looking positive and forward.

Clay Salisbury (Professional Soil Scientists Association of Oklahoma): Many members will assist with the National Land Judging Contest in Oklahoma this May. Several NRCS retiree members help with this national contest. Our spring meeting will be held during this time. A field trip is in the planning stages for this fall (October) meeting. We are thinking of alternating our fall meetings between Stillwater, OK and other areas around the state. The last several years, we have held our fall meeting at Stillwater near the OSU campus. By doing this, we are getting more participation from Oklahoma State University students and professors. We are hoping to promote the students interest in a career of soil science. PSSAO continues to scholarship the OSU soil judging team.

Bruce Willman (Pennsylvania Association of Professional Soil Scientists): Has been on the Association Board for the past 20 years. Essentially working on certification/licensing. Same problem that other states are encountering. The engineers are licensed and don't want to give us what they already have, but we need to work out an alliance with them. Certification sounds good until you talk to the regulators. We are in a catch 22 with two year legislative sessions so if you don't get in the first year it probably will not go through legislatively. About forty percent are new to the legislature. Even when we proposed a soil bill to go with the Smithsonian it would not pass. Have a new board who is trying to get into their role. Will keep forwarding information to the consortium.

Will Austin (Oregon Society of Soil Scientists): Summer tour in August will be a vineyard tour. The winter meeting is schedule for February 2008. Talk about global climate change affecting vineyards on the west coast. Working on for 10 years, first time legislature

Kelly Attebury (Professional Soil Scientists Association of Texas): I am the 2007 president of the Association that was founded in 1982. We are continuing fundraising efforts for the Smithsonian exhibit. We sponsor the state FFA land judging contest each year – host university soil judging contests. We give an annual scholarship in the amount of 1,500 dollars. Our PR committee uses spots on radio stations and articles in newspapers to promote us and discuss relevant soils topics. We currently have 120 members, including 10 members from 6 other states. We sell t-shirts and caps and that money goes toward scholarship fund. We field questions on our website – a very successful activity.

Kelly Atteburg (Professional Soil Scientists Association of Texas): I am the president of the Association that was founded in 1982. We are continuing fundraising efforts for the Smithsonian exhibit. We developed a field kit with ARS, sponsor the FFA land judging contest – host university soil judging contest. We give an annual scholarship in the amount of about 1,500 dollars. Our PR committee uses spots on radio stations and articles in newspapers to promote us. We currently have 120 members, including 6 from outside the state. We sell t-shirts and caps and that money goes toward scholarships. We field questions on our website – a very successful activity.

Tim Riebe (Washington Society of Professional Soil Scientists): In process of writing a grant to get more money for monolith for Smithsonian exhibit. We have raised \$6,074 for the exhibit to date. We were turned down in committee for licensure. Tried to submit as a title act, made it through Commerce and Labor committee but died in the Appropriations committee. Trying to regroup and will poll our membership to see how they would like us to proceed. We provide support and/or awards to Envirothon, Land Judging, Washington State Engineering and Science fair, and FFA. We will join Oregon on the vineyard soils tour this summer. For more, see our website at <http://www.ieway.com/wspss/>.

John Campbell (Wisconsin Society of Professional Soil Scientists): Working with NRCS on an historical CD providing pictures of people who started our society. Student organization started in 1971. New web site!! Spring meeting schedule in mid June. Fall meeting schedule in mid October and will include a business meeting with a tour. We provide two \$500 scholarships in the spring. We participate in the Wisconsin science teacher fair. Excellent power point presentation. In September, at the farm technology days farm show we will have a soil pit with other displays. One hundred twenty to one hundred thirty members - up over 200 licensed soil scientists.

Patrick Cowser (Nebraska Society of Professional Soil Scientists): Collected money for the Smithsonian exhibit - almost \$14,000. Give scholarships for land judging. Fall meeting is planned.

Luther Smith: Other licensing state legislation - we have a list on webpage (SSSA Organization, go to certification section). I'm willing to work with anyone on licensing.

Meeting adjourned at about 11:15 a.m.