

What is a published soil survey?



A soil survey is a detailed report on the soils of an area.

The soil survey has maps with soil boundaries and photos, descriptions, and tables of soil properties and features.

Soil surveys are used by farmers, real estate agents, land use planners, engineers and others who desire information about the soil resource.



The major parts of a soil survey publication...

- Table of Contents
- Detailed soil map units
- Use and management and interpretive tables
- Classification of soils
- References
- Glossary
- Index to map sheets
- Soil maps





Using the soil survey...

- Obtain a printed soil survey from the NRCS, USDA office, or local conservation office or access a Web version at: <http://soils.usda.gov/survey/>
- Open the soil survey to *Index To Map Sheets*
- Locate your area of interest or property on the *Index*.
- The numbers in rectangles correspond to the map sheet number located in the second half of the publication.
- Look at the aerial map closely and locate landmarks such as roads or streams to find your area of interest.



Using the soil survey continued...

- The lines on the image separate different soil types. Your area of interest may include one or more types.
- The small letters or numbers that are within the same polygon as your area of interest, such as ScC, or KnC, or LaC designate a map unit. Note this map unit symbol. It is the key to finding information.
- Turn to the *Index to Map Units* which shows the page where these map units are described. Also go to the various tables or reports which are organized by map unit symbol.



Using the soil survey continued.

- This process is simplified in Web soil surveys but follow the same sequence:
 1. Locate your area of interest of the maps.
 2. Note the map unit symbol.
 3. Go to the text or tables for information on that map unit.





Using the soil survey continued.

Glossary

Aeration, soil. The exchange of air in soil with air from the atmosphere . . .

- If you find a term or soil description in the detailed information sheet on your soil and you would like to learn what that term means, go the *Glossary* section of the report. The *Glossary* is located in the center of the publication.



Using the soil survey--*Tables*

TABLE 1.--TEMPERATURE AND
PRECIPITATION

TABLE 2.--FREEZE DATES IN
SPRING AND FALL

TABLE 3.--GROWING SEASON

TABLE 4.--ACREAGE AND
PROPORTIONAL EXTENT OF THE
SOILS

- The *Tables* section of the soil survey report provides detailed information on soil properties and their suitability and limitations as well as management and production potential of the various soils.



Using the *Tables* continued...

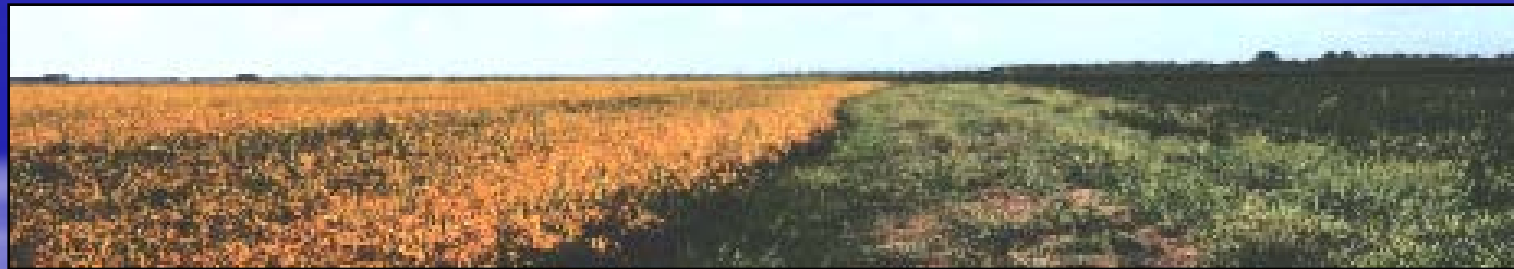
- The *Tables* section has detailed information on engineering index properties, physical and chemical properties, and soil and water features.
- The *Tables* section also has detailed information on soil use, such as crops and pasture, recreation, and engineering.
- To use the tables, simply remember your map unit symbol and find it in the appropriate table.





Other useful information...

- The soil survey report may have other useful information such as the general soils map, prime farmland, use and management of soils, processes and factors of soil formation, and landforms and surface geology.





Find out more about soil surveys.

- If, after reviewing the soil survey report, you still have unanswered questions about the soil survey or your soil, please contact the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service or conservation district office nearest you.





Where to call...

- The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service office number is located in the telephone book under U.S. Government.
- Call them with questions or concerns.



USDA Nondiscriminatory Policy...

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964