



SPADE & AUGER

Vol. 1 No. 1
(Summer 1977)

Newsletter of the Society of Soil
Scientists of Southern New England

EDITOR'S NOTE --

This is the first issue of what we hope will be a regular feature of our Society. As with any such venture, the success of this journal depends on you! You must help by sending in news items, stories, professional developments, etc. Please send your contributions to: Everett Stuart, 25 Preston Drive, North Kingstown, R.I. 02852. Also please advise me of any changes in your address.

RECENT MEETING --

The last regular meeting of the S.S.S. of S.N.E. was May 25, 1977. Treasurer Bill Wright reported 39 full members and 7 associate members had paid their 1977 dues. Bill also provided a summary of the Society's Maryland soils tour held earlier in the spring. Member Lewis Ilgen was appointed to check into the possibility of a New Hampshire trip in the fall. President Gonick reviewed progress in the Society's effort to qualify members.

The guest speaker was Mr. James Aukerman, a member of the R.I. House of Representatives. Mr. Aukerman discussed the mechanics of developing and submitting bills for consideration by legislative bodies. He reviewed the proposed legislation to register soil scientists in Connecticut.

"TRIPLE S" PHAMPHLET DUE OUT SOON --

The "Triple S" is about to release an informational pamphlet listing a brief resumé of those full members who wish to be included. The Society recognizes two qualification classes of professional soil scientists in the private, state, and federal sectors: A. Full Qualification and B. Minimal Qualification. Those persons listed in the pamphlet will be qualified under one of these two classes.

QUALIFICATION STANDARDS AND DEFINITIONS:

A. FULL QUALIFICATION - Persons that meet the following:

1. Have a baccalaureate degree with 30 semester-hours, or equivalent, in the biological, physical, and earth sciences that meet the approval of the Society Board of Directors, and
2. Have four years or more of professional experience as a soil scientist in soil classification, mapping and interpretation that meet the approval of the Society Board of Directors.

B. MINIMAL QUALIFICATION - Persons that meet the following:

1. Have a baccalaureate degree with 30 semester-hours, or equivalent, in the biological, physical, and earth sciences that meet the approval of the Society Board of Directors, and
2. Meet the requirements for GS-5 soil scientist as specified by the United States Civil Service Commission in the current Soil Science Series.

The pamphlet will be out shortly, as a special committee (headed by Society members Dean Rector and Ed Sautter) is rushing it to the printer. Copies will be available to members and other interested parties for a small fee.

DR. HUGO THOMAS FEATURED SPEAKER AT "LAST ACRE CEREMONY" --

Triple S member Dr. Hugo Thomas was guest speaker at the Middlesex County, Connecticut, "Last Acre Ceremony" in December 1976. Dr. Thomas is the Director of the Natural Resources Center, Department of Environmental Protection, State of Connecticut.

Dr. Thomas said, "The State of Connecticut has long evidenced the need for and utility of the Detailed Soil Survey by providing state funding to accelerate the mapping, incorporating reference of the Survey in State legislation, and actively encouraging the utilization of the soil resource data by all agencies responsible for resource planning, management, and regulation."

Between 1965 and 1971 the State of Connecticut appropriated \$119,000 to expedite the soil survey effort. After a lapse of 2 years due to budget structure changes and the formation of the Department of Environmental Protection, funding to accelerate the soil survey resumed in 1973. "It was originally estimated that field work could be completed by 1978 if the state reestablished its acceleration effort to the sum of \$300,000. As a result, \$60,000 has been appropriated in DEP's budget for the last four fiscal years."

Dr. Thomas went on to discuss the state legislation affecting the use of soils information. He pointed out that in 1971, "the Connecticut General Assembly passed Public Act 132--now Section 8-2B of the General Statutes, entitled the "Use of Maps of Soil Conservation Service as Standard."

It reads--"Any planning commission, zoning commission or planning and zoning commission of any municipality may use soil survey maps of the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture as standard in determining land use, planning, zoning or development regulations."

"In most localities where published or town composite soil surveys are available they are being used to varying extents in accordance with this state statute."

"In 1972, the Connecticut General Assembly passed Public Act 155--now Section 22a-36 to 45 of the General Statutes, known as the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act. As we are all aware, definition 15 of this act defines inland wetlands in Connecticut as '....land..... which consists of any of the soil types designated as poorly drained, very poorly drained, alluvial, and flood plain by the National Cooperative Soils Survey, as may be amended from time to time, of the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture.'

"Although other resource elements such as hydrology and biology are often used in the evaluation of the significance of and potential activity impacts on the wetlands, still by law the basic framework for delineation is the soil survey. Not only does the initial delineation of the wetlands rely on the soil survey, but Districts and the Soil Conservation Service staff continue to play an important role by assisting in arbitrating wetland boundary disputes."

Connecticut has the most complete natural resource data base of any state. There is complete or nearly complete statewide coverage of: detailed soil survey; 7 1/2 min. topo. quads; 7 1/2 min. orthophotoquads; 7 1/2 min. bedrock geology quads; 7 1/2 min. surficial geology quads; water resource basin inventories; existing land use maps; and complete air photo coverage for 1965, 1970, and 1975. "With the assistance of SCS, we published a new 'Endangered Rare, and Threatened Species' list and developed the concept of biologic ecoregions for the entire state," Dr. Thomas added.

Numerous state and federal agencies have been active over recent years in publishing interpretative soil documents and conducting a variety of educational and training programs in the use of soils and companion resource data. Training workshops have recently been held with municipalities and local sanitarians in the use of soils information. These are but two of many such programs held over the past five years or so.

Dr. Thomas said, "In addition to the advice sought and given through the Soil and Water Conservation District offices, the Regional Planning Agency offices, the main office of S.C.S., and other such sources, the Natural Resources Center staff in DEP responds on a daily basis, if not hourly, to requests for soil information from such state agencies as

Water Compliance, Solid Waste, Water Resources, the Conservation and Preservation units, the Department of Health, the Department of Community Affairs, and the Department of Planning and Energy Policy."

"We are now seeing an extensive utilization of the soil resource data in community development plans, sanitary landfill siting, on-site septic design approvals, erosion and sediment control planning, and many other proposed land use activities which require an evaluation of the carrying capacity of the resource base before proper design and approvals can be made. Most recently, the Soil Survey has been extensively used in defining and delineating prime agricultural lands in Connecticut."--- Dr. Hugo Thomas.

As a refresher for us all, we are reprinting the objectives of our Society--

1. To advance the profession of soil science as it relates to soil classification, mapping and interpretation.
2. To improve and maintain the stature of the professional Soil Scientist in Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts.
3. To promote high quality standards among soil scientists.
4. To foster broader recognition of the need, use, and application of Soil Science in government and especially in the private business sector.
5. To cooperate with and counsel colleges and universities in adjusting curricula to the changing needs of the Soil Scientist.
6. To function as a communication medium between professional Soil Scientists, allied disciplines and professional organizations.
7. To cooperate with other disciplines and professional organizations to advance causes of mutual interest and concern.
8. To work toward state registration and certification of Soil Scientists.
9. To foster good land use and environmental programs through the use of soil resource information.

NEWS BRIEFS--

Rhode Island soil mapping wraps up -- The soil survey in Rhode Island will shift from field mapping to map compilation work at the end of June. Supervisory soil scientist Dean Rector and soil scientist Everett Stuart will remain to work on the final report and assist in the utilization of the soils information. Four survey party members are leaving -- Dale Sprankle to Capitan, New Mexico; Craig Ditzler to Sparta, Wisconsin; Bruce Laskey to Virginia Polytech to work on his Ph.D.; and John Gagnon, a recent URI graduate, to New London County, Connecticut. The seventh member of the party, Bob Saritelli, is switching from a soil scientist to soil conservationist in Rhode Island.

Steve Elmer transferred in early May from Connecticut to Cambridge, Illinois. Steve will be party leader for the Henry County Soil Survey.

John Mott, field soil specialist with the SCS in Amherst, Massachusetts, retired in early June. John started with SCS as a soil conservationist, but spent the past 25 years as a soil scientist with the Service.

We wish all these fellows the best of luck.

----- Message to soil scientists from the Bible:

EXODUS 21 Verse 33-34

"If a man digs a well and doesn't cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, the owner of the well shall pay full damages to the owner of the animal, and the dead animal shall belong to him."

