

## MAINE ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL SOIL SCIENTISTS

Annual Meeting on March 7th, 2006

Augusta Elks Lodge

President Laura Lecker opened the meeting at 9:00 A.M. with introductory remarks, which included acknowledging Dave Turcotte's development of a brochure and upgrading of the display board, Chris Dorion's extensive efforts as webmaster, and Don Phillips' contributions as education chair (and more specifically his involvement with the annual scholarship and Smithsonian fundraising) the past several years.

**Secretary's Report:** Dave Turcotte presented the minutes (taken by former secretary Chris Dorion) of the 2005 annual meeting. A motion was made to accept the minutes, and it was seconded and then approved.

**Envirothon Donations:** Dave Marceau moved that we approve a \$500 donation for Envirothon this year, and Dave Silver seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Even though we had three one time expenses (Smithsonian contribution, website and brochure) this past year, Andrew Carpenter was pleased to report that we still remained solvent, and that we should have a surplus of ~\$1,350 this coming year. Specifics on the 2005-6 treasurer's report are attached.

**Scholarship Funds:** Don Phillips reported that Michael Benaitis received the \$500 scholarship (advertised at the University of Maine (UMO), Southern Maine University (USM) and Unity College) this year. Michael is a graduate student pursuing an M.S. in Plant, Soil and Environmental Sciences. His thesis work (under Ivan Fernandez) is addressing the movement of Class A biosolids in forested settings. Michael was present at the meeting, and spoke to the group. He expressed a desire to become a certified, consulting soil scientist after he graduates and works as an apprentice a couple of years. Don credits Dave Moyse and Ivan Fernandez for their past help in getting the Scholarship rolling, and that now there isn't very much work for us to do year-to-year. Laura Lecker encouraged membership to get the word out more, and Samantha Langley-Turnbaugh suggested that a poster would be helpful that way. Johanna Szillery wondered if we should require a minimum number of credits in soil science. Dave Moyse responded that the scholarship is targeted towards someone majoring in environmental science, but that they need to have some emphasis in soil science.

**DEP/LURC Task Force Update:** Darryl Brown reported that the Task Force (gathering various professions) has been meeting bi-monthly on average. He is there to insert soil scientist viewpoints. Current issues are professional ethics, new stormwater laws and vernal pools legislation. In reality the Task Force has only pertained to DEP the past few years, so we should consider dropping LURC off of the name.

**Membership Update:** Dave Moyse facilitated some brainstorming here. We're not getting any younger, and his firm is having trouble finding an entry level environmental

scientist with desirable qualifications. We should target potential soil scientists even at the elementary school age, and consider asking teachers when they have an earth science curriculum (where MAPSS members could deliver guest lectures). Should we develop a poster targeting high school and college students, and geared towards recruiting them to a profession in soil science? This poster would compliment the web site, brochure and display board. Rod Kelshaw emphasizes getting the connections to various land use applications on the poster. Should the executive board authorize money towards such poster, assuming there is an individual willing to spearhead such an effort? Other brainstorming geared towards increasing membership went as follows: Samantha Langley-Turnbaugh suggests paid internships for college students; Dave emphasized that the connection to career opportunities needs to be improved at Universities and Colleges; Andrew Carpenter suggested that we hand out lists of volunteer projects in soil science @ high schools and colleges; Cheryl Spencer suggested providing soil science units to teachers; Johanna Szillery responds that the Smithsonian exhibit will include such, and Wayne Hoar (prompted by Dave) responds likewise that NRCS and the SWCD's offer free educational materials (including Microsoft Power Point presentations) for grades K-12.

**Smithsonian Update:** Don Phillips stated that he is encouraged, in that (incorporating contributions from Maine directly to ASF) we now have exactly \$5,000 in contributions (the glass is ½ full). He thanks those who have contributed to date. However, there is a discrepancy, in that although we've reached ½ of the goal (\$10,000), but only ~ 25% of our members have contributed! Don encourages members to contribute whatever they can afford to. The more members that contribute helps to sell major companies (such as L.L. Bean) on donating. Tax deductible contributions (through MAPSS) should now be sent to Johanna Szillery (who will provide documentation that the donation is tax deductible), and are welcomed through 2007. Brochures on the Smithsonian Exhibit (scheduled to open in 2008) were made available beneath the display board, and the exhibit was advertised on the display board itself..

**UMO Update:** Cheryl Spencer, filling in for Ivan Fernandez, provided this update (attached). As for USM, Samantha Langley-Turnbaugh reports that an 18 credit soil science certificate is now available there. Also, there is an awards program now for soil scientists that are ARCPACS certified (see ASF web site). With respect to Unity College, Andrew Carpenter is an adjunct professor there (teaching an introductory soil science course that is very field oriented). Unity also offers a course in soil fertility.

**Website Update:** Chris Dorion emphasized that - in this day & age - we need to have all of OUR RESOURCES (outside of the brochure, display board, banner, etc.) available to members, students and the public in electronic format! Chris will continue to solicit material and ideas for the web site ([www.mapss.org](http://www.mapss.org) <<http://www.mapss.org>>), and welcomes feedback (click on reply button there). As for maintaining the web site (now that it's back up and running), the monthly fee is a mere \$15. Chris receives accolades from the membership for his efforts on bringing the web site back to life.

**NRCS Update:** Wayne Hoar, State Soil Scientist, provided the following update: maps are located on the front wall documenting the progress of soil mapping and digitizing in the state (these are available at [www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/efotg/](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/efotg/)); Larry Flewelling (with 42 years of service in the state) retired last month; Larry's position is being replaced with by a Major Land Resource Area (143) project leader, and the vacancy announcement for that position closed last Friday; new hires (soil survey project leader Bob Evon, soil scientists Anna Kettel and Donna Doel, and student trainee Nick Butler) are introduced; 2 student trainees have been hired for this summer - one from UMO and one from UNH; soil mapping in Soil Survey Area 622 (unorganized towns of Hancock and Washington County) will be completed this summer; Soil Survey Area 621 (western Aroostook County) will welcome 3 detailees this summer, possibly be advertising a career intern soil scientist position (out of Presque Isle) this spring, and have its initial field review this summer; the update of SSA 612 (Southern Penobscot County) continues, with a progress review this summer; the Southern Piscataquis, Franklin County and Somerset County soil surveys are now available on CD; Soil Survey areas 614 and 619 will be digitized (and be available on CD) later this year; Soil Survey Data for Growth Management publications (for the organized towns) have been updated and are available at [www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/efotg/](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/efotg/), and soil potential rating (for the unorganized towns) are also available there; Chris Dorion and Andrew Carpenter (as cooperative members of MAPSS) participated in last summer's progress field review for SSA 612, and their input was helpful and welcomed; dates of this summer's field reviews will be posted on [www.mapss.org](http://www.mapss.org), with field days for these on Tuesdays and Wednesdays; and this fall NRCS will be cooperating with UMO for Northeast Collegiate Soil Judging, with volunteers needed (for 10 practice pits on campus and 5 competition pits on the outskirts) to assist in the preparation and competition!

**Downeast Tour Review:** Dave Rocque reported that the weather couldn't have been better for last September's tour, that we had a pretty good turnout, and that all-in-all it was a resounding success. See the Winter Newsletter or visit [www.mapss.org](http://www.mapss.org) for details. A paper (published this spring in Soil Survey Horizons by Dave Turcotte and Ted Butler) entitled "Folists and Humods off the Coast of Eastern Maine" compliments some of the findings of this tour.

**MASE/MAPSS Workshop:** Dave Rocque reported that coordination for last summer's workshop could have been better. MASE has since recognized this breakdown in communication. In the future, Dave recommends that pits are first visited in the A.M., with time for discussion in the P.M. Dave asks the membership if they're in favor of seeing the cooperative workshop continue, and most members present show support by a raise of hands.

**Election of Officers:** Ron Olson presented the slate of officers for 2006-7. Chris Dorion is nominated for president, Laura Lecker for vice-president, Dave Turcotte for secretary, Andrew Carpenter for treasurer, Darryl Brown for director, Dave Rocque for technical chair, and Dave Moyse for membership and education chair. Ron solicits nominees from the floor, and none are offered. Wayne Hoar made a motion to accept the nominees, and Corinne Leary seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**Ideas for future Workshops:** Dave Rocque made a pitch for another hydric soils workshop, comparable to the one held in Scarborough in July, 2004. Many soil and wetland scientists (who did not attend) heard favorable reviews about that workshop, suggesting that there is enough interest to host it again (in cooperation with MAWS). Taking into consideration that NRCS would likely be asked to help, Wayne Hoar asks the membership how much interest there is in attending another such workshop. Most members in the room raise their hand to express interest in attending. Dave has a tentative date of August 16th for the workshop, but needs to check with MAWSS (at their annual meeting later this month) to see if they're supportive and that that date is OK. Following this discussion, Dave Moyses brings the general subject matter of future workshops to the floor, and suggests workshops on technical writing and business management should be considerations. Dave Marceau expresses concerns about us spreading ourselves too thin, and that perhaps we should restrict our field tours / workshops to no more than 2 per year. In terms of future workshops for towns and municipalities, Dave Rocque emphasizes that we need to teach them what soil surveys are and why they are important.

**Proposed Amendment to the Constitution:** This amendment, presented by Dave Turcotte, is to Section C: Executive Committee, Part 1: Consists of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Director. The proposed amendment is to add Previous President to the Executive Committee. Dave Moyses moves that we accept the motion, and Chris Dorion seconds the motion. Discussion concerning the motion ensues. Dave Marceau wonders if this will make it more difficult to recruit prospective presidents by forcing them to serve on the executive board for at least one additional year. Jim Logan (most recent previous president) supports the idea, so long as that position is voluntary. Dave and Chris Dorion assures the members that it would be voluntary and primarily in an advisory role (to promote greater continuity within the association). The motion passes. Don Phillips then suggests that we consider adding education chair and membership chair to the executive committee. This consideration will be taken up by this year's executive committee, and perhaps brought to the membership for a vote at next year's annual meeting.

**Outreach Suggestions for Display Board and Brochure:** Dave Turcotte informed the membership that 1,500 professional brochures have been printed to promote soil science and our profession around the state, on behalf of MAPSS. To date 100 had been distributed to UMO, and 50 to a natural history museum in Caribou. Dave also upgraded the display board for the 2nd consecutive year. He asked the membership for future venues for the display board, and suggested the Common Grounds and Fryeburg Fairs. Several people express interest in helping to man the booth at the Common Grounds Fair (where there is no fee for us to have our display board in the Agricultural Section), but only a couple express interest in helping at the Fryeburg Fair. In the past we have participated in the Agricultural Trade Show, and that is another consideration for the Education Committee to consider again. Corinne Leary thinks that high school and college career fairs would be appropriate, and several members agree. As for the brochures, they (along with other professional brochures pertaining to soil science

organizations) would accompany the display, and could be distributed to USM, Unity College, the State Museum, DEP field offices, and NRCS/SWCD field offices. Wetland Scientist Certification: Don Phillips asked those in the room if they are supportive of a state certification, and about 12 people raised their hands to signify that they were.

**Recognition of Outstanding Service:** Darryl Brown walked up to the podium and praised Laura Lecker's efforts as president this past year. Following the beginning of a tradition begun last year (for Sid Pilgrim), on behalf of MAPSS he then surprised Norm Kalloch with formal recognition and praise, and a scripted hammock with brass screws, for his years of dedicated service to our profession and Association in Maine.

## FORMAL PRESENTATIONS

### NEW STORMWATER LAW - Jeff Dennis, Maine DEP

This presentation focused on the 2005 Stormwater Management Law by summarizing its requirements. Former regulations focused on peak flows too much, and weren't effective enough for removing fines that carry pollutants (toxics and nutrients) and contribute to siltation in streams and lakes. Relative to the older requirements, objectives of the new rules are improved protection of stream channels, a reduction in elevated stormwater temperatures, greater removal of pollutants, increased flood control, and increased groundwater recharge. Requirements for better buffers (that increase infiltration and reduce runoff) serve to facilitate most of these improvements. A DEP published copy of this summary was made available, and can be OBTAINED by CONTACTING Jeff at [jeff.dennis@maine.gov](mailto:jeff.dennis@maine.gov).

### WEB SOIL SURVEY - Wayne Hoar, NRCS

This presentation provided insight on the following two websites that now provide official National Cooperative Soil Survey maps, descriptions and interpretations: [websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov](http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov) and [www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/efotg](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/efotg). The former web site allows you to access all digitized (and seamless) soil surveys in the country, some descriptions, and many national interpretive tables. It is a work in progress, and as such will continue to be improved upon, more comprehensive and inclusive, and more user friendly. A trick in using this web site is to remove help screens by clicking on the upside down ?'s in the upper right corner of that screen. Also, sometimes map unit symbols will not appear unless you are zoomed in enough. As for the latter web site, it requires GIS software to access spatial data (i.e. soil maps), but provides progress maps and some reports and interpretations that are more pertinent to Maine.

GROUNDWATER SEEPS - Terry Morley, University of Maine Graduate Student

This presentation focused on Terry's thesis work out of the University of Maine. These seeps occur where soils have relatively impermeable layers on slope breaks. They are small in area, are not ephemeral, have significant biota, and have unique edaphic influences. They are different than springs, which have focused discharge and minimal impact on surrounding biota. Biota and soil just above the seeps are used as the control. His objective is to monitor vegetation, amphibians, nitrogen cycling, surface water and ground water in seeps. Also, he is trying to distinguish as to whether they behave as wetlands or uplands, in that are the soils aerobic or anaerobic? To date at some sites he has observed soil morphology that suggests hydric soil, but with shallow groundwater is consistently aerobic.

VERNAL POOL REGULATIONS - Mike Mullen, Maine DEP, Jay Clement,  
US Army Corps of Engineers, and Marcia Spencer-Famous, LURC

This forum was solicited to provide insight on new vernal pool regulations that are part of the Maine Natural Resources Protection Act. Vernal pools are very small, depressional wetlands without predatory fish that - with adjacent upland habitat - essential to the life cycle of certain species of amphibians. The focus here then was on when vernal pools provide significant breeding habitat for blue spotted salamanders, spotted salamanders, wood frogs or fairy shrimp (as threatened and endangered species). These determinations are made by wetland scientists or wildlife ecologists. At present a 250 foot wide (~ 4 acre) habitat zone is required (i.e. to be protected) for vernal pools that are deemed significant. This protected area also needs to amount to at least 75% of the critical habitat. These vernal pool regulations directly pertain to the organized towns (regulated by DEP), while vernal pool regulations pertaining to the unorganized towns (regulated by LURC) are less well defined. The next round of training for town code enforcement officers will likely include training on these new vernal pool regulations. Representatives of the working group are from DEP, UMO, Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, Maine Audubon, the State Planning Office, Woodlot Alternatives, Maine Forest Service, and the Maine Dept. of Conservation. More info on these vernal pool regulations can be accessed by contacting Mike Mullen at [mike.mullen@maine.gov](mailto:mike.mullen@maine.gov).

AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE VERNAL POOL PANEL DISCUSSION,  
OUTGOING PRESIDENT LECKER ASKED FOR A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE  
ANNUAL MEETING. THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME  
BEFORE THE MAINE ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL SCIENTISTS, THE  
MOTION WAS SECONDED AND UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

