
The Lay of the Land

The Newsletter of the Maine Association of Professional Soil Scientists



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *by Ken Stratton*

Fellow Members of MAPSS:

Because MAPSS has many members who also belong to MASE, and because members of both organizations share a common interest in the land use/environmental issues of today, my message to the MAPSS organization is similar to that I sent out to MASE. I believe we had a very successful year for the organization. The annual meeting last year had an agenda and speakers which offered an extremely informative and educational program. Then, our joint MAPSS, MASE, MAWS Workshop at Reid State Park provided another important training session focused on hydric soil properties, wetlands, setbacks, and vegetative types. I also think that our generous efforts in support of the Envirothon and the UM Soil Judging Team go a long way in promoting both our profession and the values of this organization. On behalf of the Executive Committee, I extend our great **THANK YOU!** to all who helped make these events possible!



We also made ourselves known in the hearing rooms of the Legislature, offering testimony on bills that dealt with the DEP Site Law and, in a losing effort, the fact that our soils behave as an effective tertiary treatment system for on-site waste disposal systems (properly designed and constructed, of course). Some members were also involved in the process for certification of Wetland Scientists - we're still awaiting drafts of legislation on that, and we will keep you informed on that process. There are more of these types of issues coming along, especially with the rule-making process and, again, the DEP Site Law. Because changes in any of these rules can have a profound impact on how we conduct our work, including whether or not some of our clients have the courage to face the time and cost of the permitting process, I consider it critical we remain vigilant on these matters. Darryl Brown has been, and continues to be, deeply involved in legislative issues, and has been keeping the rest of us well informed. Darryl will be conducting the legislative session at the annual meeting, and will lead the discussion with Andy Fiske of the DEP regarding DEP's Site Law rule changes.

Don't miss the annual meeting on March 16th!! Your Executive Committee has developed an agenda designed to keep you abreast of current issues and steps we should consider in having soils information more user friendly. "User friendly" may be a term more often used with electronic gadgetry, but for us, it's more meaningful than ever. We need to know how to effectively communicate with regulators such that our work has greater use, meaning, and demand. On another front, the Division of Environmental Health put together a Stakeholders Group to review and have input on proposed changes to the **Maine Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules**. MAPSS has a representative - Johanna Szillery - on that Stakeholders Group. The Executive Committee felt our involvement in changes to the Rules is important because of the movement toward greater emphasis and use of terminology in soils morphology. Where is the line between Certified Soil Scientist and Licensed Site Evaluator? Johanna will be an important presence for us in that group. Johanna will give an update at the annual meeting, and we welcome your input.

Finally, we need your help. All of this activity means people have to be available to help get the job done - we can't keep calling on the same ones. We are looking for people to serve on committees, especially Membership and Education. And, we will need help with training programs. Dave Rocque has once again, and very kindly, done the leg work for us to have a site (Saddleback Mountain) for our summer/fall field day. And, that will mean having a group of volunteers to help with the organization and instructing at soil test pits. But - - - Dave has made it clear, it's someone else's turn. If you know of any site that would make a great area for a training program, please let Dave, Johanna, or anyone on the Executive Committee know. We will check it out with you.

Finally, finally, and without question, it is a real pleasure to work with a group of professionals dedicated to advancing the purposes of the Association.

JUST WHAT ARE SOILS WITH OXYAQUIC CONDITIONS IN THE UPPER PART

by Dave Rocque

There has been a lot of talk recently about soils with “oxyaquic conditions”. I have to admit; much of the talk has been by me or started by me. That is because, in my position as State Soil Scientist, people come to me with all manner of soil related questions and problems. I frequently get asked to do site visits to properties where problem soils are found (I rarely get to see standard soil profiles) and I am expected to provide answers. I also review all manner of proposed projects including wind farms proposed to take place on soils where no other development has been allowed because anything above 2700 feet in elevation is a protected natural resource. Add to the mix a natural curiosity and personal need to know the why and how things look the way they do and the result is some pretty interesting conclusions. One of those conclusions is that Maine has a significant amount of soils with oxyaquic conditions. Simply put, that means they are soils with a seasonal high groundwater table that has oxygen in it so reducing conditions are not present during the growing season. To be sure, most of our soils have an occasional or short term groundwater table with oxygen in it but this phenomenon becomes a bigger problem when the oxygen rich groundwater table is present for long periods of time. Standard procedures for determining the seasonal groundwater table rely upon observation of soil morphological features that develop under anaerobic conditions. That works reasonably well for the purpose for which soil classification was originally developed; agriculture. Most agriculture is on relatively flat areas where anaerobic conditions develop if the seasonal groundwater table is present for a couple of weeks or more during the growing season. It does not work very well for sites that have long continuous slopes such as are common in our Western Maine Mountains (such areas can also be found in other parts of the state). These areas have large contributing watersheds and the soils are nearly always lodgment tills (or are shallow to bedrock glacial till soils). Rainfall and/or snowmelt infiltrate the shallow depth of soil over hardpan or bedrock and then travel along that interface until reaching a wetland or waterbody. This moving groundwater carries oxygen in it so anaerobic conditions are not present, [therefore], the formation of redoximorphic features [does not occur]. This was not much of a problem in the past because little development activity occurred in areas with these conditions. That is changing now however, with ski resort expansions and even more importantly, wind farm development. For use and management of these soils, it does not matter whether or not the groundwater table has oxygen in it or not. It is a problem which can impact roads and other infrastructure but can also impact downgradient wetlands and waterbodies that depend on the continuous feed of cool clean groundwater. If the groundwater flow is interrupted or altered, downgradient resources will be altered with a chain reaction of impacts being the end result. I realized it was therefore necessary to develop criteria that could be used to identify these soils on a consistent basis.

I succeeded in convincing the Maine Association of Professional Soil Scientists last year to adopt standards for recognizing and mapping soils with oxyaquic conditions in the upper part and have developed a checklist for determining the likelihood for finding soils with oxyaquic conditions in the upper part. I have even gone so far as to develop a draft indicator for soils with oxyaquic conditions in the upper part and have developed a key for use by Site Evaluators (septic system designers) to determine the seasonal groundwater table that includes indicators for oxyaquic soils. In addition to the importance of recognizing soils with oxyaquic conditions in the upper part for use and management, ACOE has indicated they may recognize them as being found in wetlands even though they technically are not hydric soils (which by definition must have anaerobic conditions during the growing season). As a result of the workshop held at Reid State Park last year, the New England Division of the ACOE has requested an official position and guidance by the ACOE hierarchy on the subject. If they are told to include soils with oxyaquic conditions in the upper part as wetland soils, criteria for identifying them will become very important to wetland scientists.



Observing Profile of Oxyaquic Conditions

Stay tuned for more on the subject as it develops. You might want to plan a visit to Saddleback Mountain this September 1 for a workshop on problem soils and sites (see workshop description on page 3).

**COOL CLIMATE SOIL, HYDROLOGY AND
SITE EVALUATOR SOIL PIT CLASSIFICATION WORKSHOP
SADDLEBACK SKI AREA
DALLAS AND SANDY RIVER PLANTATIONS
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2010**

The Maine Association of Professional Soil Scientists, in conjunction with the Maine Association of Wetland Scientists, the Maine Association of Site Evaluators, the Society of Soil Scientists of Northern New England and the Maine Forest Service is pleased to announce a workshop which focuses on soil and hydrology conditions unique to the western Maine Mountains, northern Maine and some coastal areas. These areas have cooler and wetter climates than the central and southern parts of the state which affects soil development and hydrology conditions. The workshop includes a hands-on field exercise as well as a group discussion at the conclusion of the field exercise.

The sites included in this workshop are commonly found in the western Maine Mountains. In the past, development in the mountains was limited to a few individual homes and ski resort areas. That is rapidly changing however due to the present interest in wind power farms. The political leaders of the State of Maine have expressed an interest in making Maine a leader in wind power generation which means a fast track for development up and on the mountains. In doing so, natural resource specialists and developers have encountered such features as groundwater seeps, oxyaquic soil conditions, underground streams and boulder fields that have upland plants growing in organic duff on top of the boulders but there is water standing or flowing between the boulders. The question is what are these areas? Are they protected natural resources? At a minimum, they are features that need to be recognized and identified in the field so that construction can take place that minimizes the alteration of the natural hydrology and results in appropriately built roads and infrastructure.

The workshop will feature 5 sites with 3 or 4 numbered soil pits per site for a total of 17 soil pits. Most of the sites will also include other flagged areas for participants to observe that have unique features such as stone filled subsurface drainage channels or boulder fields covered by organic duff that are forested. Some of the soil pits are located on long continuous slopes while others are located in between boulders in the boulder fields. All of the sites have soil pits located in wetter and drier areas. The soil pits have been monitored twice weekly by employees of the Saddleback Ski Lodge for 2 years so there will be good groundwater table data. Soils in the pits will be described by a team comprised of NRCS Resource Soil Scientists Dave Wilkinson and Greg Granger, State Soil Scientist, Dave Rocque, State Site Evaluator Doug Coombs and immediate past president of MAPSS Chris Dorion. The team will provide the closest match to a soil series (based on shallow hand dug soil pits), soil drainage class (this will include using the recently adopted oxyaquic conditions criteria), hydric determination (both New England Field Indicators and the National Indicators) and Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules Classification (using the newly developed key for determining the seasonal groundwater table for Site Evaluators).

Registration will be at the base lodge from 8:30 am to 9:00 am. Participants will be given a map showing the location of the sites they are to visit as well as other handouts including a (draft) Check List for Oxyaquic Soils and a (draft) Key for Determining the Seasonal Groundwater Table for Site Evaluators. They will then be free to visit the 5 sites until 12:30 pm. Each of the sites will have a soil scientist or site evaluator stationed there to show you where the soil pits are and point out other areas flagged for making an observation. Participants are to make their own determinations regarding soil classifications and site classifications but can ask the site monitor technical questions.

After the conclusion of the field portion of the workshop, participants will gather at the base lodge for a power point presentation and discussion of each site. Leading the wetland identification discussion will be Paul Minkin, Senior Wetland Scientist with the Army Corps of Engineers Regional Office in Concord, Mass. He led the field testing of the Draft Interim Supplement throughout New England 2 years ago. Leading the discussion of the soil pits for Site Evaluator determinations will be Doug Coombs, State Site Evaluator. Also present will be Mike Mullen from MDEP, Scott Rollins from LURC, Mike Sheehan from ACOE and Dave Rocque who will MC and try to keep things moving

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along in a lively manner as well as lead the discussions of the soil pits. Lunch is on your own but there is a cafeteria in the base lodge which offers sandwiches and drinks along with snacks.

Expected outcomes of the workshop include clarification of how to classify some unique sites/areas/conditions found in the Western Maine Mountains and the identification of soils with oxyaquic conditions. This should prove helpful to anyone involved with all types of development in the Mountains and for forestry management and logging operations.

This workshop should have broad appeal to soil scientists, wetland scientists, site evaluators, code enforcement officers, planners, municipal officials, regulators, lake association members, foresters and the general public. You can participate at whatever level is appropriate for your background and knowledge (the experts at each transect site will provide the level of assistance you require).

It should be a fun and informative day for all at a very scenic location.

MAINE SOIL SURVEY TO TURN 100

By David Turcotte, Soil Scientist

Having been a soil scientist (for NRCS out of Dover-Foxcroft) and member of MAPSS for nearly 14 years, I have been fortunate to have worked, collaborated, or at least mingled with many respected pedologists in Maine (including some who were retired before I started working here). In addition, I have had reason to review various aspects of some older soil surveys in the state, such as York, Kennebec, Penobscot and both (Northeastern and Southeastern) Aroostook soil surveys. Hence last fall when I came across “The Early Soil Survey in Maine: 1910-1955” I suspected I’d found a paper of interest. Later – after reading it – I came to realize that by chance the Maine soil survey turns 100 in June! And, even more by chance, it is the same year the final initial soil survey [of the state] will be completed!

The “The Early Soil Survey” paper was written by Norman Kalloch (former SCS/NRCS state soil scientist and MAPSS president) in 1999, the year that Maine hosted the Northeast Soil Survey Work Planning Conference. A biography of John Arno’s 1936-1976 career in the National Cooperative Soil Survey was attached to the write up. Both booklets were on display at the work planning conference. This article consists of my thoughts on some of what I felt was intriguing and informative about these two papers. I also touch briefly on Robert Rourke’s publications out of the Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station, and the 2010 National Cooperative Soil Survey planner (“Benchmarks in History”).

The early soil surveys had but one purpose, and that was to determine the suitability of soils for growing agricultural crops. If they appear crude compared to modern soil surveys then consider the limitations they had compared to all of the technological advantages (better access, better base and supporting maps, GPS, GIS, etc.) we have today. The first soil survey in Maine was the Soil Survey of the Caribou Area, issued in July, 1910. Not surprisingly, it was a soil survey of Maine’s expanding potato region. The final paragraph of the report gives some sound advice on how farmers can improve their land with rotations and use of organic matter (sound familiar?).

The second soil survey in the state was of the Orono area. This report was issued just 3 months (in October 1910) after the Caribou Area report. Presumably the premise for this survey was its proximity to the land grant university. The survey only had two series: Bangor and Orono! The former covered all till, while the later covered all forms of sediments (marine/lacustrine, outwash, alluvium)! [In addition to Bangor and Orono series], there were 3 other map units: peat, muck and rough stony land. I find it interesting that they separated peat from muck, since one can distinguish sapric swamps and marshes in that area from hemic-fibric bogs (i.e. Orono and Caribou Bogs) and perhaps fens. Rough stony land might have been meltout till and/or areas with ample rock outcrops?

The third oldest survey in Maine was of the Aroostook County Area. The [mapping] area was essentially the cultivated area of The County, excluding the St. John River Valley west of Van Buren. Some of the described soil series names in that publication are still in use today: Caribou, Washburn, Easton and Linneus. This survey was significant

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in that it was the first in the state to describe both soil morphology and genesis.

After the Aroostook County Area survey, [next] came the Soil Survey of Cumberland County. As the name implies, it was the first county-wide survey conducted in the state. Ten soil series embracing 21 map units were used. Subsequent to the Cumberland County survey, were the county soil surveys of York and Waldo (that have since been updated). The first generation county surveys still in use for Maine are Penobscot (Northern Part), Androscoggin and Sagadahoc, Kennebec and Somerset (Southern Part).

Aerial photos were not used until 1937, when parts of Central Aroostook County were mapped for the third time. Munsell color standards weren't used until 1955, and prior to that, color chip samples from the paint section of Sears Roebuck were the only set of standards used! The plane table was used as the base map prior to the advent of aerial photos, since topographic maps at the time were pretty sketchy. The plane table wasn't always stable and was physically taxing to cart around. Some of the very early surveys (and through the 1990s in western unorganized towns) were mapped at one inch to the mile, which you can imagine required plenty of lumping with our notoriously variable glaciated soils. The concept of the catena was introduced in 1943. By then, more familiar series had been introduced, such as Monarda, Burnham, Plaisted, Perham, Daigle and Thorndike.

As with "The Early Soil Survey in Maine", John R. Arno's career biography is fascinating reading. Most of John's 40 year career in soil survey was spent in Maine. Twice John got to meet and interact with Charles Kellogg. His discussion on how they used the plane table is quite enlightening, and at 5' 5" he said he could barely see over the top of it! John's master's thesis was "The Silica Sequioxides Ratio of some York County Soils". That research was significant, for it was thought to determine the degree of podzolization of a soil. His biography notes the use of the Abney level for slope, early use of the stereoscope, and use of geology to begin to understand soils according to local surficial and bedrock geology. Towards the end of his career John worked with Kenneth LaFlamme, one of only three honorary members of MAPSS (the others being Norman Kalloch and John Ferwerda).

More recently (from the 1960s through the 1990s) Robert V. Rourke (et al.) described and sampled an impressive number of pedons for several series still used in the state. He actually described and sampled 5 pedons for each series he set out to qualify and quantify. My understanding is he was very conscientious about his science (in terms of how the pedons were described, sampled and analyzed), and that for several years he served on an international committee of Soil Taxonomy for Spodosols. With each technical bulletin he published came interesting conclusions about soil taxonomy and genesis for the series in question (such as that neither argillic horizons nor fragipans were characteristic of Perham and Daigle soils (Tech. Bul. 75, 1975). All of Rourke's publications, as well as "Soils of Maine" by Ferwerda et al., are available at: http://www.umaine.edu/mafes/publications/soils_water.htm. We in NRCS soil survey have used his data to help establish the classification and range of characteristics of many of our soil series.

Finally, members of MAPSS should know that the 2010 Soils Planner is all about Benchmarks in the History of the National Cooperative Soil Survey, and it may be attained at <http://landcare.sc.egov.usda.gov/>. An article that describes this sharp and informative planner is on the web in the NCSS November newsletter at <http://soils.usda.gov>. I will bring some complimentary copies of the planner to the annual meeting (on a first come – first served basis), as well as some copies of Norm Kalloch's paper and John Arno's biography. If you desire but are unable to acquire a copy of either of these there then send me an e-mail (turc3@roadrunner.com) and I'll mail you a copy.

WHAT IS A CLASS L SOIL SURVEY

by Dave Rocque

As one of the primary reviewers of proposed windfarm projects, I was given the task of determining the level of soil survey necessary to allow for the proper location and design of access roads and review of their construction techniques. My preference would have been to require a Class A High Intensity Soil Survey but I realized it was not practical for such large projects in remote areas of the state. In addition, they would be prohibitively expensive and time

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STOP AND LOOK AT THE TREES

By Aleita Burman January 26, 2010

I had the (mixed) pleasure of working with my husband in the woods last week. About once per year he “takes one for the team” and helps me out when I am facing an unusual or difficult situation that would just be easier with two people. In this case, we (i.e. me and two colleagues) had to do some fill-in soil site evaluation test pits on a subdivision, where most of the work had been done [the previous] fall, but the town required two passing test pits on each proposed lot and since the lot lines [had] changed slightly, we needed that second pit on several lots. We knew the property fairly well and so weren’t uncomfortable about doing winter documentation. [My two colleagues] were working together, so I was going to be on my own. No problem really, and something I would normally not have a problem tackling myself, except that winter test pits (as you all know) require carrying LOTS of gear. We had just had a 24 inch snow storm on top of at least a foot of snow from the weeks before, and it was about 10 degrees and windy on this particular day. So aside from all of the extra clothes you put on at the truck because you’re freezing before you get moving, which hampers your ability to walk (which I personally think effects short people more than tall people), and your work vest, you also have to carry a spade, auger, snow shovel, a digging bar for frost, and a backpack sub-meter GPS to locate the new pits. Considering that we had to break trail on snowshoes and carry all that gear (and that some of my husband’s tree equipment takes a long time to start on cold windy days), my husband came out to help and, best of all, break trail.

We were armed with a paper copy of the proposed subdivision map, which basically shows property lines, topo, our previous test pit locations, and the proposed subdivision lots. A bonus (I thought) was that the map was also downloaded as a background file on the GPS – so you know exactly where you are on the face of the earth as you are walking and can ensure that you are on the proposed lot when you dig the pit. While I grabbed the GPS, my not-so-tech-savvy husband grabbed the map – and this is where two worlds collided (thus the “mixed” pleasure of working in the field together). My husband is a forester and arborist who runs a tree service. His idea of a good map, as I was informed within the first 10 minutes of the day, is #1: an aerial, #2: a survey, and #3: gut feeling and instinct. The paper map we had was “useless” because it did not show the features that mattered when you’re trying to find your way around in the woods: trees, streams, skid trails, log landings, etc. AND the north arrow was based on grid north and wasn’t straight up on the paper. USELESS.

No problem, say I, we have the map downloaded on the GPS, and can get anywhere we need to; see, it has a measure feature and everything. Now, if we can just get our work done before the batteries freeze, we’ll be in good shape. So the compromise was that I would take a bearing and distance off the GPS, and he would navigate using that information, stopping every once in a while to take the GPS out of the warmth of his sweater to hand to me for an updated bearing. It worked well and we got our work done with time to spare. Actually a pleasant day once we warmed up.

But it got me thinking about technology as a whole, and especially its use in the woods. Now I’m not that old really, but when I started in this business, you took a map, walked around the property a bit to find the property lines (if they weren’t well marked) and, to get a feel for the property, found site features and started digging. Knowing where you were on the property was a mix of pacing, chaining, and mapping skills. You were constantly aware of where you were in relation to streams, slopes, rocky areas, big trees, etc. You were constantly aware of your surroundings, of animal sign, of vegetation changes, which, all combined, [created] a picture of the site in your mind. When you were done on a property, you had a pretty good feel for it and a memory. When a client called later with questions like: “why can’t that septic system be located 50 feet to the west?”, or worse, a regulator’s question (which I won’t even try to duplicate hereJ), you could answer pretty easily because you knew the site – like the back of your hand. And usually, you were right on – you always hit your proposed lots.

Now that I have background files, I can just walk and stare at the little screen and when it says I’m where I need to be, I can start digging. But how much is missed? How [well] do I really know that site? Can I answer questions later? Probably not with much certainty.

Technology is really removing us from what is around us. We do not see the obvious. Think about those people out west who loaded the family in their car for a Thanksgiving trip to their sister’s house, asked their GPS for the shortest route and ended up getting stuck in a high mountain pass in the middle of winter without proper clothes, food, shelter, or even matches. Were they not alerted that there was something amiss when the snow started getting

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deeper, when there were no other cars around and no tracks in the snow? Of course, we all say to ourselves that that couldn't happen to us, but I've certainly taken a stick in the eye or tripped over a branch because I'm walking while blindly looking at a little screen.

Having technology with us in the woods is definitely a bonus and can, and has, saved lives, if not lots of time. However, let's all remember to use it wisely and not let it get in the way of common sense, gut feeling and instinct. Know your site. As my husband would say, "stop and look at the trees".

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consuming for projects which the Governor and Legislature are strongly pushing. So, the question became "what is the minimum amount of information necessary to give the road designers and project reviewers what they need and is reasonably practical". After giving it considerable thought, I came to the conclusion that the soil related issues for which information was most needed were hydrology and erosion potential. Other factors such as depth to bedrock were less important for the soil survey because they would be determined during the geotechnical investigation. Looking over the MAPSS soil mapping guidelines, it became evident to that none of our existing classes of soil survey fit the bill, so I provided applicants with verbal guidance on what information was needed and how that information could be collected by soil scientists. It was an evolving process that had to become formalized in the fall of 2008. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection was designated as the lead regulatory agency for all windpower projects in the State when any segment was located in an organized territory (including the transmission line). MDEP wanted to put the soil mapping requirements for windpower access roads in writing so I developed language [for] their Site Location of Development Application Form. They didn't, however, want it to be restricted to access roads for windfarm projects so it now includes fairways, trails and other linear projects with little or no adjacent development. I suspected there would be much confusion over how to conduct a soil survey meeting the requirements for linear projects in the Site Law Application so I decided creating a new class of soil survey would be in order. It was adopted by the Maine Association of Professional Soil Scientists at their 2009 annual meeting and is now part of their Guidelines for Maine Certified Soil Scientists for Soil Identification and Mapping.

In case you are wondering why it is being called a Class L instead of Class E Soil Survey, it is because this class of soil survey is quite different from the others. Soil survey criteria become progressively less detailed as you move from Class A through Class D. If the new standard was called Class E, a logical conclusion might be that it was even less detailed than a Class D survey. That however, is not the case. By calling the new soil survey Class L, I hoped it might be assumed this one was completely different from the others. Following are the Class L Soil Survey Standards:

Purpose – This soil survey standard is designed to provide the minimum soil information necessary to allow for the design and construction of long but narrow projects such as access roads, utility lines or trails with little or no adjacent development. In remote, difficult to access sites such as mountains or roadless areas, soil observations may be made entirely by use of a hand shovel, screw or Dutch auger. For areas which are more accessible, deeper soil observations should be made in order to properly classify the soils.

1. Class L soil survey map units shall be made on the basis of parent material, slope, soil texture, soil depth to dense till or bedrock (which ever is shallowest) and soil wetness (drainage class and/or oxyaquic conditions) at the Class A High Intensity Map Unit size. The preferred method of naming the soil map units is by assigning a soil series name or names for complexes. If soils are classified to the series level in remote areas not readily accessible to equipment and/or without road cuts, it shall be noted in the narrative that soils were classified by shallow observations only.
2. Scale is 1 inch equals 100 feet or larger (e.g. 1" = 50').
3. Ground Control – base line and test pits for which detailed data are recorded are located to sub-meter accuracy under the direction of a qualified professional.
4. Base map with two foot contour lines.

Maine Association of Professional Soil Scientists

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Thank you to everyone who submitted material for this edition of The Lay of the Land!!

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE *By David Turcotte, Membership Chair*

This winter I conducted a mini membership drive, sending out 52 recruitment letters (mostly to folks who were once members of MAPSS as recently as 2007 and 2008). It has been two years since a full-scale membership drive has been implemented. Next winter the membership drive should be expanded to seek out other licensed, NRCS, regulatory and academic professionals with ties to our profession. At the end of 2009 we had 3 honorary, 42 full and 24 associate members.

Hard copies of the full member and associate member directories will be available at the annual meeting [in March], and will accompany the display board wherever it travels. If you aren't presently in the directory but wish to be in it, just mail me a survey or application form (available [on the MAPSS website]) to: 15 Hi View Lane, Corinth ME 04427. Or, if your existing information on the directory has changed, then let me know of that, as well, with an e-mail (turc3@roadrunner.com). A master copy of the directory will be on the registration table at the annual meeting, and you can make your corrections there if you wish.

Formatting challenges have caused the presentation of the directory on our web site to be less [presentable] than I had hoped. Therefore, the executive committee is going to seek a motion from the floor at the annual meeting asking the membership for some funds to get the directory into HTML format on the website. Someone searching the contact list could simply email or link directly to the soil scientist, or just use their listed phone number. An inquiring person could always just print [a list of] all full and associate MAPSS members if, for some reason, they [wanted] it. Chris Dorion, current webmaster, will enlighten the membership at the annual meeting on how he envisions this would work on the web. I personally am seeking a successor as membership chair for 2010-11.

IF ANYONE IS INTERESTED IN BECOMING CHAIR OF THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE (DAVE TURCOTTE WILL BE STEPPING DOWN FROM THIS POSITION) OR ANY OTHER COMMITTEE PLEASE LET AN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER KNOW. .