

TEXAS SOIL PROFILES

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President's Letter

Dr. David Weindorf, Tarleton State University

Greetings from Stephenville to all fellow soil scientists! I hope this letter finds you well and gearing up for a productive fall. The heat may be abating but we still need more rain. The summer has been a busy one for all, and hopefully each of you found time to enjoy it as well.

The 18th World Congress of Soil Science was held in Philadelphia, PA, on July 9-15, 2006. The theme of this meeting was "Frontiers in Soil Science: Technology and the Information Age." It was a wonderful opportunity to learn about the latest developments in soil science from colleagues across the world. One of my undergraduate students served as a field technician, helping Dr. Chien Lu Ping (University of Alaska) conduct the post-Congress tour in Alaska. Throughout the Congress, various day tours were available on everything from regenerative agriculture to geographic information systems (GIS).

Speaking of GIS, many NRCS and academic soils scientists from across Texas came together for a two-day net meeting conference call on May 22nd and 23rd. Hosted by Wayne Gabriel (NRCS-Temple), the purpose of the conference was to review current digital soils information and discuss the future directions for use of that data. Presentations were given over NASIS, Web Soil Survey, Soil Data Mart, Geospatial Data Gateway, ArcGIS, etc. Several substantive ideas were generated by the participants. One of the resounding conclusions set forth is that GIS proficiency is now an essential skill for new college graduates. Thus, if you have any influence over the direction a student may be going, encourage them to take a course or two in GIS. It will really benefit them down the road...

In closing, I hope each of you had a productive, enjoyable summer. Keep the sunscreen and mosquito spray handy - fall may be a hot one! If any of you will be grilling out and have cold beverages handy, give me a call - I'll be right over...Ha!

PSSAT Annual Meeting

The PSSAT Annual Meeting is currently scheduled for the evening of Wednesday, January 31, 2007. The Soil Survey and Land Resource Workshop at Texas A&M University is planned for Thursday and Friday, February 1-2, 2007. Details will be forthcoming, but please note these dates on your calendar.

National Society of Consulting Soil Scientists Annual Meeting in San Antonio

The NSCSS Annual Meeting is scheduled for March 1- 3, 2007 and will be headquartered at the historic Menger Hotel in San Antonio. The meeting program is under development, although Thursday and Friday (March 1 and 2) are generally reserved for technical seminars with an emphasis on professional ethics on Thursday afternoon. Friday is generally reserved for the field tour. For additional information, visit the NSCSS web site at <http://www.nscss.org/>.

GSA Meeting on Drought Management

The Geological Society of America and its partners are sponsoring a participatory conference entitled "Managing Drought and Water Scarcity in Vulnerable Environments - Creating a Roadmap for Change in the United States" on September 18-20, 2006, near Boulder, Colorado, USA. As outlined on their web site (<http://www.geosociety.org/meetings/06drought/>), meeting goals are:

"...to create an integrated, interactive, future-oriented forum for understanding and improving our management of drought and water scarcity in the United States and to stimulate national debate through the publication and wide distribution of a science- and policy-based discussion document. Drought is a normal part of climate for virtually all regions of the United States. Recent episodes have highlighted the increasing vulnerability of all regions to drought-induced water shortages. In the face of mounting pressure on finite water supplies from expanding and shifting population, urbanization, environmental degradation, and many other factors, it is imperative for the United States to consider a paradigm shift to a risk-based approach to drought management. The threat of climate change and potential increases in the frequency, severity, and duration of drought episodes is further exacerbating water management issues and conflicts among users. This meeting is designed to promote collaboration between the policy and science communities. Through a combination of plenary and invited talks, interactive roundtable and breakout group discussions, and poster presentations of case studies and innovative research and outreach efforts, participants will derive key lessons learned from national and relevant international experience and current policies and practices (e.g., factors involved in decision making, facilitators and barriers to implementing action, and treatment of underlying causes versus symptoms)."



PSSAT Scholarship Application

The 2007 PSSAT Scholarship is intended to recognize and support an outstanding undergraduate student studying to become a soil scientist at a college or university in Texas and to promote interest in careers in soil science. One \$1,500 scholarship will be awarded for the 2006-2007 school year. Eligibility, selection criteria, and application requirements are available on the PSSAT web site (<http://pssat.org/Scholarship.htm>). The application package requires two letters of recommendation and a college transcript, in addition to other application materials, so it is advisable for student applicants to start preparing their paperwork as soon as possible. The application and all supporting materials should reach Nathan Haile, the Scholarship Committee Chair, no later than December 22, 2006.

Change of Address

Julia McCormick
212 Third Street
Ingram, TX 78205

Address Correction!!

House Soils Caucus Formed

The House Soils Caucus was approved by the House Administration Committee and is now an official congressional entity. The caucus is chaired by Congressmen Tom Latham (R-4th IA) and Jim Costa (D-20th CA) and currently has 17 members.

The four goals of the House Soils Caucus include:

1. Increase support in Congress for the importance of soils and soil science through education and communication of contemporary issues in soil science.
2. Identify and prioritize soil research and education needs critical to advancing soil science to solve problems related to world food security, natural resource and environmental protection, and land use.
3. Provide information to assist in crafting agriculture policy and other research and education initiatives.
4. Enhance connection and interaction among public and private organizations and local, state and federal officials.

The soil science community is encouraged to invite other members of Congress to join the Caucus and support soil science research, education and public outreach. More information about the House Soils Caucus is available from the Soil Science Society of America (<http://www.soils.org/>)



ANOTHER REMINDER!



Dues for the 2006 fiscal year were **increased to \$25.00** at the 2005 Annual Meeting and were due at the 2006 Annual Meeting. **A membership renewal form is provided at the end of this newsletter.** So, if you did not attend the Annual Meeting in February 2006, please stay current and mail your dues to:

Jamey Douglass, PSSAT Treasurer
8703 Sage Meadow Drive
Temple, TX 76502

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PSSAT Membership Form

Membership is on a calendar-year basis.

Dues are: **Professionals** - \$25 (1 year)

Make checks payable to PSSAT and mail to: Jamey Douglass, 8703 Sage Meadow Drive, Temple, TX 76502

Check all that apply: New Member _____ Renewal _____ Address Change _____ Volunteer _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Address:
(Home) _____

(Work) _____

Phone: (H) _____ (W) _____

FAX: _____

E-mail: _____

I would like to **Volunteer** (Check all that apply):

Committee: Membership _____ Ethics _____ Finance _____
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Nominations _____ Scholarship _____

I Will: Write a member profile _____ Write a newsletter article _____
