Mar 17

11:00–12:00 p.m. (CT)

Presenter:

Robert R. Dobos, Soil Scientist, USDA-NRCS Soil and Plant Science Division

This webinar will be made available on the **NSSC YouTube Channel**

Building Capacity and Maintaining Techniques: Soil Interpretations Focus Team

The National Cooperative Soil Survey (NCSS) faces the dilemma of increased value and usage of soil survey data in a time where fewer soil scientists are available to interpret the data scientifically. This webinar describes the charges of the soil interpretations team and presents the mechanism for achieving them:

1. Forming an interdisciplinary working group to enhance and preserve the body of knowledge and techniques used in the process of creating soil survey interpretations
2. Developing new interpretations to meet customer needs
3. Maintaining and improving the existing interpretations
4. Enhancing the documentation of current and future interpretations

Four sub-teams carry out the work:

A **science sub-team** handles the literature review and any other research required to develop the criteria needed to create the model. This is basically what is done in the class known as the "Science of Interpretations". While any interested person is welcome to participate, some experienced people will be needed from diverse professional backgrounds to best explore what soil and site properties need to be accounted for in a particular interpretation.

A **model design, development and maintenance sub-team** works in the NASIS environment to assemble the properties, evaluations, and rules needed to make the models work. This group receives specialized training as needed to attain a high level of proficiency with the Calculations-Validations-Interpretations-Reporting (CVIR) scripting language as well as the rule-based fuzzy logic system.

A **testing sub-team** critically examines the outputs generated from the interpretations that are being developed to assess the accuracy of the results and suggest ways to improve the predictions. Proficiency in Arc-GIS and statistics would be very helpful in examining large quantities of information efficiently. Having a good idea of how soils should be rated for a particular land use or soil function in an area is essential..

A **documentation sub-team** assembles and publishes the metadata for each interpretation. This includes descriptions for the Web Soil Survey Rule and

Report Manager as well as a more in-depth description with diagrams that could be linked to an as yet undeveloped documentation site associated with Web Soil Survey. This also includes publishing articles on the models in refereed journals as needed to advocate and publicize the work.

You are cordially invited to engage in this process.

On day of the webinar, click the following link to join:

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NSSC staff in Lincoln are invited to join the webinar in Room 397A.

Please invite staff and partners who you think have an interest in this subject.