

April 7, 2005, Agenda, Discussion and Recommendations of the Teleconference

United States Consortium of Soil Science Associations (USCSSA) Teleconference --- April 7, 2005; Start at 10:00 AM and end at about 11:25AM Central time.

Purpose: To review and coordinate activities of the USCSSA, State Soil Societies/Associations, SSSA, AWSS, NSCSS and others.

Participants:

- Cathy McGuire, Arizona
- Kerry Arroues, Professional Soil Scientists Association of California
- Margie Faber, Society of Soil Scientist of Southern New England
- Ron Kuehl and Jim Cooper, Florida Association of Environmental Soil Scientists
- Roger Risley and Suzanne D'Souza, Minnesota Association of Professional Soil Scientists
- B. J. Shoup, New Mexico Association of Professional Soil Scientists
- Mark Silverman, Empire State Pedologists
- John Havlin, Soil Science Society of America (SSSA) and Soil Science Society of North Carolina
- Bruce Willman, Pennsylvania Association of Professional Soil Scientists
- Bob Eppinette, Soil Science Society of South Carolina
- Wendy Noll, Skip Bell and Steve Carpenter, West Virginia Association of Professional Soil Scientists
- Luther Smith and Paul Kamps, SSSA Madison, WI office
- Toby Rogers, Washington Society of Professional Soil Scientists was not able to participate in teleconference but provided e-mail comments
- Jim Culver USCSSA Advisory Group.

Agenda was developed and distributed prior to the teleconference. The following is a listing of agenda items, discussion of the agenda item and agreed recommendations.

Agenda --- Discussion --- Recommendations

1--Status of Smithsonian Soils Exhibit and fund raising activities. Paul Kamp-- SSSA, and all participants.

Discussion:

John Havlin presented an excellent overview of the SSSA commitment and current status of Smithsonian Soils Exhibit. Three committees

1. Steering
2. Development
3. Funding

consisting of 8 to 10 or more members are working with the Smithsonian Natural Museum of Natural History and others on making this project reality. Target date of 2006 was initially set have a state soils display completed for viewing by the International Union of Soil Science to be held in Philadelphia, PA. Currently 2007 -- 2008 are the dates for completed project. Many states have organized funding systems in place however there are about 15 states which are not well organized.

Fund raising is high priority. About 2.5 million dollars needed for Museum of Natural History soils displays and a total of about 4.0 million needed for entire project which included mobile soils exhibits traveling around in the United States.

John as President of SSSA has taken the lead in getting a full time person to provide national-international leadership in project funding. Valerie Breunig who has been the lead SSSA person on the Smithsonian soils project is no longer at SSSA. Paul Kamps has been employed by SSSA to work full time on project funding, beginning 3/28. John indicated even through several states had reached their initial goal of 10,000 dollars for the state soil part; additional effort was needed to get large contributions from private industry and willing individuals for a successful funding campaign.

Paul Kamp expressed his appreciation for this new SSSA position and his desire to coordinate and assist as needed. Paul reported the following:

1. about 700,000 dollars have been raised for the entire Smithsonian project
2. 250,000 dollars received for state monoliths as of March 31, 2005
3. 163,000 dollars raised in 2004 for the state soil monolith portion of the exhibit.
4. Missouri State Soil Menfrow is the first soil as a prototype display. There has been a USDA information release on this accomplishment.
5. 12 states have raised 10,000 dollars for their state soil and 8 states are over ½ of the 10,000 dollars.
6. Smithsonian is currently advertising for a soil exhibitor content researcher position to work on this soils exhibit.

Skip Bell inquired about the process of getting new state soil monoliths added to the Smithsonian. Cathy McGuire requested an update from Paul on the status of contributions and individuals who had contributed to the Arizona State Soil. Paul noted he would provide Cathy a summary of the excellent AZ progress.

Paul's contact information is 608-268-4975 and pkamps@agronomy.org.

Recommendations:

1. Paul will make available to states the process of how additional state soil monoliths will be added to Smithsonian.
2. Paul will make available or reference where the USDA press release information is posted. **Completed: Contact: <http://www.usda.gov/> then Newsroom, then News Releases, and Latest Releases.**
3. Paul will make available or post a photograph of how the Missouri State Soil Exhibits looks as it is currently on display in the Museum of Natural History.

2--Potential future joint USCSSA-SSSA activities. I.e. Receptions, Professional Soil Scientists Roundtable at SSSA annual meetings and/or special regional workshops. John Halving – SSSA and all participants.

Discussion:

John gave a brief overview of the Professional Soil Scientists Roundtable sessions at the Denver and Seattle meetings. Tom Sims provided the SSSA leadership for the first meeting in Denver. Participation and feedback from the Denver meeting was better than the Seattle session last year. John met with the National Society of Consulting Soil Scientists and they indicate their participation at the Salt Lake meeting might not be too strong. General discussion on best options on future meetings. Suggestions to emphasis on future meeting in Indiana and New Orleans in 06 and 07. John indicated he would like to continue the reception of soil scientist's activity at the Salt lake meeting.

Margie indicated that the absent of the traditional soils field trips during the past two meetings were not positive. She indicated hands on educational soils activities would add to the interest of participants.

Recommendations:

Plans are to have a Reception of Soil Scientists at the Salt Lake meetings. John Havlin will take lead and work with others as appropriate in scheduling and etc. Discussion was to have a reception with a few brief comments from SSSA and USCSSA.

3 -- USCSSA and SSSA target organizations or groups (realtor associations, engineering societies, geological societies, land planning associations and etc) at national level to show what our professions can provide. – Bob Eppinette- Soil Science Society of South Carolina, John Havlin and others.

Discussion:

General discussion of this issue. Bob indicated the in South Carolina Federal and several state agencies cooperate at different levels in sharing information. Many other professional groups do not have an appreciation of soil scientists and what value they can provide to their work. Encouragement for more joint regional meetings. John indicated plans were underway for SSSA and Geological Society of America to meet in 2008. In NC the Realtors Association receive CEU credit for participating in technical Soil Science Society of North Carolina meetings. Most professional groups have “No Clue” as to what the National Cooperative Soil Survey is.

Recommendations:

Encourage state soil societies/associations to get acquainted with the leadership of other professional organizations such as Realtors, Engineer Associations, County Assessors Associations, Land Planners Associations, Geological Societies and etc. Big long term job!! Need to follow up with more detail in future teleconferences.

4 -- State Certification and Licensing of soil scientist's progress. – Luther Smith, John Havlin – SSSA.

Discussion:

SSSA leadership is encouraging state certification of soil scientists. John spent one-half day during the SSSA meetings in Seattle meetings last fall discussing state certification with the Washington Society of Professional Soil Scientists. SSSA provided some funding to pay for a lobbyist to help get the soil certification passed by the Washington legislative body. Time ran out to get the bill passed this year but plans look quite favorable to get the bill passed this next year. Luther and John also indicated that Georgia is interested in working with SSSA in getting state certification of soil scientists passed in their state. SSSA has a long term goal of working with and encouraging 15 or more states to get state certification.

Bruce Willman discussed state certification models and various levels of professional membership. One question of concern was that a person with no academic background could take the ARCPACS test, pass it and be certified. Bruce indicated the PA legislators were not receptive to passing licensing or state certification for new professional groups.

Luther reported that currently there are about 1200 Certified by ARCPACS. One thought is to encourage the state soil societies/association to have a state certification program and the SSSA to be the National Board of Certification. This would get more states involved however the ability of each state to do this, the cost and legality within each state need additional study. Bruce indicated this might be a good approach in PA as certification by the PA legislators was not

likely.

Toby Rogers provided the following excellent summary of state certification activities by the Washington Society of Professional Soil Scientists:

“We are continuing to bolster our defenses for the '06 legislative session and will be putting a letter together to solicit our state society memberships. SSSA has been a huge help in the past year, providing logistical, informational, and financial assistance. It has been great to see the licensing effort receive so much national attention and we look forward to working more with SSSA and any people across the nation who are looking for practical knowledge gained from our experiences.”

Luther indicated he was available to meet with state soil societies/associations to discuss certification.. Question – When do state soil societies/association have their annual or other scheduled meetings? Bruce indicated the Pennsylvania Association of Professional Soil Scientists will have their annual meeting on November 12, 2005. May be a summer meeting.

Recommendations:

1. SSSA continues to work with state on certification of soil scientists.
2. USCSSA will work with Luther Smith in identifying the dates of state soil societies/association annual and other signification meeting dates.

5 -- USCSSA web site – Format and Update of Officers. – Jim Culver.

The format for listing of officers has been updated. New format is more user friendly and has easy capacity to quire for various kind of information. Web site URL is <http://soilsassociation.org/>

Recommendation:

Send the USCSSA an update of any new elected officers of your state soil societies/associations. Suggest using the format on the USCSSA web site in updating officers. Send updated copy to Jim Culver at j4culver@aol.com

6 -- Meeting the Needs of Professional Soil Scientists Survey of 2004. Are there some critical items that we could identify as priority for the USCSSA?? – Margie Faber -- Society of Soil Scientists of Southern New England and others.

Discussion:

Margie reported that a 5-6 page summary of the 2004 survey on “Meeting the Needs of Professional Soil Scientists had been prepared. Copies are on the SSSA and the USCSSA web sites. Bruce also indicated PA had included this

summary in their recent Pennsylvania Association of Professional Soil Scientists newsletter. Margie and the SSSA staff at Madison also prepared an excellent summary poster used at the Seattle SSSA meetings.

Margie raised the question about past discussion of an online journal by SSSA. Luther indicated the SSSA was currently doing some evaluation on the potential of an online journal.

Some discussion on summarizing this survey and publish it in Soil Survey Horizons.

Recommendation:

Margie Faber and John Havlin will collectively reevaluate this excellent summary and have it published in Soil Survey Horizons. This will serve as a quality literature cited source of information for soil scientists and others.

7 -- Concern on decline in Soil Pedology programs at Universities. How can State Soil Societies/Associations support a strong Pedology program at their Universities? -- All.

Discussion:

Several states have experienced retirement of Professors teaching soils. Some states are able to fill vacant positions. 10 Universities have less soils staff. Some discussion on the opportunity to assist those who teach earth science on how to effectively include the science of soils in their classes. This could include visual aids, lesson plans, special soils training seminar type sessions.

Completion for positions, recognition of a good work and funding are competitive at most all levels – Federal, State and Local. Often excellent work by University Pedologists is not fully recognized.

Recommendation:

Each state soil society/association writes a letter of support and appreciation for the University Pedology program, as appropriate. Letter to be send to University President, Deans and etc. Often letters from an outside entity do contribute positively to the visibility of a needed program. Also there are other state and local agencies who often will be willing to write positive letters on behalf of having a quality University Soils Pedology program.

8 -- What State Soil Societies/Associations are doing to promote soils education for youth and others --- All.

Discussion:

Some excellent discussion. Lots of good activity. Bruce reported PA uses a technique of making miniature educational profiles of state soil at environmental type meetings. They also sponsor prizes and plaques of contest winners. Some states use plastic tubes with disk separating the major soil horizons in educational sessions. South Carolina has an excellent CD on soil education for students. Alaska has a good technique of students making soil monolith type soil profiles.

Recommendation:

USCSSA work with SSSA and others in identify some of the current techniques and excellent work being done. This information about what is going on will be posted to web sites as reference material for interested individuals.

9 -- Update on new MLRA concepts of production soil survey. --- All

Roger shared an excellent brief summary of the MLRA concept and some of the positive activities of the Minnesota MLRA office. Soil survey is made by natural geomorphic perimeters rather the geographic boundaries. Wisconsin and Minnesota currently making good together on updates. Field operations on MLRA concepts going well. Administratively operations on political boundaries are sometime a concern.

Teleconference Adjourned about 11:25 AM Central Time