



United States
Department of
Agriculture

In cooperation with the
Montana Agricultural
Experiment Station

MT639—Soil Survey of Sweet Grass County Area, Montana



Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service



Part II



The original maps and tables have been deleted from this online version. Since the soil survey's publication, more data on soil properties may have been collected, new interpretations developed, or existing interpretive criteria modified. Maps and current data tables can be accessed through the Web Soil Survey (<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>).

How to Use This Soil Survey

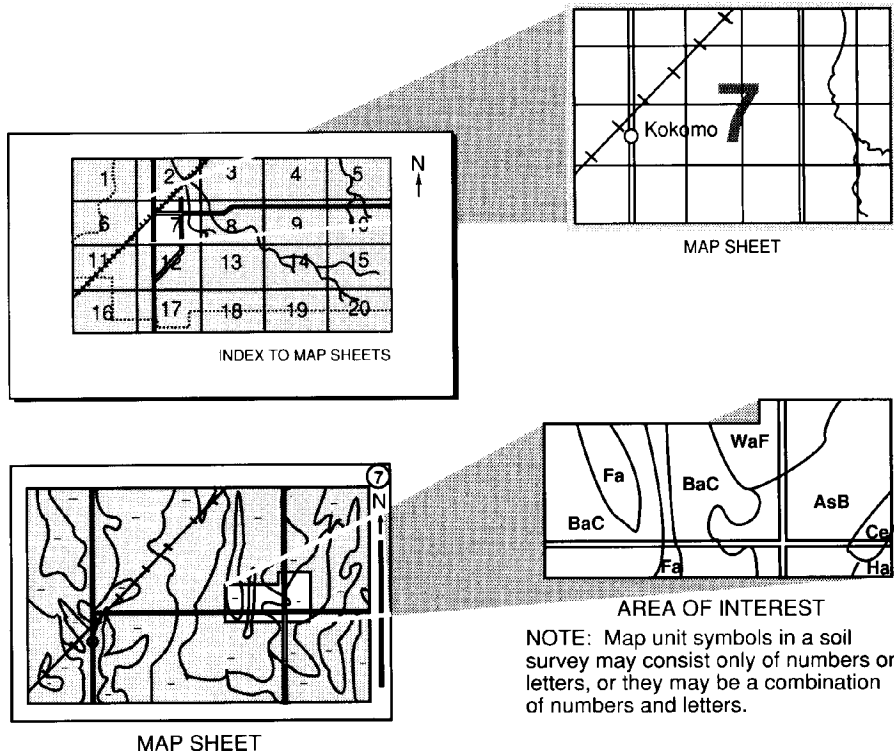
Detailed Soil Maps

The detailed soil maps can be useful in planning the use and management of small areas.

To find information about your area of interest, you can locate the Section, Township, and Range by zooming in on the **Index to Map Sheets**, or you can go to the Web Soil Survey at (<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>).

Note the map unit symbols that are in that area. The **Contents** lists the map units by symbol and name and shows the page where each map unit is described.

See the Contents for sections of this publication that may address your specific needs.



This soil survey is a publication of the National Cooperative Soil Survey, a joint effort of the United States Department of Agriculture and other Federal agencies, State agencies including the Agricultural Experiment Stations, and local agencies. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly the Soil Conservation Service) has leadership for the Federal part of the National Cooperative Soil Survey.

Major fieldwork for this soil survey was completed in 1997. Soil names and descriptions were approved in 1997. Unless otherwise indicated, statements in this publication refer to conditions in the survey area in 1997. This survey was made cooperatively by the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station. It is part of the technical assistance furnished to the Sweet Grass County Conservation District.

The most current official data are available through the NRCS Soil Data Mart website at <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov>. Soil maps in this survey may be copied without permission. Enlargement of these maps, however, could cause misunderstanding of the detail of mapping. If enlarged, maps do not show the small areas of contrasting soils that could have been shown at a larger scale.

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Cover: Two dominant features of the Sweet Grass County landscape are the Yellowstone River and Crazy Mountains. The river valley soils in this view are mainly Fairway and Korchea loams. Soils that are commonly found in the rangeland are Cabbart loam, Yawdim clay loam, and Reedpoint very channery loams. The high terraces in the background are mostly Roy and Tamaneen cobbly loams. Representative soils in the upper foothills are Adel loam on the rangeland and Stemple very cobbly loam in the forested areas.

Additional information about the Nation's natural resources is available online from the Natural Resources Conservation Service at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>.

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453E—Libeg very cobbly sandy loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes
454F—Redfern-Warwood complex, 25 to 70 percent slopes

455F—Redfern-Fifer complex, 25 to 60 percent slopes
456F—Stemple-Cheadle, moist, complex, 25 to 70 percent slopes
457D—Arrowpeak-Gilispie-Fifer complex, 2 to 15 percent slopes
458C—Vebar-Castner complex, 2 to 8 percent slopes

459A—Newtman muck, 0 to 2 percent slopes
460B—Foolhen-Beehive-Bearmouth complex, 0 to 4 percent slopes
461B—Soapcreek-Absher family complex, 0 to 4 percent slopes
DA—Denied access
M-W—Water, miscellaneous
W—Water

Summary of Tables

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For tables with the most current data, please visit the
Soil Data Mart at <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/>.

Soil Survey of Sweet Grass County Area, Montana

This soil survey is an inventory and evaluation of the soils in the survey area. It can be used to adjust land uses to the limitations and potentials of natural resources and the environment. In addition, this survey can help to prevent soil-related failures in land uses.

In preparing a soil survey, soil scientists, conservationists, engineers, and others collect extensive field data about the nature and behavioral characteristics of the soils. They collect data on erosion, droughtiness, flooding, and other factors that affect various soil uses and management. To predict soil behavior, field experience and collected data on soil properties and performance are used.

Information in this section can be used to plan the use and management of soils for crops and pasture; as rangeland and woodland; as sites for buildings, sanitary facilities, highways and other transportation systems, and parks and other recreational facilities; and for wildlife habitat. This information can be used to identify the potentials and limitations of each soil for specific land uses and to help prevent construction failures caused by unfavorable soil properties.

Interpretive ratings help engineers, planners, and others understand how soil properties influence important nonagricultural uses, such as building site development and construction materials. The ratings indicate the most restrictive soil features affecting the suitability of the soils for these uses.

Soils are rated in their natural state. No unusual modification of the soil site or material is made other than that which is considered normal practice for the rated use. Although soils may have limitations, it is important to remember that engineers and others can modify soil features or can design or adjust the plans for a structure to compensate for most of the limitations. Most of these practices, however, are costly. The final decision in selecting a site for a particular use generally involves weighing the costs of site preparation and maintenance.

Planners and others using soil survey information can evaluate the effect of specific land uses on productivity and on the environment in all or part of the survey area. The survey can help planners to maintain or create a land use pattern in harmony with the natural soil.

Contractors can use this survey to locate sources of sand and gravel, roadfill, and topsoil. They can use it to identify areas where bedrock, wetness, or very firm soil layers can cause difficulty in excavation.

Health officials, highway officials, engineers, and others may also find this survey useful. The survey can help them plan the safe disposal of wastes and locate sites for pavements, sidewalks, campgrounds, playgrounds, lawns, and trees and shrubs.

“Classification of the Soils” and “Acreage and Proportionate Extent of the Soils” tables at the end of this section show the classification and extent of the soils in this survey area.

Agronomy

Crops and Pasture

General management needed for crops and pasture is suggested in this section. The estimated yields of the main crops and pasture plants are listed, the system of land capability classification used by the Natural Resources Conservation Service is explained, and prime farmland is described.

Planners of management systems for individual fields or farms should consider the detailed information given in the description of each soil under the heading "Detailed Soil Map Units." Specific information can be obtained from the local office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service or the Cooperative Extension Service.

Cropland Management

Management concerns affecting the use of the detailed soil map units in the survey area for constructing grassed waterways, vegetating grassed waterways and filter strips, and installing sprinkler irrigation are shown in the table, "Cropland Management."

A *grassed waterway* is a natural or constructed waterway, typically broad and shallow, seeded to grass as protection against erosion. The grassed waterway conducts surface water away from cropland.

A *filter strip* is a trench with a sand or gravel bottom used to filter water.

Sprinkler irrigation is a method to apply water to soils to assist in the production of crops. Water is sprayed over the soil surface through pipes or nozzles from a pressure system.

Land Capability Classification

Land capability classification shows, in a general way, the suitability of soils for most kinds of field crops. Crops that require special management are excluded. The soils are grouped according to their

limitations for field crops, the risk of damage if they are used for crops, and the way they respond to management. The criteria used in grouping the soils do not include major and generally expensive landforming that would change slope, depth, or other characteristics of the soils, nor do they include possible but unlikely major reclamation projects. Capability classification is not a substitute for interpretations designed to show suitability and limitations of groups of soils for rangeland, for forestland, or for engineering purposes.

In the capability system, soils are generally grouped at three levels—capability class, subclass, and unit.

Capability classes, the broadest groups, are designated by the numbers 1 through 8. The numbers indicate progressively greater limitations and narrower choices for practical use. The classes are defined as follows:

Class 1 soils have slight limitations that restrict their use.

Class 2 soils have moderate limitations that restrict the choice of plants or that require moderate conservation practices.

Class 3 soils have severe limitations that restrict the choice of plants or that require special conservation practices, or both.

Class 4 soils have very severe limitations that restrict the choice of plants or that require very careful management, or both.

Class 5 soils are subject to little or no erosion but have other limitations, impractical to remove, that restrict their use mainly to pasture, rangeland, forestland, or wildlife habitat.

Class 6 soils have severe limitations that make them generally unsuitable for cultivation and that restrict their use mainly to pasture, rangeland, forestland, or wildlife habitat.

Class 7 soils have very severe limitations that make them unsuitable for cultivation and that restrict their use mainly to grazing, forestland, or wildlife habitat.

Class 8 soils and miscellaneous areas have limitations that preclude commercial plant production

and that restrict their use to recreational purposes, wildlife habitat, watershed, or esthetic purposes.

Capability subclasses are soil groups within one class. They are designated by adding a small letter, *e*, *w*, *s*, or *c*, to the class numeral, for example, 2e. The letter *e* shows that the main hazard is the risk of erosion unless close-growing plant cover is maintained; *w* shows that water in or on the soil interferes with plant growth or cultivation (in some soils the wetness can be partly corrected by artificial drainage); *s* shows that the soil is limited mainly because it is shallow, droughty, or stony; and *c*, used in only some parts of the United States, shows that the chief limitation is climate that is very cold or very dry.

In class 1 there are no subclasses because the soils of this class have few limitations. Class 5 contains only the subclasses indicated by *w*, *s*, or *c* because the soils in class 5 are subject to little or no erosion. They have other limitations that restrict their use to pasture, rangeland, forestland, wildlife habitat, or recreation.

The acreage of soils in each capability class or subclass is shown in the table, "Land Capability and Yields per Acre of Crops and Pasture." The capability classification of map units in this survey area is given in the section "Detailed Soil Map Units" and in the yields table.

Prime Farmland and Other Important Farmland

In this section, prime farmland and other important farmland are defined. The soils in the survey area that are considered prime farmland are listed in the table, "Prime and Important Farmland," at the end of this section.

Prime Farmland

Prime farmland is one of several kinds of important farmland defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It is of major importance in meeting the Nation's short- and long-range needs for food and fiber. Because the supply of high-quality farmland is limited, the U.S. Department of Agriculture recognizes that responsible levels of government, as well as individuals, should encourage and facilitate the wise use of our Nation's prime farmland.

Prime farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing

food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses. It could be cultivated land, pasture, forestland, or other land, but it is not urban or built-up land or water areas. The soil qualities, growing season, and moisture supply are those needed for the soil to economically produce sustained high yields of crops when proper management, including water management, and acceptable farming methods are applied. In general, prime farmland has an adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, an acceptable salt and sodium content, and few or no rocks. It is permeable to water and air. It is not excessively erodible or saturated with water for long periods, and it either is not frequently flooded during the growing season or is protected from flooding. Slope ranges mainly from 0 to 6 percent. More detailed information about the criteria for prime farmland is available at the local office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

A recent trend in land use in some parts of the survey area has been the loss of some prime farmland to industrial and urban uses. The loss of prime farmland to other uses puts pressure on marginal lands, which generally are more erodible, droughty, and less productive and cannot be easily cultivated.

The map units in the survey area that are considered prime farmland are listed in the "Prime and Important Farmland" table. This list does not constitute a recommendation for a particular land use. On some soils included in the list, measures that overcome a hazard or limitation, such as flooding, wetness, and droughtiness, are needed. Onsite evaluation is needed to determine whether or not the hazard or limitation has been overcome by corrective measures. The extent of each listed map unit is shown in the "Acreage and Proportionate Extent of the Soils" table. The location is shown on the detailed soil maps. The soil qualities that affect use and management are described under the heading "Detailed Soil Map Units."

Additional Farmland of Statewide Importance

Some areas other than areas of prime farmland are of statewide importance in the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. The criteria used in defining and delineating these areas are determined by the appropriate state agency or

agencies. Generally, additional farmland of statewide importance includes areas that nearly meet the criteria for prime farmland and that economically produce high yields of crops when treated and managed by acceptable farming methods. Some areas can produce as high a yield as areas of prime farmland if conditions are favorable. In some states, additional farmland of statewide importance may

include tracts of land that have been designated for agriculture by state law.

Farmland of statewide importance is included in the list of prime farmland. Criteria is available in the Field Office Technical Guide, Section II, which is available in local offices of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and online at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/efotg/>.

Rangeland

Range makes up about 75 percent of the land in Sweet Grass County. The areas of range provide forage for about 45,000 cow-calf pairs and 18,400 sheep and lambs. Nearly 88 percent of the farm income in the county is derived from the sale of livestock. The average size of a ranch is about 2,800 acres.

Most grazing is on native range. The range is used primarily for grazing by domestic livestock. However, it also is used as wildlife habitat, recreational areas, and watershed, and it has esthetic value.

In areas that have similar climate and topography, differences in the kind and amount of vegetation produced on rangeland are closely related to the kind of soil. Effective management is based on the relationship between the soils and vegetation and water.

Range is defined as land on which the native vegetation (the climax, or natural potential, plant community) is predominantly grasses, grasslike plants, forbs, and shrubs suitable for grazing and browsing. Range includes natural grasslands, savannas, many wetlands, some deserts, tundra, and certain shrub and forb communities. Range receives no regular or frequent cultural treatment. The composition and production of the plant community are determined by soil, climate, topography, overstory canopy, and grazing management.

Grazed forestland is defined as land on which the understory includes, as an integral part of the forest plant community, plants that can be grazed without significant impairment of other forest values.

Native pasture is defined as land on which the potential (climax) vegetation is forest but which is used and managed primarily for the production of native forage plants. Native pasture includes cutover forest land and forest land that has been cleared and is managed for native or naturalized forage plants.

The table "Rangeland and Grazeable Understory—Productivity and Characteristic Plant Communities" at the end of this section shows, for each soil, the ecological site; the total annual production of vegetation in favorable, normal, and

unfavorable years; the characteristic native vegetation; and the average percentage of each species. Explanation of the column headings in this table follows.

An *ecological site* is the product of all the environmental factors responsible for its development. It has characteristic soils that have developed over time throughout the soil development process; a characteristic hydrology, particularly infiltration and runoff, that has developed over time; and a characteristic plant community (kind and amount of vegetation). The hydrology of the site is influenced by development of the soil and plant community. The vegetation, soils, and hydrology are all interrelated. Each is influenced by the others and influences the development of the others. The plant community on an ecological site is typified by an association of species that differs from that of other ecological sites in the kind and/or proportion of species or in total production. Descriptions of ecological sites are provided in the Field Office Technical Guide, which is available in local offices of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and online at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/efotg/>.

Total dry-weight production is the amount of vegetation that can be expected to grow annually in a well-managed area that is supporting the potential natural plant community. It includes all vegetation, whether or not it is palatable to grazing animals. It includes the current year's growth of leaves, twigs, and fruits of woody plants. It does not include the increase in stem diameter of trees and shrubs. It is expressed in pounds per acre of air-dry vegetation for favorable, normal, and unfavorable years. In a favorable year, the amount and distribution of precipitation and the temperatures make growing conditions substantially better than average. In a normal year, growing conditions are about average. In an unfavorable year, growing conditions are well below average, generally because of low available soil moisture. Yields are adjusted to a common percent of air-dry moisture content.

Characteristic native vegetation—the grasses, forbs, and shrubs that make up most of the potential

natural plant community on each soil—is listed by common name. Under *rangeland composition*, the expected percentage of the total annual production is given for each species making up the characteristic vegetation. The amount that can be used as forage depends on the kinds of grazing animals and on the grazing season.

Rangeland Condition

Rangeland condition is based on a comparison of the present plant community with the potential natural plant community on a particular ecological site. The more closely the existing community resembles the natural community, the better the range condition.

Abnormal disturbances that change the natural plant community include repeated overuse by livestock, excessive burning, erosion, and plowing. Grazing animals select the most palatable plants. These plants will eventually die if they are continually grazed. A very severe disturbance may completely destroy the natural community. Under these conditions, the less desirable plants, such as annuals and weedlike plants, can invade. If the plant community has not deteriorated significantly, it eventually can return to dominantly natural plants if proper grazing management is applied.

Four range condition classes are used to show the degree of deterioration of the natural plant community.

An area of rangeland is in *excellent condition* if more than 75 percent of the present plant community is the same as the natural plant community. It is in *good condition* if the natural plants make up 51 to 75 percent of the present plant community, in *fair condition* if those plants make up 26 to 50 percent, and in *poor condition* if they make up less than 25 percent.

Knowledge of the range site and condition is necessary as a basis for planning and applying the management needed to maintain or improve the desired plant community for selected uses. Such information is needed to determine management objectives, proper grazing systems and stocking rates, suitable wildlife management practices, the potential for recreational uses, and the condition of watersheds.

Rangeland Management

Rangeland management requires a knowledge of the kinds of soil and of the potential natural plant community. It also requires an evaluation of the present range similarity index and rangeland trend.

Range similarity index is determined by comparing the present plant community with the potential natural plant community on a particular rangeland ecological site. The more closely the existing community resembles the potential community, the higher the range similarity index. Rangeland trend is defined as the direction of change in an existing plant community relative to the potential natural plant community. Further information about the range similarity index and rangeland trend is available in chapter 4 of the “National Range and Pasture Handbook” (USDA, 2003).

The objective in range management is to control grazing so that the plants growing on a site are about the same in kind and amount as the potential natural plant community for that site. Such management generally results in the optimum production of vegetation, control of undesirable brush species, conservation of water, and control of erosion. Sometimes, however, an area with a range similarity index somewhat below the potential meets grazing needs, provides wildlife habitat, and protects soil and water resources.

Grazing management is the most important part of any rangeland management program. Proper grazing use, timely deferment of grazing, and planned rotation grazing systems are key practices. The experience of ranchers and research has shown that if no more than one-half of the current year’s growth is grazed, a plant community in good or excellent condition can be maintained and one in fair condition can be improved. The remaining one-half enables plants to make and store food for regrowth and root development. As a result, the desirable plants remain healthy and are not replaced by less desirable grasses and weeds. Also, the plant cover protects the soil from water erosion and soil blowing, improves tilth, increases the rate of water infiltration, and helps to control runoff.

Certain practices commonly are needed to obtain a uniform distribution of grazing. These practices include developing livestock watering facilities, fencing, properly locating salt and mineral supplements, constructing livestock trails in steeply sloping areas, and riding or herding. The table, “Rangeland Improvement,” shows, for each map unit, the limitations to the range improvements of fencing and developing pond reservoir areas.

Various kinds of grazing systems can be used in range management. No single grazing system is best under all conditions. The grazing system should increase the quantity and improve the quality of the range vegetation; should meet the needs of the individual operator; and should be designed

according to topography, type of grazing animals, and resource management objectives.

Special improvement practices are needed in areas where management practices do not achieve the desired results or where recovery is too slow under forage management alone. These practices include range seeding, brush management, water spreading, prescribed burning, and mechanical treatment.

Some soils are suited to mechanical treatment for range improvement. On other soils, however, only proper grazing management can improve the range. Capability classes are designated by the numbers 1 through 8. The numbers indicate progressively greater limitations and narrower choices for practical use. Many soils in capability classes 1 through 4 are suited to such practices as seeding, mechanical brush and weed control, and water spreading. Those soils in capability classes 7 and 8, however, are not suitable. Many soils in capability classes 1 through 4 are suited to tillage for seedbed preparation before native or introduced forage plant species are seeded. Soils in capability class 6 may be suited to limited surface disturbance, such as scarification, for seeding and as a means of increasing the rate of water infiltration for seed germination.

Where feasible, mechanical renovation practices, such as shallow chiseling, can help to speed recovery of the desired plants. These practices open up the surface and thus allow absorption of more moisture and production of more desirable plants. Mechanical renovation, brush management, and timely deferment of grazing allow recovery of desired plants.

Seeding may be needed in areas where less desirable plants are dominant. A clean, firm seedbed should be prepared, suitable species should be selected for seeding, and rest periods should be long enough to allow the new plants to become established. Special improvement practices can be

effective only if the management system helps to keep the desirable plants healthy.

Forestland Understory Management

Understory vegetation consists of grasses, forbs, shrubs, and other plants. If well managed, some forestland can produce enough understory vegetation to support grazing of livestock or wildlife, or both, without damage to the trees.

Forest understory production can be influenced by controlling canopy density in addition to the management of stocking rates, distribution, and season of use. Often both the forestland and range resources can be enhanced through thinning the overstory to canopy levels that optimize both timber and forage production. Broadcast seeding of disturbed areas soon after timber harvest can improve forage quantity and quality and reduce the chances of undesirable plants occupying the site.

Steepness of slopes and distance to drinking water are severe grazing management problems in much of the mountain and foothill areas. Variations in primary season of use, production levels, and plant communities because of elevation and aspect changes present additional challenges. Long, steep slopes provide limited access to livestock. Less sloping areas are subject to overuse. Grazing should be delayed until the soil is firm enough to withstand trampling and the plants have matured enough to withstand grazing pressure.

Riparian areas should be protected from overuse by livestock. Misuse results in deterioration of protective vegetation, reduction of streambank stability, and excessive erosion. Developing off-stream-watering locations can successfully prevent cattle from overgrazing riparian areas and encourage better livestock distribution.

Forestland

Robert D. Logar, Montana State Forester, Natural Resources Conservation Service, prepared this section.

Forest Resource Statistics

Total acres within the survey area are approximately 900,700 (Alexander, 1966). Approximately 10 percent, or about 88,682 acres, of the survey area is forested (Eyre, 1980). The commercial forestland is generally of low productivity, producing less than 50 cubic feet per acre per year (Dahms, 1964). Net volume of sawtimber within the survey area was estimated in 1989 to be approximately 335,001,000 board feet; 90 percent of which is softwood timber (Meyer, 1938; Dahms, 1964). Eighty-eight percent of the estimated timber volume is on private land (Dahms, 1964). Low productivity and small tree diameters limit the sawtimber volume available. Harvesting of the timber resource has increased over the years. Both sawtimber and pulp wood have been removed. Approximately 351,000 board feet of sawtimber is removed annually on nonindustrial private forestland (Meyer, 1938). Net annual growth of sawtimber is about 9,513,000 board feet. The area has an annual mortality of about 575,000 board feet of sawtimber (Eyre, 1980).

Fire Protection

The forestland within the survey area is protected from fire by the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Forestry Division, and local fire districts. The Black Butte Fire occurred in September 1994. The burn was approximately 12,000 acres with about 82 percent on private land. Of those 12,000 acres, about half were forested. About 1,500 acres were of high intensity burn; 4,000 acres were of medium intensity burn; and 6,500 acres were of low intensity burn.

Cover Types

Soils vary in their ability to support the growth of trees. Depth, fertility, texture, and available water

capacity influence tree growth. Elevation, aspect, soils, and climate determine the kinds of trees that can be expected on a site and their growth rate. The forested soils in the soil survey area range from shallow to very deep, from nongravelly to extremely gravelly, and from fine textured to coarse textured. Because of differences among soils, as well as differences in climate, topography, and geology, forests vary in composition and productivity.

In this survey area, ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir cover types occupy the largest acreage. Cover types of limber pine, Rocky Mountain juniper, plains/narrow leaf/black cottonwood, green ash, Engelmann spruce, and quaking aspen occupy lesser acreages.

Parent Material

The forested areas are generally associated with four different parent materials in the survey area:

1. The interbedded sandstone and shale of the Fort Union Formation
2. The agglomerate of the Weeds Formation
3. The alluvium of the Yellowstone and Boulder River valleys
4. The glacial moraines of the Boulder River, and Elk, Big Timber, and Sweetgrass Creeks

Forested Areas

The major part of the coniferous forestland within the survey area can be divided into three general areas:

1. Foothills of the Absaroka-Beartooth Mountains
2. Sweetgrass Hills*
3. Foothills of the Crazy Mountains

*There are forested hills that form the divide between Sweetgrass and White Beaver Creeks. To assist in identifying this area, and though unofficial, this area will be referred to as the Sweetgrass Hills for the purposes of this manuscript.

The foothills of the Absaroka-Beartooth Mountains occur mostly in the southern part of the county. The Sweetgrass Hills occur in the central and northern portions. The foothills of the Crazy Mountains occur in

the northern and western portions. Elevation ranges from about 3,740 feet (Reedpoint) to 7,500 feet (Green Mountain) for the forestland within the survey area.

Foothills of the Absaroka-Beartooth Mountains

The foothills of the Absaroka-Beartooth Mountains are a part of the Weeds Formation and contain some alluvium and glacial moraine deposits. The Weeds Formation is a coarse-grained volcanic mudflow. The soils are primarily steep, shallow to deep, noncalcareous, loamy textured material with some rock outcrop.

Ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine, limber pine, and Rocky Mountain juniper cover types occupy the foothills of the Absaroka-Beartooth Mountains. This area is primarily within the 15- to 19-inch precipitation zone with a small area of 20 to 25 inches along the Boulder River and Elk Creek. Forest soils generally associated with the Weeds Formation are the Ashbon, Sweetweed, Vision, and Whitlash soil series. Forest soils generally associated with the glacial moraine deposits are the Rocko, Stemple, and Worock soil series. The associated plant communities are dominated by Idaho fescue, bluebunch wheatgrass, rough fescue, pinegrass, mallow ninebark, common snowberry, and Rocky Mountain juniper.

Quaking aspen is found in random wet areas throughout the survey area, predominantly in the 15- to 19-inch precipitation zone. Quaking aspen occur on the Adel, Bridger, Monaberg, and Pintlar soil series. These soils have moderate to high available water capacity and are located in positions that receive extra moisture. The forest understory plant community is dominated by mountain brome, bearded wheatgrass, Oregon grape, common snowberry, and sticky geranium.

Sweetgrass Hills

The Sweetgrass Hills consist of interbedded sandstone and shale of the Fort Union Formation with alluvium located along the Yellowstone River valley. Where the Fort Union Formation has been uplifted, it has developed primarily into areas of shallow and moderately deep soils with some rock outcrop. The forested areas have varying degrees of stand density occupying these sites.

Ponderosa pine, limber pine, Rocky Mountain juniper, and small areas of Douglas-fir occupy the Sweetgrass Hills. This area is primarily within the 10- to 14-inch precipitation zone. Forest soils generally associated with the Fort Union Formation

and the ponderosa pine/limber pine cover type are the Birney, Cabbart, Delpoint, and Rentsac soil series. The associated forest understory plant community varies with precipitation, steepness of slope, aspect, overstory tree canopy density, and soils. Associated plant communities are dominated by bluebunch wheatgrass, green needlegrass, little bluestem, skunkbush sumac, common snowberry, and juniper.

A Douglas-fir cover type exists primarily on the northern aspects. Forest soils generally associated with this cover type are the Cabba, Castner, and Doney soil series. Associated plant communities are dominated by Idaho fescue, bluebunch wheatgrass, thickspike wheatgrass, and common juniper.

Plains and narrowleaf cottonwood cover types exist along the lower portions of the Yellowstone River (below the confluence of Sweetgrass Creek) and its tributaries. These areas fall within a 10- to 14-inch precipitation zone. Havre, Meadowcreek, and Nesda soil series are some of the associated soils in these valley bottoms. Associated plant communities are dominated by bluebunch wheatgrass, green needlegrass, needleandthread, western wheatgrass, Canada wildrye, and rose. Green ash is associated with the cottonwoods but is generally found along smaller drainageways and occurs on well-drained soils.

Narrowleaf and black cottonwood cover types are found along the upper portions of the Yellowstone River (above the confluence with Sweetgrass Creek) and its tributaries. These areas occur within the 15- to 19-inch precipitation zone. McIlwaine, Meadowcreek, and Nesda are some of the associated soil series found in these valley bottoms. Associated plant communities are dominated by bluebunch wheatgrass, basin wildrye, slender wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, common snowberry, common chokecherry, and rose. Green ash cover type exists in the smaller drainageways and occurs on well-drained soils.

The occasionally flooded soils of the valley bottoms are generally forested with deciduous tree species. The rarely flooded soils of the valley bottoms are occasionally forested with deciduous trees. Trees have been cleared from much of the rarely flooded and some of the occasionally flooded alluvial soil areas for crop production.

Foothills of the Crazy Mountains

The foothills of the Crazy Mountains consist of interbedded sandstone and shale of the Fort Union

Formation with some glacial moraine deposits near Big Timber and Sweetgrass Creeks. Where this formation has been uplifted, it has developed primarily into areas of shallow and moderately deep soils with some rock outcrop. The forested areas have varying degrees of stand density occupying these sites.

The foothills of the Crazy Mountains are occupied by Douglas-fir, limber pine, and Engelmann spruce cover types. This area is primarily within the 15- to 19-inch precipitation zone with some small areas of 20 to 25 inches nearer the mountains. The forest soils associated with the Fort Union Formation in the 15- to 19-inch precipitation zone are the Cabba and Castner soil series. Forest soils associated with the Fort Union Formation in the 20- to 25-inch precipitation zone are the Cowood, Danaher, Redfern, Timberlin, Tongue River, and Warwood soil series. Forest soils associated with the glacial moraine deposits are the Rocko, Stemple, and Worock soil series. The Beehive soil series is associated with the Engelmann spruce cover type. The associated forest understory plant community varies with precipitation, steepness of slope, aspect, overstory tree canopy density, and soils. Associated plant communities are dominated by Idaho fescue, bluebunch wheatgrass, Columbia needlegrass, common juniper, and common snowberry in the lower elevations and elk sedge, rough fescue, pinegrass, grouse whortleberry, and ninebark in the higher elevations.

Quaking aspen is found in random wet areas throughout the survey area, predominantly in the 15- to 19-inch precipitation zone. Adel, Bridger, Monaberg, and Pintlar soil series are the associated soils. These soils have moderate to high available water capacity and are located in positions that receive extra moisture. The forest understory plant community is dominated by mountain brome, bearded wheatgrass, Oregon grape, common snowberry, and sticky geranium.

Forestland Management and Productivity

Soil Interpretations

To aid those who manage forestland in the soil survey area, soil interpretations relating to forestland

use and management have been developed. Items considered for interpretation are:

1. Conservation tree/shrub suitability groups,
2. Construction limitations for haul roads/log landings,
3. Hand planting suitability,
4. Harvest equipment operability,
5. Log landing operability,
6. Mechanical planting suitability,
7. Mechanical site preparation (deep),
8. Mechanical site preparation (surface),
9. Potential erosion hazard (off-road/off trail),
10. Potential erosion hazard (road/trail),
11. Road suitability (natural surface),
12. Soil rutting hazard, and
13. Potential fire damage hazard.

Not all of these forestry interpretations may be expressed. Local work groups who would be using the "Soil Survey Manual" (Soil Survey Division Staff, 1993) selected the interpretations they would like to see as a part of this manuscript.

Forestland management information for each forested soil is contained in the "Forest Harvest Management" table. Definitions, ratings, and assumptions are explained in the following paragraphs

Soil Rating and Limitations

In the "Forest Harvest Management" table the values listed indicate severity of the criteria limitations, with 0.00 being not limited and 1.00 being very limited.

Off-Road Erosion Hazard, Road Erosion Hazard, and Road/Log Landings Construction Limitations are the hazards or risks of soil loss from unsurfaced roads/trails.

1. Ratings assess:
 - a. The force that natural precipitation events have to dislodge and move soil materials on roads, trails, and firebreaks.
 - b. Activities on roads and trails that result in bare ground, compaction, and reshaping of the soil surface.
 - c. Use by trucks, skidders, off-road vehicles, and other similar equipment.
 - d. The impact on compacted, bare road, trail surface using the representative value for slope gradient of the soil component.
2. Ratings assume that roads and trails are generally linear, continuous, and narrow and range up to 7.5 meters in width.

3. Ratings do not assess frozen or snow-covered soil.
4. Definition of ratings:
 - a. Not limited: Little or no erosion is likely.
 - b. Limited: Some erosion is likely; occasional maintenance may be needed; simple erosion control measures may be needed.
 - c. Very limited: Significant erosion can be expected; roads require frequent maintenance; costly erosion control measures are needed.
5. Soil rating criteria: Primary soil features considered in making this rating were slope, soil erodibility factor, and percent rock fragments.

Forestland Productivity

Expected tree growth rate and the diversity of trees on a site are determined by a combination of elevation, aspect, soils, and climate. The ability of soils to support tree growth is dependent on variability in soil depth, fertility, texture, and available water capacity.

The “Forestland Productivity” table includes the columns *Common Trees*, *Site Index*, *Volume of Wood Fiber*, and *Trees to Manage*. The column, *Common Trees*, refers to the trees most commonly encountered on the different soils. For the more common trees, particularly those of commercial value, site index values have been determined.

Site Index is a value that ranks soil productivity for a specified tree species. It is determined by taking height measurements and concluding the age of selected trees within stands of a given species (Alexander, 1966). This index is the average height, in feet, that dominant and codominant trees of a given species attain in a specified number of years. The specified number of years (base age) may be different for different species. The site index applies to fully stocked, even-aged, unmanaged stands. The site indexes shown in the “Forestland Productivity” table are averages based on measurements made at sites that are representative of the soil series. The higher the site index number is, the more productive the soil for that species is.

The site index base age is 30 years for narrowleaf and plains cottonwood; 50 years for black cottonwood, Douglas-fir, and Engelmann spruce; 80 years for quaking aspen; and 100 years for ponderosa pine and lodgepole pine. Therefore site index values are not directly comparable from one species to another. Site index values were computed from the following references: ponderosa pine (Meyer, 1938), quaking aspen (Baker, 1925),

lodgepole pine (Alexander, 1966), Douglas-fir (Brickell, 1968), black cottonwood (Sauerwein, 1979) and plains cottonwood (locally adapted site index curves developed by the NRCS).

The *Trees to Manage* column in the “Forestland Productivity” table lists trees adapted to the site. The first listed tree species will likely be the most productive.

Yields

The column, *Volume of Wood Fiber*, in the “Forestland Productivity” table lists the average annual yield estimates in board feet (Scribner’s log rule) per acre for selected tree species. Overstory yield estimates were determined for most species from average annual yield versus site index curves developed through adjustment of data presented in yield tables published from several different sources. Average annual yield values were computed at the culmination of mean annual increment.

“Yield of Even-aged Stands of Ponderosa Pine” (Meyer, 1938) was used for estimating the yields of ponderosa pine. “Yield Tables for Managed Stands of Lodgepole Pine in Colorado and Wyoming” (Myers, 1967) was used to estimate the board foot yield of lodgepole pine. Board-foot volumes in the reference are based on Scribner’s log rule and include all trees larger than 10 inches in diameter breast height to an 8-inch top diameter inside bark. Total cubic foot yield estimates are based on “Gross and Net Yield Tables for Lodgepole Pine” (Dahms, 1964). In this reference, total cubic foot volume estimates (inside bark) are based on all trees with diameter breast height inside the bark of more than 1 inch. “Aspen in the Central Rocky Mountain Region” (Baker, 1925) was used to estimate quaking aspen yields. Total cubic-foot volume estimates in the reference are based on all trees larger than 4 inches in diameter breast height. Plains cottonwood yields are based on data collected by the NRCS.

Forest Understory

Forest understory information can be found in the “Rangeland” section of the manuscript with the use of the “Rangeland and Grazeable Understory—Productivity and Characteristic Plant Communities” table. The forest understory information consists of a listing of the understory plant species expected to occur beneath a forest canopy, an estimate of the associated understory production in favorable and unfavorable years, and the habitat type or ecological site description that would best describe the climax plant community.

Recreation

Sweet Grass County Area is located in the south-central portion of Montana. The area has mountains and rangeland and is bordered by Park, Meagher, Wheatland, Golden Valley, Stillwater and Carbon Counties. This area of Montana provides many recreational opportunities. The soils in the Sweet Grass County Area support a wide range of outdoor recreational activities. Common recreational activities include hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, canoeing, rafting, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, and admiring the beautiful scenery. Knowledge of soil types is a valuable tool for managing areas with recreational potential.

Forest Service-owned land in Sweet Grass County totals 281,835 acres in the Gallatin National Forest. There are many hiking trails and cabins, which hikers and skiers can rent. There are also numerous public campgrounds and picnic areas.

Big Timber, the largest town in Sweet Grass County, is located between the Crazy and Absaroka Mountains on the confluence of the Boulder and Yellowstone Rivers. To the northwest of Big Timber, the Crazy Mountains rise to a height of 11,000 feet. To the south, in the Absaroka Range, is Granite Peak, Montana's highest mountain, which rises to 12,799 feet. These areas of Sweet Grass County provide an abundance of recreational opportunities.

The Boulder and Yellowstone Rivers are noted for some of the best trout fishing in the United States. There are 50 miles of native trout streams on the

Boulder River, located in the Gallatin National Forest. Species available are brook trout, brown trout, native cutthroat trout, and rainbow trout. Besides trout fishing, the Yellowstone River is also popular for canoeing and floating. In addition to the Boulder and Yellowstone Rivers, there are many other smaller streams and lakes that provide backcountry fishing opportunities.

In and near Sweet Grass County are licensed outfitters and guest ranches, which provide pack trips, hunting, fishing, and other recreational opportunities. A wide range of hunting options are available for big game and upland game birds. There are big game guide services available, but also individual permits for whitetail and mule deer, elk, and moose. Antelope are plentiful on the rangeland.

The climate in parts of Sweet Grass County is another attraction for many visitors. Daytime temperatures rarely exceed 90 degrees, and nights are cool. The humidity seldom rises above 25 or 30 percent.

Sweet Grass County lies 75 miles northeast of Yellowstone National Park, one of the largest tourist attractions in the west. Yellowstone National Park has many miles of scenic hiking trails. These same trails provide for outstanding cross-country skiing in the winter. As well as having broad mountain ranges and beautiful valleys, Yellowstone National Park also has many miles of clear mountain streams and rivers that abound with trout.

Wildlife Habitat

Soils affect the kind and amount of vegetation that is available to wildlife as food and cover. They also affect the construction of water impoundments. The kind and abundance of wildlife depend largely on the amount and distribution of food, cover, and water. Wildlife habitat can be created or improved by planting appropriate vegetation, by maintaining the existing plant cover, or by promoting the natural establishment of desirable plants.

Elements of Wildlife Habitat

The following paragraphs describe the elements of wildlife habitat.

Grain and seed crops are domestic grains and seed-producing herbaceous plants. Soil properties and features that affect the growth of grain and seed crops are depth of the root zone, texture of the surface layer, available water capacity, wetness, slope, surface stoniness, and flooding. Soil temperature and soil moisture also are considerations. Examples of grain and seed crops are barley, oats, rye, and wheat.

Grasses and legumes are domestic perennial grasses and herbaceous legumes. Soil properties and features that affect the growth of grasses and legumes are depth of the root zone, texture of the surface layer, available water capacity, wetness, surface stoniness, flooding, and slope. Soil temperature and soil moisture also are considerations. Examples of grasses and legumes are alfalfa, bromegrass, clover, crownvetch, fescue, orchardgrass, reed canarygrass, timothy, and trefoil.

Wild herbaceous plants are native or naturally established forbs and grasses, including weeds. Soil properties and features that affect the growth of these plants are depth of the root zone, texture of the surface layer, available water capacity, wetness, surface stoniness, and flooding. Soil temperature and soil moisture also are considerations. Examples of wild herbaceous plants are blackberry, blueberry, bluestem, dandelion, fescue, goldenrod, Indiangrass, lambsquarters, nightshade, ragweed, and wheatgrass.

Deciduous trees and woody understory produce bark, buds, catkins, foliage, nuts or other fruit, and twigs. Soil properties and features that affect the growth of deciduous trees and shrubs are depth of the root zone, available water capacity, and wetness. Examples of deciduous trees and woody understory are American elm, birch, boxelder, green ash, maple, oak, poplar, and willow. Examples of fruit-producing shrubs that are suitable for planting on soils that have good potential for these plants are American plum, chokecherry, crabapple, hawthorn, honeysuckle, redosier dogwood, serviceberry, and silver buffaloberry.

Coniferous plants furnish browse and seeds. Soil properties and features that affect the growth of coniferous trees, shrubs, and ground cover are depth of the root zone, available water capacity, and wetness. Examples of coniferous plants are cedar, fir, hemlock, juniper, larch, pine, spruce, and yew.

Shrubs are bushy woody plants that produce fruit, buds, twigs, bark, and foliage. Soil properties and features that affect the growth of shrubs are depth of the root zone, available water capacity, salinity, and soil moisture. Examples of shrubs are big sagebrush, bitterbrush, mountain mahogany, and snowberry.

Wetland plants are annual and perennial wild herbaceous plants that grow on moist or wet sites. Submerged or floating aquatic plants are excluded. Soil properties and features affecting wetland plants are texture of the surface layer, wetness, reaction, salinity, slope, and surface stoniness. Examples of wetland plants are arrowhead, bulrush, cattail, pickerelweed, rushes, sedges, smartweed, water plantain, wild millet, and wildrice.

Shallow-water areas have an average depth of less than 5 feet. Some are naturally wet areas. Others are created by dams, levees, or other water-control structures. Soil properties and features affecting shallow water areas are depth to bedrock, wetness, surface stoniness, slope, and permeability. Examples are beaver ponds, muskrat marshes, waterfowl feeding areas, wildlife watering developments, and other wildlife ponds.

Kinds of Wildlife Habitat

Habitat for openland wildlife consists of cropland, meadows, pasture, and areas that are overgrown with grasses, herbs, shrubs, and vines. These areas produce grain and seed crops, grasses and legumes, and wild herbaceous plants. Wildlife attracted to openland areas include cottontail rabbit, field sparrow, Hungarian partridge, killdeer, meadowlark, pheasant, red fox, sage grouse, and sharp-tailed grouse.

Habitat for woodland wildlife consists of areas of coniferous and/or deciduous plants and associated grasses, legumes, and wild herbaceous plants. Wildlife attracted to woodland areas include black bear, deer, elk, owl, porcupine, raccoon, ruffed grouse, thrush, tree squirrel, wild turkey, and woodpecker.

Habitat for wetland wildlife consists of open, marshy or swampy, shallow-water areas. Some of the wildlife attracted to wetland areas include beaver, bittern, duck, geese, heron, kingfisher, mink, muskrat, otter, and rail.

Habitat for rangeland wildlife consists of areas of shrubs and wild herbaceous plants. Wildlife attracted to rangeland areas include antelope, deer, lark bunting, meadowlark, and sage grouse.

Wildlife of the Sweet Grass County Area

Habitat quality and interspersions determine wildlife population levels. Suitability of a particular habitat for a wildlife species depends greatly on the nature of the plant communities present. Prevailing land-use practices and management determine the quantity, quality, and distribution of plant communities. These

factors are governed to some extent by the soils of the area.

Rating soils for their ability to produce vegetative elements for wildlife habitat does not take into account local climatic influences, present use of soils, juxtaposition of habitat types or elements, or present distribution of wildlife species. For these reasons, the selection and suitability of an area for wildlife habitat development require onsite evaluation.

The Sweet Grass County Area has a diverse landscape that offers a wide range of wildlife habitat. The northeastern portion supports antelope, prairie dogs, sage grouse, hawks, eagles, and other animals that inhabit the open plains.

The creeks, reservoirs, and rivers support brook trout, cutthroat trout, and rainbow trout. Wetlands near and around these water bodies provide resting and feeding areas for migratory waterfowl in the spring and fall.

Cultivated areas provide food and cover for grouse, partridge, pheasant, and many types of song birds. Foothill and mountain areas support black and grizzly bear, elk, moose, mountain lion, grouse, and squirrel. Mule deer and white-tailed deer roam throughout the county in a variety of wildlife habitats.

Populations of game and nongame species can be enhanced by using conservation practices to improve their habitat. These practices include development of odd or irregularly shaped areas in and adjacent to farmland to provide food and cover, protection of habitat from fire or grazing, and establishment of woody vegetation to provide winter shelter. Wildlife habitat may also be enhanced through application of commonly employed conservation practices including minimum tillage, planned grazing systems, pond construction, shelterbelts and field windbreaks, and stripcropping.

Engineering

This section provides information for planning land uses related to urban development and to water management. Soils are rated for various uses, and the most limiting features are identified. Ratings are given for building site development, sanitary facilities, construction materials, and water management. The ratings are based on observed performance of the soils and on the data in the tables described under the heading "Soil Properties."

Information in this section is intended for land use planning, for evaluating land use alternatives, and for planning site investigations prior to design and construction. The information, however, has limitations. For example, estimates and other data generally apply only to that part of the soil between the surface and a depth of 5 to 7 feet. Because of the map scale, small areas of different soils may be included within the mapped areas of a specific soil.

The information is not site specific and does not eliminate the need for onsite investigation of the soils or for testing and analysis by personnel experienced in the design and construction of engineering works.

Government ordinances and regulations that restrict certain land uses or impose specific design criteria were not considered in preparing the information in this section. Local ordinances and regulations should be considered in planning, in site selection, and in design.

Soil properties, site features, and observed performance were considered in determining the ratings in this section. During the fieldwork for this soil survey, determinations were made about particle-size distribution, liquid limit, plasticity index, soil reaction, depth to bedrock, hardness of bedrock within 5 to 7 feet of the surface, soil wetness, depth to a water table, ponding, slope, likelihood of flooding, natural soil structure aggregation, and soil density. Data were collected about kinds of clay minerals, mineralogy of the sand and silt fractions, and the kinds of adsorbed cations. Estimates were made for erodibility, permeability, corrosivity, shrink-swell potential, available water capacity, and other behavioral characteristics affecting engineering uses.

This information can be used to evaluate the potential of areas for residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational uses; make preliminary estimates of construction conditions; evaluate alternative routes for roads, streets, highways, pipelines, and underground cables; evaluate alternative sites for sanitary landfills, septic tank absorption fields, and sewage lagoons; plan detailed onsite investigations of soils and geology; locate potential sources of gravel, sand, earthfill, and topsoil; plan drainage systems, irrigation systems, ponds, terraces, and other structures for soil and water conservation; and predict performance of proposed small structures and pavements by comparing the performance of existing similar structures on the same or similar soils.

The information in the tables, along with the soil maps, the soil descriptions, and other data provided in this survey, can be used to make additional interpretations.

Some of the terms used in this soil survey have a special meaning in soil science and are defined in the "Glossary."

Building Site Development

Soil properties influence the development of building sites, including the selection of the site, the design of the structure, construction, performance after construction, and maintenance. The "Building Site Development" table shows the degree and kind of soil limitations that affect dwellings with and without basements.

The ratings in the table are both verbal and numerical. Rating class terms indicate the extent to which the soils are limited by all of the soil features that affect building site development. *Not limited* indicates that the soil has features that are very favorable for the specified use. Good performance and very low maintenance can be expected. *Somewhat limited* indicates that the soil has features that are moderately favorable for the specified use. The limitations can be overcome or minimized by special planning, design, or installation. Fair

performance and moderate maintenance can be expected. *Very limited* indicates that the soil has one or more features that are unfavorable for the specified use. The limitations generally cannot be overcome without major soil reclamation, special design, or expensive installation procedures. Poor performance and high maintenance can be expected.

Numerical ratings in the table indicate the severity of individual limitations. The ratings are shown as decimal fractions ranging from 0.01 to 1.00. They indicate gradations between the point at which a soil feature has the greatest negative impact on the use (1.00) and the point at which the soil feature is not a limitation (0.00).

Dwellings are single-family houses of three stories or less. For dwellings without basements, the foundation is assumed to consist of spread footings of reinforced concrete built on undisturbed soil at a depth of 2 feet or at the depth of maximum frost penetration, whichever is deeper. For dwellings with basements, the foundation is assumed to consist of spread footings of reinforced concrete built on undisturbed soil at a depth of about 7 feet. The ratings for dwellings are based on the soil properties that affect the capacity of the soil to support a load without movement and on the properties that affect excavation and construction costs. The properties that affect the load-supporting capacity include depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, subsidence, linear extensibility (shrink-swell potential), and compressibility. Compressibility is inferred from the Unified classification. The properties that affect the ease and amount of excavation include depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, slope, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, hardness of bedrock or a cemented pan, and the amount and size of rock fragments.

Sanitary Facilities

The "Building Site Development" table shows the degree and kind of soil limitations that affect septic tank absorption fields. The ratings are both verbal and numerical. Rating class terms indicate the extent to which the soils are limited by all of the soil features that affect these uses. *Not limited* indicates that the soil has features that are very favorable for the specified use. Good performance and very low maintenance can be expected. *Somewhat limited* indicates that the soil has features that are moderately favorable for the specified use. The limitations can be overcome or minimized by special planning, design, or installation. Fair performance

and moderate maintenance can be expected. *Very limited* indicates that the soil has one or more features that are unfavorable for the specified use. The limitations generally cannot be overcome without major soil reclamation, special design, or expensive installation procedures. Poor performance and high maintenance can be expected.

Numerical ratings in the table indicate the severity of individual limitations. The ratings are shown as decimal fractions ranging from 0.01 to 1.00. They indicate gradations between the point at which a soil feature has the greatest negative impact on the use (1.00) and the point at which the soil feature is not a limitation (0.00).

Septic tank absorption fields are areas in which effluent from a septic tank is distributed into the soil through subsurface tiles or perforated pipe. Only that part of the soil between depths of 24 and 60 inches is evaluated. The ratings are based on the soil properties that affect absorption of the effluent, construction and maintenance of the system, and public health. Permeability, depth to a water table, ponding, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, and flooding affect absorption of the effluent. Stones and boulders, ice, and bedrock or a cemented pan interfere with installation. Subsidence interferes with installation and maintenance. Excessive slope may cause lateral seepage and surfacing of the effluent in downslope areas.

Some soils are underlain by loose sand and gravel or fractured bedrock at a depth of less than 4 feet below the distribution lines. In these soils the absorption field may not adequately filter the effluent, particularly when the system is new. As a result, the ground water may become contaminated.

Flooding is a serious problem because it can result in pollution in areas downstream from the landfill. If permeability is too rapid or if fractured bedrock, a fractured cemented pan, or the water table is close to the surface, the leachate can contaminate the water supply. Slope is a consideration because of the extra grading required to maintain roads in the steeper areas of the landfill. Also, leachate may flow along the surface of the soils in the steeper areas and cause difficult seepage problems.

Construction Materials

The "Construction Material Potential" table gives information about the soils as potential sources of gravel, roadfill, sand, and topsoil. Normal compaction, minor processing, and other standard construction practices are assumed.

Sand and *gravel* are natural aggregates suitable for commercial use with a minimum of processing. They are used in many kinds of construction. Specifications for each use vary widely. In the "Construction Material Potential" table, only the likelihood of finding material in suitable quantity is evaluated. The suitability of the material for specific purposes is not evaluated, nor are factors that affect excavation of the material. The properties used to evaluate the soil as a source of sand or gravel are gradation of grain sizes (as indicated by the Unified classification of the soil), the thickness of suitable material, and the content of rock fragments. If the bottom layer of the soil contains sand or gravel, the soil is considered a likely source regardless of thickness. The assumption is that the sand or gravel layer below the depth of observation exceeds the minimum thickness.

Roadfill is soil material that is excavated in one place and used in road embankments in another place. In this table, the soils are rated as a source of roadfill for low embankments, generally less than 6 feet high and less exacting in design than higher embankments.

The ratings are for the whole soil, from the surface to a depth of about 5 feet. It is assumed that soil layers will be mixed when the soil material is excavated and spread.

The ratings are based on the amount of suitable material and on soil properties that affect the ease of excavation and the performance of the material after it is in place. The thickness of the suitable material is a major consideration. The ease of excavation is affected by large stones, depth to a water table, and slope. How well the soil performs in place after it has

been compacted and drained is determined by its strength (as inferred from the AASHTO classification of the soil) and linear extensibility (shrink-swell potential).

Topsoil is used to cover an area so that vegetation can be established and maintained. The upper 40 inches of a soil is evaluated for use as topsoil. Also evaluated is the reclamation potential of the borrow area. The ratings are based on the soil properties that affect plant growth; the ease of excavating, loading, and spreading the material; and reclamation of the borrow area. Toxic substances, soil reaction, and the properties that are inferred from soil texture, such as available water capacity and fertility, affect plant growth. The ease of excavating, loading, and spreading is affected by rock fragments, slope, depth to a water table, soil texture, and thickness of suitable material. Reclamation of the borrow area is affected by slope, depth to a water table, rock fragments, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, and toxic material.

The surface layer of most soils is generally preferred for topsoil because of its organic matter content. Organic matter greatly increases the absorption and retention of moisture and nutrients for plant growth.

In the table, the types of potential sources that each soil was evaluated for are listed under the *probability* column. The *value* column assigns a rating to each soil as to its potential as a source for the materials listed. The ratings range from 0 to 100. They indicate gradations between the point at which a soil feature is severely limited (0) to the point at which the soil has the greatest probability (100) of being a potential source of the construction material.

Soil Properties

Data relating to soil properties are collected during the course of the soil survey.

Soil properties are ascertained by field examination of the soils and by laboratory index testing of some benchmark soils. Established standard procedures are followed. During the survey, many shallow borings are made and examined to identify and classify the soils and to delineate them on the soil maps. Samples are taken from some typical profiles and tested in the laboratory to determine particle-size distribution, plasticity, and compaction characteristics.

Estimates of soil properties are based on field examinations, on laboratory tests of samples from the survey area, and on laboratory tests of samples of similar soils in nearby areas. Tests verify field observations, verify properties that cannot be estimated accurately by field observation, and help to characterize key soils.

The estimates of soil properties are shown in tables. They include engineering index properties, physical and chemical properties, and pertinent soil and water features.

Engineering Index Properties

The “Engineering Index Properties” table gives the engineering classifications and the range of index properties for the layers of each soil in the survey area.

Depth to the upper and lower boundaries of each layer is indicated.

Texture is given in the standard terms used by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These terms are defined according to percentages of sand, silt, and clay in the fraction of the soil that is less than 2 millimeters in diameter. “Loam,” for example, is soil that is 7 to 27 percent clay, 28 to 50 percent silt, and less than 52 percent sand. If the content of particles coarser than sand is 15 percent or more, an appropriate modifier is added, for example, “gravelly.” Textural terms are defined in the “Glossary.”

Classification of the soils is determined according to the Unified soil classification system (ASTM, 1993) and the system adopted by the American Association

of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO, 1986).

The Unified system classifies soils according to properties that affect their use as construction material. Soils are classified according to particle-size distribution of the fraction less than 3 inches in diameter and according to plasticity index, liquid limit, and organic matter content. Sandy and gravelly soils are identified as GW, GP, GM, GC, SW, SP, SM, and SC; silty and clayey soils as ML, CL, OL, MH, CH, and OH; and highly organic soils as PT. Soils exhibiting engineering properties of two groups can have a dual classification, for example, CL-ML.

The AASHTO system classifies soils according to those properties that affect roadway construction and maintenance. In this system, the fraction of a mineral soil that is less than 3 inches in diameter is classified in one of seven groups from A-1 through A-7 on the basis of particle-size distribution, liquid limit, and plasticity index. Soils in group A-1 are coarse grained and low in content of fines (silt and clay). At the other extreme, soils in group A-7 are fine grained. Highly organic soils are classified in group A-8 on the basis of visual inspection.

If laboratory data are available, the A-1, A-2, and A-7 groups are further classified as A-1-a, A-1-b, A-2-4, A-2-5, A-2-6, A-2-7, A-7-5, or A-7-6. As an additional refinement, the suitability of a soil as subgrade material can be indicated by a group index number. Group index numbers range from 0 for the best subgrade material to 20 or higher for the poorest.

Rock fragments larger than 10 inches in diameter and 3 to 10 inches in diameter are indicated as a percentage of the total soil on a dry-weight basis. The percentages are estimates determined mainly by converting volume percentage in the field to weight percentage.

Percentage (of soil particles) passing designated sieves is the percentage of the soil fraction less than 3 inches in diameter based on an oven-dry weight. The sieves, numbers 4, 10, 40, and 200 (USA Standard Series), have openings of 4.76, 2.00, 0.420, and 0.074 millimeters, respectively. Estimates are based on laboratory tests of soils sampled in the

survey area and in nearby areas and on estimates made in the field.

Liquid limit and *plasticity index* (Atterberg limits) indicate the plasticity characteristics of a soil. The estimates are based on test data from the survey area or from nearby areas and on field examination.

The estimates of particle-size distribution, liquid limit, and plasticity index are generally rounded to the nearest 5 percent. Thus, if the ranges of gradation and Atterberg limits extend a marginal amount (1 or 2 percentage points) across classification boundaries, the classification in the marginal zone is generally omitted in the table.

Physical Properties

The "Physical Properties of the Soils" table shows estimates of some physical characteristics and features that affect soil behavior. These estimates are given for the layers of each soil in the survey area. The estimates are based on field observations and on test data for these and similar soils.

Depth to the upper and lower boundaries of each layer is indicated.

Particle size is the effective diameter of a soil particle as measured by sedimentation, sieving, or micrometric methods. Particle sizes are expressed as classes with specific effective diameter class limits. The broad classes are sand, silt, and clay, ranging from the larger to the smaller.

Clay as a soil separate consists of mineral soil particles that are less than 0.002 millimeter in diameter. In the table, the estimated clay content of each soil layer is given as a percentage, by weight, of the soil material that is less than 2 millimeters in diameter.

The content of sand, silt, and clay affects the physical behavior of a soil. Particle size is important for engineering and agronomic interpretations, for determination of soil hydrologic qualities, and for soil classification.

The amount and kind of clay affect the fertility and physical condition of the soil and the ability of the soil to adsorb cations and to retain moisture. They influence shrink-swell potential, permeability, plasticity, the ease of soil dispersion, and other soil properties. The amount and kind of clay in a soil also affect tillage and earthmoving operations.

Moist bulk density is the weight of soil (oven-dry) per unit volume. Volume is measured when the soil is at field moisture capacity, that is, the moisture content at $1/3$ - or $1/10$ -bar (33kPa or 10kPa) moisture tension. Weight is determined after the soil is dried at 105 degrees C. In the table, the estimated moist bulk

density of each soil horizon is expressed in grams per cubic centimeter of soil material that is less than 2 millimeters in diameter. Bulk density data are used to compute shrink-swell potential, available water capacity, total pore space, and other soil properties. The moist bulk density of a soil indicates the pore space available for water and roots. Depending on soil texture, a bulk density of more than 1.4 can restrict water storage and root penetration. Moist bulk density is influenced by texture, kind of clay, content of organic matter, and soil structure.

Permeability (K_{sat}) refers to the ability of a soil to transmit water or air. The term "permeability," as used in soil surveys, indicates saturated hydraulic conductivity (K_{sat}). The estimates in the table indicate the rate of water movement, in inches per hour, when the soil is saturated. They are based on soil characteristics observed in the field, particularly structure, porosity, and texture. Permeability is considered in the design of soil drainage systems and septic tank absorption fields.

Available water capacity refers to the quantity of water that the soil is capable of storing for use by plants. The capacity for water storage is given in inches of water per inch of soil for each soil layer. The capacity varies, depending on soil properties that affect retention of water. The most important properties are the content of organic matter, soil texture, bulk density, and soil structure. Available water capacity is an important factor in the choice of plants or crops to be grown and in the design and management of irrigation systems. Available water capacity is not an estimate of the quantity of water actually available to plants at any given time.

Linear extensibility refers to the change in length of an unconfined clod as moisture content is decreased from a moist to a dry state. It is an expression of the volume change between the water content of the clod at $1/3$ - or $1/10$ -bar tension (33kPa or 10kPa tension) and oven dryness. The volume change is reported in the table as percent change for the whole soil. Volume change is influenced by the amount and type of clay minerals in the soil.

Linear extensibility is used to determine the shrink-swell potential of soils. The shrink-swell potential is low if the soil has a linear extensibility of less than 3 percent; moderate if 3 to 6 percent; high if 6 to 9 percent; and very high if more than 9 percent. If the linear extensibility is more than 3, shrinking and swelling can cause damage to buildings, roads, and other structures and to plant roots. Special design commonly is needed.

Organic matter is the plant and animal residue in the soil at various stages of decomposition. In the

“Physical Properties of the Soils” table, the estimated content of organic matter is expressed as a percentage, by weight, of the soil material that is less than 2 millimeters in diameter.

The content of organic matter in a soil can be maintained by returning crop residue to the soil. Organic matter has a positive effect on available water capacity, water infiltration, soil organism activity, and tilth. It is a source of nitrogen and other nutrients for crops and soil organisms.

Erosion factors are shown in the table as the K factor (K_w and K_f) and the T factor. Erosion factor K indicates the susceptibility of a soil to sheet and rill erosion by water. Factor K is one of several factors used in the Universal Soil Loss Equation (USLE) and the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE) to predict the average annual rate of soil loss by sheet and rill erosion in tons per acre per year. The estimates are based primarily on percentage of silt, sand, and organic matter and on soil structure and permeability. Values of K range from 0.02 to 0.69. Other factors being equal, the higher the value, the more susceptible the soil is to sheet and rill erosion by water.

Erosion factor K_w indicates the erodibility of the whole soil. The estimates are modified by the presence of rock fragments.

Erosion factor K_f indicates the erodibility of the fine-earth fraction, or the material less than 2 millimeters in size.

Erosion factor T is an estimate of the maximum average annual rate of soil erosion by wind or water that can occur without affecting crop productivity over a sustained period. The rate is in tons per acre per year.

Wind erodibility groups are made up of soils that have similar properties affecting their susceptibility to wind erosion in cultivated areas. The soils assigned to group 1 are the most susceptible to wind erosion, and those assigned to group 8 are the least susceptible. The groups are as follows:

1. Coarse sands, sands, fine sands, and very fine sands.
2. Loamy coarse sands, loamy sands, loamy fine sands, loamy very fine sands, ash material, and sapric soil material.
3. Coarse sandy loams, sandy loams, fine sandy loams, and very fine sandy loams.
- 4L. Calcareous loams, silt loams, clay loams, and silty clay loams.
4. Clays, silty clays, noncalcareous clay loams, and silty clay loams that are more than 35 percent clay.

5. Noncalcareous loams and silt loams that are less than 20 percent clay and sandy clay loams, sandy clays, and hemic soil material.

6. Noncalcareous loams and silt loams that are more than 20 percent clay and noncalcareous clay loams that are less than 35 percent clay.

7. Silts, noncalcareous silty clay loams that are less than 35 percent clay, and fibric soil material.

8. Soils that are not subject to wind erosion because of rock fragments on the surface or because of surface wetness.

Wind erodibility index is a numerical value indicating the susceptibility of soil to wind erosion, or the tons per acre per year that can be expected to be lost to wind erosion. There is a close correlation between wind erosion and the texture of the surface layer, the size and durability of surface clods, rock fragments, organic matter, and a calcareous reaction. Soil moisture and frozen soil layers also influence wind erosion.

Chemical Properties

The “Chemical Properties of the Soils” table shows estimates of some chemical characteristics and features that affect soil behavior. These estimates are given for the layers of each soil in the survey area. The estimates are based on field observations and on test data for these and similar soils.

Depth to the upper and lower boundaries of each layer is indicated.

Cation-exchange capacity is the total amount of extractable bases that can be held by the soil, expressed in terms of milliequivalents per 100 grams of soil at neutrality (pH 7.0) or at some other stated pH value. Soils having a low cation-exchange capacity hold fewer cations and may require more frequent applications of fertilizer than soils having a high cation-exchange capacity. The ability to retain cations reduces the hazard of ground-water pollution.

Effective cation-exchange capacity refers to the sum of extractable bases plus aluminum expressed in terms of milliequivalents per 100 grams of soil. It is determined for soils that have pH of less than 5.5.

Soil reaction is a measure of acidity or alkalinity. The pH of each soil horizon is based on many field tests. For many soils, values have been verified by laboratory analyses. Soil reaction is important in selecting crops and other plants, in evaluating soil amendments for fertility and stabilization, and in determining the risk of corrosion.

Calcium carbonate equivalent is the percent of carbonates, by weight, in the fraction of the soil less

than 2 millimeters in size. The availability of plant nutrients is influenced by the amount of carbonates in the soil. Incorporating nitrogen fertilizer into calcareous soils helps to prevent nitrite accumulation and ammonium-N volatilization.

Gypsum is expressed as a percent, by weight, of hydrated calcium sulfates in the fraction of the soil less than 20 millimeters in size. Gypsum is partially soluble in water. Soils that have a high content of gypsum may collapse if the gypsum is removed by percolating water.

Salinity is a measure of soluble salts in the soil at saturation. It is expressed as the electrical conductivity of the saturation extract, in millimhos per centimeter at 25 degrees C. Estimates are based on field and laboratory measurements at representative sites of nonirrigated soils. The salinity of irrigated soils is affected by the quality of the irrigation water and by the frequency of water application. Hence, the salinity of soils in individual fields can differ greatly from the value given in the table. Salinity affects the suitability of a soil for crop production, the stability of soil if used as construction material, and the potential of the soil to corrode metal and concrete.

Sodium adsorption ratio (SAR) is a measure of the amount of sodium (Na) relative to calcium (Ca) and magnesium (Mg) in the water extract from saturated soil paste. It is the ratio of the Na concentration divided by the square root of one-half of the Ca + Mg concentration. Soils that have SAR values of 13 or more may be characterized by an increased dispersion of organic matter and clay particles, reduced permeability and aeration, and a general degradation of soil structure.

Water Features

The "Water Features" table gives estimates of various water features. The estimates are used in land use planning that involves engineering considerations.

Hydrologic soil groups are based on estimates of runoff potential. Soils are assigned to one of four groups according to the rate of water infiltration when the soils are not protected by vegetation, are thoroughly wet, and receive precipitation from long-duration storms.

The four hydrologic soil groups are:

Group A. Soils having a high infiltration rate (low runoff potential) when thoroughly wet. These consist mainly of deep, well drained to excessively drained sands or gravelly sands. These soils have a high rate of water transmission.

Group B. Soils having a moderate infiltration rate when thoroughly wet. These consist chiefly of moderately deep or deep, moderately well drained or well drained soils that have moderately fine texture to moderately coarse texture. These soils have a moderate rate of water transmission.

Group C. Soils having a slow infiltration rate when thoroughly wet. These consist chiefly of soils having a layer that impedes the downward movement of water or soils of moderately fine texture or fine texture. These soils have a slow rate of water transmission.

Group D. Soils having a very slow infiltration rate (high runoff potential) when thoroughly wet. These consist chiefly of clays that have a high shrink-swell potential, soils that have a high water table, soils that have a claypan or clay layer at or near the surface, and soils that are shallow over nearly impervious material. These soils have a very slow rate of water transmission.

If a soil is assigned to a dual hydrologic group (A/D, B/D, or C/D), the first letter is for drained areas and the second is for undrained areas.

The *months* in the table indicate the portion of the year in which the feature is most likely to be a concern.

Water table refers to a saturated zone in the soil. The table indicates, by month, depth to the top (*upper limit*) and base (*lower limit*) of the saturated zone in most years. Estimates of the upper and lower limits are based mainly on observations of the water table at selected sites and on evidence of a saturated zone, namely grayish colors or mottles (redox features) in the soil. A saturated zone that lasts for less than a month is not considered a water table.

Ponding is standing water in a closed depression. Unless a drainage system is installed, the water is removed only by percolation, transpiration, or evaporation. The table indicates *surface water depth* and the *duration* and *frequency* of ponding. Duration is expressed as *very brief* if less than 2 days, *brief* if 2 to 7 days, *long* if 7 to 30 days, and *very long* if more than 30 days. Frequency is expressed as none, rare, occasional, and frequent. *None* means that ponding is not probable; *rare* that it is unlikely but possible under unusual weather conditions (the chance of ponding is nearly 0 percent to 5 percent in any year); *occasional* that it occurs, on the average, once or less in 2 years (the chance of ponding is 5 to 50 percent in any year); and *frequent* that it occurs, on the average, more than once in 2 years (the chance of ponding is more than 50 percent in any year).

Flooding is the temporary inundation of an area caused by overflowing streams, by runoff from adjacent slopes, or by tides. Water standing for short periods after rainfall or snowmelt is not considered flooding, and water standing in swamps and marshes is considered ponding rather than flooding.

Duration and frequency are estimated. Duration is expressed as *extremely brief* if 0.1 hour to 4 hours, *very brief* if 4 hours to 2 days, *brief* if 2 to 7 days, *long* if 7 to 30 days, and *very long* if more than 30 days. Frequency is expressed as none, very rare, rare, occasional, frequent, and very frequent. *None* means that flooding is not probable; *very rare* that it is very unlikely but possible under extremely unusual weather conditions (the chance of flooding is less than 1 percent in any year); *rare* that it is unlikely but possible under unusual weather conditions (the chance of flooding is 1 to 5 percent in any year); *occasional* that it occurs infrequently under normal weather conditions (the chance of flooding is 5 to 50 percent in any year); *frequent* that it is likely to occur often under normal weather conditions (the chance of flooding is more than 50 percent in any year but is less than 50 percent in all months in any year); and *very frequent* that it is likely to occur very often under normal weather conditions (the chance of flooding is more than 50 percent in all months of any year).

The information is based on evidence in the soil profile, namely thin strata of gravel, sand, silt, or clay deposited by floodwater; irregular decrease in organic matter content with increasing depth; and little or no horizon development.

Also considered is local information about the extent and levels of flooding and the relation of each soil on the landscape to historic floods. Information on the extent of flooding based on soil data is less specific than that provided by detailed engineering surveys that delineate flood-prone areas at specific flood frequency levels.

Soil Features

The “Soil Features” table gives estimates of various soil features. The estimates are used in land use planning that involves engineering considerations.

A *restrictive layer* is a nearly continuous layer that has one or more physical, chemical, or thermal properties that significantly impede the movement of water and air through the soil or that restrict roots or otherwise provide an unfavorable root environment. Examples are bedrock, cemented layers, dense layers, and frozen layers. The table indicates the hardness and thickness of the restrictive layer, both

of which significantly affect the ease of excavation. *Depth to top* is the vertical distance from the soil surface to the upper boundary of the restrictive layer.

Subsidence is the settlement of organic soils or of saturated mineral soils of very low density. Subsidence generally results from either desiccation and shrinkage or oxidation of organic material, or both, following drainage. Subsidence takes place gradually, usually over a period of several years. The table shows the expected initial subsidence, which usually is a result of drainage, and total subsidence, which results from a combination of factors.

Potential for frost action is the likelihood of upward or lateral expansion of the soil caused by the formation of segregated ice lenses (frost heave) and the subsequent collapse of the soil and loss of strength on thawing. Frost action occurs when moisture moves into the freezing zone of the soil. Temperature, texture, density, permeability, content of organic matter, and depth to the water table are the most important factors considered in evaluating the potential for frost action. It is assumed that the soil is not insulated by vegetation or snow and is not artificially drained. Silty and highly structured, clayey soils that have a high water table in winter are the most susceptible to frost action. Well drained, very gravelly, or very sandy soils are the least susceptible. Frost heave and low soil strength during thawing cause damage to pavements and other rigid structures.

Risk of corrosion pertains to potential soil-induced electrochemical or chemical action that corrodes or weakens uncoated steel or concrete. The rate of corrosion of uncoated steel is related to such factors as soil moisture, particle-size distribution, acidity, and electrical conductivity of the soil. The rate of corrosion of concrete is based mainly on the sulfate and sodium content, texture, moisture content, and acidity of the soil. Special site examination and design may be needed if the combination of factors results in a severe hazard of corrosion. The steel or concrete in installations that intersect soil boundaries or soil layers is more susceptible to corrosion than the steel or concrete in installations that are entirely within one kind of soil or within one soil layer.

For uncoated steel, the risk of corrosion, expressed as *low*, *moderate*, or *high*, is based on soil drainage class, total acidity, electrical resistivity near field capacity, and electrical conductivity of the saturation extract.

For concrete, the risk of corrosion also is expressed as *low*, *moderate*, or *high*. It is based on soil texture, acidity, and amount of sulfates in the saturation extract.

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Glossary

Ablation till. Loose, permeable till deposited during the final downwasting of glacial ice. Lenses of crudely sorted sand and gravel are common.

Aeration, soil. The exchange of air in soil with air from the atmosphere. The air in a well-aerated soil is similar to that in the atmosphere; the air in a poorly aerated soil is considerably higher in carbon dioxide and lower in oxygen.

Aggregate, soil. Many fine particles held in a single mass or cluster. Natural soil aggregates, such as granules, blocks, or prisms, are called peds. Clods are aggregates produced by tillage or logging.

Alkali (sodic) soil. (See Sodic (alkali) soil.)

Alluvial fan. A body of alluvium, with overflow of water and debris flow deposits, whose surface forms a segment of a cone that radiates downslope from the point where the stream emerges from a narrow valley onto a less sloping surface. Source uplands range in relief and areal extent from mountains to gullied terrains on hillslopes.

Alluvium. Material, such as sand, silt, or clay, deposited on land by streams.

Alpha,alpha-dipyridyl. A dye that when dissolved in 1N ammonium acetate is used to detect the presence of reduced iron (Fe II) in the soil. A positive reaction indicates a type of redox feature.

Animal-unit-month (AUM). The amount of forage required by one mature cow of approximately 1,000 pounds weight, with or without a calf, for 1 month.

Aquic conditions. Current soil wetness characterized by saturation, reduction, and redox features.

Argillite. Weakly metamorphosed mudstone or shale.

Aspect. The direction in which a slope faces.

Association, soil. A group of soils or miscellaneous areas geographically associated in a characteristic repeating pattern and defined and delineated as a single map unit.

Available water capacity (available moisture capacity). The capacity of soils to hold water available for use by most plants. It is commonly

defined as the difference between the amount of soil water at field moisture capacity and the amount at wilting point. It is commonly expressed as inches of water per inch of soil. The capacity, in inches, in a 60-inch profile or to a limiting layer is expressed as:

Very low	0 to 3.75
Low	3.75 to 5.0
Moderate	5.0 to 7.5
High	more than 7.5

Avalanche chute. The track or path formed by an avalanche.

Backslope. The geomorphic component that forms the steepest inclined surface and principal element of many hillslopes. Backslopes in profile are commonly steep and linear and descend to a footslope. In terms of gradational process, backslopes are erosional forms produced mainly by mass wasting and running water.

Badland. Steep or very steep, commonly nonstony, barren land dissected by many intermittent drainage channels. Badland is most common in semiarid and arid regions where streams are entrenched in soft geologic material. Local relief generally ranges from 25 to 500 feet. Runoff potential is very high, and geologic erosion is active.

Basal area. The area of a cross section of a tree, generally referring to the section at breast height and measured outside the bark. It is a measure of stand density, commonly expressed in square feet.

Basal till. Compact glacial till deposited beneath the ice.

Base saturation. The degree to which material having cation-exchange properties is saturated with exchangeable bases (sum of Ca, Mg, Na, and K), expressed as a percentage of the total cation-exchange capacity.

Base slope. A geomorphic component of hills consisting of the concave to linear (perpendicular to the contour) slope that, regardless of the lateral shape, forms an apron or wedge at the bottom of a hillside dominated by colluvium and

slope-wash sediments (for example, slope alluvium).

Bedding planes. Fine strata, less than 5-millimeters thick, in unconsolidated alluvial, eolian, lacustrine, or marine sediment.

Bedrock. The solid rock that underlies the soil and other unconsolidated material or that is exposed at the surface.

Bedrock-floored plain. An extensive nearly level to gently rolling or moderately sloping area that is underlain by hard bedrock and has a slope of 0 to 8 percent.

Bench terrace. A raised, level or nearly level strip of earth constructed on or nearly on a contour, supported by a barrier of rocks or similar material, and designed to make the soil suitable for tillage and to prevent accelerated erosion.

Blowout. A shallow depression from which all or most of the soil material has been removed by the wind. A blowout has a flat or irregular floor formed by a resistant layer or by an accumulation of cobbles or gravel. In some blowouts, the water table is exposed.

Board foot. A unit of measure of the wood in lumber, logs, or trees. The amount of wood in a board 1 foot wide, 1 foot long, and 1 inch thick before finishing.

Bottom land. The normal flood plain of a stream, subject to flooding.

Boulders. Rock fragments larger than 2 feet (60 centimeters) in diameter.

Bouldery. Refers to a soil with .01 to 0.1 percent of the surface covered with boulders.

Bouldery soil material. Soil that is 15 to 35 percent, by volume, rock fragments that are dominated by fragments larger than 24 inches (60 centimeters) in diameter.

Breaks. The steep and very steep broken land at the border of an upland summit that is dissected by ravines.

Breast height. An average height of 4.5 feet above the ground surface; the point on a tree where diameter measurements are ordinarily taken.

Brush management. Use of mechanical, chemical, or biological methods to reduce or eliminate competition from woody vegetation and thus to allow understory grasses and forbs to recover or to make conditions favorable for reseeding. Brush management increases forage production and thus reduces the hazard of erosion. It can improve the habitat for some species of wildlife.

Cable yarding. A method of moving felled trees to a nearby central area for transport to a processing facility. Most cable yarding systems involve use

of a drum, a pole, and wire cables in an arrangement similar to that of a rod and reel used for fishing. To reduce friction and soil disturbance, felled trees generally are reeled in while one end is lifted or the entire log is suspended.

Calcareous soil. A soil containing enough calcium carbonate (commonly combined with magnesium carbonate) to effervesce visibly when treated with cold, dilute hydrochloric acid.

Caliche. A more or less cemented deposit of calcium carbonate in soils of warm-temperate, subhumid to arid areas. Caliche occurs as soft, thin layers in the soil or as hard, thick beds directly beneath the solum, or it is exposed at the surface by erosion.

California bearing ratio (CBR). The load-supporting capacity of a soil as compared to that of standard crushed limestone, expressed as a ratio. First standardized in California. A soil having a CBR of 16 supports 16 percent of the load that would be supported by standard crushed limestone, per unit area, with the same degree of distortion.

Canopy. The leafy crown of trees or shrubs. (See Crown.)

Capillary water. Water held as a film around soil particles and in tiny spaces between particles. Surface tension is the adhesive force that holds capillary water in the soil.

Cation. An ion carrying a positive charge of electricity. The common soil cations are calcium, potassium, magnesium, sodium, and hydrogen.

Cation-exchange capacity. The total amount of exchangeable cations that can be held by the soil, expressed in terms of milliequivalents per 100 grams of soil at neutrality (pH 7.0) or at some other stated pH value. The term, as applied to soils, is synonymous with base-exchange capacity but is more precise in meaning.

Channeled. Refers to a drainage area in which natural meandering or repeated branching and convergence of a streambed have created deeply incised cuts, either active or abandoned, in alluvial material.

Channery soil material. A soil that is, by volume, more than 15 percent thin, flat fragments of sandstone, shale, slate, limestone, or schist as much as 6 inches along the longest axis. A single piece is called a channer.

Chemical treatment. Control of unwanted vegetation through the use of chemicals.

Chiseling. Tillage with an implement having one or more soil-penetrating points that shatter or loosen hard, compacted layers to a depth below normal plow depth.

- Cirque.** A semicircular, concave, bowl-like area that has steep faces primarily resulting from erosive activity of a mountain glacier.
- Clay.** As a soil separate, the mineral soil particles less than 0.002 millimeters in diameter. As a soil textural class, soil material that is 40 percent or more clay, less than 45 percent sand, and less than 40 percent silt.
- Clayey soil.** Silty clay, sandy clay, or clay.
- Clay film.** A thin coating of oriented clay on the surface of a soil aggregate or lining pores or root channels. Synonyms: clay coating, clay skin.
- Claypan.** A slowly permeable soil horizon that contains much more clay than the horizons above it. A claypan is commonly hard when dry and plastic or stiff when wet.
- Clearcut.** A method of forest harvesting that removes the entire stand of trees in one cutting. Reproduction is achieved artificially or by natural seeding from the adjacent stands.
- Climax plant community.** The stabilized plant community on a particular site. The plant cover reproduces itself and does not change so long as the environment remains the same.
- Closed depression.** A low area completely surrounded by higher ground and having no natural outlet.
- Coarse textured soil.** Sand or loamy sand.
- Cobble (or cobblestone).** A rounded or partly rounded fragment of rock 3 to 10 inches (7.6 to 25 centimeters) in diameter.
- Cobbly soil material.** Material that has 15 to 35 percent, by volume, rounded or partially rounded rock fragments 3 to 10 inches (7.6 to 25 centimeters) in diameter. Very cobbly soil material has 35 to 60 percent of these rock fragments, and extremely cobbly soil material has more than 60 percent.
- Codominant trees.** Trees whose crowns form the general level of the forest canopy and that receive full light from above but comparatively little from the sides.
- COLE (coefficient of linear extensibility).** (See Linear extensibility.)
- Colluvium.** Soil material or rock fragments, or both, moved by creep, slide, or local wash and deposited at the base of steep slopes.
- Commercial forest.** Forestland capable of producing 20 cubic feet or more per acre per year at the culmination of mean annual increment.
- Complex slope.** Irregular or variable slope. Planning or establishing terraces, diversions, and other water-control structures on a complex slope is difficult.
- Complex, soil.** A map unit of two or more kinds of soil or miscellaneous areas in such an intricate pattern or so small in area that it is not practical to map them separately at the selected scale of mapping. The pattern and proportion of the soils or miscellaneous areas are somewhat similar in all areas.
- Concretions.** Grains, pellets, or nodules of various sizes, shapes, and colors consisting of concentrated compounds or cemented soil grains. The composition of most concretions is unlike that of the surrounding soil. Calcium carbonate and iron oxide are common compounds in concretions.
- Conglomerate.** A coarse-grained, clastic rock composed of rounded or subangular rock fragments more than 2 millimeters in diameter. It commonly has a matrix of sand and finer-textured material. Conglomerate is the consolidated equivalent of gravel.
- Conservation cropping system.** Growing crops in combination with needed cultural and management practices. In a good conservation cropping system, the soil-improving crops and practices more than offset the effects of the soil-depleting crops and practices. Cropping systems are needed on all tilled soils. Soil-improving practices in a conservation cropping system include the use of rotations that contain grasses and legumes and the return of crop residue to the soil. Other practices include the use of green manure crops of grasses and legumes, proper tillage, adequate fertilization, and weed and pest control.
- Conservation tillage.** Any tillage and planting system in which a cover of crop residue is maintained on at least 30 percent of the soil surface after planting in order to reduce the hazard of water erosion. In areas where soil blowing is the primary concern, a system that maintains a cover of at least 1,000 pounds of flat residue of small grain or the equivalent during the critical erosion period.
- Consistence, soil.** Refers to the degree of cohesion and adhesion of soil material and its resistance to deformation when ruptured. Consistence includes resistance of soil material to rupture and to penetration; plasticity, toughness, and stickiness of puddled soil material; and the manner in which the soil material behaves when subject to compression. Terms describing consistence are defined in the "Soil Survey Manual" (Soil Survey Division Staff, 1993).

- Consolidated sandstone.** Sandstone that disperses within a few hours when fragments are placed in water. The fragments are extremely hard or very hard when dry, are not easily crushed, and cannot be textured by the usual field method.
- Consolidated shale.** Shale that disperses within a few hours when fragments are placed in water. The fragments are extremely hard or very hard when dry and are not easily crushed.
- Contour stripcropping (or contour farming).** Growing crops in strips that follow the contour. Strips of grass or close-growing crops are alternated with strips of clean-tilled crops or summer fallow.
- Control section.** The part of the soil on which classification is based. The thickness varies among different kinds of soil, but for many it is that part of the soil profile between depths of 10 inches and 40 or 80 inches.
- Coprogenous earth (sedimentary peat).** Fecal material deposited in water by aquatic organisms.
- Corrosion.** Soil-induced electrochemical or chemical action that dissolves or weakens concrete or uncoated steel.
- Cover crop.** A close-growing crop grown primarily to improve and protect the soil between periods of regular crop production, or a crop grown between trees and vines in orchards and vineyards.
- Crop residue management.** Returning crop residue to the soil, which helps to maintain soil structure, organic matter content, and fertility and helps to control erosion.
- Cropping system.** Growing crops according to a planned system of rotation and management practices.
- Cross-slope farming.** Deliberately conducting farming operations on sloping farmland in such a way that tillage is across the general slope.
- Crown.** The upper part of a tree or shrub, including the living branches and their foliage.
- Culmination of the mean annual increment (CMAI).** The average annual increase per acre in the volume of a stand. Computed by dividing the total volume of the stand by its age. As the stand increases in age, the mean annual increment continues to increase until mortality begins to reduce the rate of increase. The point where the stand reaches its maximum annual rate of growth is called the culmination of the mean annual increment.
- Decreasers.** The most heavily grazed climax range plants. Because they are the most palatable, they are the first to be destroyed by overgrazing.
- Deep soil.** A soil that is 40 to 60 inches deep over bedrock or to other material that restricts the penetration of plant roots.
- Deferred grazing.** Postponing grazing or resting grazing land for a prescribed period.
- Dense layer (in tables).** A very firm, massive layer that has a bulk density of more than 1.8 grams per cubic centimeter. Such a layer affects the ease of digging and can affect filling and compacting.
- Depth, soil.** Generally, the thickness of the soil over bedrock. Very deep soils are more than 60 inches deep over bedrock; deep soils, 40 to 60 inches; moderately deep, 20 to 40 inches; shallow, 10 to 20 inches; and very shallow, less than 10 inches.
- Depth to rock (in tables).** Bedrock is too near the surface for the specified use.
- Dip slope.** A slope of the land surface, roughly determined by and approximately conforming to the dip of the underlying bedrock.
- Diversion (or diversion terrace).** A ridge of earth, generally a terrace, built to protect downslope areas by diverting runoff from its natural course.
- Divided-slope farming.** A form of field stripcropping in which crops are grown in a systematic arrangement of two strips, or bands, across the slope to reduce the hazard of water erosion. One strip is in a close-growing crop that provides protection from erosion, and the other strip is in a crop that provides less protection from erosion. This practice is used where slopes are not long enough to permit a full stripcropping pattern to be used.
- Dominant trees.** Trees whose crowns form the general level of the forest canopy and that receive full light from above and from the sides.
- Drainage class (natural).** Refers to the frequency and duration of periods of saturation or partial saturation during soil formation, as opposed to altered drainage, which is commonly the result of artificial drainage or irrigation but may be caused by the sudden deepening of channels or the blocking of drainage outlets. Seven classes of natural soil drainage are recognized:
Excessively drained.—These soils have very high and high hydraulic conductivity and a low water-holding capacity. They are not suited to crop production unless irrigated.
Somewhat excessively drained.—These soils have high hydraulic conductivity and a low water-holding capacity. Without irrigation, only a narrow range of crops can be grown, and yields are low.
Well drained.—These soils have an intermediate water-holding capacity. They retain optimum

amounts of moisture, but they are not wet close enough to the surface or long enough during the growing season to adversely affect yields.

Moderately well drained.—These soils are wet close enough to the surface or long enough that planting or harvesting operations or yields of some field crops are adversely affected unless a drainage system is installed. Moderately well-drained soils commonly have a layer with low hydraulic conductivity, a wet layer relatively high in the profile, additions of water by seepage, or some combination of these.

Somewhat poorly drained.—These soils are wet close enough to the surface or long enough that planting or harvesting operations or crop growth is markedly restricted unless a drainage system is installed. Somewhat poorly drained soils commonly have a layer with low hydraulic conductivity, a wet layer high in the profile, additions of water through seepage, or a combination of these.

Poorly drained.—These soils commonly are so wet, at or near the surface, during a considerable part of the year that field crops cannot be grown under natural conditions. Poorly drained conditions are caused by a saturated zone, a layer with low hydraulic conductivity, seepage, or a combination of these.

Very poorly drained.—These soils are wet to the surface most of the time. The wetness prevents the growth of important crops (except rice) unless a drainage system is installed.

Drainage, surface. Runoff, or surface flow of water, from an area.

Drainageway. An area of ground at a lower elevation than the surrounding ground and in which water collects and is drained to a closed depression or lake or to a drainageway at a lower elevation. A drainageway may or may not have distinctly incised channels at its upper reaches or throughout its course.

Drumlin. A low, smooth, elongated oval hill, mound, or ridge of compact glacial till. The longer axis is parallel to the path of the glacier and commonly has a blunt nose pointing in the direction from which the ice approached.

Duff. A generally firm organic layer on the surface of mineral soils. It consists of fallen plant material that is in the process of decomposition and includes everything from the litter on the surface to underlying pure humus.

Dune. A mound, ridge, or hill of loose, windblown granular material (generally sand), either bare or covered with vegetation.

Ecological site. An area where climate, soil, and relief are sufficiently uniform to produce a distinct natural plant community. An ecological site is the product of all the environmental factors responsible for its development. It is typified by an association of species that differ from those on other ecological sites in kind and/or proportion of species or in total production.

Eluviation. The movement of material in true solution or colloidal suspension from one place to another within the soil. Soil horizons that have lost material through eluviation are eluvial; those that have received material are illuvial.

Endosaturation. A type of saturation of the soil in which all horizons between the upper boundary of saturation and a depth of 2 meters are saturated.

Eolian soil material. Earthy parent material accumulated through wind action; commonly refers to sandy material in dunes or to loess in blankets on the surface.

Ephemeral stream. A stream, or reach of a stream, that flows only in direct response to precipitation. It receives no long-continued supply from melting snow or other source, and its channel is above the water table at all times.

Episaturation. A type of saturation indicating a perched water table in a soil in which saturated layers are underlain by one or more unsaturated layers within 2 meters of the surface.

Erosion. The wearing away of the land surface by water, wind, ice, or other geologic agents and by such processes as gravitational creep.

Erosion (geologic). Erosion caused by geologic processes acting over long geologic periods and resulting in the wearing away of mountains and the building up of such landscape features as flood plains and coastal plains. Synonym: natural erosion.

Erosion (accelerated). Erosion much more rapid than geologic erosion, mainly as a result of human or animal activities or of a catastrophe in nature, such as fire, that exposes the surface.

Erosion pavement. A layer of gravel or stones that remains on the surface after fine particles are removed by sheet or rill erosion.

Escarpment. A relatively continuous and steep slope or cliff breaking the general continuity of more gently sloping land surfaces and resulting from erosion or faulting. Synonym: scarp.

Esker. A long, narrow, sinuous, steep-sided ridge composed of irregularly stratified sand and gravel that were deposited by a subsurface stream flowing between ice walls or through ice tunnels

of a retreating glacier and that were left behind when the ice melted. Eskers range from less than a mile to more than 100 miles in length and from 10 to 100 feet in height.

Even aged. Refers to a stand of trees in which only small differences in age occur between individual trees. A range of 20 years is allowed.

Extrusive rock. Igneous rock derived from deep-seated molten matter (magma) emplaced on the earth's surface.

Fallow. Cropland left idle in order to restore productivity through accumulation of moisture. Summer fallow is common in regions of limited rainfall where cereal grain is grown. The soil is tilled for at least one growing season for weed control and decomposition of plant residue.

Fertility, soil. The quality that enables a soil to provide plant nutrients, in adequate amounts and in proper balance, for the growth of specified plants when light, moisture, temperature, tilth, and other growth factors are favorable.

Fibric soil material (peat). The least decomposed of all organic soil material. Peat contains a large amount of well-preserved fiber that is readily identifiable according to botanical origin. Peat has the lowest bulk density and the highest water content at saturation of all organic soil material.

Field moisture capacity. The moisture content of a soil, expressed as a percentage of the oven-dry weight, after the gravitational, or free, water has drained away; the field moisture content 2 or 3 days after a soaking rain; also called *normal field capacity*, *normal moisture capacity*, or *capillary capacity*.

Fine textured soil. Sandy clay, silty clay, or clay.

Firebreak. Area cleared of flammable material to stop or help control creeping or running fires. It also serves as a line from which to work and to facilitate the movement of firefighters and equipment. Designated roads also serve as firebreaks.

First bottom. The normal flood plain of a stream, subject to frequent or occasional flooding.

Flaggy soil material. Material that has, by volume, 15 to 35 percent flagstones. Very flaggy soil material has 35 to 60 percent flagstones, and extremely flaggy soil material has more than 60 percent flagstones.

Flagstone. A thin fragment of sandstone, limestone, slate, shale, or (rarely) schist 6 to 15 inches (15 to 38 centimeters) long.

Flood plain. A nearly level alluvial plain that borders a stream and is subject to flooding unless protected artificially.

Fluvial. Of or pertaining to rivers; produced by river action, as a fluvial plain.

Foothill. A steeply sloping upland that has relief of as much as 1,000 feet (300 meters) and fringes a mountain range or high-plateau escarpment.

Footslope. The geomorphic component that forms the inner, gently inclined surface at the base of a hillslope. The surface profile is dominantly concave. In terms of gradational processes, a footslope is a transitional zone between an upslope site of erosion (backslope) and a downslope site of deposition (toeslope).

Forb. Any herbaceous plant not a grass or a sedge.

Forest cover. All trees and other woody plants (underbrush) covering the ground in a forest.

Forest type. A stand of trees similar in composition and development because of given physical and biological factors by which it may be differentiated from other stands.

Fragipan. A loamy, brittle subsurface horizon low in porosity and content of organic matter and low or moderate in clay but high in silt or very fine sand. A fragipan appears cemented and restricts roots. When dry, it is hard or very hard and has a higher bulk density than the horizon or horizons above. When moist, it tends to rupture suddenly under pressure rather than to deform slowly.

Frost action (in tables). Freezing and thawing of soil moisture. Frost action can damage roads, buildings and other structures, and plant roots.

Genesis, soil. The mode of origin of the soil. Refers especially to the processes or soil-forming factors responsible for the formation of the solum, or true soil, from the unconsolidated parent material.

Giant ripple mark. The undulating surface sculpture produced in noncoherent granular materials by currents of water and by the agitation of water in wave action during the draining of large glacial lakes, such as Glacial Lake Missoula.

Glacial drift. Pulverized and other rock material transported by glacial ice and then deposited. Also, the sorted and unsorted material deposited by streams flowing from glaciers.

Glacial outwash. Gravel, sand, and silt, commonly stratified, deposited by glacial meltwater.

Glacial till. Unsorted, nonstratified glacial drift consisting of clay, silt, sand, and boulders transported and deposited by glacial ice.

Glaciated uplands. Land areas that were previously covered by continental or alpine glaciers and that are at a higher elevation than the flood plain.

Glaciofluvial deposits. Material moved by glaciers and subsequently sorted and deposited by streams flowing from the melting ice. The

deposits are stratified and occur as kames, eskers, deltas, and outwash plains.

Glaciolacustrine deposits. Material ranging from fine clay to sand derived from glaciers and deposited in glacial lakes mainly by glacial meltwater. Many deposits are interbedded or laminated.

Gleyed soil. Soil that formed under poor drainage, resulting in the reduction of iron and other elements in the profile and in gray colors.

Grassed waterway. A natural or constructed waterway, typically broad and shallow, seeded to grass as protection against erosion. Conducts surface water away from cropland.

Gravel. Rounded or angular fragments of rock as much as 3 inches (2 millimeters to 7.6 centimeters) in diameter. An individual piece is a pebble.

Gravelly soil material. Soil that is 15 to 35 percent, by volume, rounded or angular rock fragments up to 3 inches (7.6 centimeters) in diameter. Very gravelly soil is 35 to 60 percent gravel, and extremely gravelly soil is more than 60 percent gravel by volume.

Grazeable forestland. Land capable of sustaining livestock grazing by producing forage of sufficient quantity during one or more stages of secondary forest succession.

Green manure crop (agronomy). A soil-improving crop grown to be plowed under in an early stage of maturity or soon after maturity.

Ground water. Water filling all the unblocked pores of the material below the water table.

Gully. A miniature valley with steep sides cut by running water and through which water ordinarily runs only after rainfall. The distinction between a gully and a rill is one of depth. A gully generally is an obstacle to farm machinery and is too deep to be obliterated by ordinary tillage; a rill is of lesser depth and can be smoothed over by ordinary tillage.

Gypsum. A mineral consisting of hydrous calcium sulfate.

Habitat type. An aggregation of all land areas capable of producing similar climax plant communities.

Hard bedrock. Bedrock that cannot be excavated except by blasting or by the use of special equipment that is not commonly used in construction.

Hardpan. A hardened or cemented soil horizon, or layer. The soil material is sandy, loamy, or clayey and is cemented by iron oxide, silica, calcium carbonate, or other substance.

Head out. To form a flower head.

Head slope. A geomorphic component of hills consisting of a laterally concave area of a hillside, especially at the head of a drainageway. The overland waterflow is converging.

Heavy metal. Inorganic substances that are solid at ordinary temperatures and are not soluble in water. They form oxides and hydroxides that are basic. Examples are copper, iron, cadmium, zinc, manganese, lead, and arsenic.

Hemic soil material (mucky peat). Organic soil material intermediate in degree of decomposition between the less decomposed fibric material and the more decomposed sapric material.

High-residue crops. Such crops as small grain and corn used for grain. If properly managed, residue from these crops can be used to control erosion until the next crop in the rotation is established. These crops return large amounts of organic matter to the soil.

Hill. A natural elevation of the land surface, rising as much as 1,000 feet above surrounding lowlands, commonly of limited summit area and having a well-defined outline; hillsides generally have slopes of more than 8 percent. The distinction between a hill and a mountain is arbitrary and is dependent on local usage.

Horizon, soil. A layer of soil, approximately parallel to the surface, having distinct characteristics produced by soil-forming processes. In the identification of soil horizons, an uppercase letter represents the major horizons. Numbers or lowercase letters that follow represent subdivisions of the major horizons. An explanation of the subdivisions is given in the "Soil Survey Manual" (Soil Survey Division Staff, 1993). The major horizons of mineral soil are as follows:

O horizon.—An organic layer of fresh and decaying plant residue.

A horizon.—The mineral horizon at or near the surface in which an accumulation of humified organic matter is mixed with the mineral material. Also, a plowed surface horizon, most of which was originally part of a B horizon.

E horizon.—The mineral horizon in which the main feature is loss of silicate clay, iron, aluminum, or some combination of these.

B horizon.—The mineral horizon below an A or E horizon. The B horizon is in part a layer of transition from the overlying A to the underlying C horizon. The B horizon also has distinctive characteristics, such as (1) accumulation of clay, sesquioxides, humus, or a combination of these;

(2) prismatic or blocky structure; (3) redder or browner colors than those in the A horizon; or (4) a combination of these.

C horizon.—The mineral horizon or layer, excluding indurated bedrock, that is little affected by soil-forming processes and does not have the properties typical of the overlying soil material. The material of a C horizon may be either like or unlike that in which the solum formed. If the material is known to differ from that in the solum, an Arabic numeral, commonly a 2, precedes the letter C.

Cr horizon.—Sedimentary beds of consolidated sandstone and semiconsolidated and consolidated shale. Generally, roots can penetrate this horizon only along fracture planes.

R layer.—Consolidated bedrock beneath the soil. The bedrock commonly underlies a C horizon, but it can be directly below an A or a B horizon.

Hornfels. A fine-grained metamorphic rock composed of quartz, feldspar, mica, and other minerals, formed by the action of intrusive rock upon sedimentary rock, especially shale.

Humus. The well decomposed, more or less stable part of the organic matter in mineral soils.

Hydrologic soil groups. Refers to soils grouped according to their runoff-producing characteristics. The chief consideration is the inherent capacity of soil bare of vegetation to permit infiltration. The slope and the kind of plant cover are not considered but are separate factors in predicting runoff. Soils are assigned to four groups. In group A are soils having a high infiltration rate when thoroughly wet and having a low runoff potential. They are mainly deep, well drained, and sandy or gravelly. In group D, at the other extreme, are soils having a very slow infiltration rate and thus a high runoff potential. They have a claypan or clay layer at or near the surface, have a permanent high water table, or are shallow over nearly impervious bedrock or other material. A soil is assigned to two hydrologic groups if part of the acreage is artificially drained and part is undrained.

Igneous rock. Rock formed by solidification from a molten or partially molten state. Major varieties include plutonic and volcanic rock. Examples are andesite, basalt, and granite.

Illuviation. The movement of soil material from one horizon to another in the soil profile. Generally, material is removed from an upper horizon and deposited in a lower horizon.

Impervious soil. A soil through which water, air, or roots penetrate slowly or not at all. No soil is

absolutely impervious to air and water all the time.

Increasesers. Species in the climax vegetation that increase in amount as the more desirable plants are reduced by close grazing. Increasesers commonly are the shorter plants and the less palatable to livestock.

Infiltration. The downward entry of water into the immediate surface of soil or other material, as contrasted with percolation, which is movement of water through soil layers or material.

Infiltration capacity. The maximum rate at which water can infiltrate into a soil under a given set of conditions.

Infiltration rate. The rate at which water penetrates the surface of the soil at any given instant, usually expressed in inches per hour. The rate can be limited by the infiltration capacity of the soil or the rate at which water is applied at the surface.

Intake rate. The average rate of water entering the soil under irrigation. Most soils have a fast initial rate; the rate decreases with application time. Therefore, intake rate for design purposes is not a constant but is a variable depending on the net irrigation application. The rate of water intake, in inches per hour, is expressed as follows:

Less than 0.2	very low
0.2 to 0.4	low
0.4 to 0.75	moderately low
0.75 to 1.25	moderate
1.25 to 1.75	moderately high
1.75 to 2.5	high
More than 2.5	very high

Interfluv. An elevated area between two drainageways that sheds water to those drainageways.

Intermittent stream. A stream, or reach of a stream, that flows for prolonged periods only when it receives ground-water discharge or long, continued contributions from melting snow or other surface and shallow subsurface sources.

Invaders. On range, plants that encroach into an area and grow after the climax vegetation has been reduced by grazing. Generally, plants invade following disturbance of the surface.

Irrigation. Application of water to soils to assist in production of crops. Methods of irrigation are:

Basin.—Water is applied rapidly to nearly level plains surrounded by levees or dikes.

Border.—Water is applied at the upper end of a strip in which the lateral flow of water is controlled

by small earth ridges called border dikes, or borders.

Controlled flooding.—Water is released at intervals from closely spaced field ditches and distributed uniformly over the field.

Corrugation.—Water is applied to small, closely spaced furrows or ditches in fields of close-growing crops or in orchards so that it flows in only one direction.

Drip (or trickle).—Water is applied slowly and under low pressure to the surface of the soil or into the soil through such applicators as emitters, porous tubing, or perforated pipe.

Furrow.—Water is applied in small ditches made by cultivation implements. Furrows are used for tree and row crops.

Sprinkler.—Water is sprayed over the soil surface through pipes or nozzles from a pressure system.

Subirrigation.—Water is applied in open ditches or tile lines until the water table is raised enough to wet the soil.

Wild flooding.—Water, released at high points, is allowed to flow onto an area without controlled distribution.

K_{sat}, Saturated hydraulic conductivity. (See Permeability.)

Kame. A moundlike hill of glacial drift, composed chiefly of stratified sand and gravel.

Kame terrace. A terracelike ridge consisting of stratified sand and gravel that were deposited by a meltwater stream flowing between a melting glacier and a higher valley wall or lateral moraine and that remained after the disappearance of the ice. It is commonly pitted with kettles and has an irregular ice-contact slope.

Lacustrine deposit. Material deposited in lake water and exposed when the water level is lowered or the elevation of the land is raised.

Lake plain. A surface marking the floor of an extinct lake, filled in by well-sorted, stratified sediments.

Landslide. The rapid downhill movement of a mass of soil and loose rock, generally when wet or saturated. The speed and distance of movement, as well as the amount of soil and rock material, vary greatly.

Large stones (in tables). Rock fragments 3 inches (7.6 centimeters) or more across. Large stones adversely affect the specified use of the soil.

Lateral moraine. A ridgelike moraine carried on and deposited at the side margin of a valley glacier. It is composed chiefly of rock fragments derived from the valley walls by glacial abrasion and plucking or by mass wasting.

Leaching. The removal of soluble material from soil or other material by percolating water.

Linear extensibility. Refers to the change in length of an unconfined clod as moisture content is decreased from a moist to a dry state. Linear extensibility is used to determine the shrink-swell potential of soils. It is an expression of the volume change between the water content of the clod at $1/3$ - or $1/10$ -bar tension (33kPa or 10kPa tension) and oven dryness. Volume change is influenced by the amount and type of clay minerals in the soil. The volume change is the percent change for the whole soil. If it is expressed as a fraction, the resulting value is COLE, coefficient of linear extensibility.

Liquid limit. The moisture content at which the soil passes from a plastic to a liquid state.

Loam. Soil material that is 7 to 27 percent clay particles, 28 to 50 percent silt particles, and less than 52 percent sand particles.

Loamy soil. Coarse sandy loam, sandy loam, fine sandy loam, very fine sandy loam, loam, silt loam, silt, clay loam, sandy clay loam, or silty clay loam.

Loess. Fine grained material, dominantly of silt-sized particles, deposited by wind.

Low-residue crops. Such crops as corn used for silage, peas, beans, and potatoes. Residue from these crops is not adequate to control erosion until the next crop in the rotation is established. These crops return little organic matter to the soil.

Low strength. The soil is not strong enough to support loads.

Marl. An earthy, unconsolidated deposit consisting chiefly of calcium carbonate mixed with clay in approximately equal amounts.

Masses. Concentrations of substances in the soil matrix that do not have a clearly defined boundary with the surrounding soil material and cannot be removed as a discrete unit. Common compounds making up masses are calcium carbonate, gypsum or other soluble salts, iron oxide, and manganese oxide. Masses consisting of iron oxide or manganese oxide generally are considered a type of redox concentration.

Mean annual increment (MAI). The average annual increase in volume of a tree during its entire life.

Mechanical treatment. Use of mechanical equipment for seeding, brush management, and other management practices.

Medium textured soil. Very fine sandy loam, loam, silt loam, or silt.

Merchantable trees. Trees that are of sufficient size to be economically processed into wood products.

Metamorphic rock. Rock of any origin altered in mineralogical composition, chemical composition, or structure by heat, pressure, and movement. Nearly all such rocks are crystalline.

Microhigh. An area that is 2 to 12 inches higher than the adjacent microlow.

Microlow. An area that is 2 to 12 inches lower than the adjacent microhigh.

Mineral soil. Soil that is mainly mineral material and low in organic material. Its bulk density is more than that of organic soil.

Minimum tillage. Only the tillage essential to crop production and prevention of soil damage.

Miscellaneous area. An area that has little or no natural soil and supports little or no vegetation.

Miscellaneous water. A sewage lagoon, an industrial waste pit, a fish hatchery, or a similar water area.

Moderately coarse textured soil. Coarse sandy loam, sandy loam, or fine sandy loam.

Moderately deep soil. A soil that is 20 to 40 inches deep over bedrock or to other material that restricts the penetration of plant roots.

Moderately fine textured soil. Clay loam, sandy clay loam, or silty clay loam.

Mollic epipedon. A thick, dark, humus-rich surface horizon (or horizons) that has high base saturation and pedogenic soil structure. It may include the upper part of the subsoil.

Moraine. An accumulation of glacial drift in a topographic landform of its own, resulting chiefly from the direct action of glacial ice. Some types are lateral, recessional, and terminal.

Morphology, soil. The physical makeup of the soil, including the texture, structure, porosity, consistence, color, and other physical, mineral, and biological properties of the various horizons, and the thickness and arrangement of those horizons in the soil profile.

Mottling, soil. Areas of color that differ from the matrix color. These colors are commonly attributes retained from the geologic parent material. (See Redox features for indications of poor aeration and impeded drainage.)

Mountain. A natural elevation of the land surface, rising more than 1,000 feet above surrounding lowlands, commonly of restricted summit area (relative to a plateau) and generally having steep sides. A mountain can occur as a single, isolated mass or in a group forming a chain or range.

Muck. Dark, finely divided, well-decomposed organic soil material. (See Sapric soil material.)

Mudstone. Sedimentary rock formed by induration of silt and clay in approximately equal amounts.

Munsell notation. A designation of color by degrees of three simple variables—hue, value, and chroma. For example, a notation of 10YR 6/4 is a color with hue of 10YR, value of 6, and chroma of 4.

Naturalized pasture. Forestland that is used primarily for the production of forage for grazing by livestock rather than for the production of wood products. Overstory trees are removed or managed to promote the native and introduced understory vegetation occurring on the site. This vegetation is managed for its forage value through the use of grazing management principles.

Neutral soil. A soil having a pH value of 6.6 to 7.3. (See Reaction, soil.)

Nose slope. A geomorphic component of hills consisting of the projecting end (laterally convex area) of a hillside. The overland waterflow is predominantly divergent.

Nutrient, plant. Any element taken in by a plant essential to its growth. Plant nutrients are mainly nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, sulfur, iron, manganese, copper, boron, and zinc obtained from the soil and carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen obtained from the air and water.

Observed rooting depth. Depth to which roots have been observed to penetrate.

Organic matter. Plant and animal residue in the soil in various stages of decomposition. The content of organic matter in the surface layer is described as follows:

Very low	less than 0.5 percent
Low	0.5 to 1.0 percent
Moderately low	1.0 to 2.0 percent
Moderate	2.0 to 4.0 percent
High	4.0 to 8.0 percent
Very high	more than 8.0 percent

Outwash plain. An extensive area of glaciofluvial material that was deposited by meltwater streams.

Overstory. The trees in a forest that form the upper crown cover.

Oxbow. The horseshoe-shaped channel of a former meander, remaining after the stream formed a cutoff across a narrow meander neck.

Pan. A compact, dense layer in a soil that impedes the movement of water and the growth of roots. For example, *hardpan*, *fragipan*, *claypan*, *plowpan*, and *traffic pan*.

Parent material. The unconsolidated organic and mineral material in which soil forms.

Peat. Unconsolidated material, largely undecomposed organic matter, that has accumulated under excess moisture. (See Fibric soil material.)

Ped. An individual natural soil aggregate, such as a granule, a prism, or a block.

Pedon. The smallest volume that can be called “a soil.” A pedon is three dimensional and large enough to permit study of all horizons. Its area ranges from about 10 to 100 square feet (1 square meter to 10 square meters), depending on the variability of the soil.

Percolation. The movement of water through the soil.

Permeability. The quality of the soil that enables water or air to move downward through the profile.

Terms describing permeability are:

Very slow	less than 0.06 inch
Slow	0.06 to 0.2 inch
Moderately slow	0.2 to 0.6 inch
Moderate	0.6 to 2.0 inches
Moderately rapid	2.0 to 6.0 inches
Rapid	6.0 to 20 inches
Very rapid	more than 20 inches

pH value. A numerical designation of acidity and alkalinity in soil. (See Reaction, soil.)

Phase, soil. A subdivision of a soil series based on features that affect its use and management, such as slope, stoniness, and flooding.

Plastic limit. The moisture content at which a soil changes from semisolid to plastic.

Plasticity index. The numerical difference between the liquid limit and the plastic limit. The range of moisture content within which the soil remains plastic.

Playa. The generally dry and nearly level lake plain that occupies the lowest parts of closed depressional areas, such as those on intermontane basin floors. Temporary flooding occurs primarily in response to precipitation and runoff.

Plowpan. A compacted layer formed in the soil directly below the plowed layer.

Ponding. Standing water on soils in closed depressions. Unless the soils are artificially

drained, the water can be removed only by percolation or evapotranspiration.

Poorly graded. Refers to a coarse-grained soil or soil material consisting mainly of particles of nearly the same size. Because there is little difference in size of the particles, density can be increased only slightly by compaction.

Potential natural community (PNC). The biotic community that would become established on an ecological site if all successional sequences were completed without interferences by man under the present environmental conditions. Natural disturbances are inherent in its development. The PNC may include acclimatized or naturalized nonnative species.

Potential rooting depth (effective rooting depth).

Depth to which roots could penetrate if the content of moisture in the soil were adequate. The soil has no properties restricting the penetration of roots to this depth.

Prescribed burning. The application of fire to land under such conditions of weather, soil moisture, and time of day as presumably will result in the intensity of heat and spread required to accomplish specific forest management, wildlife, grazing, or fire hazard reduction purposes.

Productivity, soil. The capability of a soil for producing a specified plant or sequence of plants under specific management.

Profile, soil. A vertical section of the soil extending through all its horizons and into the parent material.

Proper grazing use. Grazing at an intensity that maintains enough cover to protect the soil and maintain or improve the quantity and quality of the desirable vegetation. This practice increases the vigor and reproduction capacity of the key plants and promotes the accumulation of litter and mulch necessary to conserve soil and water.

Quartzite, metamorphic. Rock consisting mainly of quartz that formed through recrystallization of quartz-rich sandstone or chert.

Quartzite, sedimentary. Very hard but unmetamorphosed sandstone consisting chiefly of quartz grains.

Range condition. The present composition of the plant community on a range site in relation to the potential natural plant community for that site. (See Similarity index.)

Range site. (See Ecological site.)

Rangeland. Land on which the potential natural vegetation is predominantly grasses, grasslike plants, forbs, or shrubs suitable for grazing or

browsing. It includes natural grasslands, savannas, many wetlands, some deserts, tundras, and areas that support certain forb and shrub communities.

Reaction, soil. A measure of acidity or alkalinity of a soil, expressed in pH values. A soil that tests to pH 7.0 is described as precisely neutral in reaction because it is neither acid nor alkaline. The degrees of acidity or alkalinity, expressed as pH values, are:

Ultra acid	less than 3.5
Extremely acid	3.5 to 4.4
Very strongly acid	4.5 to 5.0
Strongly acid	5.1 to 5.5
Moderately acid	5.6 to 6.0
Slightly acid	6.1 to 6.5
Neutral	6.6 to 7.3
Slightly alkaline	7.4 to 7.8
Moderately alkaline	7.9 to 8.4
Strongly alkaline	8.5 to 9.0
Very strongly alkaline	9.1 and higher

Recessional moraine. A moraine formed during a temporary but significant halt in the retreat of a glacier.

Red beds. Sedimentary strata that are mainly red and are made up largely of sandstone and shale.

Redox concentrations. Nodules, concretions, soft masses, pore linings, and other features resulting from the accumulation of iron or manganese oxide. An indication of chemical reduction and oxidation resulting from saturation.

Redox depletions. Low-chroma zones from which iron and manganese oxide or a combination of iron and manganese oxide and clay has been removed. These zones are indications of the chemical reduction of iron resulting from saturation.

Redox features. Redox concentrations, redox depletions, reduced matrices, a positive reaction to alpha,alpha-dipyridyl, and other features indicating the chemical reduction and oxidation of iron and manganese compounds resulting from saturation.

Reduced matrix. A soil matrix that has low chroma in situ because of chemically reduced iron (Fe II). The chemical reduction results from nearly continuous wetness. The matrix undergoes a change in hue or chroma within 30 minutes after exposure to air as the iron is oxidized (Fe III). A type of redox feature.

Regeneration. The new growth of a natural plant community, developing from seed.

Regolith. The unconsolidated mantle of weathered rock and soil material on the earth's surface; the loose earth material above the solid rock.

Relict stream terrace. One of a series of platforms in or adjacent to a stream valley that formed prior to the current stream system.

Relief. The elevations or inequalities of a land surface, considered collectively.

Residuum (residual soil material). Unconsolidated, weathered or partly weathered mineral material that accumulated as consolidated rock disintegrated in place.

Rill. A steep-sided channel resulting from accelerated erosion. A rill generally is a few inches deep and not wide enough to be an obstacle to farm machinery.

Riser. The relatively short, steeply sloping area below a terrace tread that grades to a lower terrace tread or base level.

Riverwash. Unstable areas of sandy, silty, clayey, or gravelly sediments. These areas are flooded, washed, and reworked by rivers so frequently that they support little or no vegetation.

Road cut. A sloping surface produced by mechanical means during road construction. It is commonly on the uphill side of the road.

Rock fragments. Rock or mineral fragments having a diameter of 2 millimeters or more; for example, boulders, stones, cobbles, and gravel.

Rock outcrop. Exposures of bare bedrock other than lava flows and rock-lined pits.

Root zone. The part of the soil that can be penetrated by plant roots.

Rubble land. Areas that have more than 90 percent of the surface covered by stones or boulders. Voids contain no soil material and virtually no vegetation other than lichens. The areas commonly are at the base of mountain slopes, but some are on mountain slopes as deposits of cobbles, stones, and boulders left by Pleistocene glaciation or by periglacial phenomena.

Runoff. The precipitation discharged into stream channels from an area. The water that flows off the surface of the land without sinking into the soil is called surface runoff. Water that enters the soil before reaching surface streams is called ground-water runoff or seepage flow from ground water.

Saline soil. A soil containing soluble salts in an amount that impairs growth of plants. A saline soil does not contain excess exchangeable sodium.

Salinity. The electrical conductivity of a saline soil. It is expressed, in millimhos per centimeter, as follows:

Nonsaline	0 to 4
Slightly saline	4 to 8
Moderately saline	8 to 16
Strongly saline	more than 16

Sand. As a soil separate, individual rock or mineral fragments from 0.05 to 2.0 millimeters in diameter. Most sand grains consist of quartz. As a soil textural class, a soil that is 85 percent or more sand and not more than 10 percent clay.

Sandstone. Sedimentary rock containing dominantly sand-sized particles.

Sandy soil. Sand or loamy sand.

Sapric soil material (muck). The most highly decomposed of all organic soil material. Muck has the least amount of plant fiber, the highest bulk density, and the lowest water content at saturation of all organic soil material.

Saturation. Wetness characterized by zero or positive pressure of the soil water. Under conditions of saturation, the water will flow from the soil matrix into an unlined auger hole.

Sawlogs. Logs of suitable size and quality for the production of lumber.

Scarification. The act of abrading, scratching, loosening, crushing, or modifying the surface to increase water absorption or to provide a more tillable soil.

Scribner's log rule. A method of estimating the number of board feet that can be cut from a log of a given diameter and length.

Sedimentary plain. An extensive nearly level to gently rolling or moderately sloping area that is underlain by sedimentary bedrock and that has a slope of 0 to 8 percent.

Sedimentary rock. Rock made up of particles deposited from suspension in water. The chief kinds of sedimentary rock are conglomerate, formed from gravel; sandstone, formed from sand; shale, formed from clay; and limestone, formed from soft masses of calcium carbonate. There are many intermediate types. Some wind-deposited sand is consolidated into sandstone.

Sedimentary uplands. Land areas of bedrock formed from water- or wind-deposited sediments. They are higher on the landscape than the flood plain.

Seepage (in tables). The movement of water through soil. Seepage adversely affects the specified use.

Semiconsolidated sedimentary beds. Soft geologic sediments that disperse when fragments are

placed in water. The fragments are hard or very hard when dry. Determining the texture by the usual field method is difficult.

Sequum. A sequence consisting of an illuvial horizon and the overlying eluvial horizon. (See Eluviation.)

Series, soil. A group of soils that have profiles that are almost alike, except for differences in texture of the surface layer or of the underlying material. All the soils of a series have horizons that are similar in composition, thickness, and arrangement.

Shale. Sedimentary rock formed by the hardening of a clay deposit.

Shallow soil. A soil that is 10 to 20 inches deep over bedrock or to other material that restricts the penetration of plant roots.

Sheet erosion. The removal of a fairly uniform layer of soil material from the land surface by the action of rainfall and surface runoff.

Shelterwood system. A forest management system requiring the removal of a stand in a series of cuts so that regeneration occurs under a partial canopy. After regeneration, a final cut removes the shelterwood and allows the stand to develop in the open as an even-aged stand. The system is well suited to sites where shelter is needed for regeneration, and it can aid regeneration of the more intolerant tree species in a stand.

Shoulder. The uppermost inclined surface at the top of a hillside. It is the transitional zone from the backslope to the summit of a hill or mountain. The surface is dominantly convex in profile and erosional in origin.

Shrink-swell (in tables). The shrinking of soil when dry and the swelling when wet. Shrinking and swelling can damage roads, dams, building foundations, and other structures. It can also damage plant roots.

Side slope. A geomorphic component of hills consisting of a laterally planar area of a hillside. The overland waterflow is predominantly parallel.

Silica. A combination of silicon and oxygen. The mineral form is called quartz.

Silt. As a soil separate, individual mineral particles that range in diameter from the upper limit of clay (0.002 millimeters) to the lower limit of very fine sand (0.05 millimeters). As a soil textural class, soil that is 80 percent or more silt and less than 12 percent clay.

Siltstone. Sedimentary rock made up of dominantly silt-sized particles.

Similar soils. Soils that share limits of diagnostic criteria, behave and perform in a similar manner,

and have similar conservation needs or management requirements for the major land uses in the survey area.

Similarity index. A similarity index is the percentage of a specific vegetation state plant community that is presently on the site.

Sinkhole. A depression in the landscape where limestone has been dissolved.

Site class. A grouping of site indexes into five to seven production capability levels. Each level can be represented by a site curve.

Site curve (50-year). A set of related curves on a graph that shows the average height of dominant or dominant and codominant trees for the range of ages on soils that differ in productivity. Each level is represented by a curve. The basis of the curves is the height of dominant or dominant and codominant trees that are 50 years old or are 50 years old at breast height.

Site curve (100-year). A set of related curves on a graph that shows the average height of dominant or dominant and codominant trees for a range of ages on soils that differ in productivity. Each level is represented by a curve. The basis of the curves is the height of dominant or dominant and codominant trees that are 100 years old or are 100 years old at breast height.

Site index. A designation of the quality of a forest site based on the height of the dominant stand at an arbitrarily chosen age. For example, if the average height attained by dominant or dominant and codominant trees in a fully stocked stand at the age of 50 years is 75 feet, the site index is 75.

Skid trails. Pathways along which logs are dragged to a common site for loading onto a logging truck.

Slash. The branches, bark, treetops, reject logs, and broken or uprooted trees left on the ground after logging.

Slickens. Accumulations of fine textured material, such as material separated in placer-mine and ore-mill operations. Slickens from ore mills commonly consist of freshly ground rock that has undergone chemical treatment during the milling process.

Slickensides. Polished and grooved surfaces produced by one mass sliding past another. In soils, slickensides may occur at the bases of slip surfaces on the steeper slopes; on faces of blocks, prisms, and columns; and in swelling clayey soils, where there is marked change in moisture content.

Slickspot. A small area of soil having a puddled, crusted, or smooth surface and an excess of exchangeable sodium. The soil generally is loamy

or clayey, is slippery when wet, and is low in productivity.

Slope. The inclination of the land surface from the horizontal. Percentage of slope is the vertical distance divided by horizontal distance, then multiplied by 100. Thus, a slope of 20 percent is a drop of 20 feet in 100 feet of horizontal distance. In this survey the following slope classes are recognized:

Nearly level	0 to 2 percent
Gently sloping	2 to 4 percent
Moderately sloping	4 to 8 percent
Strongly sloping	8 to 15 percent
Moderately steep	15 to 25 percent
Steep	25 to 45 percent
Very steep	more than 45 percent

Slope (in tables). Slope is great enough that special practices are required to ensure satisfactory performance of the soil for a specific use.

Slow intake (in tables). The slow movement of water into the soil.

Sodic (alkali) soil. A soil having so high a degree of alkalinity (pH 8.5 or higher) or so high a percentage of exchangeable sodium (15 percent or more of the total exchangeable bases), or both, that plant growth is restricted.

Sodicity. The degree to which a soil is affected by exchangeable sodium. Sodicity is expressed as a sodium adsorption ratio (SAR) of a saturation extract, or the ratio of Na^+ to $\text{Ca}^{++} + \text{Mg}^{++}$. The degrees of sodicity and their respective ratios are:

Slight	less than 13:1
Moderate	13-30:1
Strong	more than 30:1

Sodium adsorption ratio (SAR). A measure of the amount of sodium (Na) relative to calcium (Ca) and magnesium (Mg) in the water extract from saturated soil paste. It is the ratio of the Na concentration divided by the square root of one-half of the Ca + Mg concentration.

Soft bedrock. Bedrock that can be excavated with trenching machines, backhoes, small rippers, and other equipment commonly used in construction.

Soil. A natural, three-dimensional body at the earth's surface. It is capable of supporting plants and has properties resulting from the integrated effect of climate and living matter acting on earthy parent material, as conditioned by relief over periods of time.

Soil separates. Mineral particles less than 2 millimeters in equivalent diameter and ranging

between specified size limits. The names and sizes, in millimeters, of separates recognized in the United States are as follows:

Very coarse sand	2.0 to 1.0
Coarse sand	1.0 to 0.5
Medium sand	0.5 to 0.25
Fine sand	0.25 to 0.10
Very fine sand	0.10 to 0.05
Silt	0.05 to 0.002
Clay	less than 0.002

Solum. The upper part of a soil profile, above the C horizon, in which the processes of soil formation are active. The solum in soil consists of the A, E, and B horizons. Generally, the characteristics of the material in these horizons are unlike those of the material below the solum. The living roots and plant and animal activities are largely confined to the solum.

Species. A single, distinct kind of plant or animal having certain distinguishing characteristics.

Stone line. A concentration of coarse fragments in a soil. Generally, it is indicative of an old weathered surface. In a cross section, the line may be one fragment or more thick. It generally overlies material that weathered in place and is overlain by recent sediment of variable thickness.

Stones. Rock fragments 10 to 24 inches (25 to 60 centimeters) in diameter if rounded or 15 to 24 inches (38 to 60 centimeters) in length if flat.

Stony. Refers to a soil containing stones in numbers that interfere with tillage, or stones cover .01 to 0.1 percent of the surface. Very stony means that 0.1 to 3.0 percent of the surface is covered with stones. Extremely stony means that 3 to 15 percent of the surface is covered with stones.

Stony soil material. Soil that is 15 to 35 percent, by volume, rock fragments that are dominated by fragments 10 to 24 inches (25 to 60 centimeters) in diameter.

Strath terrace. A surface cut formed by the erosion of hard or semiconsolidated bedrock and thinly mantled with stream deposits.

Stream channel. The hollow bed where a natural stream of surface water flows or may flow; the deepest or central part of the bed, formed by the main current and covered more or less continuously by water.

Stream terrace. One of a series of platforms in a stream valley, flanking and more or less parallel to the stream channel. It originally formed near the level of the stream and is the dissected remnants of an abandoned flood plain,

streambed, or valley floor that were produced during a former stage of erosion or deposition.

Strippcropping. Growing crops in a systematic arrangement of strips or bands that provide vegetative barriers to soil blowing and water erosion.

Structure, soil. The arrangement of primary soil particles into compound particles or aggregates. The principal forms of soil structure are *platy* (laminated), *prismatic* (vertical axis of aggregates longer than horizontal), *columnar* (prisms with rounded tops), *blocky* (angular or subangular), and *granular*. *Structureless* soils are either *single grain* (each grain by itself, as in dune sand) or *massive* (the particles adhering without any regular cleavage, as in many hardpans).

Stubble mulch. Stubble or other crop residue left on the soil or partly worked into the soil. It protects the soil from wind erosion and water erosion after harvest, during preparation of a seedbed for the next crop, and during the early growing period of the new crop.

Subsoil. Technically, the B horizon; roughly, the part of the solum below plow depth.

Subsoiling. Tilling a soil below normal plow depth, ordinarily to shatter or loosen a layer that is restrictive to roots.

Substratum. The part of the soil below the solum.

Subsurface layer. Any surface soil horizon (A, E, AB, or EB) below the surface layer.

Summer fallow. The tillage of uncropped land during the summer to control weeds and allow storage of moisture in the soil for the growth of a later crop. A practice common in semiarid regions, where annual precipitation is not enough to produce a crop every year. Summer fallow is frequently practiced before planting winter grain.

Summit. A general term for the top, or highest level, of an upland feature, such as a hill or mountain. It commonly refers to a higher area that has a gentle slope and is flanked by steeper slopes.

Surface layer. The soil ordinarily moved in tillage, or its equivalent in uncultivated soil, ranging in depth from 4 to 10 inches (10 to 25 centimeters). Frequently designated as the "plow layer," or the "Ap horizon."

Tailwater. The water directly downstream of a structure.

Talus. Rock fragments of any size or shape, commonly coarse and angular, derived from and lying at the base of a cliff or very steep rock slope. The accumulated mass of such loose, broken rock formed chiefly by falling, rolling, or sliding.

- Taxadjuncts.** Soils that cannot be classified in a series recognized in the classification system. Such soils are named for a series they strongly resemble and are designated as taxadjuncts to that series because they differ in ways too small to be of consequence in interpreting their use and behavior.
- Terminal moraine.** A belt of thick glacial drift that generally marks the termination of important glacial advances.
- Terrace.** An embankment, or ridge, constructed across sloping soils on the contour or at a slight angle to the contour. The terrace intercepts surface runoff so that water soaks into the soil or flows slowly to a prepared outlet. A terrace in a field generally is built so that the field can be farmed. A terrace intended mainly for drainage has a deep channel that is maintained in permanent sod.
- Terrace (geologic).** An old alluvial plain, ordinarily flat or undulating, bordering a river, a lake, or the sea.
- Terracette.** Small, irregular step-like forms on steep hillslopes, especially in pasture, formed by creep or erosion of surficial materials that may or may not be induced by trampling of livestock such as sheep or cattle.
- Texture, soil.** The relative proportions of sand, silt, and clay particles in a mass of soil. The basic textural classes, in order of increasing proportion of fine particles, are *sand*, *loamy sand*, *sandy loam*, *loam*, *silt loam*, *silt*, *sandy clay loam*, *clay loam*, *silty clay loam*, *sandy clay*, *silty clay*, and *clay*. The sand, loamy sand, and sandy loam classes may be further divided by specifying "coarse," "fine," or "very fine."
- Till plain.** An extensive, nearly level to gently rolling or moderately sloping area that is underlain by or consists of till and that has a slope of 0 to 8 percent.
- Tilth, soil.** The physical condition of the soil as related to tillage, seedbed preparation, seedling emergence, and root penetration.
- Toeslope.** The outermost inclined surface at the base of a hill. Toeslopes are commonly gentle and linear in profile.
- Topsoil.** The upper part of the soil, which is the most favorable material for plant growth. It is ordinarily rich in organic matter and is used to topdress roadbanks, lawns, and land affected by mining.
- Trace elements.** Chemical elements, for example, zinc, cobalt, manganese, copper, and iron, in soils in extremely small amounts. They are essential to plant growth.
- Trafficability.** The degree to which a soil is capable of supporting vehicular traffic across a wide range in soil moisture conditions.
- Tread.** The relatively flat terrace surface that was cut or built by stream or wave action.
- Tuff.** A compacted deposit that is 50 percent or more volcanic ash and dust.
- Understory.** Any plants in a forest community that grow to a height of less than 5 feet.
- Upland.** Land at a higher elevation, in general, than the alluvial plain or stream terrace; land above the lowlands along streams.
- Valley.** An elongated depressional area primarily developed by stream action.
- Valley fill.** In glaciated regions, material deposited in stream valleys by glacial meltwater. In nonglaciated regions, alluvium deposited by heavily loaded streams.
- Variation.** Refers to patterns of contrasting colors assumed to be inherited from the parent material rather than to be the result of poor drainage.
- Varve.** A sedimentary layer or a lamina or sequence of laminae deposited in a body of still water within a year. Specifically, a thin pair of graded glaciolacustrine layers seasonally deposited, usually by meltwater streams, in a glacial lake or other body of still water in front of a glacier.
- Very deep soil.** A soil that is more than 60 inches deep over bedrock or to other material that restricts the penetration of plant roots.
- Very shallow soil.** A soil that is less than 10 inches deep over bedrock or to other material that restricts the penetration of plant roots.
- Water bars.** Smooth, shallow ditches or depressional areas that are excavated at an angle across a sloping road. They are used to reduce the downward velocity of water and divert it off and away from the road surface. Water bars can easily be driven over if constructed properly.
- Water-spreading.** Diverting runoff from natural channels by means of a system of dams, dikes, or ditches and spreading it over relatively flat surfaces.
- Weathering.** All physical and chemical changes produced in rocks or other deposits at or near the earth's surface by atmospheric agents. These changes result in disintegration and decomposition of the material.
- Well graded.** Refers to soil material consisting of coarse-grained particles that are well distributed over wide range in size or diameter. Such soil normally can be easily increased in density and bearing properties by compaction. Contrasts with poorly graded soil.

Wilting point (or permanent wilting point). The moisture content of soil, on an oven-dry basis, at which a plant (specifically a sunflower) wilts so much that it does not recover when placed in a humid, dark chamber.

Windthrow. The action of uprooting and tipping over trees by the wind.

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