



# Illinois Soil Classifiers Association Newsletter

Summer 2005

## Upcoming Events

ISCA Council Meeting  
August 26, 2005

ISCA Fall Meeting and Tour  
October 7, 2005

Central States Forest Soils  
Workshop October 11-13,  
2005

ISCA and NRCS Co-  
sponsored Field Exam for  
Soil Classifiers and Soil  
Scientists October 20, 2005

Illinois Cooperative Soil  
Survey Annual Planning  
Conference September 14,  
2005

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## Message from the President

During our last Executive Council meeting we created a subcommittee to review the current requirements for soil classifier certification. Ken Gotsch was nominated to chair the committee and has already formed a subcommittee to review and propose modifications to the requirements for certification. Specifically, his group is working to revise the 500 hours required for certification and to propose a more achievable standard.

The Summer/Fall meeting has been scheduled and will be held in Clark and Edgar Counties in Southeastern Illinois in early October. The tour will include the examination of several soil series and an overview of the current soil survey update process. I again encourage the membership to attend this tour since it is a great opportunity to see the soils in an area you may not be familiar with and to meet other soil scientists from throughout the state.

Regards  
Bruce Putman  
815-338-6218  
[putman@mc.net](mailto:putman@mc.net)

## COMMITTEE TACKLES CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

The Ethics, Certification and Membership Committee has been reviewing the standards and requirements for ISCA certification. The initial work began early this year with committee members commenting on the overall certification requirements. This comment period preceded a work-group subcommittee established by the Ethics, Certification and Membership Chairperson, Ken Gotsch. This subcommittee consisted of Mark Bramstedt, John Doll, Dana Grantham, Clayton Heffter, Bruce Putman and Wiley Scott. Five members of this working subcommittee met at the NRCS Field Office in Normal on July 14, 2005 to forge a revised version based on comments received including the working subcommittee's own personal experience. A draft revision was achieved and will be presented to the ISCA Council for review. Formal approval and adoption requires approval by the ISCA Council followed by notification to ISCA membership culminating in a formal vote. More information is to follow.

Ken Gotsch, Chair  
Ethics, Certification and Membership Committee

**ILLINOIS SOIL CLASSIFIERS ASSOCIATION**

## MINUTES

## ISCA COUNCIL MEETING

May 6, 2005

Bloomington, Illinois

## Present:

Mark Bramstedt, Past President

Greg Clark, Newsletter Chair

Bob Tegeler, Vice President

Bruce Putman, President

Chris Cochran, Secretary

Chuck Frazee, Treasurer

Clayton Heffter, President Elect

Ken Gotsch, Ethics, Certification, &amp; Membership

President Bruce Putman called the Council Meeting to order at 10:10 AM.

Putman called for a motion to approve the Agenda. Motion so made, seconded and approved. Putman called for a motion to approve the minutes for the two previous Council Meetings and the Annual Meeting all held on March 1, 2005. Cochran indicated that there was a change in the minutes regarding the Treasurer's report. Motion was made, seconded and approved to approve the minutes as amended. (The amended minutes were published in the Spring 2005 ISCA Newsletter.)

**Secretary's Report** – Drummer T-Shirts. Of the 200 shirts ordered, 106 remain. 0-medium; 40-large; 49-xlarge; 5-xxlarge; 12-xxxlarge. Remaining inventory is valued at \$1,322.

**Treasurer's Report** – Frazee passed out copies of the treasurer's report. Opening balance as of March 1, 2005 was \$16,873.76; Income-\$2,133.82; Expenses-\$7,971.20; Closing Balance as of May 5, 2005 is \$11,036.38. Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was made, seconded and approved unanimously.

**Certification Board** – Bill Kreznor. One applicant received favorable reviews by the Board. An exam is to be scheduled. The Board is currently reviewing CEUs submitted by 13 CPSCs.

**STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Constitution, By-Laws and Legislative** – Jaimee Hammitt. No report.

**Ethics, Certification and Membership** – Ken Gotsch. Sent questionnaire to CPSC members regarding certification requirements. Two members responded. Ken will follow up.

**Finance** – Bob Tegeler. Rick Francen and Steve Suhl are committee members.

**Newsletter** – Greg Clark. Greg passed out drafts of newsletter for review and approval. Ken Gotsch commended Greg and his committee for a good job.

**Nominations** – Mark Bramstedt. No report.

**Public Relations and Education** – Doug Gaines. Need brochure for ISCA and follow up on Todd Soukup's work on Understanding your Soil Report.

## AD-HOC AND SPECIAL APPOINTEE REPORTS

**Program** – Greg Clark. Putting a tour together across Shelbyville moraine/outwash plain/ Illinoisan till.

**Historian** – Roger Windhorn. No report.

**State Advisory Commission on Private Sewage Disposal** – Bruce Putman. Bruce appointed Mark Bramstadt to chair this position. Chad Morman from the Illinois Dept. of Public Health will be notified of this appointment.

**Smithsonian Project Coordinator** – Bill Kreznor. Over \$6000 raised in Illinois. State Liaison Mike Konen will prepare letters to conservation groups and farm organizations this summer. ISCA members are encouraged to contact Bill or Mike regarding potential donors.

**USCSSA Teleconference** – Bob Tegeler. 15 individuals participated in the teleconference. Notes cover the last 4 agenda items:

***Item 6*** -Meeting the Needs of Professional Soil Scientists Survey of 2004. Are there some critical items that we could identify as priority for the USCSSA?

Possible priorities discussed include:

- On-line journal that goes beyond the scope of *Soil Survey Horizons*
- Field trips for hands on training
- The declining number of soil scientists at universities
- Better promote a soil science curriculum at universities
- Possible decline in Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) funding
- Summarize the survey in *Soil Survey Horizons*
- Send out survey results again, as a word document, if needed

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

- Send letters of support to university heads for their efforts in support of pedology programs
- Express concern over pedology staff reductions at some universities
- Survey land grant universities next winter to determine the number of soil scientists on staff in pedology departments
- Urge universities to offer BS degrees in soil science

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

- Promote state soils to youth, by use of soil tubes
- One SWCD is trying to develop a soil tunnel
- Put educational material on the web site
- Consider a Journal of Life Sciences and Education
- Work on getting educational information out to the public

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

- Try to get more people in field mapping (more like a soil survey operation)
- Roger Risley (MN) discussed MLRA procedures in Minnesota. He stressed that the soil survey should not be limited by county or state boundaries, but should be on a geomorphic basis.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- ▷ Membership Handbook – On web.
- ▷ Recognition of those who worked on State Soil – Jim Hornickel to be asked to head up committee.
- ▷ E-Mail Newsletter – Discussion centered on sending email to members notifying them that future Newsletters will be posted on the Web. Members wanting Newsletters mailed will have to request it. Motion was made by Clayton Heffter, seconded by Mark Bamstedt to “send Newsletter to ALL Members one last time, notifying them that future Newsletters will be by email unless they request otherwise.” Motion carried.
- ▷ State Loading Rate Chart – posted on web. Need to put a disclaimer that this is not for general use. Members need to use current chart. Chart on web is proposed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- ▷ Cliff Miles’ request – Bruce will contact Doug to contact Cliff for recommendation.
- ▷ Summer Meeting Agenda and location – In progress
- ▷ Roy Mahnesmith’s request – Long discussion ensued. Ken’s committee will need to make recommendation on future alternative means for certification. Motion was made to approve Roy Mahnesmith’s request for alternate means for certification. Motion was defeated. Bruce will contact Roy to explain the Council’s action. Ken will have ideas by next meeting.
- ▷ Hydric Soils Training – To be held on June 30-July 1 in Sycamore, IL.

Meeting adjourned at 12:20 pm.

**Next council meeting has been changed to August 26, 2005 at 10am in Bloomington.**

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Cochran, Secretary

## ISCA Fall Soils Tour

The ISCA Fall Tour will be hosted by the Charleston MLRA Soil Survey office on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Plans are to evaluate soils north, south, and on the Shelbyville Moraine. The tour will take place in southern Edgar County and the northern part of Clark County. The stops will include a chance to evaluate a soil with a paleosol. Lunch will be provided by ISCA and will be at Mill Creek Park in Clark County. An overview of the process of NRCS soil survey updates will be included as part of the tour.

Mark Friday, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2005 on your calendars and make plans to attend the ISCA Fall Soils Tour.

**Registration, agenda, hotel information, etc. will be sent out around the first part of September.**



## TRADING POST

This spot is reserved for members who would like to buy, sell, trade, or announce an item, event, or activity in our newsletter. Please limit your classified ad to 25 words or less. Email your ad to the newsletter at [greg.clark@il.usda.gov](mailto:greg.clark@il.usda.gov)

- ISCA ball caps available for \$9 (includes S&H). Contact Chris Cochran at [chris\\_cochran@prodigy.net](mailto:chris_cochran@prodigy.net)

## Illinois State Soil T-Shirts Still Available

Drummer T-Shirts are still available. Some size and color combinations are becoming limited in number. Be sure and order before your size and color are gone.

**Short Sleeve -- \$12**

**Long Sleeve -- \$14**

**Shipping and**

**Handling \$5 per order**

Order by calling Chris Cochran (217) 345-6767

E-mail : [chris\\_cochran@prodigy.net](mailto:chris_cochran@prodigy.net)

Two navy blue ISCA collared shirts still available. XL and XXXL \$17



Mr. Bruce Putman, President  
Illinois Soil Classifiers Association  
1200 Portage Lane  
Woodstock, Illinois 60098

March 30, 2005

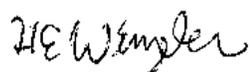
Edwin Winzeler  
407 East Green Street #2  
Urbana, Illinois 61802

Dear Mr. Putman,

I was honored to receive the Burt Ray award last fall at the regional Soil Judging competition at Purdue University. Our team placed third among the teams there and qualified for the national championship in Alabama. Two of us from the team have continued on and we have added two new teammates. We are hoping to perform even better at this coming competition on April 7<sup>th</sup>.

I would sincerely like to thank the ISCA for recognizing my efforts to succeed at competitive soil judging with such a generous award. With my winnings I have decided to purchase equipment that will be useful to me as a soil scientist.

Sincerely,



Edwin Winzeler

Edwin is currently a summer trainee with the Charleston MLRA. He has assisted with editing manuscripts and field-work in Coles and Macon Counties, participated in order one mapping and training in Lake County, and practice mapped areas in Coles County. He will be finishing his degree at the University of Illinois this year.



Mr. Bruce Putman, President  
 Illinois Soil Classifiers Association  
 1200 Portage Lane  
 Woodstock, Illinois 60098

March 30, 2005

Andy Brantner, Olivia Dorothy,  
 Lindsay Reinhardt, and Edwin Winzeler  
 University of Illinois Soil Judging Team  
 1102 South Goodwin Street  
 Urbana, Illinois 61802

Dear Mr. Putman,

We would like to thank you and the members of the Illinois Soil Classifiers Association for your generosity in supporting our team as we head to the National Soil Judging contest in Auburn, Alabama this spring. We are eager to represent Illinois well by winning the competition.

Though none of us has direct experience of the Ultisols common in Lee County, Alabama, Dr. Darmody, our coach, will train us for a week on the soils there. In the mean time we have been studying the taxonomic and natural history aspects of the soils by examining published soil survey reports. We have also textured numerous soil samples to develop our skills in using the textural triangle. Once we arrive in Alabama we believe we can gain the first-hand knowledge of the region's soils necessary for winning the competition by means of intensive field investigation before the competition begins.

The generosity of the ISCA has gone a long way toward meeting our expenses in Alabama and has made it easier for us to commit to our task. On a less instrumental level, it is inspiring to realize that the ISCA recognizes what we are attempting to do so much as to grant support. We appreciate the support and will do our best to earn it.

Sincerely,

*Edwin Winzeler*  
Edwin Winzeler

*Lindsay Reinhardt*  
Lindsay Reinhardt

*Olivia Dorothy*  
Olivia Dorothy

Andy Brantner

*Andy Brantner*

Go Illini!



## ISCA Hosts Hydric Soils Course

An ISCA course “Hydric Soils for Wetland Determinations” was held June 30-July 1 in Sycamore in DeKalb County. The course focused on using the “Field Indicators of Hydric Soils” and was attended by private consultants and some employees of state and federal agencies. Twenty seven people attended the course (29 paid) which had a limit of 30 participants. Five of those attending were ISCA members (ISCA members received a 50% discount). Since the course covered some basic soils information, it was targeted to the non-soil scientist or to soil scientists who were unfamiliar with



the Field Indicators of Hydric Soils. The 2-day course actually covered quite a bit of material and it included both lecture and field activities. The first day was pretty grueling. It started at 9:30 AM and finished at 9:00 PM. In the two days, two field trips were taken to Shabbona



State Park where the participants were able to see several different soils representing many of the hydric soil indicators. The participants described and evaluated the soils to determine which indicator(s) the soils might meet. In another field activity the participants used the indicators to determine the boundary between a hydric soil and a non-hydric soil. The dry conditions of spring and early summer made it more difficult to sample the soils, but we had plenty of mallets on hand to get the soil probes into the ground.

This course was organized by several ISCA members in NE Illinois who work with consultants in wetland determinations. These ISCA members had noticed a lack of understanding of hydric soil properties in many of the reports that they receive from consultants that deal with wetlands. The course was established to provide consultants and others who work with wetlands a better understanding of hydric soil properties and to provide some training to help the consultants provide better documentation when describing hydric soils.



ISCA members on the planning committee were: Jaimee Hammit, Clayton Heffter, Ken Anderson, Pat Kelsey, Dale Calsyn, Mark Bramstedt, Jennifer Wollenweber, and Todd Soukup. All the instructors for the course were ISCA members, as well. Instructors included Jaimee Hammit, Clayton Heffter, Ken Anderson, Pat Kelsey, Dale Calsyn, Mark Bramstedt, Roger Windhorn, Ken Gotsch, and Steven Zwicker. Dale, Mark, Roger, Ken and Steve also served as the field instructors.

The course evaluations were almost all positive and several comments requested or suggested that we host another hydric soil course in the near future. It appears that the course was a great success! Thanks to all those who were involved in both the planning and the instruction.

Submitted by Mark Bramstedt

The Soil Scientist Association of Tennessee (SSAT) and NRCS will be hosting the

## 25th Annual Central States Forest Soils Workshop

October 11-13, 2005

Great Smoky Mountain National Park.

NRCS has been conducting a soil survey in the park since 1999 and has sampled many pedons.

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Holiday Inn (full service) in Cherokee, North Carolina. Contact numbers are: 800-Holiday or 828-497-9181. Let the hotel know you are with the "**Forest Soils Workshop**" or give them the group code "**FSW**". The guaranteed rate for two double beds is \$64.00 + taxes. A room with a king bed is available for \$74.00 + taxes.

Early registration for the workshop is **\$69 per participant**.

For more information or to register by mail using the registration form, log on the NRCS website: [www.tn.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/soils/CSFSWS/CSFSWS.html](http://www.tn.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/soils/CSFSWS/CSFSWS.html).

Make plans now to attend!

## ISCA and NRCS to Co-sponsor a Field Exam for Soil Classifiers and Soil Scientists

The purpose of this exam is to test and fine-tune the skills and abilities of Illinois soil scientists and soil classifiers in identifying soil properties in the field. This exam will be an opportunity for each soil classifier to evaluate his or her skills in identifying color, texture, structure, limiting layers, and other basic soil properties. Often times, soil classifiers work alone in the field and do not have a way of comparing their field evaluation with other soil classifiers. The Field Exam will provide an opportunity for discussion of some of the basic issues in field identification and interpretation of soils. The field exam will use the approved "[Key for Determining Sewage Loading Rates](#)" (from the Illinois Department of Public Health, Private Sewage Disposal Licensing Act and Code <http://www.ilga.gov/commission/jcar/admincode/077/07700905ZZ9996amR.html> ) and procedures and nomenclature from the USDA [Soil Survey Manual](http://soils.usda.gov/technical/manual/) <http://soils.usda.gov/technical/manual/> and the USDA-NRCS [Field Book for Describing and Sampling Soils](http://soils.usda.gov/technical/fieldbook/) <http://soils.usda.gov/technical/fieldbook/>.

Copies of the "Key for Determining Sewage Loading Rates" will be available. All those attending are encouraged to bring their soil description gear. Suggested items to bring include: Munsell color book, water bottle, tape measure, 100 foot tape or measuring wheel, compass, knife, pencils, clipboard, textural triangle and any field guide or other reference material. There will be some extra field gear available for you to use if you do not have a specific item. You do not need a soil probe or shovel. The field exam will be considered an "open book" exam, so any reference material may be used. This is a voluntary exam and the results of the exam will not be kept as an official record of the individual member. The exam is not required for certified soil classifiers however, the ISCA Executive Council strongly encourages all practicing members to attend and welcomes the attendance of all members. The field exam will qualify for continuing education units. Here are the details of the exam day:

Date: **Thursday, October 20, 2005**

Time: Attend one of two sessions - morning (**9:00-12:00**) or afternoon (**1:00-4:00**)

Where: Allerton Park, 4-H camp, west of **Monticello, IL** (see map following page– use the north entrance)

Cost: None – one of the many benefits of being an ISCA member

All ISCA members and soil classifiers are encouraged to attend.

All NRCS soil scientists are encouraged to attend.

**Advanced registration is required**

**Register by contacting:**

Mark Bramstedt (**e-mail preferred**)

USDA-NRCS

1001 E. Grant St., Suite A

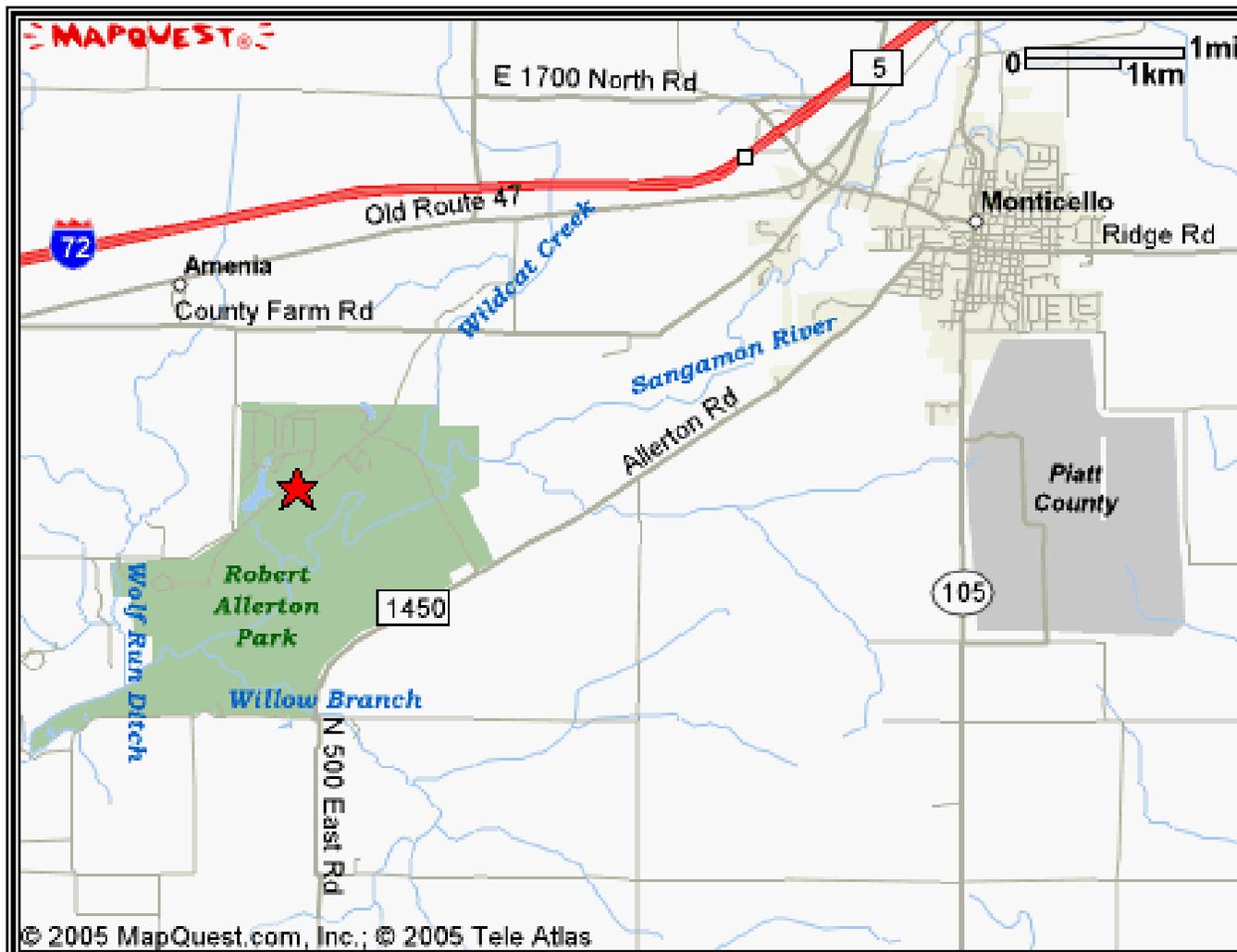
Watseka, IL 60970

815-432-6639 x113

[mark.bramstedt@il.usda.gov](mailto:mark.bramstedt@il.usda.gov)

Registration Deadline: October, 11, 2005

**PLEASE INDICATE YOUR SESSION PREFERENCE**



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Location of Soil Scientist Field Exam. Allerton Park, 4-H camp, west of Monticello, IL



## ANNOUNCEMENT



Currently, 17 ISCA members receive this newsletter through the U.S. Mail. In order to keep administrative costs down, we will no longer mail out the newsletter. Instead, you will be notified through email when the current/next newsletter is available on our web site. Exceptions will be made for those of you who do not have computers or email addresses. If, for any other reason, you wish to continue to receive the newsletter through the U.S. Mail, contact Chris Cochran at [chris\\_cochran@prodigy.net](mailto:chris_cochran@prodigy.net).



The ISCA Newsletter can be downloaded in PDF format from our web site at:

<http://www.illinoissoils.org/news.htm>



## United States Department of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
2118 West Park Court  
Champaign, IL 61821  
Phone: 217/353-6600  
Fax: 217/353-6676

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August 8, 2005

Dear Illinois Soil Survey Cooperators and Supporters:

The 2005 Illinois Cooperative Soil Survey Annual Planning Conference will be held on Wednesday, September 14, 2005, at the NRCS State Office, 2118 West Park Court, Champaign, Illinois. The purpose of the Conference is to bring our cooperators and other soil survey supporters up-to-date on soil survey activities in the state.

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service will be hosting the Conference this year. We will convene at 9:30am. The Conference will adjourn at 12 noon. A tentative agenda is attached.

An MLRA Soil Survey Project Leader/Resource Soil Scientist work session will convene at 1:00 pm after the work planning conference. It will adjourn at 12 noon on Wednesday, September 14. You are invited to attend all or part of the work session.

We will be looking for input from the group on soil survey related issues that need to be addressed this next year. Please RSVP to Jean McConkey by September 9, 2005 at 217/353-6635.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. GRADLE  
State Conservationist

Attachment

cc:

Micheal Golden, Director, Soil Survey Division, NHQ, NRCS, Washington, D.C.  
Robert Ahrens, Director, National Soil Survey Center, Lincoln, Nebraska  
MW State Conservationists/State Soil Scientists  
Leadership Team  
MLRA Project Leaders  
Resource Soil Scientists  
State Office Soils Staff



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### Submissions

This is **YOUR** newsletter. If you wish to submit material, here are some preferences.

- Send information by the last week of the month before the newsletter is scheduled to be published.
- Digital copy in Microsoft Word
- Use as little formatting (indents, bullets, charts) as possible. This increases the work to get it into Publisher.

### Publication Schedule for 2005-2006

- Summer (August)
- Fall (November)
- Winter (February)
- Spring (May)



## 2005 ILLINOIS COOPERATIVE SOIL SURVEY WORK PLANNING CONFERENCE

Wednesday, September 14, 2005

**USDSA-NRCS State Office**  
**2118 West Park Court**  
**Champaign, Illinois**  
**Agenda**

- **Convene 9:30 am**
- **Opening Remarks**
- **Status Reports by Cooperators**
  - » **Natural Resources Conservation Service**
  - » **Illinois Department of Agriculture**
  - » **Illinois State Geological Survey**
  - » **Illinois Department of Transportation**
  - » **Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts**
  - » **University of Illinois**
  - » **UI Cooperative Extension Service**
  - » **United States Forest Service**
- **Other Reports**
- **Discussion**
- **Adjourn 12:00 Noon**
- **LUNCH**
- **MLRA Project Leaders/Resource Soil Scientists Work Session**

The Illinois Soil Classifiers Association is an organization promoting the wise use of the soil resource. ISCA is made up of professional soil classifiers in public service, private industry, and education and includes students and others interested in preserving soil. A soil classifier maps, describes and interprets soils according to a national system of soil classification. ISCA was established in 1975 and is affiliated with the American Registry of Certified Professionals in Agronomy, Crops, and Soils.