



# Illinois Soil Classifiers Association Newsletter

Summer — August 2024

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2024 Fall Meeting            October 2

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## Message from the President

Soil Taxonomy. It is the backbone of our association and many other organizations like it, and as soil classifiers, it is heavily imprinted in the fabric of our collective professional DNA. Without the development of a system to classify soils based upon their genesis and morphology, the creation of our association and much of the work our membership has conducted over the years may have never occurred. Soil Taxonomy is the culmination of theories produced by visionaries coupled with decades of exhaustive research and rigorous testing. Briefly stated, it is science. With that being said, as scientists, we all understand that taxonomic systems are constructed to be dynamic and have the ability to be modified when new evidence arises and data is collected. For instance, the earliest edition of Soil Taxonomy had only ten soil orders, and it wasn't until the 1990s when the Andisols and Gelisols orders were added to bring the total number of recognized orders to the current number of twelve.

Now, as most of you are aware, there are two new proposed soil orders that are currently going through the regional testing and evaluation process. The first of these two newly proposed orders, Artesols, deals with human-altered and human-transported soils. The second, Aquasols, is set to include subaqueous and, more controversially, terrestrial aquic soils as the proposal is currently written. The formation of the Aquasols order was brought to the attention of ISCA's Executive Council and later, the entire membership, towards the beginning of this year. After a thorough review of the proposal, the overall consensus of the Executive Council and other ISCA members was that creating an order for subaqueous soils could be justifiable, but applying the new order to terrestrial soils would degrade the utility and cohesion of Soil Taxonomy. It appeared that insufficient research and testing had been conducted on at least the soils in the Mollisols and Alfisols orders. Additionally, unlike proposals for other new soil orders, input had not been widely solicited from areas expected to incur significant impacts from the adoption of this proposal.

Rather than sit idly by, the Executive Council decided to make our collective grievances known to the authors of the Aquasols order proposal by drafting a response letter. ISCA members Donald Fehrenbacher, Mark Bramstedt, Alicia Metzger, Samuel Indorante, Robert Tegeler, and Bradley Cate collaborated on the creation of the letter, and at the start of May, I sent the letter out to the USDA/NRCS National Leader for Soil Taxonomy, Joey Shaw. Dr. Shaw responded rather promptly and wished to share our concerns as part of the testing feedback. He also ensured me that we would receive a copy of the revised proposal once the regional testing and evaluation process was completed.

(continued on next page)

## Message from the President Continued

Submitted by Brandon Mueller

The Aquasols order proposal can be found online on the NRCS website, and the thoughtfully crafted response letter to the order proposal can be found in this edition of ISCA's Newsletter. The Executive Council strongly urges that you share the response letter with any peers and colleagues that may be interested or are not yet aware of this new order proposal. Furthermore, if anyone has any further comments or criticisms related to the Aquasols order that were not brought up in the response letter, we encourage you to write something up and send it along to Dr. Shaw. I would be more than happy to supply you with a mailing address or email address for Dr. Shaw if you wish to do so.

There is one last thing that I would like to bring up before you continue along reading this edition of ISCA's Newsletter. The first edition of Soil Taxonomy was published in 1975, but there is one other huge event that occurred in 1975. For those of you old enough to remember, no I am not talking about the end of the Vietnam War, the debut of "Wheel of Fortune", or even the release of the song "Rhinstone Cowboy". I would in fact be referring to the establishment of our very own Illinois Soil Classifiers Association, which will be celebrating its 50 year anniversary at the turn of the year. So for this coming year's Annual Meeting I would like to do something a little more special. For one, we will be honoring the many charter members that helped pour the foundation of our great Association, so if you have any photos or "memorabilia" from the early days of the Association I would be grateful if you were to share them with me or the Newsletter Committee. Furthermore, I have already received a few ideas for the overall logistics and venue of the Annual Meeting, but if anyone has any more input please feel free to get in contact with me. Let's make our 50th Annual Meeting one to remember!

It has been an honor serving ISCA these first couple of months, and I look forward to continuing to serve for the remainder of my term! I hope everyone has a safe and great end to their summer, and hopefully I will get the chance to see many of you at our Fall Meeting in Southern Illinois at the start of October!

Brandon Mueller

## 2024 ISCA Annual Meeting Recap

Submitted by Brandon Mueller

Thirty-eight (38) people were in attendance for the Illinois Soil Classifiers Association's 49th Annual Meeting that took place on March 6, 2024 at the I Hotel & Conference Center in Champaign. The last council meeting before the "changing-of-the-guard" occurred before lunch. The lunch for this year's meeting was catered by the I Hotel & Conference Center. After lunch was finished, Liz Miernicki gave a brief description of The Burton W. Ray Scholarship Award and announced the 2023 winner, University of Illinois



at Urbana-Champaign student, Joshua D'Avola. Following the conclusion of the Burton W. Ray Scholarship Award, Bob Oja briefly described the inaugural ISCA Student Scholarship Award that had recently been developed by the Public Relations and Education Committee. To make a long story short, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign student, Thomas Alwardt, was declared the recipient of this new scholarship award.



This year's guest speaker was Luke Jones, a farmer in west central Illinois who also works as a consultant with Understanding Ag. Understanding Ag is a regenerative agricultural consulting company that is comprised of farmers and ranchers who help educate and mentor their clients on the principles and practices of regenerative agriculture. Luke spoke about his own background as a farmer and how he came to embrace the regenerative agriculture model. He also presented on the overall importance and significance of implementing regenerative agriculture practices from both environmental and economical stand-

points, and highlighted some of the success stories he had been a part of.

The annual business meeting followed Luke's presentation in which the chairpersons of each ISCA committee provided their annual report. A few of the key points from the business meeting reports were that the total number of ISCA members had increased by five, and the total number of ISCA certified members had decreased by two over the course of the year. We welcomed nine new members into the association, but no members had become newly certified. Lastly, the association's financial status experienced close to a \$6,000 increase, mainly due to the success of the 2023 Hydric Soils Workshop and the soil texture kit program.

## 2024 ISCA Annual Meeting Recap

Submitted by Brandon Mueller



Following the business meeting reports, State Conservationist, Tammy Willis, spoke about her urban agriculture initiative, and State Soil Scientist, Ron Collman, gave us an update on the projects that NRCS had been working on and was involved with.

Sam Indorante and Brad Cate provided some background information and a status report on the recently proposed Aquasols order, and following their introduction, a thoughtful and lively discussion ensued over the potential impact that this order proposal might have.

Mary Beth Falsey reviewed the 2024 budget that she and the Finance Committee put together, and the budget was voted on and approved. Bob McLeese was the MC for the Bent Auger Award again this year, filling in for Andrew Margenot who was selected as last year's Bent Auger Award recipient. The Bent Auger Award was awarded to Caden LaFond, a new member to ISCA. Congratulations Caden! Liz Miernicki, Bob Oja, and William R. Kreznor & Associates provided door prizes this year, and there were so many door prizes to be won that nearly everyone in attendance left the meeting as a winner.

After the door prizes were awarded, Liz Miernicki announced this year's elections results. Alicia Metzger was nominated for the position of President-Elect and Ashtyn Stufflebeam was nominated as the new Vice President. Congratulations to both Alicia and Ashtyn! Finally, Bob Oja shared some final words before passing the gavel onto Brandon Mueller, the 2024-2025 ISCA President. After a few brief comments from Brandon about the upcoming year, the meeting came to an end after a loud bang of the gavel! Thank you to all who could attend and to all who helped make this year's meeting possible!



## Updates from the ISCA Certification Board

Submitted by Bill Kreznor

### Notes from the ISCA Certification Board by Bill Kreznor, CPSC, Secretary-Treasurer

The 2024-2025 ISCA Certification Board includes Scott Wiesbrook (Chair), Josh Litwiller (Vice-chair), Bill Kreznor (Secretary-Treasurer), and members Jerry Berning, Josh Elmer, and Galen Litwiller. The terms of Wiesbrook and Kreznor will expire in 2025; Berning and Elmer in 2026, and G. Litwiller and J. Litwiller in 2027.

The Board is pleased to announce that Jacob Rumbold successfully completed the requirements for certification on 30 April and is now a Certified Professional Soil Classifier. Congratulations to Jacob! There are currently two other applications in the works.

The Board has processed a number of PDH submissions since late last year. At the end of December of this year, only one of the current 39 CPSCs will need to submit their PDHS for the 5-year renewal. However, at the end of December 2025, 15 of the current 39 CPSCs will need to submit their PDHs for renewal. On behalf of the current Board, I ask that those CPSCs on the December 2025 cycle consider submitting your PDHs early: later this year or early in 2025 rather than waiting until December of next year. This will allow the Board ample time to review your PDHs, identify any shortcomings in time for you to address them, and allow you to continue practicing as a CPSC.

## Call for Nominees—2025 ISCA Election

Submitted by Bob Oja

Calling all ISCA Members! Get in on all the election activity by considering running for one of three offices ISCA will have open this upcoming election,: President Elect, Vice-President, and Secretary. In order to run for a position, you must be a Full or Honorary Member of ISCA in good standing. Additional responsibilities for each position are provided below.

- Duties of the President Elect include serving on the Ethics, Certification, and Membership Committee. The President Elect will also appoint chairpersons for most of the standing committees as he/she transitions into becoming president after 1 year. Presidential duties include presiding over Council and Association meetings. He/she will also conduct the business of the Association under the direction of the Council.
- Duties of the Vice President include being the chairperson of the Finance Committee and in the absence or disability of the President, the Vice President would take over.

**Lastly, but certainly without noting, Scott Wiesbrook will be stepping down from his position as Secretary after many years. Thank you, Scott, for all of your years of commitment and a job well done!**

- Some of the duties of the Secretary include keeping a record of membership and collecting yearly dues. The Secretary is also charged with keeping the minutes of Council and Association Meetings. The term is three years.

All three positions include membership on the Executive Council and will begin following the 2025 Annual Meeting election results announcement.

I hope all of you will consider running for one of these three positions. It is still early, and we will not need names until later this year but it is never too early to send in your name!



## Summary of the Proposed Change to Soil Taxonomy

Submitted by Alicia Metzger and Brandon Mueller

You may or may not be aware of a current proposed Change to Soil Taxonomy under review to include a new soil order, Aquasols. The creation of this new soil order would have profound effects on the classification systems that have been in place and implemented for many decades and the soil orders found throughout Illinois. While the theoretical argument can be made for marine soils located along the coastlines of the United States, to then include all terrestrial soils as well is a stretch to say the least. ISCA members, including Past President Bob Oja, current President, Brandon Mueller, and President-Elect Alicia Metzger, Mark Bramstedt, Don Fehrenbacher, Brad Cate, and others, formed an Aquasols Committee to provide their insight and expertise in order to draft a response letter to the proposal contact at NRCS USDA, Dr. Joey Shaw. Much to the surprise of the Aquasols Committee members, Mr. Shaw provided a thoughtful and well received response requesting the inclusion of ISCA's letter in a response to the proposal's authors.

A copy of the draft letter sent to Mr. Shaw are included on the next page and a summary of the proposed changes from the addition of the Aquasols order to Soil Taxonomy are below.

### Changes to Soil Taxonomy through the addition of Aquasols:

- Will place hydrology indicators over all other soil forming factors
- Any soil with hydrology indicators within the upper 12" of the soil profile are considered Aquasols
- Emphasize the creation of a wet soil order as a "foundation and structure of a range of unique and valued ecosystems. Creating a wet soil order explicitly recognizes the values and functions of these soils which serve as the core of all soil interpretations."
- A loss of information in soil taxonomy by reducing it down to whether a soil is "wet or not" over other taxonomic functions
- No information on the effect the change will have on regulatory programs, including wetlands, as the proposal specifically states the Waters of the U.S. rule as a driving factor

## Summary of the Proposed Change to Soil Taxonomy

Submitted by Alicia Metzger and Brandon Mueller



April 8, 2024

Dr. Joey Shaw  
USDA/NRCS National Leader for Soil Taxonomy  
Room 4816 South Building  
14<sup>th</sup> & Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dr. Shaw,

The Illinois Soil Classifiers Association (ISCA) has reviewed the proposed Aquasols order and supporting documentation. ISCA members oppose the current proposal to add the Aquasols order to Soil Taxonomy in any format that applies to terrestrial soils. Our main concern is that the emphasis of hydrology over genesis will not improve but degrade the utility and cohesion of Soil Taxonomy. The proposed change will serve to reduce the information conveyed by taxonomy at the suborder through subgroup levels, will emphasize hydrology over all other soil genetic and morphological characteristics, and will be in conflict with many of the tenets of soil taxonomy.

### Taxonomic Development and Guy Smith

The proposal's authors begin by quoting the subtitle of Soil Taxonomy, "A Basic System for Making and Interpreting Soil Surveys", as proof that interpretive groups should define taxa, but Soil Taxonomy states the opposite.<sup>1</sup> The general term "classification includes taxonomy, but it also includes the grouping of soils according to limitations that affect specific purposes." "For example, one might want a group that includes all soils that are water logged..." but "no matter how a single hierarchy is arranged, it is not possible to have all desired groups. Therefore, no single hierarchy can best serve all our purposes." Soil Taxonomy cannot be defined by an interpretive grouping but should operate separately. The proposal states that the creation of the hydric soils criteria was unfortunate, but it is exactly what Taxonomy envisioned, an example of a grouping or classification of multiple taxa for a specific purpose.

The authors further state, "Adopting a wet soil order would therefore emphasize the importance of soil interpretations at the highest level in Soil Taxonomy." But again, there is no place in Soil Taxonomy where interpretations or interpretive groups are a driving force in defining taxa at the level. The order is defined as "differentiated by the presence or absence of diagnostic horizons or features that reflect soil-forming processes." Perhaps the authors want to use depth to water table as a soil-forming process, when it is really the product of a combination of climate and topography. By using depth to water table at the order level, they have confused the property or feature with the processes that created it and adopted the grouping as a definition. This was and is not the purpose of Soil Taxonomy.

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<sup>1</sup> Soil Survey Staff. 1999. *Soil taxonomy: A basic system of soil classification for making and interpreting soil surveys*. 2nd edition. Natural Resources Conservation Service. U.S. Department of Agriculture Handbook 436.



## Summary of the Proposed Change to Soil Taxonomy

Submitted by Alicia Metzger and Brandon Mueller

Soil Taxonomy states that Mollisols “form under grass in climates that have a moderate to pronounced seasonal moisture deficit.” This deficit created an epipedon that was dark but was made up of mineral not organic soil material. This moisture deficit and the oxidation of plant material during significant times of the year created the diagnostic horizon that defines Mollisols, including Aquolls, before the installation of artificial drainage.

Invoking the ghost of Guy Smith, the authors ignored Dr. Smith’s response to the question, “Why not an aquic order?” He considered the hypothetical combination of drained Aquolls and drained Aquults into an aquic order. He concluded “that if we established an order of the aquic great groups, we would have some very strange bedfellows”<sup>2</sup> based on just these two orders’ differences. He went on to say, “We would be better off to keep the Aquolls with the other Mollisols and the Aquults with the other Ultisols.” This is true of the other orders that the proposal in question combines into the Aquasols. In other words, creating an aquic order as proposed would constitute a hodgepodge of dissimilar soils.

### Data-Driven Justification

Requests for other groundwater-driven interpretations, such as drainage class, basements, depth to water table, hydric soil rating, and hydrologic soil group, will not be simplified with the introduction of the Aquasols order. These interpretations do not currently relate well to taxonomy, nor would they be enhanced. Aquic suborders, great groups, and subgroups are currently quite divergent within and especially between orders. The only hydrologic clarification that Aquasols would bring is that aquic conditions are present within (or above) the upper 30cm (a depth tied to current regulatory schemes). More utility/parity could be gained between and among orders with a careful restructuring of existing suborder or lower classifications.

Other purported justifications include that the five top soil information requests involve depth to water table/aquic conditions. However, the first example, Hydrologic Soil Group, actually refers to the propensity of a soil to foster runoff as it relates to the potential for soil erosion. These are mainly functions of topography and infiltration, with soil wetness being only one parameter. The authors also cite farmland classification as being dependent on depth to water table, but it is rather based on the categories of Prime, Statewide Important, and Unique Farmland based on their suitability “to produce food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops.” Indeed, in tailoring Taxonomy, a scientific system, to temporal regulatory schemes and classifications, the seeds are planted for future incompatibility. Regulations often change in lockstep with political goals, with or without the input of science.

### Taxonomy and Ecosystem Services

The authors tout wetness as “the foundation and structure of a range of unique and valued ecosystems. Creating a wet soil order explicitly recognizes the values and functions of these soils which serve as the core of all soil interpretations.” This is a conveniently partial truth in that wetness or the occurrence of intermediate conditions, such as moderately wet through moderately dry, also fosters unique associated ecosystems. Prairie ecosystems, due to soil and climatic conditions, are unique to Mollisols over a variety of hydrologic conditions. It does not follow that creation of an Aquasols order will aid ecosystem characterization any more than the current system in terrestrial landscapes.

As one follows a hydrosequence/catena down the landscape, it is illogical that soil orders must also change when wetness is only one of the many variables that makes “a soil” and its associated ecosystem. Again, as Guy Smith predicted, we will have “strange bedfellows.” Creating differing soil

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Soil Conservation Service, “The Guy Smith Interviews: Rationale for Concepts in Soil Taxonomy” (1986). *Natural Resources-Planning, Management, and Conservation*. Paper 1. [https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/govdocs\\_nr/1](https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/govdocs_nr/1)

## Summary of the Proposed Change to Soil Taxonomy

Submitted by Alicia Metzger and Brandon Mueller

orders tied to one and only one characteristic rather than multiple soil-forming factors will unnecessarily complicate or obscure relevance of the hydrosequence/catena.

### Loss of Information and Reclassification of Hydrology

We concur with Dr. Darrell Schulze's (Purdue) observations<sup>3</sup> that there will be a loss of conveyed information in the current Aquasols scheme while ambiguity will be introduced regarding a soil's hydric or nonhydric status. Taxonomy is the language soil scientists converse in. It implies much more than how wet the soils are. Immediately apparent is that the recognition of endosaturation vs episaturation, aeric and pachic subgroups, fragipans deeper than 40cm, and likely more are lost under this proposal. Dr. Schulze also observed that series not considered hydric (Blount-Aeric Epiaqualfs) reclassify as Typic Densileptaqs along with a significant loss of important information. A cursory survey of somewhat poorly drained Mollisols indicates that the Amana, Raub, Rowley, Nevin, Nicolet, Ottosen, Merton, Fostoria, Crippen, and Arkton series will fall within the proposed Mollihumaqs subgroup.

The point is that insufficient research or testing has been conducted of soils at the very least in the Mollisols and Alfisols orders. In contrast with proposals for other new soil orders, input has not been widely solicited from states or regions expected to incur significant impacts as a result of adoption. *Stated simply, needed research is incomplete.*

### Summary of Concerns

While creating the Aquasols order may be perceived by some as an advancement in the utility of taxonomy, its application to terrestrial soils among all existing orders save Gelisols and Histosols is emphatically not. ISCA feels adoption of the Aquasols order, as currently proposed, will reduce rather than improve the utility of Soil Taxonomy if applied to terrestrial soils. There is little debate from us that the Wassaqs and Peraqs Aquasol suborders have a place in Soil Taxonomy. However, with the adoption of the other proposed suborders, there is little information regarding impacts to terrestrial soils, possible creation of legacy suborders, existing pedon databases, soil maps, or possible effects on existing regulatory programs. Should Aquasols be generically characterized as waters of the U.S., the potential for widespread regulatory consequences to local, state, and Federal regulations is far reaching and also has apparently not been considered.

In addition to those of Dr. Schulze, we fully concur with the concerns and recommendations of the Taxonomy Committee Report from the 2023 National Cooperative Soil Survey Conference.<sup>4</sup>

Tendered for your consideration,

The Illinois Soil Classifiers Association  
(by: Brandon Mueller, President)

<sup>3</sup> <https://nrcs.app.box.com/s/my3lhuiiu9wenlycuottbep5ff63pqq/file/1255200676465>

<sup>4</sup> <https://nrcs.app.box.com/s/ne2f2eluqzllrip99s5c6xeowifp2s/file/1317110022805?sb=/details>

## 2024 National Collegiate Soil Judging Competition

Submitted by Liz Miernicki

The 2024 National Collegiate Soil Judging Contest took place in Ames, Iowa this past April. Iowa State University hosted the six-day competition in Story and Marshall counties. The University of Illinois was one of 25 schools that competed. Below is a list of competitors:

Arkansas	Maryland	University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Auburn	Mizzou	University of Wisconsin – Platteville
Cal Poly	NC State	University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point
Clemson	New Mexico	University of Tennessee – Knoxville
Colorado State	Penn State	Utah
Del Valley	Purdue	Virginia Tech
Fresno	Texas A&M	West Texas A&M
Idaho	University of Delaware	
Illinois	University of Minnesota	

The first four days were dedicated to practice, followed by the competition, where students competed both individually and as a team. Students mostly described Mollisols and Alfisols, but a couple of Inceptisols made it into the mix.

Overall, the University of Illinois placed 13th in the competition, with Virginia Tech University winning. The University of Illinois Soil Judging Team placed first in the team judging category with a total score of 572! The team was led by head coach Liz Miernicki and assistant coach Scott Wiesbrook.

Thank you to ISCA and Kreznor & Associates for the financial support! We appreciate it more than you know. We're looking forward to the Region 3 Collegiate Soil Judging Contest this Fall in Carbondale, Illinois.





## 2024 National Collegiate Soil Judging Competition Results

Submitted by Liz Miernicki

### Team Judging Scores:

Team Judging	Score	Rank
Illinois	572	1st
University of Nebraska - Lincoln	547	2nd
Maryland	543	3rd
Idaho	532	4th
UT Knoxville	532	7th
Penn State	532	6th
Arkansas	532	5th
UW Platteville	531	8th
Utah	530	9th
Purdue	528	10th



## 2024 National Collegiate Soil Judging Competition Results

Submitted by Liz Miernicki

Overall rankings of the 25 schools:

Team	Overall score
Virginia tech	3044
University of Nebraska - Lincoln	3011
UW Platteville	2986
Purdue	2971
NC State	2970
Idaho	2951
Cal Poly	2932
U-Delaware	2918
Maryland	2911
Arkansas	2906
UW Stevens point	2906
UT Knoxville	2869
Mizzou	2868
Illinois	2863
Clemson	2849
University of Minnesota	2848
Penn State	2816
Auburn	2805
Del Valley	2797
West TX A&M	2776
New Mexico	2762
Colorado State	2748
TX A&M	2727
Utah	2687
Fresno	2628



## 2024 Fall Meeting Announcement

Submitted by Brandon Mueller

The 2024 Fall Meeting will take place on Wednesday, October 2nd, 2024 at Giant City State Park Lodge in Makanda, Illinois. Please join us for presentations by geologist Joe Devera with the Illinois State Geologic Survey, Shawnee National Forest archaeologist Heather Carey with the U.S. Forest Service, and Public Service Administrator Kristi Dodson with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Office of Mines & Minerals – Land Reclamation Division.

The speakers will talk about the geologic history of Southern Illinois and ongoing research tied to its unique geology, the history behind the Shawnee National Forest and current projects going on within the forest, and the history of coal mining and the evolution of the land reclamation process in Southern Illinois.

The afternoon will be spent viewing and discussing several soil pits at Southern Illinois University's scenic Touch of Nature Outdoor Education Center.



**2024 ISCA Fall Meeting**  
**Wednesday October 2, 2024**

10 am—4 pm

Giant City State Park Lodge  
406 Giant City Lodge Road  
Makanda, Illinois

Cost: \$25 per person / \$15 Student Members

Lunch will be provided

ONLINE REGISTRATION IS AVAILABLE AT <https://www.illinoissoils.org/announcements/>

## 2024 Fall Meeting Agenda

Submitted by Brandon Mueller

9:30—10:00 am      Registration

10:00 am—12:30 pm      Guest Speakers

**JOSEPH A. DEVERA**  
PRINCIPAL RESEARCH SCIENTIST IN PALE-  
ONTOLOGY AND FIELD GEOLOGIST  
ILLINOIS STATE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

**HEATHER CAREY**  
ARCHAEOLOGIST  
U.S. FOREST SERVICE  
SHAWNEE NATIONAL FOREST

**KRISTI DODSON**  
PUBLIC SERVICE ADMINISTRATOR, ILLI-  
NOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RE-  
SOURCES  
OFFICE OF MINES AND MINERALS  
LAND RECLAMATION DIVISION

12:30pm      Invocation/Lunch

1:30pm      Travel to Soil Pits at Touch of Nature Out-  
door Education Center

## 2024 Fall Meeting Speakers

Submitted by Brandon Mueller

### Joseph A. Devera

Joseph A. Devera received a BS in Geology from Northern Illinois University in Dekalb, IL in 1980. He then received his MS in Geology from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale in 1986. Joseph worked with Exploration Services as a Well Site Geologist in the Illinois Basin prior to starting as a Field Geologist with the Illinois State Geological Survey (ISGS) in 1985. Since then, he has served as ISGS Senior Paleontologist and Field Geologist from 2008-2016 and was promoted in 2016 to his current position as the Principal Research Scientist in Paleontology and Field Geology. Joseph started as an Adjunct Professor at SIU in 2004 where he teaches a variety of classes – mineralogy, paleontology, physical geology, carbonate petrography, and introduction to field geology. Mr. Devera has authored or co-authored over fifty 7.5' geologic quadrangles in Illinois including Southern Illinois, St. Louis Metro East area, central Illinois, and currently the Quad Cities area. He has also worked in West Texas, New Mexico, and Morocco. His main interests consist of geologic mapping, invertebrate paleontology, Paleozoic depositional systems, ichnology, and stratigraphy.

### Heather Carey

Heather Carey has been a professional archaeologist working for the U.S. Forest Service – Shawnee National Forest for the past twenty-one years. She received a BS in Historic Preservation and a MA in Anthropology and currently serves as the Forest's Heritage Program Manager and Tribal Liaison. Heather's archaeological career has been focused on cultural resource management, which has provided her broad experience and knowledge in a variety of areas. She has worked at both pre-contact and historic period sites, is familiar with cultural resource laws and compliance, manages numerous archaeological collections, and communicates archaeological information to others through interpretation and outreach. Heather is also responsible for maintaining positive relationships and dialogue with eleven federally recognized tribal partners. In addition, she serves as President of the Illinois Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association.

### Kristi Dodson

Kristi serves as the Public Service Administrator with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Office of Mines & Minerals – Land Reclamation Division (LRD). She has been employed with the LRD for the past 10 years stationed in the Northern District Office in Springfield, Illinois. She started her career with LRD as a Land Reclamation Specialist (inspector) and then moved to a Wildlife Technical Specialist role in 2016. Kristi has served as the Bond Unit Manager, the GIS Unit Manager, and the Soil Units Manager for the past 6 years. Her education background consists of a Master of Science in Biology from Sul Ross State University in Alpine, Texas and a Master of Arts in Environmental Planning and Management from the University of Illinois at Springfield. Prior to moving to Illinois and joining the LRD, Kristi worked as an Assistant Professor of Biology (and an occasion Instructor in the Physical Education Department) at South Plains College in Levelland, Texas. Kristi and her husband enjoy boating, biking, hiking, gardening, cooking, and playing with their cats.

## 2024 Fall Meeting Lodging and Recreational Activities

Submitted by Brandon Mueller

There are plenty of options for lodging in the form of hotels throughout the Carbondale area. Most of these hotels are located along Route 13, but it should be noted that it is still about a 30 minute drive south from Carbondale to arrive at Giant City State Park Lodge. For those of you looking for a shorter morning commute to the lodge, it is suggested that you look into either cabins, rooms, or campsites at Giant City State Park or Touch of Nature Outdoor Education Center.

Giant City State Park Lodge has three types/styles of cabins that they offer to their guests. The modest “historic cabins” are offered at a rate of \$90/night, the “prairie cabins” are a little more spacious and are offered at a rate of \$110/night, and the larger and more scenic “bluff cabins” are offered at a rate of \$150/night. To see for yourselves or to book one of these cabins follow this link: <https://giantcitylodge.com/cabins/> or you may also contact the lodge in order to book a cabin by calling 618-457-4921.

Touch of Nature Outdoor Education Center has several cabins as well as several lodges with plenty of available rooms to stay at for your trip down to Southern Illinois. Follow this link: <https://ton.siu.edu/hospitality-services/lodging.php> to view their available lodging options, and you can also get in contact with a member of their staff by calling 618-453-1121 or by emailing them at ton@siu.edu.

With this year’s Fall Meeting taking place during the middle of the week, some of you may feel inclined to spend the rest of the week and the following weekend in beautiful Southern Illinois during the initiation of fall colors. In terms of outdoor activities and recreation, there is almost an endless supply of things to do in and around the Carbondale area. Giant City State Park, Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge, the River to River Trail, the Shawnee National Forest, Marberry Arboretum, and Lake Murphysboro State Park are just a few of the destinations that offer a numerous amount of hiking and biking trails and access to water related activities. Furthermore, there are plenty of wineries, distilleries, breweries, BBQ restaurants, apple orchards, and golf courses to visit throughout the area in case you need any more of an incentive to stay in Southern Illinois longer than one day.

# ISCA 2024 FALL WORKSHOP & MEETING

**Location:** Giant City State Park Lodge  
460 Giant City Lodge Road  
Makanda, IL 62958

**Date:** Wednesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024



## REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS SEPTEMBER 25

At this meeting, we will hear from three guest speakers to learn more about the rich history of the Shawnee National Forest as well as the complex geologic history of Southern Illinois as a whole. Additional discussion will be presented on coal mining and the evolution of the land reclamation process in Southern Illinois.

Following lunch, an afternoon field activity will be led by local experts as we have the opportunity to visit Southern Illinois University's scenic Touch of Nature Outdoor Education Center for the purposes of viewing and discussing several soil pits.

Cabins, rooms, and campsites are available to reserve at your own expense at Giant City State Park and Touch of Nature Outdoor Education Center. Call **618-457-4921** to get in contact with Giant City State Park Lodge or **618-453-1121** to get in contact with Touch of Nature Outdoor Education Center.

Please **MAIL** this registration form  
(AND your check) to:

Robert Tegeler  
124 Joan Drive  
Divernon, IL 62530

**Registration Deadline: September 25th**

**ALL ATTENDEES MUST REGISTER**

*\$25 per person / \$15 per student*

Family style Chicken Dinner will be provided for lunch  
with cobbler for dessert

ONLINE REGISTRATION is available at <https://www.illinoissoils.org/announcements/>

Name	Email Address	Company/State

Total Count: #

Total Payment Payable to ISCA : \$



## Updates from the Newsletter Committee

Submitted by Alicia Metzger

You may have noticed the Newsletter got a little update. Let us know if you like the new color scheme that closely matches the Illinois Soil Classifiers Association website. As always, this is YOUR newsletter and your feedback is greatly appreciated!

Lastly, I will be taking over as President of ISCA in March of 2025 and will be looking for someone to take over as Chairman of the Newsletter Committee. Please consider submitting your name to the Newsletter Committee and Bob Oja.

Thank you!

Alicia Metzger

[www.illinoissoils.org](http://www.illinoissoils.org)

ISCA Newsletter Staff

Alicia Metzger,  
Chairperson

Email:  
[Newsletter@illinoissoils.org](mailto:Newsletter@illinoissoils.org)

### 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. It can be done, but increases work load for the committee.

The Newsletter Committee reserves the right to make edits/ corrections deemed appropriate

### Publication Schedule

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



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.

### **ISCA on Facebook and Twitter**

For those of you who want to keep in touch with ISCA members and others interested in soils in Illinois, join our group on Facebook or Twitter. Search Facebook for "Illinois Soil Classifiers Association" or Twitter for @ISCA\_Soil. Anyone may post messages, announcements, pictures or events that may be of interest to our membership. These are great platforms for posting information and meetings of other associations or organizations who use soil information. This is also a great place to post pictures of recent projects, interesting soils, or maybe something unrelated to soils, but of general interest to the membership. If you don't have Facebook or Twitter, it is easy to set up. Just go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) or [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com) and follow the instructions. Unfortunately, these sites are restricted on some government computers, so many of you will need to do this at home. Contact [webmaster@illinoissoils.org](mailto:webmaster@illinoissoils.org) if you have any difficulty or if you have any questions or comments.

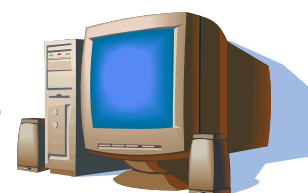


### **ISCA Newsletter Committee is looking for pictures of its members, past or present, to include in future newsletters!**

Submissions can be sent electronically or hard copy to the staff address, see above and left. Please include a narrative for the caption! If hard copies are sent please indicate, if they are to be returned otherwise photographs will be retained in an archive photos file.

### **[www.illinoissoils.org](http://www.illinoissoils.org)**

New, exciting links have been added to the "Announcements" page on our website. Be sure to bookmark this page. It is an excellent resource to keep you informed on the latest soils issues. Better yet... make it your home page!



ISCA Newsletter  
46W951 Country Lane  
Maple Park, IL 60151

Visit the ISCA website for access to all newsletters  
<https://www.illinoissoils.org/member-resources/newsletter/>

## Change of Address Form

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Mail to: Scott Wiesbrook, ISCA Secretary, 1816 S. Oak St., IL 61820