



ILLINOIS SOIL CLASSIFIERS ASSOCIATION

Message from the President

As the 2026 Annual Meeting approaches and my term as President comes to a close, I want to thank you as members for allowing me to serve our Association during such a landmark year. Fifty years is quite an accomplishment and while I am grateful to be a member of ISCA, I am more grateful to have been trusted to help lead it and guide it into year fifty-one. When I started attending ISCA meetings in 2007 – 2008, I was an undergraduate student and participant on the Northern Illinois Soil Judging team. As I reflect back on that moment I can honestly say, that young student never would have imagined the honor, opportunity, and growth this Association has given me over the last 19 years. I am forever grateful to you, my colleagues, who have shared your expertise, wisdom, learning experiences, guidance, and passion with me personally, but also with ISCA. I have witnessed the dedication of our members have to keep our Association relevant and cherish the expertise we carry as a “team” of soil scientists.

When I look ahead, I hope we continue to pave the way for ISCA to be able to celebrate another 50 years! I am optimistic that we will remain important and vital to the protection and health of Illinois soils. I hope we continue to share the passion and love we carry for our profession with those outside of our world, I hope we can continue to stand up and be heard during those rare opportunities where we get to exercise our opinion and expertise. In the last 10 years or so, ISCA has added mentorship/apprenticeship opportunities, a student scholarship, and a Hydric Soils Course, among many others, to the list of services we offer. We have also been able to connect with local regulatory agencies such as DuPage and Lake County Stormwater Management, the Illinois Health Department, and various high schools and colleges throughout the state to offer training, field experience, and educational presentations. As members, I remind you that we are only as good as the volunteers are willing to contribute, and we are never short of volunteerism opportunities! I look down the line and see fewer and fewer spots being filled in as members begin to retire and worry about losing that knowledge. Soil science has changed a lot over the last 50 years, and many of those practicing today have never



had the opportunity to conduct a soil survey and likely will not be able to. University courses are dwindling, and less students seem to be entering the Soil Science world. While I do not mean to sound dismal, I hope to encourage you. Contact the Council and offer your time, as little or much as possible. You can write an article or share a story or photos with the Newsletter Committee. Send Bill, ISCA’s Historian, some old photos or information to be documented in our archive. Offer to give a short presentation at an Annual or Fall meeting. Offer time assisting with field days or competitions.

Alicia

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2026 Annual Meeting

Location: Illinois Natural History Survey
1816 South Oak Street
Champaign, Illinois 61820

Date: Saturday, March 21, 2026 at 11:00am

2026 Annual Meeting Agenda

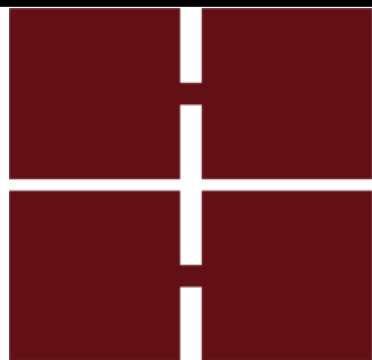
Council Meeting.....	10:30AM
Registration.....	11:00AM
Opening Remarks.....	11:45AM
Invocation and Lunch	12:00PM
2025 Burton W. Ray Scholarship Award.....	1:00PM
2025 Student Scholarship Award	1:00PM
Guest Speaker – Dr. Alfred Hartemink	1:10PM
Business Meeting	2:00PM

Register Online at <https://illinoissoils.org/announce/>

\$30 per person / \$10 per student

Lunch and dessert will be provided

Registration Deadline: March 12, 2026



HENDRICK HOUSE

~ CELEBRATING 75 YEARS ~

Buffet Menu
catering by Hendrick House

Choice of 3 Entrees

- Baked Ziti (Cheese – Vegetarian)
- Pulled BBQ Pork
- Roasted Chicken Breast

Sides

- Roasted Potatoes
- Buttered Corn
- Garden Salad

Drinks provided

Dessert

Double Chocolate Brownies / Assorted Cookies

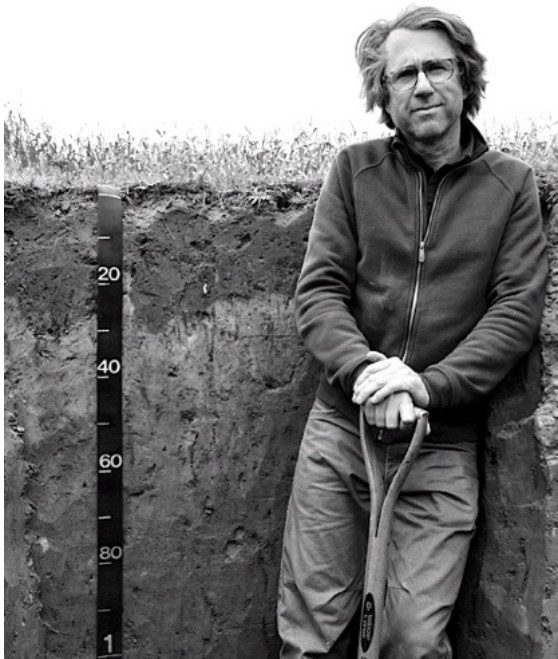
Dr. Alfred Hartemink, Guest Speaker

Beyond horizons: the evolution of soil profile studies

Alfred E. Hartemink

University of Wisconsin - Madison, Department of Soil & Environmental Sciences, FD Hole Soils Lab, 1525 Observatory Drive, Madison, WI 53706 USA. E-mail: hartemink@wisc.edu

Soil profiles are vertical sequences of horizons reflecting physical, chemical, and biological processes. Studying them reveals soil formation, properties, and ecosystem functions. Over the past two centuries, our understanding has evolved from viewing soil as simple weathered rock to recognizing it as a dynamic natural body shaped by climate, organisms, parent material, relief, and time. The twentieth century emphasized systematic description, classification, and functional interpretation, linking horizons to water, nutrient, and energy fluxes. Today, soil profiles are seen as four-dimensional (x, y, z plus time), evolving systems, studied using field observation, remote sensing, digital soil morphometrics, and molecular techniques. An overview is presented of the measurement of soil properties and morphometric characteristics, soil depth functions, and soil profile imaging and mapping.



Alfred Hartemink is Professor of Soil Science at the University of Wisconsin - Madison since 2011. His work is guided by a long fascination with the soil profile – how it can be read, sensed, and understood – ranging from the use of proximal soil sensors to the stewardship of soil carbon in natural and agricultural landscapes. Alongside his scientific research, he has written extensively on the intellectual currents that have shaped soil science.

Candidates for Executive Council Office

For President-elect

Galen Litwiller -

Galen Litwiller, 59, started working in soil classification under Lester Bushue in 2012. Since earning ISCA certification in 2015, he has worked on both sides of the IL-IN border providing on-site soil evaluations to homeowners and contractors. He enjoys meeting new people and helping in the planning of new homes. He has a BS and MS in Agronomy/Soils from the University of Illinois. He served in Honduras (94-97) as an agricultural extensionist with Mennonite Central Committee, promoting soil conservation and crop production systems. He later returned to the family farming operation at Paxton, IL, and built houses in partnership with his parents. He and his wife, Clair, married in 1992 and have 3 sons, 3 daughters, and 2 grandchildren. They are active in homeschooling and church activities. Galen is thankful for the support that fellow ISCA classifiers have given him over many years and hopes to keep working as long as Lester did!

Scott Wiesbrook -

Received a B.S. in Agricultural Science with an emphasis in Soils in 1996 from the University of Illinois. He spent two more years at UI working on an M.S. under Dr. Robert Darmody before accepting a position at the Illinois Natural History Survey as a soil/wetland scientist. Since 1998, Scott has conducted wetland delineations, assessed potential sites for wetland mitigation, and monitored, created, and restored wetlands for INHS. He is currently the Associate Project Leader for Soils in the Wetland Science Program, which involves some database maintenance, supervisory responsibilities, and report reviewing; in addition to actually getting to map soils and wetlands. He has coached/assisted with the U of I soil judging team since 2004, and has also helped coach Black Hawk College, East Campus to 12 NACTA Soil Judging National Championships (2 year division) since 2000. He joined ISCA in 2008, and has served on the Certification Board, as well as a term as vice president, 3 terms as secretary, 3 terms on the finance committee, and several terms on the ethics, certification and membership committee.

For Treasurer

Robert Tegeler -

Received a BS in Resource Management with a Soil Science Minor from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, in 1976. He began working with the Soil Conservation Service (SCS)/ Natural Resources Conservation Service(NRCS) in 1976 as a Soil Scientist, student trainee. In January 1977, Bob began working full time with SCS on the Champaign County soil survey, and over the years worked on numerous county soil surveys in Illinois. He was the Springfield MLRA Soil Survey Office Leader upon retirement from NRCS in 2019. In 2003, Bob started conducting soil investigations for septic systems on a part time basis, and he is continuing to do these types of soil investigations in central Illinois. Bob became a member of ISCA in 1977. He is currently finishing up his first three year term as Treasurer, but over the years he has also held the office of Secretary three different times, Vice president once, and was a member of the Certification Board for a three year term, serving as Secretary-Treasurer for 2 years.

Candidates for Executive Council Office (continued)

For Vice President

Kenneth Anderson -

Is a Certified Professional Soil Classifier and longtime member of ISCA, serving previously on the Executive Council. Ken started a new chapter in April 2022 as an Environmental Project Manager for Engineering Resource Associates, Inc., and has transitioned to Business Development Coordinator. Prior to this transition, Ken worked as Chief of Planning and Operations for the Forest Preserve District of Kane County for over 3.5 years. Before this, Ken spent 30 years working for Kane County in various positions from Director of the Kane County Department of Environmental and Water Resources to a Soil Scientist/Planner with the Kane County Development Department. He is blessed with a beautiful wife and 3 daughters, 1 still in college. He has a Bachelor of Science in Watershed Management and Natural Resource Management with a minor in Soil Science from the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. He enjoys fishing, golfing, leading a community group at his church, spending time in the Lord's creation, and HT time.

Dr. Eric Brevik -

Is a Professor of Soil Science and Geology at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIU). He received his bachelor's and master's degrees in geology from the University of North Dakota and his PhD in soil science from Iowa State University. He has over 25 years of experience in higher education at Valdosta State University (Georgia), Dickinson State University (North Dakota), and SIU. This time has included 6 years as a department chair and 3.5 years as a college dean. Eric teaches an array of courses at the upper undergraduate and graduate level, including soil genesis, morphology, and classification; soil fertility; soil physical properties; soil description and interpretation; and scientific communication. His research interests include soil genesis, soil mapping, links between soils and geology, human impacts on the soil resource, science education, and soil science history. In his spare time Eric enjoys travel, relaxing at the lake, and spending time with his family.

Jacob Rumbold -

Holds a bachelor's degree in Crop and Soil Science from Illinois State University (2022) and is a Certified Professional Soil Classifier with ISCA (2024). He has worked in the field of soil science with Soil Analysis (Bill Teater, Josh Litwiller) for 6 years and has conducted soil investigations in more than 40 counties across Illinois. He lives in and works out of Tremont, IL. When he's not outdoors conducting soil investigations, Jacob enjoys spending time with family and friends, playing with his three young children, motorcycling, and playing sports.

Ballot for ISCA Executive Council Officers

- Voting rights are for Full Members only.
- Ballots can be emailed, mailed, or brought to the Annual Meeting.
- Please vote for one candidate for each office by placing an **X** next to the name.
- Biographies about each candidate are provided on the previous pages.
- Write-in candidates must have agreed to run for that office, prior to election.

VOTING OPTIONS:

1. Email ballot to miernic2@illinois.edu - Scan or photograph your ballot and send as an attachment to the email with "Ballot" in the subject line. The ballot will be stored until virtually "opened" by the Nominations Committee without compromising your secrecy.
2. Mail ballot to:

Illinois Natural History Survey
 c/o Liz Miernicki
 1816 S. Oak Street
 Champaign, IL 61820

Seal ballot in a separate envelope marked "Ballot" on the outside and place in a separate mailing envelope. Please include a return address on the mailing envelope to ensure an eligible vote. *Envelopes without a return address will not be counted.* Mailed ballots will remain unopened and will be recorded as to who has voted prior to the Annual Meeting. The unopened, sealed ballots will be passed to the Nominations Committee at the Annual Meeting.

All email and mail-in ballots must be received by March 20, 2026 to be counted.

President-Elect	
	Galen Litwiller
	Scott Wiesbrook
	Write-In Candidate:
Treasurer	
	Bob Tegeler
	Write-In Candidate:
Vice President	
	Ken Anderson
	Dr. Eric Brevik
	Jacob Rumbold
	Write-In Candidate:

Bent Auger Award

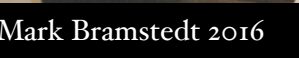
The Bent Auger Award is an “honorary award” given to an ISCA member for a memorable act or acts of service, that was performed while in the process of soil classification. There is no statute of limitations for nominating a candidate. Any ISCA member may nominate a candidate, at the Annual Meeting, by presenting the story of the memorable service performed. Nominations are based on facts and truths, but are not necessarily fully so. Photographs are also helpful for the membership to select the award winner. The winner of the Bent Auger Award is determined by voice vote. The award winner must scratch his or her name into the award plaque (with the accompanying nail) and display the plaque in a place of honor.

ISCA Members are encouraged to get their nomination ready for the Annual Meeting. Who will be the 2026 winner?

Bent Auger Award A Few of the Past Winners



Ronald Collman 2011



Mark Bramstedt 2016



Robert McLeese - multiple years



Alicia Metzger 2022



Liz Miernicki 2025



Igor - 1st Award Winner, date ?



Kenneth Gotsch 2009



www.illinoissoils.org

This is YOUR Newsletter. If you wish to submit material, here are some guidelines:

- Email a digital copy.
- Use minimal formatting.
- Subject matter is open and includes:
 - general topics on soil science, soil research & investigations, field activities
 - soil judging
 - personal encounters with soil, geomorphology, earth sciences
 - other topics that would be of general interest to members
 - photos are appreciated
 - no political editorials
 - The committee reserves the right to publish or not and edit for grammar & length without affecting the integrity of the article

Send Newsletter submissions to:

newsletter@illinoissoils.org

Newsletter Committee

Ashtyn Stufflebeam
 Mindy Siner
 Hope Dermott
 Mark Bramstedt

Soil Science “concerns the development under the influence of environmental conditions of the outer layer of the earth’s crust. It concerns the part of the earth’s crust which is itself both the product and indispensable support of organic life on the earth. The soil lies on the twilight of life, a connecting link between the living and the non-living, between material animated by vital forces and material subject to physical forces.”

Charles F Marbut 1949

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 X

For those of you who want to keep in touch with ISCA members & others interested in soils in Illinois, join our group on Facebook or X. Search Facebook for “Illinois Soil Classifiers Association” or “@ISCA_Soil” on X. Contact webmaster@illinoissoils.org to get permission if you want to post on these platforms.

ISCA at www.illinoissoils.org

Check out the “Announcements” page on our website for current activities, especially between Newsletters. It is an excellent resource to keep you informed on certification, membership, and the latest soil issues.

Newsletter Publication Schedule

- Winter (February)
- Spring (April/May)
- Summer (Aug/Sept)
- Fall (November)

