



NEWS RELEASE

6013 Lakeside Boulevard
Indianapolis, IN 46278
www.in.nrcs.usda.gov

Digital Soils Information Now 100%

INDIANAPOLIS, January 31, 2007— On January 19, 2007, 105 years after the first soil survey was published in Indiana, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) crossed another threshold by posting a digital copy of the soil survey for Warren County to the Soil Data Warehouse, on the internet. This brings digital soils coverage for Indiana to 100%. The 1902 Posey County soil survey report was the first one published in Indiana.

“Now, anyone with access to the internet can quickly get to digital soils data for all 92 Indiana counties,” says Jane Hardisty, State Conservationist for NRCS. “Over the years, we have crossed several important thresholds with the soil survey, but this one is particularly exciting because it has such a dramatic effect on the availability of soils data. As an agency we are trying to make scientific and factual data as widely available as possible. We want to make the process of getting it as transparent as we can, and put the data and information into the hands of all parties who can use it.”

In addition to traditional uses by farmers and conservation planners, soil survey information now has many other uses. Homeowners, realtors, county officials, universities, students, consultants and others are utilizing the data. “From farmers to homeowners to developers, understanding your soil is important. Soil serves as a foundation, a medium for growing trees, crops or lawns, and as a basis for sustaining everything,” says Hardisty. “Because we are all affected by soil, this is data everyone needs to be able to access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.”

What does digitizing do to make the info more available? The soil maps and information look the same on the screen of your computer as it did when you opened the printed soil survey. The digital copy makes it available using a computer, and you can get to it from your desk at home or at work. If you don't have access to the internet, you can still visit your local Soil and Water Conservation District to get your soils information. Digitizing the survey also saves public funds, as it costs much less to put the soil survey on a CD than to print it.

For those with access to the internet, digital soils information for all 92 Indiana counties is now available, anytime, anywhere, through the Soil Data Mart <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/> and the Web Soil Survey at <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/> .

In the past, soils information was available in soil survey reports which cover an entire county or in some cases multiple counties. Now, in addition to full county coverage, an "area of interest" can be identified, and soils information for only the selected area is included in the map and report that is created on demand.

#

Contact:

Jane Hardisty, State Conservationist, (317) 290-3200

Michael McGovern, Public Affairs Specialist, (317) 290-3200, ext. 324