

Soils

Soil Conservation History / Healthy Soil Components / How To Improve Your Soils

Why soil is an important topic

Soil is the foundation of life on earth. Plants, animals, birds, and insects all need healthy soil to survive.

Three Segments

1. The Soil Conservation Service and Soil Conservation Districts

- The Dust Bowl of the 1930's has been called "the worst hard time"
- When clouds of dust (soil) descended on Washington D. C. in the early 1930's, Congress decided it was time to act to save this important national resource, and the Soil Conservation Service was created
- The SCS was in charge of 500 Civilian Conservation Corps Camps during the great depression, most of which worked on helping to control erosion
- When citizens in a county got together and formed a soil conservation district, the federal government assigned a soil conservation specialist to work with them
- Conservation Districts generally follow county boundaries, and cover nearly every county in the United States.

2. Components of healthy soil

- Mineral particles – sands, silts, and clays
- Pore space – space for both water and air
- Organic matter – living and dead

3. Techniques to improve the health of your soil

- Soil testing and adjusting mineral nutrients
- What pH is, why it matters, and how to adjust it
- Managing nitrogen – an elusive, gaseous nutrient
- Increasing organic matter
- Providing habitat for soil organisms