

FACT SHEET

Web Soil Survey 3.1

*The most frequently used USDA website with more than 180,000 users
and more than 25,000 soil survey data exports downloaded each month.*



July, 2015

Web Soil Survey (WSS) provides soil data and information produced by the National Cooperative Soil Survey. It is operated by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and provides access to the largest natural resource information system in the world. NRCS has soil maps and data available online for more than 95 percent of the nation's counties and anticipates having 100 percent in the near future. The site is updated and maintained online as the single authoritative source of soil survey information.

NEW FEATURES

Area of Interest (AOI) Size Limit Increased - The AOI size limit has been increased from 10,000 to 100,000 acres. Soil survey areas exceeding this limit can still be set as AOIs using Quick Navigation.

Area of Interest (AOI) Import and Export Options - Web Soil Survey now allows you to create an AOI from a saved shapefile or zipped shapefile. Web Soil Survey also now allows you to save your AOI as a zipped shapefile that can be downloaded.

Improved Maps and Imagery - Map background imagery is now provided by Bing Maps. The new imagery is higher quality, color everywhere, and has complete coverage. Imagery is available world-wide and at all map scales - map navigation is only prohibited near the poles (above 75 degrees north latitude or below 75 degrees south latitude). Maps are now drawn in the Web Mercator projection, the de facto industry standard (used by Google, Bing, Yahoo, MapQuest, and others). The general appearance of road and soil maps has also been improved.

Soil Survey Area Quick Navigation Improvements - Soil Survey Area Quick Navigation now shows version and availability information before you set your AOI. In addition, a problem with the display of long soil survey area names has been resolved.

Map Identify Results for All Map Layers - The map "identify" tool now shows information on all map layers at the clicked point, rather than just a selected layer.

Improved Display of Special Line Features - Soil special line features are now labeled according to the type of line feature. The label is an abbreviation, such as "ESO". You can use the map "identify" tool to see the corresponding feature name, such as "Escarpment, nonbedrock."

Instant Soil Data Downloads Direct from Web Soil Survey - SSURGO and STATSGO2 downloads were previously available only using the Soil Data Mart and Geospatial Data Gateway. Downloads required you to place an order and wait for it to be fulfilled. Now you can download them immediately from WSS. Simply go to the new "Download Soils Data" tab, select your state and other display options and you'll see a table of available data with links to download a zip file for each.

Printable Map Tile Options Improved - The fixed-scale option for printable maps supports tiling of maps across multiple sheets of paper. This has been expanded to allow larger maps (more sheets). It has also been made more efficient, supporting rectangular sets of tiles rather than restricting to square (which often resulted in sheets outside of your AOI). Index maps have also been improved.

Editable Map Properties - The new version of WSS provides expanded options for changing map properties, including:

- Soil boundary color
- Soil boundary thickness
- Soil label size
- Background image opacity

<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>



AOI Map Unit Selection - Quick Navigation for Soil Survey Area now allows an AOI to be created by choosing map units from a list. This creates a non-spatial AOI that does not provide soil maps but allows quick access to Soil Reports, Suitabilities and Limitations for Use (without Soil Ratings maps), and Soil Properties and Qualities (without Soil Ratings maps).

Notification of Soil Data Updates – There are two ways to stay up to date:

- **RSS** You can now subscribe to RSS feeds for notification of soil data updates. Prior to the release of Web Soil Survey 3.0, Soil Data Mart customers could subscribe to a soil survey area for notification whenever data for that soil survey area was updated. Web Soil Survey 3.0 RSS Feeds will replace the Soil Data Mart subscriptions. To use the RSS Feed in Web Soil Survey 3.0, click on the "Subscribe" link located beneath the USDA logo in the upper-left corner of Web Soil Survey.
- **GovDelivery** you can also subscribe to GovDelivery for soil related issues. Subscribe by topic using a free subscription service called GovDelivery. Click on the GovDelivery icon on the WSS website and choose the topics of interest.

Expanded Hours - Web Soil Survey is now available 24 hours (maintenance periods excluded). It was previously shut down for data updates for 4 hours nightly.

Measurement Tool Segment Lengths - The map measurement tool shows the length of each segment in addition to the total of all segments.

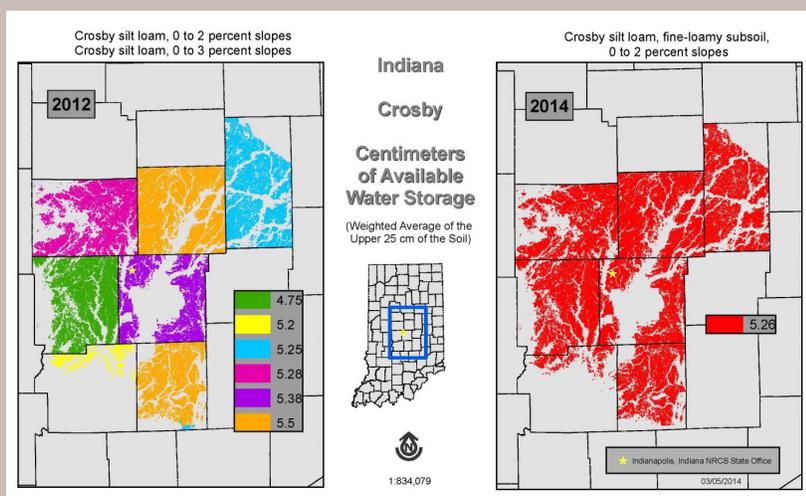
Annual Soil Data Updates - Soil survey data will now be published annually at the start of the government fiscal year (October 1). Occasional high-priority updates may happen at other times of the year.

No Gaps - Improvements to the spatial data include a complete spatial soil survey boundary layer and a map unit polygon layer with no gaps or overlays within the Continental United States. This is a major accomplishment in the Agency's desire to move to a truly seamless SSURGO spatial database. Customers can now be assured that soils information is complete for use in spatial analysis.

Interpretations - Each soil survey now contains a full complement of national interpretations giving users the ability to analyze interpretations regionally, multi-state or across the United States.

EXAMPLE OF SEAMLESS FLOW OF MAP UNITS ACROSS COUNTY BOUNDARIES

The illustration below shows an example of soils data that was "harmonized" across county boundaries. The 2012 image shows that the available water storage data was slightly different for these two Crosby map units. The 2014 image shows the results of the "harmonizing" project which combined these two similar map units into one common map unit with data that is now consistent across county boundaries.



WEB SOIL SURVEY SUPPORT

Web Soil Survey customers can click on the "Contact Us" link in Web Soil Survey to get assistance from the Soils Hotline, a State Soil Scientist, or a local NRCS Office. If any data is missing, contact us or refer to the Electronic Field Office Technical Guide. For more information on Indiana soils go to the Indiana Soils website at: www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/in/soils/

TIPS and SHORTCUTS

These tips will make your use of Web Soil Survey more effective and enjoyable: http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/Tips_Shortcuts.htm

FIND INFORMATION BY TOPIC

On the Web Soil Survey home page a link was added to a guide that lists the location of maps, reports, and tables found underneath the Soil Data Explorer tab: http://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/Resources/HomePage/Soil_Explorer_Tab.pdf