

Soils Workgroup Meeting, DLCD, Salem, April 30, 2014, 1:00pm – 3:00pm

Attendees: Bob DenOuden (GEO) Gail Ewart (DLCD), Ian Reid (NRCS), Thor Thorson (NRCS), Myrica McCune (INR), Sheri Schneider (USGS), Ali Turiel (DLCD), Diana Walker (ODA), Katherine Daniels (DLCD)

A=action items:

Ian started off the discussion with a brief review of past efforts by the soils workgroup dating back to 2009. At that time, requirements for a statewide soils data set, as part of the Oregon GIS Framework, were gathered from a variety of state agency staff and work was focused on the creation of a framework soils data standard. A standards document was drafted and presented to a framework forum, but it did not proceed to adoption by OGIC. In addition, work was done, led by Jay Noller at OSU, to compile a soils dataset for Oregon. A draft dataset was created, but it did not include an accompanying database. Despite these efforts, there still remains a need for a statewide soils data layer. This workgroup, led by Ian/NRCS, will attempt to move the framework soils data layer forward to completion.

Ian then reviewed the progress that has been made on soils data by NRCS in the past five years. One change to the Web Soil Survey datamart is that the data refresh cycle is now annual and takes place each October. Data updates are rare otherwise. Ian and Thor then walked the group through the state of soils surveys completed (and certified) as well as those underway and scheduled to be completed and certified over the next several years. Most of these surveys are in eastern Oregon although work is ongoing in southern Oregon, parts of Polk County, and in the Willamette National Forest. They then described the SSURGO product vs. STATSGO – which Thor noted is a 1:250,000 scale product (not 1:1,000,000 as it is sometimes described). The underlying data model for SSURGO and STATSGO is the same, so a merging of the two to create statewide soils data is achievable. They noted that Steve Campbell has done this kind of work in the past and could create a similar melded product for Oregon in a few months.

There was some discussion about what priorities drive the soil survey schedule of where surveys are done, which in most cases is simply driven by where funding is available to do surveys.

Ian mentioned another product that is available for accessing soils data; the Soil Data Viewer, which is a Microsoft Access based query tool which integrates with ArcGIS and can be used to ingest soils data for somewhat limited geographic extents. We also discussed the Map Unit Aggregate Table, which is where the key soils attributes are held. Based on a new review of framework requirements for an Oregon soils layer, this table can be extended to include attributes of general and widespread interest.

There was some discussion of the issues of discontinuities between different soil surveys, often at county boundaries, and the issues this causes. In the long run the NRCS is working on smoothing these inconsistencies, but the priority in Oregon is to complete areas where SSURGO level data is not available at all.

There was also a mention of another product, the gridded SSURGO or GSSURGO product, which is a 10m grid soils product that is coupled with a vector layer and includes a .vat table with key soils attributes. These data are available at a statewide extent.

Thor noted that any framework soils product that is distributed will only contain data that is available publicly.

As the meeting concluded it was agreed that the next steps will be to engage Steve Campbell to build a merged SSURGO – STATSGO soils data layer for Oregon. In the meantime, the soils workgroup will review the 2007 requirements list and modify or expand it to meet today's needs. This will help inform what attribute data is included into the merged data product. The merged product will form the basis of the Oregon soils framework dataset, stewarded by NRCS and updated periodically as new SSURGO data is certified and made available. **A** - Ian will work with Steve to initiate this effort.

It was agreed that we would look to the next three months or so for a time to meet and review the merged product. **A** - Bob and Ian will work on scheduling this. Preliminary availability for Steve looks like the weeks of August 18 and 25, as well as some dates in September for presenting the merged layer, some statewide layers of soil properties or interpretations, and a Soil Data Viewer demo. **A** - The entire soils workgroup will review and comment upon the framework soils data requirements list.