Annual Committee Report

Committee Code # S374
Date Prepared: Nov. 20, 2003

Name of Society Activity: Glossary of Soil Science Terms

☐ This is a final report.

General Report:
The committee met during the 2002 Annual Tri-Society Meetings in Indianapolis, IN. While this meeting occurred in what is traditionally a quite period within the historical 5 – 10 year cycle of revising the Glossary of Soil Science Terms, a proposal was brought forward to accomplish a 5 – year revision target aimed at 2006 (last revision was 2001). As part of that process, a substantial body of terms from S5 was presented dealing with soil geomorphology, soil geography, and parent material terms widely used in soil inventory. These were presented with the options to a) not consider, b) incorporate into the current SSSA Glossary, or c) seek a stand-alone document either internally or externally. Unanimous agreement was reached on option b) to incorporate the terms within the current Glossary.

As part of these discussions, it was pointed out that other than the SSSA Glossary, there currently is no authoritative, comprehensive source for Soil Science definitions. Previous sources are out of print, or focused on other disciplines with only a cursory treatment of Soil Science. Strong enthusiasm was voiced for each division to use this document (SSSA Glossary) as the place to present its preferred definitions.

Several email contacts were made to the Committee Chair throughout the year inquiring about explicit definitions in the SSSA Glossary (e.g. loamy sand). Issues clarified.

The Committee Chair made a correction request to the ASA headquarters to update the web page information that had incorrectly retained the previous date of publication of the Glossary (1996) and replaced it with the correct and more recent date of 2001.

A request was received from Ms. Prueller, the project leader for the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) to address the committee regarding a web-based Carbon Terminology Project for Forestry. Chair encouraged them to join the committee during the annual meetings in Denver. [Note: These folks did not appear at the annual meetings.]

The committee next met during the 2003 Annual Tri-Society Meetings in Denver Co. The 2002 proposal was reviewed for benefit of new members

[Note: In Nov., 2002, the committee was unaware of a recently issued dictionary sponsored by the Canadian Soil Science Society (Gregorich, et al., 2001). Initial review of this text since the 2002 meetings shows it to be much more detailed than previous documents, commercially available, but still insufficiently comprehensive. Additionally, in key aspects (e.g. soil structure, soil classification, etc.) it is written primarily for a Canadian audience and emphasizes Canadian conventions. Except for brief appendixes showing some conversions between systems, it does not appear to treat conventions widely used in the US. Consequently, it is inadequate for the needs of many in the SSSA.]

Discussions revisited and expanded on key issues of the 2002 meeting and further explored issues of specific project focus. Following these discussions, motions were made and approved on voice vote to:
1) Approach the SSSA Board and seek approval and support before beginning this project.
2) Recognize that this undertaking may substantially change the present document (e.g. from what was a glossary to what might now become a dictionary).

[Note: Subsequent to this 2003 committee meeting, a recommendation was drafted by the out-going chair (see below under “Recommendations”) and delivered to Mike Singer, President SSSA, who brought it before the SSSA Board on Thursday, Nov. 6th, 2003. Clarifying queries by board members included questions about potential cost. Committee sees the minimum production cost as low, as initial document preparation will be electronic, and release could also be in electronic formats: e.g. web based, CD’s, etc. Decisions regarding hard copy production (more costly) can wait until a later date]. After asking various questions for clarification, the SSSA Board approved support for this project and encouraged that it move ahead.]

Unfinished Business:
Approach Division Chairs to solicit comments / changes to the current Glossary for their subject areas, with a completion target of Annual Tri-Society Meetings in 2005, and subsequent release in early 2006. Approach Board of Directors to schedule release of the revised copy of the Glossary in 2006.

Recommendations:
[This was given to Mike Singer who presented it at the second session of the SSSA Board of Directors, Thursday, Nov. 6].

To: SSSA Board of Directors
From: S374 “Glossary of Soil Science Terms” Committee

11/06/2003

In executing this committee’s charge to maintain and update the “Glossary of Soil Science Terms”, this committee unanimously agrees that the current document is neither complete nor comprehensive enough to serve the needs of the Soil Science community represented by this society.

Therefore, this committee recommends to the SSSA Board of Directors that the be expanded to be a more comprehensive document and we seek approval and support of the Board to complete this endeavor.

Remarks:
It has been a pleasure participating in the committee. – Phil Schoeneberger

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Submitted by:
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