

SECTION II
A. SOILS INFORMATION

3. SOIL DESCRIPTIONS – Official Series Descriptions

The Official Soil Series Descriptions (OSD) is a national collection of more than 20,000 detailed soil series descriptions, covering the United States, Territories, Commonwealths, and Island Nations served by USDA-NRCS. The descriptions, in a text format, serve as a national standard.

The soil series is the lowest category of the national soil classification system. The name of a soil series is the common reference term, used to name soil map units. Soil series are the most homogenous classes in the system of taxonomy. "Official Soil Series Descriptions" define specific soil series in the United States, Territories, Commonwealths, and Island Nations served by USDA-NRCS. They are descriptions of the taxa in the series category of the national system of soil classification. They serve mainly as specification for identifying and classifying soils. The descriptions contain soil properties that define the soil series, distinguish it from other soil series, serve as the basis for the placement of that soil series in the soil family, and provide a record of soil properties needed to prepare soil interpretations.

The OSD describes general and detailed information about each recognized soil in the United States, Territories, Commonwealths, and Island Nations served by USDA-NRCS. Each OSD includes: location, author's initials, introductory paragraph, taxonomic classification, detailed soil profile description, location of the typical soil profile, range in characteristics, competing series, geographic setting, geographically associated soils, drainage and permeability, use and vegetation, distribution and extent, series established, remarks, and additional data.

Official Series Descriptions can be found at the USDA-NRCS OSD web site.

<http://soils.usda.gov/technical/classification/osd/>