

**COOL CLIMATE SOIL, HYDROLOGY
AND
SITE EVALUATOR SOIL PIT CLASSIFICATION WORKSHOP
SADDLEBACK SKI AREA
DALLAS AND SANDY RIVER PLANTATIONS
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2010**

The Maine Association of Professional Soil Scientists, in conjunction with the Maine Association of Wetland Scientists, the Maine Association of Site Evaluators, the Society of Soil Scientists of Northern New England and the Maine Forest Service is pleased to announce a workshop which focuses soil and hydrology conditions unique to the western Maine Mountains, northern Maine and some coastal areas. These areas have cooler and wetter climates than the central and southern parts of the state which affects soil development and hydrology conditions. The workshop includes a hands-on field exercise as well as a group discussion at the conclusion of the field exercise.

The sites included in this workshop are commonly found in the western Maine Mountains. In the past, development in the mountains was limited to a few individual homes and ski resort areas. That is rapidly changing however due to the present interest in wind power farms. The political leaders of the State of Maine have expressed an interest in making Maine a leader in wind power generation which means a fast track for development up and on the mountains. In doing so, natural resource specialists and developers have encountered such features as groundwater seeps, oxyaquaic soil conditions, underground streams and boulder fields that have upland plants growing in organic duff on top of the boulders but there is water standing or flowing between the boulders. The question is what are these areas? Are they protected natural resources? At a minimum, they are features that need to be recognized and identified in the field so that construction can take place that minimizes the alteration of the natural hydrology and results in appropriately built roads and infrastructure.

The workshop will feature 5 sites with 3 or 4 numbered soil pits per site for a total of 17 soil pits. Most of the sites will also include other flagged areas for participants to observe that have unique features such as stone filled subsurface drainage channels or boulder fields covered by organic duff that are forested. Some of the soil pits are located on long continuous slopes while others are located in between boulders in the boulder fields. All of the sites have soil pits located in wetter and drier areas. The soil pits have been monitored twice weekly by employees of the Saddleback Ski Lodge for 2 years so there will be good groundwater table data. Soils in the pits will be described by a team comprised of NRCS Resource Soil Scientists Dave Wilkinson and Greg Granger, State Soil Scientist, Dave Rocque, State Site Evaluator Doug Coombs and immediate past president of MAPSS Chris Dorion. The team will provide the closest match to a soil series (based on shallow hand dug soil pits), soil drainage class (this will include using the recently adopted oxyaquaic conditions criteria), hydric determination (both New England Field Indicators and the National Indicators) and Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules Classification (using the newly developed key for determining the seasonal groundwater table for Site Evaluators).

Registration will be at the base lodge from 8:30 am to 9:00 am. Participants will be given a map showing the location of the sites they are to visit as well as other handouts including a (draft) Check List for Oxyaquaic Soils and a (draft) Key for Determining the Seasonal Groundwater Table for Site Evaluators. They will then be free to visit the 5 sites until 12:30 pm. Each of the sites will have a soil scientist or site evaluator stationed there to show you where the soil pits are and point out other areas flagged for making an observation. Participants are to make their own determinations regarding soil classifications and site classifications but can ask the site monitor technical questions.

After the conclusion of the field portion of the workshop, participants will gather at the base lodge for a power point presentation and discussion of each site. Leading the wetland identification discussion will be Paul Minkin, Senior Wetland Scientist with the Army Corps of Engineers Regional Office in Concord, Mass. He led the field testing of the Draft Interim Supplement throughout New England 2 years ago. Leading the discussion of the soil pits for Site Evaluator determinations will be Doug Coombs, State Site Evaluator. Also present will be Mike Mullen from MDEP, Scott Rollins from LURC, Mike Sheehan from ACOE and Dave Rocque who will MC and try to keep things moving along in a lively manner as well as lead the discussions of the soil pits. Lunch is on your own but there is a cafeteria in the base lodge which offers sandwiches and drinks along with snacks.

Expected outcomes of the workshop include clarification of how to classify some unique sites/areas/conditions found in the Western Maine Mountains and the identification of soils with oxyaquaic conditions. This should prove helpful to anyone involved with all types of development in the Mountains and for forestry management and logging operations.

This workshop should have broad appeal to soil scientists, wetland scientists, site evaluators, code enforcement officers, planners, municipal officials, regulators, lake association members, foresters and the general public. You can participate at whatever level is appropriate for your background and knowledge (the experts at each transect site will provide the level of assistance you require).

It should be a fun and informative day for all at a very scenic location.