

Soil Science Division

Central Appalachian Interior Mountains & Plateaus (Region 6)



Morgantown, West Virginia, Soil Survey Office

Multi-State and Multi-Agency Wetlands Training

Purpose

During the week of July 10, the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) and the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources hosted basic wetland delineation and identification training in Elkins, West Virginia. Thirty-five participants from several West Virginia State agencies and the Maryland Department of Forestry gathered to learn how to identify wetlands for regulatory purposes and habitat identification. Instruction was provided by an interagency cadre, including staff from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Maryland Department of the Environment, WVDEP, and NRCS. Staff from WV NRCS and the Morgantown Soil Survey Office guided participants to a better understanding of hydric soils and hydric soil indicators.

The agenda focused on the three parameters used to determine the presence of a wetland. The group spent portions of 3 days in the classroom learning the principles of the wetland indicators. The remainder of time participants were in the field, learning how to describe plant communities, dig and describe a soil pit, and identify evidence of hydrology. Concepts of morphological adaptations and problematic wetland situations were also discussed.

Participants were provided a variety of field sites. Each location varied in plant community type, ranging from herbaceous to shrub to forest. The soils included mineral and organic materials, and five hydric soil indicators were observed. Training culminated with a discussion and evaluation of all wetland parameters observed in the field. Wetland data forms were completed, and wetland determinations were made.

Key Outcomes

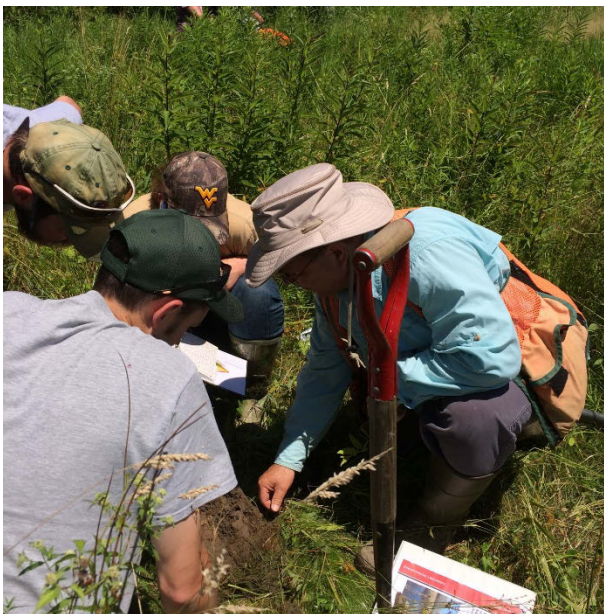
The course was a hands-on, comprehensive event in which all steps in the process of wetland evaluation and determination were presented. Participants had the opportunity to learn from the knowledgeable training cadre.

Landowners will benefit from this training since staff from a variety of State agencies are now better equipped to identify wetlands and hydric soils. Although some participants will not make wetland determinations, they are now more familiar with wetland identification and the proper steps to follow given various situations related to wetland.





State Soil Scientist Jared Beard discusses hydric soil indicators within a mowed wetland.



Resource Soil Scientist Tim Dilliplane points out hydric soil properties to participants.