

# Ohio Pedologist

[www.ohiopedologist.org](http://www.ohiopedologist.org)

Dear Members,

Can we lose the battle but ultimately win the war? This is the question I have pertaining to Ohio Department of Health's (ODH) decision to allow non-certified soil scientists to do on site work. The executive council of AOP unanimously decided to support the idea that certified soil scientists should be doing soil site evaluations for septic installations.



President Buzard

The draft rule that dealt with this recently came out of the Sewage Advisory Committee stating that certified soil scientists would not be required to perform all soil site evaluations in the state. Ouch, that smarts a bit to a lot of our membership. Granted ODH's decision was a set back but could it prove to be a benefit to the profession and provide work to our members who do consulting work? I guess time will tell the story.

It is my contention and the contention of the current Executive Council (if I may be so bold) that certified soil scientists should be utilized to do soil site evaluations. Well we can wish and theorize all we want but, as always, reality has a nasty way of rearing her head and letting us know who is boss. The cold hard truth is that there aren't enough certified soil scientists to handle the workload. OK, so there aren't enough of us to go around. Do we give up on our desire to promote our profession and hopefully create a market for future soil scientists? I think the answer has to be NO! We certainly need to work with the Ohio Department of Health and the county health departments, not against them. However we have an obligation to stay focused on our main goals of AOP and remain willing to consider options that may help us realize those goals. Could some form of licensing or mentoring programs be implemented down the road in which AOP could be a major player while increasing the numbers of capable soil site evaluators in the field? It may or may not be a doable option.

Will the opportunities for consulting work be numerous or scarce looking down the road? Now is a very critical time for our profession and organization. I happen to believe, as some others do, that opportunities for consulting in the future could very

well hinge on how well today's soil scientists market themselves. In my almost twenty-seven year career, I have never experienced any soil scientist who intentionally did anything short of their best effort. On the contrary, usually the criticism you hear is not of quality but of quantity. That having been said, I strongly feel that maintaining a professional image and performing quality work that always reflects positively on the profession and organization will play a crucial role in determining how bright the future looks for consulting work.

At this time it certainly appears that some draft rules that have come out of the Sewage Advisory Committee meetings could ultimately generate more work for certified soil scientists. Certified soil scientists will continue to be required for first order soil survey projects. In addition, the new rules pertaining to increases in vertical separation distances will almost certainly increase the use of alternative on-site sewage disposal systems (mounds and drips). This will hopefully increase the need for more detailed and accurate soil information. It is my belief and hope (and that of the executive council) that certified soil scientists will logically be recognized as the professionals to provide the high quality information that will be needed for these systems.

There will be public meetings put on by the State Health Department to discuss and hear comments about the draft rules that the Sewage Advisory Committee has come up with. These are supposed to happen during the month of November. Larry Tormes said he would inform the Executive Council when the dates and locations are set. Larry feels that the Soil Absorption Rule (3701-29-13) will be of particular interest to soil scientists. This rule deals with vertical separation distances and soil credits. I encourage our membership to attend these meetings when possible. A positive presence by AOP members at the meetings will indicate an interest by our organization and reinforce to other professionals our desire to remain engaged in the process.

I think we can lose a battle and still win the war. Time will tell the story. I know one thing for certain: I can think of no better group of people to be a part of to face the upcoming challenges.

*Rick*

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## 2005 Directory of Officers

<b>Rick Buzard, President</b>
<b>Tom Zimmerman, President-elect</b>
<b>Steve Prebonick, Past President</b>
<b>Todd Houser, Secretary</b>
<b>George Derringer, Treasurer</b>
<b>Steve Miller, Newsletter editor</b>
<b>Neil Smeck, Academic Rep.</b>
<b>John Allen, Federal Rep.</b>
<b>Linn Roth, Private Rep.</b>
<b>Matt Deaton, State Rep.</b>

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# ASSOCIATION NEWS

## AOP Annual Winter Meeting Guest Speaker

This years guest speaker at the winter meeting will be geologist Scott Brockman. He will present a discussion on "*The Geology of our newest National Park: Cuyahoga Valley National Park.*" He will touch on the glacial and bedrock geology of the park as well as the human history of the Cuyahoga Valley.

CVNP is visually appealing with a rich array of meandering streams, gorges, waterfalls, and rock ledges. It is also rich in geologic interpretations including buried valleys, multiple glacial advances, and unique periglacial formations, all worthy of preservation as our newest national park in the year 2000.

**C. Scott Brockman** – retired Senior geologist, Ohio Geological Survey.

Presently teaching geology and soil courses part time at OSU-Marion, OSU-Lima, and Columbus State.

Scott grew up in Cincinnati. His first job with the Ohio Survey was to map the glacial geology of the Cincinnati region. This was a career-defining assignment through which he became familiar with Teays River deposits, paleosols, buried forest beds, glacially deformed bedrock, landslides, and just about every glacial deposit and landform imaginable.

### EDUCATION

Master of Science, Geology, 1983, University of Cincinnati

Master of Education, Secondary Science, 1980, University of Cincinnati

Bachelor of Science, Geology, 1972, University of Cincinnati

### MEMORABLE ACTIVITIES AND HOBBIES

Ohio Academy of Science, member, 1985 - present; Vice-president elect, geology, 1992-1993; Coordinator of the Earth and Space Science Division, 1993 - present. Editorial board, Ohio Journal of Science, 1998 - 2001.

## EVENTS

January 26th 2006 —AOP Annual Winter Meeting-Highbanks Metro Park, Columbus, Ohio

### Consultant List Updates

There have been a number of concerns about how current the AOP consultant list is. A separate mailing was sent out to individuals on the list in an attempt to update the information. A lack of response from an individual will result in removal from the list.

### Awards Nominations

The AOP awards program has been active in recognizing people for their contributions to AOP and soil science. We continue to need your participation in order to identify candidates for appropriate recognition. Listing of the categories and criteria for recognition are on the AOP website at [www.ohiopedologist.org](http://www.ohiopedologist.org). Also included is the current nomination form for your use. Send it to Larry Milliron. Please note the deadline necessary so that the review and action needed can be accomplished by the time of our Annual meeting in January.

Thank you,  
Larry Milliron

### Smithsonian Soils Exhibit

The Association will continue to match donation to the Smithsonian through the end of this year. George Derringer, AOP Treasurer, is in the process of sending the names of previous contributors to the Smithsonian so the each contributor can be recognized.

### Audit Committee

Jeff Glanville and Rich Gehring were asked to review the association's financial records. Their report will be discussed at the Annual Winter Meeting.

### Welcome New Members

Jeff Grabarkiewicz  
John Matthews

## AWARDS NOMINATION FORM

Complete and return to the Larry Milliron, AOP Awards Committee  
Larry.Milliron@oh.usda.gov  
3807 St. Nicholas Dr., Richfield, OH 44286-2533  
(Deadline, to be received by November 23<sup>rd</sup>)

**Nominee:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nominee's Profession:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Nominee's Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

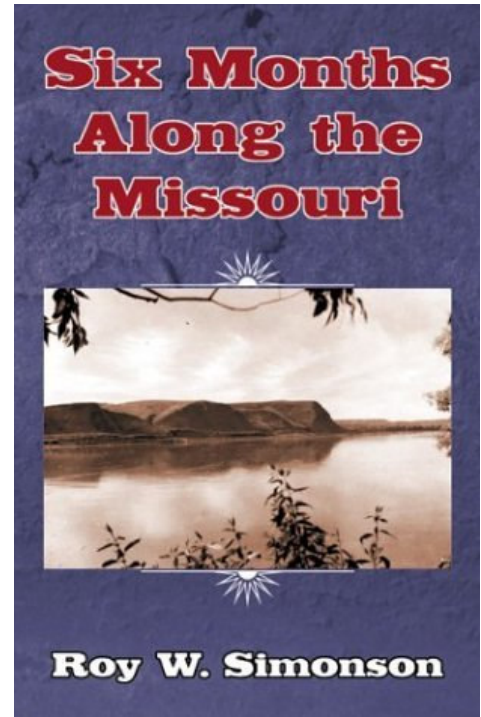
**\*Nomination for ---**

- Honorary Membership**
- Distinguished Service Award**
- Pedologist Merit Award**
- Golden Clod Award**
- Certificate of Appreciation**
- Certificate of Recognition** (No Deadline)

Briefly explain the nominee's qualifications for the award, and why you believe he/she deserves recognition. (Use back of sheet or additional sheets if necessary.)

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**Submitted by:** \_\_\_\_\_



**Roy Simonson**, AOP Honorary Member, completed one memoir and one book in the last nine years. The book title "Letters, Letter Segments, and Memoirs from a Farm" was mostly written between 1997 and 2002 but did not get into print until this year. The memoir was written in the second half of 2003 and published last year. Titled "Six months along the Missouri" it is an account of living and working conditions during the second half of 1935 when he was a soil scientist in a team of three men completing the appraisals of ranches along part of the Missouri River in north-eastern Montana. The government was going to buy the land that would be flooded when the Fort Peck Dam was completed.

The books can be purchased at [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com).

## Vote on C, Scott Brockman as Honorary Member

Scott Brockman has been a valuable source of information for the Ohio Collaborative Soil Survey Program. Many of our members have benefited from his broad knowledge of glacial geology and soils. We will be voting on whether to make Scott Brockman an Honorary Member during our January 26th, 2006 Annual Meeting. If you cannot attend the meeting please mail this ballot to Larry Milliron at the address above (in the Awards nomination form).

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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# My Point of View

To my fellow AOP members,

With the ongoing discussions concerning soils and household sewage disposal at the Ohio Department of Health the importance of soil science is again in the limelight. Through AOP representatives, we have the opportunity to make sound recommendations addressing soil related issues in pending legislation. Some comments made, or worse yet not made, advocating the importance of certified soil scientists are sending up red flags. AOP members know there is more to soil science than site evaluations for on site septic disposal, but the point could also be made that there is more to soil science than populating a data base in NASIS. We do our membership a disservice when we are too involved in our aspect of soil science to support members whose livelihood is in another. The input of AOP professionals representing our discipline on various committees will affect the careers of their fellow members.

To minimize the importance of a soil scientist in one aspect of land use planning promotes an attitude of indifference, which will negatively impact other areas of our discipline. We lessen the importance of our training and experience if we relinquish decision-making authority to those who are not qualified soils professionals. When those with inadequate soils expertise submit erroneous evaluations their failure jeopardizes the importance of a soil professional and our association. To promote the importance of certified soil scientists in one aspect of land use planning enhances the value of these individuals in other areas as well.

I believe soil science is at a crossroad. No longer is government employment working on a soil survey staff the only career path. An increased awareness of environmental concerns is opening up many opportunities for individuals wanting a career as a soil professional. Construction companies, fertilizer dealers, landscape suppliers, and private consultants are just a few examples where soil knowledge is being seen as an integral part of the decision making process. As these avenues of opportunity open we must take full advantage of the positive business environment presented by diligently promoting soil science, certification, and our organization.

We have all listened to academic institutions lament the decline in soil science majors and witnessed the impact on the affected departments. As more careers outside government employment materialize perhaps this trend can be reversed. Students will select studies for careers that hold opportunities for success. We advance our profession and the opportunities for our future colleagues as we promote the importance of soils information and expertise in all areas of land use planning where environmental concerns are an issue.

Steve Prebonick

AOP Certified Soil Scientists and Members,

During a recent AOP Board of Certification Meeting a memo was distributed to committee members. The memo, written by a Health District employee and distributed to the Sewage Advisory Committee, questioned the need for input from soil scientists in evaluating site conditions for on-site septic systems and specifically criticizes an ARCPACS and AOP-certified soil scientist for failure to include soil structure in the submitted reports. Unfortunately it was decided that no action should be taken because the submitted memo was not a formal complaint.

The Certification Committee should have taken this by the horns. The Committee should be obligated to defend the reputation of the AOP certified soil scientists or else they should pursue the complainant and ask that a formal complaint be written about a member so that the situation can be investigated. We, as an association, should not allow other disciplines or individuals to degrade the whole profession because of one bad apple. Is it the obligation of the Certification Committee to review these allegations even if they are not filed formally? If it is not, maybe we should make it a policy to get involved. Wouldn't this be a more appropriate use of time than determining how many CEUs a member should be deducted during approved training events for taking bus trips between sites, coffee breaks, and lunch. Investigating these allegations would show the non-believers that AOP is committed to holding AOP certified soil scientist accountable for their actions.

Concerned,

Steve Miller

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## Sewage Rules Could Stall New Home Starts

By DAVID TRINKO  
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10/31/2005

dtrinko@limanews.com

OTTAWA — The rich clay soils in Putnam County, Ohio remain perfect for high-yielding corn, soybean, and wheat crops each year.

Those same soils could keep a crop of new homes from sprouting throughout the county's rural areas, though. Proposed state Health Department rule changes for septic systems could leave just 1.1 percent of the county able to construct new homes with wastewater treatment systems.

"They're really looking at the environmental aspect of off-lot water discharges," said Anita Stechschulte, an environmental health expert for the Putnam County Health Department. "They're not looking at the practical aspects. This could stop new home constructions, not just here but in a number of counties."

The Sewage Advisory Council continues to review the proposed rule changes, which it expects to approve next spring and could take effect in January 2007. Drafts so far outlaw the traditional sand-filter septic system with a tank in the side yard, Stechschulte said. In their place could come "leach lines," a series of 4-inch lines weaving around in the soil. Those lines must be at least 48 inches from a "limiting layer," which causes problems with Putnam County's relatively high water table. Putnam County is considering increasing its minimum lot size to two acres to accommodate these systems.

The proposed rule changes, the first major statewide revision since 1977, push for more regional wastewater treatment systems, Stechschulte said. That could force new rural homeowners to tie into a local municipality's system or build their own for a group of rural homeowners. "I don't feel like we'll be getting the backing from the state Health Department we'll need," Stechschulte said. "People are going to be upset, and the local Health Department will get to hear about it. We had no say in the rules whatsoever."

Stechschulte urged people to contact their county and state lawmakers to urge the state Health Department to reconsider parts of its rule changes. She said the Northwest Ohio Sewage Consortium, of which Putnam County belongs, offered suggestions but doesn't appear to be changing minds in Columbus. She noted a sewage treatment company and a homebuilders association already expressed problems with the changes.

The proposed rule changes will still allow mound systems, in which a homeowner constructs aboveground sewage storage. Those systems have a high failure rate as the ground covering the storage erodes, Stechschulte said. An irrigation system also remains possible, but Putnam County hasn't ever issued permits for irrigation or mound systems, she said.

Three of the four most common types of soil in Putnam County aren't suited for the new leach-line systems, Stechschulte said, with Hoytville, Latty, and Paulding soils not meeting the needs for the system. The fourth, Nappanee, could be suitable for an irrigation-based wastewater system, according to research by Karen Mancl, a professor of Food, Agricultural, and Biological Engineering at The Ohio State University.

County Health Department officials know their soil types from a soil survey released in November 1974 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service. **The book may be old, but Stechschulte said the dirt didn't change much in the past 30 years.**

Mancl's study of all 88 Ohio counties showed 72.9 percent of Putnam County's soils weren't suited for any type of onsite system, making it the third-least suitable county, behind Wood (77.5 percent) and Henry (75.8 percent). Allen County has relatively good soil for future country homes, with just 34.8 percent being unsuitable.

The rule changes could have a long-term slowing effect on new home construction in rural areas. In the short term, they could create a boom of new housing starts. The County Health Department currently sees about 120 septic system permit applications per year, but it saw 60 in a one-month period when the county changed its rules in January.

"As long as you are permitted before the effective date of the new rules, you will be grandfathered in with the current rules," she said. "I'd expect to see a lot of people starting on their new homes before these new regulations begin."

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## Maintaining Our Professional Image

In a recent quarterly publication of the *Ohio Engineer*, the President's Message addressed the problems that engineers are having with 'protecting their profession.' As soil scientist, we should be interested in this same message and also be aware of other disciplines that may be attempting to claim the ability to conduct detailed soil investigations. Unfortunately some members of AOP believe that a person can be trained in soil morphology in two weeks just as the collegiate soil judges are. What does this say about the Pedologists and Professional Soil Scientists that have spent 4+ years in post-secondary education and have been involved with soil survey work for 30 or more years? Have we not learned anything about soils after collegiate soil judging? When these comments come from within AOP we realize that some members have a long way to go. All AOP members have to be aware of what they say should promote soil science every chance they get. Maybe we can learn from the engineers.

The core of the President's Message was that only engineers are responsible for maintaining their profession as experts in their respective fields and that every engineer should be mindful of the outside interest groups that are slowly encroaching in on their profession. The engineers have protected the field of engineering by 1) developing a strong society, 2) hiring a legislative agent who has the time to monitor activities at Statehouse that influences engineering, and 3) developed a state licensing program. The engineers have been successful at protecting their profession, so following these three points should be a goal of AOP. We may not be able to do all at once but we already have a strong professional society and certification program so we should get started on points two and three as soon as possible.

The President's Message continues on and cites an attempt by an outside interest group to encroach in on the engineering discipline during the Sewage Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting. (The SAC was formed by ODH to develop new rules and improve upon the old rules written for on-site sewage treatment systems.) The message cites one of the SAC members as saying "engineers don't know anything about soils or on-site sewage treatment." It is unfortunate that this comment was said even though it did get the attention of the engineers. When given an opportunity to promote soil science, it is not recommended to do this by denigrating another profession or person. All of us have heard other professionals denigrate soil science (and we typically get defensive) but we should not reciprocate negatively. When confronted with this situation we should do a better job as a profession to promote soil science and explain the benefits that a competent soil scientist can provide to the design and function of on-site sewage treatment systems.

Steve Miller

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# **"Wild Turkey" and "Soil Science" with the Indiana Classifiers**

By Frank E. Gibbs, C.P.S.Sc.

As I "Squirted" thru the building Cincinnati rush hour traffic in my new Jetta and deftly evaded the "Klingon" Death Cruisers bent on giving me a speeding ticket, I wondered what I was thinking when I decided to go to the Indiana Soil Classifiers Fall Campout, Tour & Business Meeting...

The weather forecast had been upgraded from 70% chance of rain to 100% before I left home. Good God! This will be a mess! I'd never been to one. But I was encouraged to attend last June by Dena Marshall while teaching with her in Minneapolis.

Folks, what I gained, vastly exceeded my expectations... They had set up in the Park early in the morning and were giving tests called "Field Skill Training and Evaluation" for the Indiana Registry of Soil Scientists (IRSS) by examining samples and describing profiles that made sure they were still accurate in their field work and obtain CEU's.

By the time I got there, they were playing volleyball, cooking out and drinking beer.

As darkness fell we regaled each other with tales of Soil Scientist "Tom Foolery" while passing a bottle of Wild Turkey around the campfire and discussing our current work and the future of Soil Science in our own states.

It was a great time that I could go on and on about it, but I will cut to quick to itemize what I learned and gained:

#1 ~ Indiana has a Licensing System (IRSS) and they do lots of Soil Investigations for Septic Systems. They hired a "Lobbyist" to achieve this, as have several other States.

#2 ~ Indiana is also concerned about low numbers of young people employed in Soil Science. However, judging from the number of young soil scientists I met at the business meeting and tour, they are way ahead of Ohio because they have a larger market for their services due to item # 1.

#3 ~ Indiana has established a "Soil Scientist Scholarship Fund" at Purdue to encourage students to enroll in studies that lead to becoming an "Indiana Registered Soil Scientist".

#4 ~ I renewed acquaintances with old friends and met several new and talented young Soil Scientists including the replacement for the great Dr. Franzmier at Purdue and several of his Grad Students. Several of the young folks I met are going into Private Consulting or have already started their businesses.

#5 ~ There is great sense of "Loyalty" in this group to their fellow Scientists. In particular they were mourning the loss this year of Ken McWilliams to cancer. Ken must have had the greatest sense of humor judging by the number of his jokes told around the camp fire (I think someone even had them written down and numbered!).

#6 ~ Even the Business Meeting was interesting and pertinent. Several folks raised concerns about complaints from Health Depts., regarding a few individuals that weren't doing enough borings for subdivisions or in another case, 2 different Soil Scientists had called the same site "Well Drained" and "Very Poorly Drained" ... The Health Dept wanted to know what to do with the site and who to complain to...

My "Point" in this article is that Indiana is "Light Years" ahead of us in gaining "Market Recognition" for their Expertise. This translates into "Money", "Job Opportunities", "Careers", an "Education Market" for The Soil Science Dept at Purdue, and most importantly a Future for Soil Science in Indiana.

This did not happen without a lot of hard work, money and foresight by the "Classifiers". And there are still some problems for them to work out (as noted in item #6). But at least Indiana is moving ahead.

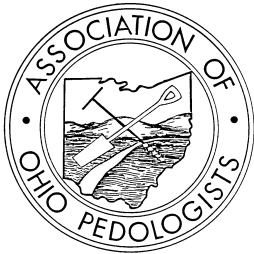
We can learn from Indiana. We have a Certification Board, but what have we done here in Ohio to address item #6? (We recently had a similar problem brought up in the "SAC" Hearings from Geauga County). This is not an easy question to resolve, but we are not alone. There are similar growing pains in other states and in other disciplines. We can learn from their experiences. Hell, even Barbers and Hair Dressers are licensed in Ohio.

In summary, my sincerest congratulations to the Indiana Classifiers for what they've done for Soil Science. If you've never attended The "Fall Tour" I suggest you give it a try.

It never rained...

**Ohio Pedologist**

The Ohio State University  
School of Natural Resources  
Columbus, OH 43210



«Last Name», «First Name»  
«Street»  
«City, State, Zip»