CHAPTER 12

THE URBAN SOILS PROGRAM IN PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA

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A cooperative detailed soil survey agreement was made and initiated in 1958 between the Prince William County Board of Supervisors, the Agronomy Department of Virginia Polytechnic Institute, and the USDA Soil Conservation Service. This soil survey was designed for anticipated urban as well as for agriculture uses. After the soil survey was completed, the soils maps were redrafted on cronaflex to facilitate copying for public distribution (milar where maps can be copied by ammonia processing method on the county Ozolid machine). It is now possible for the public of obtain at a nominal fee the aerial mosaics, base maps, tax maps showing various parcels of land in the county and type of zoning, and the soils maps at a scale of 1" = 400'. Consequently, information is easily transferable from one map to another.

After the mapping was completed a popularized soils report was written for each soil type within the county. This popularized report included a short description of each soil type, suitability of each soil type for engineering or urban uses as well as various agriculture and forestry uses and the more significant problems likely to be encountered with each soil type in these various uses as reflected by their physical characteristics. Consequently, any person or agency can acquire a copy of the soils map and interpretative material for all or any portion or parcel of land in Prince William County.

After completion of the soil survey map and the soils report, an agreement between the Board of Supervisors of Prince William County and the Agronomy Department of Virginia Polytechnic Institute was made whereby the Agronomy Department would furnish a staff employee to remain in the county to make on site investigations and interpret soils information for specific urban uses. This soil scientist is technically responsible to the Agronomy Department and administratively responsible in county affairs to the Prince William County Public Works Department. For the soil scientist's services, Prince William County agreed to pay the Agronomy Department of Virginia Polytechnic Institute a portion of his salary.

1. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and Prince William County, Virginia.