A Borrow Pit is Not Just a Borrow Pit!

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Q. If it takes an hour for a man to dig a whole hole (pit), how long does it take for him to dig one-half a hole (pit)?
A. A hole is a hole, but a borrow pit is not just a borrow pit! There are literally hundreds of different kinds of borrow pits including, but not excluded to: deep, shallow, wet, dry, sand, clay, gravel, loam, rock, organic, hardpan, etc.

We want soil taxonomy to classify soils on the basis of something that is there rather than on the basis of something that is absent. Soil scientists prefer to classify soils not on the basis of what is absent but rather on the basis of something that is present. If we put together all borrow pits, we would have a miscellaneous accumulation of many different kinds of soil material remains classified in a single group only because of something that is not there, and it is not easy when something is absent to prove that it has been removed. It may have never been there! The soil material remains are now and have been subjected to different soil forming processes and environmental conditions. Borrow pits have many uses. In New England, the soil material remains of borrow pits can be mapped and classified as simply as: A-B-C----DEFG.

Maine’s Site Location of Development Statute defines the governs borrow pits opened up or expanded in excess of 5 acres and excavating for natural resources of areas in excess of 60,000 ft².

Maine’s Land Use Regulation Statute regulating land use in plantations and unorganized townships establishes land use districts and permitted uses. The Commercial Industrial Development Subdistricts includes areas of 2 or more acres devoted to the commercial extraction of minerals including, but not limited to, borrow pits for sand, fill or gravel, peat extraction, and the mining of metals and rock.

1 This article is a rebuttal to the article by Don Elisman entitled “A Pit by any Other Name is Still a Pit” published in Volume 21, Number 4, Winter 1980.
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