Planning Key to Successful Distribution of Soil Report

Tyrone M. Goddard¹

In New York, public meetings to distribute copies of newly published soil surveys are important for promoting local interest and use. The meetings bring participants together who represent a range in occupations and interests. Farmers, leaders of civic organizations, political leaders, planners and consultants, realtors, and representatives from the various levels of government are included. These meetings establish the soil survey report as a valuable document for use in planning and evaluation. They also provide an opportunity to recognize the contributions of the members and local supporters of the National Cooperative Soil Survey.

Planning and publicity are the keys to a successful meeting. Good planning is needed to design a public information campaign and develop a program. The recently concluded Rensselaer County meeting is a good example of what planning and publicity can accomplish. More than 320 people attended this meeting! In fact, so much interest was generated that we could not accommodate all of the people wishing to attend (Fig. 1).

The credit for planning and organizing this meeting goes to Thomas Sanford, Rensselaer County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Manager. Sanford targeted engineers, planners, consultants, realtors, and developers as the audience for this meeting. He advertised through newspapers and direct mailings. He also enlisted local government agencies and professional organizations to publicize the meeting. For instance, the Rensselaer County Public Relations Department advertised the meeting to county government clientele. The Rensselaer County Board of Realtors publicized the meeting by mailing announcements on their stationery to their entire membership. The county health department provided a list of developers and consultants. This strategy resulted in thorough coverage of the intended audience.

In advertisements, Sanford informed his audience that the soil survey of Rensselaer County, which many people awaited, would be available at the meeting. He described the cooperative involvement responsible for the

¹Soil scientist; USDA-SCS; Syracuse, NY 13260.