News and Announcements

Carter Allan Steers

Carter Allen Steers, retired Assistant Head of the NRCS Cartographic Center (Fort Worth, TX), died of cancer April 21 in Durant, Oklahoma. Carter was born in Dewey County, Oklahoma, on 15 July 1934. He was raised on a farm, and in 1956, graduated from Oklahoma State University with a B.S. in Soil Science. While earning his degree, Carter worked as a technician in the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) Laboratory in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Upon graduation, Carter went to work for the SCS as a soil scientist in Woodward County, Oklahoma. He served as Survey Party Leader for the Dewey County and Bryan County, Oklahoma, Soil Surveys. In 1967, he moved to Alabama as a Soil Correlator. During this time, Carter completed an M.S. under the direction of Dr. Ben Hajek investigating statistical evaluation of soil mapping units. This work was the foundation for the committee (of which Carter was a member) that developed the five orders of soil survey that are so widely used today. He also developed a system to facilitate map compilation using stick-on symbols that resulted in faster publication of Soil Survey reports.

Carter moved to Fort Worth as the Assistant Head of the Cartographic Unit in 1972. He later served as Assistant Principal Soil Correlator and as head of the Southern Region Natural Resource Inventory (NRI). After serving as Head of the Automatic Data Processing staff, he returned to the National Cartographic Center. Carter was an early proponent of the use of computers in Soil Survey and was largely responsible for the computer-generated interpretive soil maps produced in the southern region. Carter’s cheerful attitude and desire to get the work completed was an inspiration to those who worked with him.

Carter is survived by: his wife JoAnn, daughters Lana and Dana, and son Greg.

Joe D. Nichols, retired Soil Scientist, SCS, Fort Worth, Texas