REPORT OF COMMITTEE
ON REPORTS, MAPS AND TECHNIQUE OF MAPPING

This committee may fairly claim continuous existence since 1922, although there have been variations in its name and form due to shifting emphasis on the different phases of our work. Twenty-two Association members have served on this committee and others have contributed to the programs which have presented many suggestions. While certain results have been obtained, it is apparent that many proposed improvements—even those which were generally applauded—have not been put into practice.

Some recommendations have been turned down in the past on the plea of “economy”, but probably inertia, confirmed habits and personal preferences are major obstacles to change.

These facts, coupled with rather complete coverage of the subject in past years, raises the question “What is there for this committee to do?” However, as long as making maps and writing reports are the tasks consuming most of Soil Survey time and money, this Association may well maintain a committee to consider ways and means of improving these two main products of our labors.

This year’s program deals more with the production of material entering into the reports and maps than with the methods of presenting the information.

After reviewing the work of previous committees and canvassing the present situation, we submit the following suggestions for your consideration.

It would be desirable to get the reaction of users of Soil Surveys and learn their ideas about the good and bad points of our surveys and maps. In this connection, a paper by a County Agricultural Agent who has tried to use a Soil Survey in his work should be a good contribution to a future program.

We favor the early publication of the general soil map of the United States.

We suggest collecting and reporting information about the different kinds of soil maps and publications which may have been made or proposed, in addition to the ordinary Soil Surveys.

We call attention to the tabulated summary as a means of giving readers the gist of a Soil Survey report without need of reading through long discussions. Good examples of such tables are found in Soil Survey Report Number 7 of the University of Saskatchewan.

We favor describing each type fully under its own name so that the reader will have complete information about minor types instead of merely brief comparisons to major types.

We suggest the advisability of making separations which will make soil maps more usable in appraisal and land utilization work.

We suggest the construction of special maps to show practical applications of the soil classification.

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