

## Instructions for Accessing and Using the NCSS Web Soil Survey to Determine Dominant Map Units and Related Soil Information (8-15)

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**What is the  
Web Soil  
Survey?**

The National Cooperative Soil Survey (NCSS) Web Soil Survey is a tool, located on the Internet, which can be used to obtain all the information traditionally found in soil surveys. For nutrient management consultants in Maryland, it streamlines the process of determining dominant soil map units in fields where the Phosphorus Site Index is calculated.

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**Where is the  
Web Soil  
Survey  
Located?**

Log on to the NCSS Web Soil Survey web site at:  
<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>

Click on the “Start WSS” button to begin.

The simple yet powerful way  
to access and use soil data.






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Graphics courtesy of NCSS


**Locate the Field**

To locate the field of interest, follow the steps in the table below.

Step	Action
1	<p>Select an Area of Interest (AOI).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Click on the Address tab <b>OR</b> click on the State and County tab and enter the required information.</li> <li>Click on the “View” button.</li> </ul>
2	<p>To move the map to your location of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Click on the “Pan” button on the tool bar in the map window.</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Click on the map and drag to reposition the image.</li> </ul>
3	<p>To obtain a closer view of your AOI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Click on the “Zoom In” button on the tool bar in the map window.</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place the cursor on a corner of the area that you want to enlarge and drag across the area.</li> <li>At any time, you can click on the “Zoom History Back” button to return to your previous view.</li> </ul> 


**Define Field Boundaries and Identify Soil Types**

To identify soil types on the field of interest, follow the steps in the table below.

Step	Action
1	<p>To define the field boundaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Click on the “AOI polygon” button on the tool bar in the map window.</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Click around the perimeter of the field.</li> <li>Double-click to complete the polygon. The field selected is identified on the map and the acreage is displayed in the “AOI Information” block on the left side of the screen.</li> </ul>
2	<p>To identify soil types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Click on the “Soil Map” tab at the top of the screen. The soil types of the field are now displayed on the map and the acres and percentages of each soil type are displayed in the “Map Unit Legend” block on the left side of the screen.</li> </ul>

**Print a Soil Map and a Map Unit Summary**

To print a soil map and a map unit summary, follow the steps in the table below.

Step	Action
1	Click on the “Printable Version” button located on the top right of the page.
2	Click on “Custom Subtitle” and type in the field name.
3	<p>Click on the “View” button.</p> <p><i>Note 1:</i> You may need to temporarily allow pop-ups if the printable map does not come into view. Go to the “Tools” option on your browser, click on “Pop-up Blocker” and then click on “temporarily allow pop-ups” (these directions may vary for different browsers).</p> <p><i>Note 2:</i> The image will also not display if you are zoomed in too closely. Click on the “Zoom Out” button and then click once on the soils map.</p> 
4	You can now print the map and map unit summary, or save as a .pdf file.

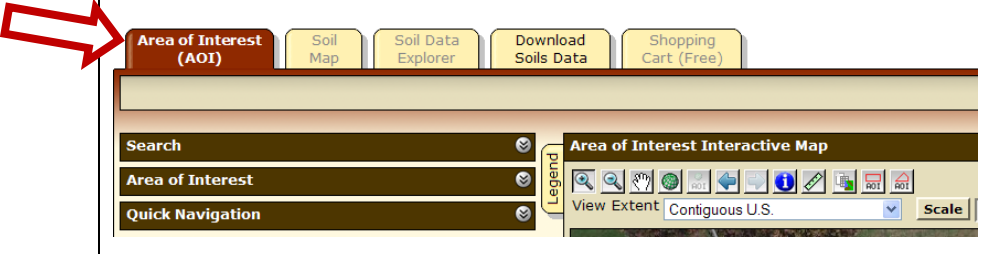
**View or Print a Map Unit Description**

To view or print a map unit description, follow the steps in the table below.

Step	Action
1	Click on the “Soil Data Explorer” tab at the top of the screen.
2	Click on the “Soil Reports” tab.
3	Click on the “AOI Inventory” cell.
4	Click on the “Map Unit Description (Brief)” cell.  <i>Note:</i> Some reports are not available individually. If this is the case, select “Map Unit Description (Brief, Generated) and then “View Soil Report” to get a report of all map unit descriptions.
5	Click on the box in front of soil of interest so that a green check appears.
6	Click the “View Soil Report” button.  <i>Note:</i> You may need to temporarily allow pop-ups if the printable document does not come into view. Go to the “Tools” option, click on “Pop-up Blocker” and then click on “temporarily allow pop-ups” (these directions may vary for different browsers).
7	To print, follow steps one (1) through four (4) in “Print a Soil Map and a Map Unit Summary” on page 3 of this document.

**Locate a Second Field**

At times, it will be necessary to document soil type on more than one field on a farm. To identify a second field, follow the steps in the table below.

Step	Action
1	To access the Interactive Map: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Click on the Area of Interest (AOI) tab at the top left side of the screen. (The map displayed will show the field previously selected.)</li> </ul> 
2	Proceed to Step 2, “Locate the Field” found on page 2.  <i>Note:</i> Creating a new AOI will remove any previous AOIs, so make sure you have saved the reports you need before proceeding.