

Soils in environmental protection and enhancement

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The Department of Natural Resources began its involvement in the National Cooperative Soil Survey in 1977. With the passage of the Parks and Soils Sales Tax, the department's efforts to reduce soil erosion greatly expanded into one of the most successful programs in the country. One aspect of that program was a continued commitment to complete the soil survey for Missouri in cooperation with the Natural Resource Conservation Service and the University of Missouri. The soil survey not only enhances soil conservation efforts but also is the foundation for everything from containing spills to siting individual wastewater treatment sites to building bridges.

One of the greatest challenges in environmental protection is to improve water quality in Missouri. Much of the contamination that decreases water quality comes through the soil either as sediment or chemical contamination. As the survey nears completion in Missouri, the department's efforts will expand into resource assessment and assistance as well as continuing documentation of our soil resource. Taken together, this approach will continue the expansion of soil knowledge and put more of our staff resources to meeting Missouri's needs.