

Using GIS to modernize the Missouri soil survey

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At the winter 2001-2002 completion of the initial soil survey fieldwork, new tasks begin for the National Cooperative Soil Survey program in Missouri. Soil surveys have been generally conducted on a county-by-county basis, often with many years separating the mapping of adjacent counties. Personnel has often changed, along with evolving concepts of soil classification and mapping. As a result, some inconsistencies exist among county soil surveys.

The forthcoming “modernization” phase of the Missouri soil survey will employ tools not previously available to soil mappers. The initial soil survey data will be in digital form, and can be utilized in a GIS with other geospatial data to create spatially distributed hypotheses about soil distributions. Inconsistencies among and within counties can be identified and systematically examined.