



# Official Soil Series Descriptions (OSD)

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The Official Soil Series Descriptions (OSD) is a national collection of more than 20,000 detailed soil series descriptions. These descriptions, in a text format, serve as a national standard.

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“**Official soil series description**” is a term applied to the description approved by NRCS that defines a specific soil series in the United States. These official soil series descriptions are descriptions of the taxa in the series category of the national system of classification. They mainly serve as specifications for identifying and classifying soils.

## Database Access

The Official Soil Series Description Query Facility enables you to create a list of soil series meeting specified selection criteria.

## VIEW OSDS BY QUERY

Includes option to download report.

[VIEW NOW \(HTTPS://SOILSERIES.SC.EGOV.USDA.GOV/OSDQUERY.ASPX\)](https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/osdquery.aspx)

## VIEW OSD BY SERIES NAME

Use with best-match feature or wildcard characters.

[VIEW NOW](https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/osdname.aspx) ([HTTPS://SOILSERIES.SC.EGOV.USDA.GOV/OSDNAME.ASPX](https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/osdname.aspx))

## VIEW OSDS BY LIST OF SERIES NAMES

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## Highlights

The soil series is the lowest category of the national soil classification system. The name of a soil series is the common reference term, used to name soil map units. Soil series are the most homogenous classes in the system of taxonomy. The descriptions contain soil properties that define the soil series, distinguish it from other soil series, serve as the basis for the placement of that soil series in the soil family, and provide a record of soil properties needed to prepare soil interpretations.

- **Extent of Program.** National.
- **Available Products Coverage.** OSDs are available for all soil series officially recognized in the United States, Territories, Commonwealths, and Island Nations served by USDA-NRCS.
- **Information Content.** The OSDs describe general and detailed information about each recognized soil in the United States, Territories, Commonwealths, and Island Nations served by USDA-NRCS, including location, author's initials, introductory paragraph, taxonomic classification, detailed soil profile description, location of the typical soil profile, range in characteristics, competing series, geographic setting, geographically

associated soils, drainage and permeability, use and vegetation, distribution and extent, series established, remarks, and additional data.

- **Product Delivery Format.** OSDs are stored as unformatted ASCII text files and as HTML-formatted files.

Additional information about the establishment and maintenance of official series descriptions can be found in the **National Soil Survey Handbook, Part 614.06**.

## Recommended Citation

*Soil Survey Staff, Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Official Soil Series Descriptions. Available online. Accessed [month/day/year].*

## Contact Soils

Please contact us if you see something that needs to be updated, if you have any questions, or if you need accessibility assistance.

Soils Webmaster

402-437-5499 (tel:402-437-5499)

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-  [askusda@usda.gov](mailto:askusda@usda.gov) (<mailto:askusda@usda.gov>)

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