

# Using Soil Surveys for Equalization Purposes

## Soil and Water Conservation Society *South Dakota Chapter*

### BACKGROUND

The agricultural land evaluation procedures used in South Dakota are frequently being criticized because of inflationary land values, use of sales prices, and the influence of management on assessment.

Inflation and speculative investment have caused land sale prices to exceed the value of the lands' potential to produce food and fiber.

There is a strong grass roots movement in the country today to hold the line on taxes and make them equitable.

These concerns point to a strong need for evaluating agricultural land on the basis of the individual soil's ability to produce food and fiber.

### THE CHAPTER'S POSITION

The South Dakota Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society is a voluntary organization of practicing land operators, professional conservationists, and other concerned citizens dedicated to promoting wise use of our soil and water resources. Because of this commitment, they have established the following positions related to the use of soil surveys.

It is the position of the South Dakota Chapter that:

- equitable agricultural land evaluation must be based on the soil's ability to produce food and fiber.
- agricultural land has a variation of soil from field to field and farm to farm.
- a soil survey developed by professional soil scientists is the most accurate record of the extent, amount, and degree of variation of the soils.
- soil surveys provide a complete inventory of the soil resources of a county, including soil's physical and chemical properties; geographic distribution; comparative crop, pasture and range yields; limitations and suitabilities for different land uses, and the opportunity for continual research by local state and federal agencies.

- because the soil survey provides information on soils, their location, extent and productive potential, the soil survey should be adopted as the universal method of determining land evaluation within the State of South Dakota.
- the State of South Dakota should continue to support the soil survey program by accelerating automation of soil information in all counties.

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