

READING GUIDE*

Interpretations III: Applications

Soil Survey Division Staff (1993), Chapter 6, p. 298-319 (p.14-29)

OBJECTIVE: *To understand the process by which soil interpretations and other soil ratings are developed, and to recognize the role of soil survey and soil interpretations in land-use planning.*

1. **Why is it important to have national criteria for development and application of soil interpretations instead of local (by county or state) criteria?**
2. What is the general process by which interpretations are developed?
3. Why is it important to include input from users and professionals from other disciplines when developing interpretations?
4. Why is the development of interpretations considered to be an iterative process?
5. What are *national inventory groupings*? Why are they developed? What are examples of national inventory groupings?
6. What is *prime farmland*? What soil properties are considered when evaluating land to be prime farmland? How does prime farmland compare to *unique farmland*?
7. What are *hydric soils*? **Why are hydric soils important?**
8. What is *highly erodible land*?
9. What is *land-use planning*? How are soil surveys used for the purpose of land-use planning?
10. How do local planning and regional planning differ in their use and application of soil surveys and soil interpretations?
11. How are soil surveys and soil interpretations used in the management of farmland? Provide specific examples.
12. What is *soil productivity*? How is soil productivity quantified in soil survey? **How does soil productivity differ from soil fertility?**
13. How are soil surveys and soil interpretations used in the management of rangeland? Provide specific examples.
14. How are soil surveys and soil interpretations used in the management of forest land? Provide specific examples.
15. How are soil surveys and soil interpretations used in the management of wildlife habitat? Why are current land use, existing vegetation, or current wildlife population not considered?
16. How are soil surveys and soil interpretations used in the management of building sites? Provide specific examples. Why is the application of soil interpretations to soil survey data for building sites particularly challenging? How are soil survey interpretations best used for building site evaluation?
17. How are soil surveys and soil interpretations used in the management of waste disposal? Provide specific examples.

SYNTHESIS:

18. For purposes of land-use planning, why might it be necessary to consider not only the qualities and limitations of individual soils, but the patterns of soils? Provide specific examples.

* Questions in plain type represent basic facts and concepts. Questions in **bold** type are those that are answered in the text but require more careful consideration. The Synthesis questions at the end help you apply the facts and concepts to a relevant issue.