

# Soils Resource Guide Documents for the New Mexico ENVIROTHON

Many soil information resources and publications are available online which can be downloaded and printed free of charge. Many of these are the same guides professional soil scientist use daily in their work, and have been adapted to present the same concepts and principles of soil identification, properties, uses, and management in less technical terms. The a starting point to find comprehensive information on soils is the National Soils Page Web Page at <http://soils.usda.gov/> . The following references should prove to be useful in training ENVIROTHON participants in soil science.

***Dig It! The Secrets of Soil*** <http://forces.si.edu/soils/index.html>

The “Dig It!” web site features many of the informational sections on soils featured at the soil exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution, and provides several easy to follow lessons regarding the nature of soil, how it forms, and its value to man.

***Soil Biology Primer*** – [http://soils.usda.gov/sqi/concepts/soil\\_biology/biology.html](http://soils.usda.gov/sqi/concepts/soil_biology/biology.html)

The *Soil Biology Primer* is an introduction to the living component of soil and how it contributes to agricultural productivity, and air and water quality and includes units about bacteria, fungi, protozoa, nematodes, arthropods, and earthworms.

***Understanding Soil Risks and Hazards*** – <http://soils.usda.gov/use/risks.html>

Understanding Soil Risks and Hazards introduces several soil related risks and hazards that are important to city and county planners, developers, construction contractors, and others who use or build facilities on or in soils.

***From the Surface Down*** - [http://soils.usda.gov/education/resources/7\\_12/index.html](http://soils.usda.gov/education/resources/7_12/index.html)

From the Surface Down is an introduction to soil surveys for agronomic use and describes soil formation and the properties and qualities important to the interpretation and management of cropland soils.

***Soil Quality Publications*** – <http://soils.usda.gov/sqi/publications/publications.html>

The NRCS Soil Quality web site includes many reference and publications describing soil quality factors and the importance in maintaining soil health.

***Urban Soils Primer*** - <http://soils.usda.gov/use/urban/primer.html>

The Urban Soils Primer is an introduction to urban soils for homeowners, planning boards, property managers, and educators which provides important information for planning and managing land resources in a manner that helps to prevent or mitigate problems associated with sedimentation, contamination, runoff, and structural failure.

***Field Book for Sampling and Describing Soils*** - <http://soils.usda.gov/technical/fieldbook/>

The Field Book for Sampling and Describing Soils is a comprehensive reference for the examination and description of soil properties, qualities, features, and site characteristics.

*If you have questions regarding these information sources or need additional information, please call your local **Natural Resources Conservation Service** Office or Ken Scheffe, State Soil Scientist, at (505) 761-4433*