

[Federal Register: July 13, 1994]

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Soil Conservation Service

Changes in **Hydric** Soils of the United States

AGENCY: Soil Conservation Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of change.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to 7 CFR 12.31(a)(3)(i), the Soil Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture gives notice of a change in the **Hydric** Soils of the United States as listed in the third edition of the **Hydric** Soils of the United States, Miscellaneous Publication 1491, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, June 1991.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Craig A. Ditzler, Chair, National Technical Committee for **Hydric** Soils, National Soil Survey Center, Soil Conservation Service, room 152, Federal Building, 100 Centennial Mall N., Lincoln, NE 68508-3866, Telephone (402) 437-5353.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The third edition of the **Hydric** Soils of the United States was published June 1991, and a notice of change published in the Federal Register, October 11, 1991, Vol. 56, No. 198, page 51371. Changes to this document were made in 1993 and published in the Federal Register, October 6, 1993, Vol. 58, No. 192, page 52078. The changes published herein reflect soils added and deleted since the 1991 publication.

The national list of **hydric** soils changes as additional soil series are recognized and defined and/or properties of existing soil series are updated based on additional data. These changes reflect refinements in knowledge of the soils of the United States. New soil series are recognized as soils are mapped in previously unmapped areas. These new series have always met **hydric** soil criteria, whether recognized as series or not, and thus represent an insignificant change in acreage of **hydric** soils. Soils that are removed from the list are mostly dry phases of existing **hydric** soils. These dry phases would not have met wetland hydrology criteria, thus represent an insignificant change in acreage of wetlands.

The list of **hydric** soils is computer generated using the **hydric** soil criteria and a database of properties of each soil series in the United States. The database is also used to generate interpretations of how soils perform for many land uses. Therefore, some changes in the list of **hydric** soils result from adding phases for a **hydric** soil to refine another interpretation. This split or addition of a **hydric** phase causes an increase in the number of **hydric** soils, but does not affect the acres of the **hydric** soil. Data for all soil series are in the Soil Interpretations Record and may be reviewed by contacting a local office of the Soil Conservation Service in the appropriate State.

The National Technical Committee also modified the definition of

hydric soils as given in Miscellaneous Publication 1491 to ``A **hydric** soil is a soil that formed under conditions of saturation, flooding, or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part.'' The change in the definition does not affect the National List of **Hydric** Soils. The change aligns the definition more closely with Soil Taxonomy and clarifies that artificially drained phases are **hydric** soils if the soil in its undisturbed state meets the criteria.

Dated: June 29, 1994.

Richard W. Arnold,
Director, Soil Survey Division.

Briefing Paper

National List of **Hydric** Soils

Prepared by: Maurice J. Mausbach, May 1993

Background

--The National List of **Hydric** Soils is:

*published by the Soil Conservation Service.

*revised annually and notice is filed in Federal Register.

*generated from Soil Interpretations Records in the National Soil Database.

--The National Technical Committee for **Hydric** Soils reviews and concurs with changes to the National List of **Hydric** Soils.

--The Soil Interpretations Records for soil series are:

*continuously updated as data is collected on soil properties.

*reviewed by the soil survey quality assurance staff at the National Soil Survey Center.

*used in all aspects of the Soil Survey Program of which **hydric** soils are a small part.

Reasons for Changes in the **Hydric** Soil List

--Addition of new soil series due to:

*newly mapped areas (soils have always been **hydric** but have not previously been recognized as soil series).

*narrowing of an existing series into two soils. An example being a series that is both **hydric** and nonhydric being split into their respective parts.

--Result from new phases being added to an existing soil series. Phases are added for many reasons and include:

*flooding and ponding phases of which some may be **hydric** and others nonhydric. Many of these changes are made to accommodate nonhydric interpretations of soil use.

*surface texture or depth phases both of which are not related to change in **hydric** soil status but are needed for other interpretations.

*wetness or water table phases of which some may be **hydric** and others nonhydric. Some of these changes are made to accommodate other interpretations of soil use.

--Result from change in flooding, ponding, water table, or drainage class as a result of new information. Soils are added and deleted from the list due to these changes.

Summary of Changes to 1991 National List

--116 entries (soils) added of which