

Land-Capability Classification System: Past, Present, and Future. (S05-sinclair171619-Poster)

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Abstract:

This paper outlines the development, benefits, and current use of the U.S. Land-Capability Classification System. A number of different land classification systems have been used in this and other countries. Many countries developed such systems because of the need to classify land-scape units to help solve land use and land planning problems. In the U.S., Land-Capability Classification development started in the early 1900's. Within a few decades it became the principal land classification tool used by conservation planners in the U.S. Beginning in the 1930's and continuing into the 1970's the system was periodically updated to incorporate new technology and knowledge. The end-objective of Land-Capability Classification was to help protect the soil resource and improve economic returns to farmers and ranchers. There has been a renewed interest in this system during the 1990's. Accordingly, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) plans to develop a computerized decision support system to help assign U.S. soils to the proper Land Capability Class. As part of this process, an interagency group has reviewed the principles and technology underlying this system in order to make any needed changes prior to computerization.

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