SSSA Board of Directors Conference Call
November 20, 2008
(Call started at 10:00 AM CST; ended at 11:20 AM)

The meeting was called to order by President Gary Peterson. Board participants were:

   Gary A. Peterson, SSSA President
   Rattan Lal, SSSA Past President
   David E. Radcliffe, S-1 Board Rep.
   Michael E. Essington, S-2 Board Rep
   Carolyn G. Olson, S-5 Board Rep.
   Diane E. Stott, S-6 Board Rep.
   Robert L. Mikkelsen, S-8 Board Rep.
   Randal J. Southard, S-9 Board Rep.
   Sally D. Logsdon, SSSA Editor-in-Chief, ex officio
   Ellen Bergfeld, Chief Executive Officer, ex-officio

Also participating:
Nicholas B. Comerford, Incoming Pres-Elect
Fran Katz, Chief Operations Officer
Wes Meixelsperger, Chief Financial Officer
Susan Chapman, Director of Member Services
Karl Glasener, Director of Science Policy
Paul Kamps, Development Officer
Keith Schlesinger, Director of Meetings and Conventions
Cathy Goudreau, Recorder

S003 Board of Directors
1. By consensus the Board approved the October 9, 2008 SSSA Board of Directors Meeting minutes.

2. The dates of May 4-6, May 11-13, or May 18-20 have been suggested for the Spring SSSA Board meeting in Lexington, Kentucky. The Board was requested to email their preference to Ellen within the next day.

3. The next Board conference call is scheduled for 10:00 AM Central Standard Time on December 18.

S211 Budget and Finance
Wes Meixelsperger reported that the October financial statement is consistent with the past month’s statements and operating income is at a break-even level. Investment returns continue to cause a drag on reported earnings. Per action taken on the September 24, 2007 Board conference call to accept the new investment portfolio strategy recommended by Smith Barney to move from managed investments to exchange traded funds, money is currently invested on a 50-50 basis between fixed income and equity. With declining equity values in the investment portfolio, the policy may at some point force the sale of fixed income securities (at a loss) in order to purchase additional equity securities to keep the portfolio in compliance with Board policy. Wes will work with the B&F Chair to bring a recommendation for a revised investment strategy to the Board for discussion on the December 18 conference call.
S470 General Awards
The CSSA Board of Directors recently passed an action that made ASA and SSSA Executive Committee and Board of Directors members eligible to write letters of support and/or be nominated for CSSA awards, including Fellow, and they requested that the SSSA Board reciprocate.

ACTION: It was moved by Randy Southard that CSSA and ASA Executive Committee and Board of Directors members be eligible to write letters of support and/or be nominated for SSSA awards, including Fellow. Seconded by Carolyn Olson. Carried unanimously.

S589 Smithsonian Soils Exhibit
Ellen Bergfeld reported that funding for the traveling exhibit is moving forward and looking positive. It is anticipated that there will be an official communication/press release in the near future regarding a major donation.

S711 Program Planning
1. The Board reconsidered the following action taken at the May 3-4, 2007 Board meeting:

   A person would be eligible to present a volunteer paper in only those Societies for which they hold membership (ie, an ASA only member could not present in a CSSA Division). This does not apply to invited speakers.

   It was noted that the action was one of several recommendations from the Budget and Finance Committee relative to dues restructuring. It was anticipated that the membership requirement would bring in additional members. The action was not implemented for 2008 because of the joint annual meeting with GSA.

   After discussing the pros and cons of the action, it was the consensus of the Board that the Soil Science Society of America should encourage participation by allowing paper presentations by nonmembers. In addition, the Canadian Society of Soil Science and the Mexican Society of Soil Science will meet with SSSA in 2011 and the policy would again need to be lifted.

   ACTION: It was moved by Randy Southard to lift the SSSA membership requirement for authors of volunteer papers at the SSSA annual meeting. Seconded by Dan Neary. Carried unanimously.

   Ellen Bergfeld will communicate the above action to the ASA and CSSA Boards of Directors and encourage them to reconsider their policy.

2. As a follow-up to discussions at the October 9, 2008 Board meeting, the Board reviewed the following proposed guidelines for use of program enhancement funds, drafted by Nick Comerford.

   Guidelines for Use of Program Enhancement Funds

   Program enhancement funds are derived from the registration fees collected at the Soil Science Society of America Annual Meetings. The distribution of these enhancement funds is determined by policy as approved by the Soil Science Society of America Board of Directors. Below are the guidelines for the proper use of these funds by society Divisions.

   The question to ask, when committing these funds, is “does this expenditure enhance the quality of the program, the involvement of meeting participants, or the recognition of excellence during the current or previous annual meeting programs.”
The affirmative answer to that question is the responsibility of the leadership in each division of the society. That leadership should be able to justify the expenditure as being appropriate if required to do so by the Soil Science Society of America Board of Directors.

Examples of appropriate expenditures are, but not limited to:

- Paying expenses and awarding honoraria to invited speakers of symposia
- Monetary awards to graduate students for outstanding accomplishments
- Monetary award for outstanding young scientist
- Food and drink events that improve the communication and/or promote the activity of membership in professional activities such as poster session discussions or graduate student meet and greet events with division members
- Underwriting costs of field trips to augment the educational and collaborative experience of field trips
- Underwriting costs of symposia or thematic sessions for the use of technology to deliver talks, such as costs associated with WebX presentations, from cutting edge scientists via distance technology

**ACTION:** It was moved by David Radcliffe to approve the guidelines for use of program enhancement funds. Seconded by Rob Mikkelsen. Carried unanimously.

Keith Schlesinger will forward the guidelines to the SSSA Division Chairs and include them in the Program Planning Manual.

3. As a follow-up to discussions at the October 9, 2008 Board meeting, the Board reviewed the SSSA Program Enhancement Funds Proposal prepared by ad hoc committee members Richard Dick, Rob Mikkelsen, and Randy Southard. It was the consensus of the Board to focus the discussion on the concept of a competitive grant program vs. the current distribution formula.

**ACTION:** It was moved by Richard Dick to approve the concept of doubling the amount of money available for program enhancement funds for annual meetings, with the goal of distributing the funds through a competitive grant program. Seconded by Rattan Lal. Carried unanimously.

Gary Peterson and Paul Bertsch will share the concept with ASA and CSSA leadership. The ad hoc committee will continue to work on the details for implementation of a competitive grant program. The Board was encouraged to provide feedback to the committee.

**S890 North American Proficiency Testing (NAPT) Program**

Susan Chapman briefed the Board on the status of the NAPT program. A copy of a letter signed by the NAPT Chair and Past Chair to USDA-NRCS affirming the validity of the program will be shared with the Board. Discussion of the NAPT program and how it fits into the Strategic Plan will be an agenda item for the Spring 2009 SSSA Board meeting.

Meeting adjourned.