

The **MISSION** of the Congressional Soils Caucus is to heighten the awareness of and appreciation for the importance and role of soils and soil science among policymakers and the public to promote proper soil management and conservation to ensure the continued production of high-quality and abundant food, feed and fiber, while protecting and enhancing the environment and natural resource base across the nation.

“CIVILIZATION  
ITSELF RESTS  
UPON THE SOIL”

-THOMAS JEFFERSON



SOIL SCIENCE SOCIETY  
OF AMERICA

# Congressional SOILS Caucus

## Focus Areas for Educational Briefings

### THE VITAL ROLE OF SOILS IN:

- ✓ Bioenergy/Biofuels
- ✓ Carbon Farming/Sequestration
- ✓ Nutrient Management
- ✓ Nutrition
- ✓ Recovery of Soil Function after Wildfire Disturbance

Water Quality and Quantity

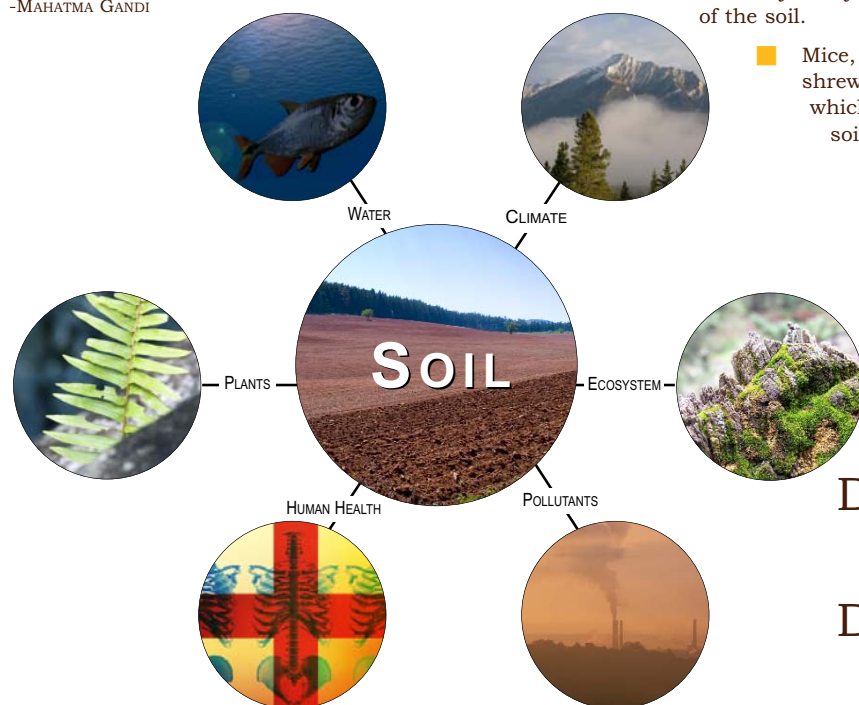
Land Use Management

## THE GOALS OF THE CONGRESSIONAL SOILS CAUCUS:

1. Increase appreciation and support in Congress for the importance of soils and soil science through continuing education and timely communication of contemporary issues in soil science.
2. Identify and prioritize soil research and education needs critical to advancing soil science to solve problems related to world food security, natural resource and environmental protection, and land use.
3. Provide timely information and input to assist in the development of farm bill programs and other legislation involving soil research and education priorities.
4. Enhance connection and interaction among public and private organizations, federal and state agencies, and constituencies to accomplish the mission.

## “TO FORGET HOW TO TEND THE SOILS IS TO FORGET OURSELVES”

-MAHATMA GANDI



## WHAT ON EARTH IS SOIL?

- Topsoil is the most productive soil layer.
- Five tons of topsoil spread over an acres is only 1/32 inch thick--the thickness of a dime.
- Natural processes can take more than 500 years to form one inch of topsoil.
- Fungi and bacteria help break down organic matter in the soil.
- Plant roots and lichens break up rocks which become part of new soil.
- Five to 10 tons of animal life can live in an acre of soil.
- Earthworms digest organic matter, recycle nutrients, and make the surface soil richer.
- Mice take seeds and other plant materials into underground burrows, where this material eventually decays and becomes part of the soil.
- Mice, moles, and shrews dig burrows which help aerate the soil.

## “THE NATION THAT DESTROYS ITS SOIL, DESTROYS ITSELF”

-FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT

## COOL FACTS ABOUT SOIL

- Did you know that there are more living individual organisms in a tablespoon of soil than there are people on the earth?
- Did you know that almost all of the antibiotics we take to help us fight infections were obtained from soil microorganisms?
- Did you know that agriculture is the only essential industry on earth?
- Did you know that soil is a non-renewable natural resource?
- Did you know that the best china dishes are made from soil?
- Did you know that about 70% of the weight of a text book or glossy paged magazine is soil?
- Did you know that putting clay on your face in the form of a "mud mask" is done to cleanse the pores in the skin?

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