

27th PRSSS, 2005 Spring Workshop

“Fields of Convergence: The Diversity of Contemporary Soil Science”

The 2005 spring workshop, held March 19th, was a great success. “Fields of Convergence: The Diversity of Contemporary Soil Science” was presented by the PRSSS and the Soil and Water Conservation Society – BC Chapter (SWCS) and was attended by 69 individuals. The Vancouver Branch of the British Columbia Institute of Agrologists also generously sponsored the event. The day began with a keynote address from Dr. Anne Naeth who wears two hats -the Associate Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Home Economics at the University of Alberta (U of A) and the President of the Canadian Society of Soil Science. She opened with a look into her research interests which includes soil disturbance and land reclamation. She closed with a thoughtful discussion of new directions in western Canadian soil science.

Theresa Duynstee from the Greater Vancouver Regional District followed with an overview of the region’s liquid waste management system. She discussed the region’s biosolids management program, Nutrifor, and some of the many projects that the region is pursuing including land application projects.

A PhD candidate from the Biometeorology Group at UBC, David Gaumont-Guay, spoke next about the role of soil respiration processes in the carbon balance of boreal forest ecosystems. David discussed the biophysical factors driving temporal and spatial variability in soil respiration. He also provided an overview of the development of new technologies being used to measure the CO₂ exchange between forests, the soil and the atmosphere.

Next participants chose to participate in a discussion led by Dave Sands regarding the development of a Soil Protection Act for BC or join Nathan Basiliko, Rachelle Lalonde and Lucie Jerabkova for a tour of UBC’s Belowground Ecology Group laboratory facilities. Participants enjoyed the opportunity to have a lively discussion and get off their feet.

Dr. Bill Chapman, Ministry of Forests, next discussed the Soil Conservation Effectiveness Evaluation. This tool is used to assess effectiveness in the policies and practices used to conserve soil productivity and hydrologic function within cutblocks. The development of new tools like this is important for monitoring forest values under the new Forest and Range Protection Act.

Kim Sutherland from the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries then described the use of GIS technology to analyze farmland use and agricultural land needs within the Fraser Valley East. This analysis is useful for both agricultural and municipal planning.

PRSSS and SWCS would like to thank all of the speakers for generously giving their time to speak at the event. We would like to thank all of those who participated in the workshop. If you have any suggestions of themes or speakers for the 2006 spring workshop, or if you would like to help plan next year’s event, please contact PRSSS at prsss@vcn.bc.ca.

by Lesley Dampier