



## Historical Soil Maps of Wisconsin, USA

A.E. Hartemink (1), B. Lowery (1), and C. Wacker (2)

(1) University of Wisconsin - Madison, Department of Soil Science, Madison, WI, USA, (2) USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Madison, WI, USA

The mapping of soils has been one of the most challenging and thought-provoking aspects of the soil science discipline. It has contributed to the fundamental understanding of soils, how they were formed, occur across the landscape and globe, and how they respond to use and management. Soil mapping has also shown the deficiencies in our understanding of soil properties and processes – both in time and space. The lands of the state of Wisconsin had been occupied by humans for thousands of years when the first French explorers arrived in 1634. Agricultural development in Wisconsin was much slower compared to states to the west that had less forest. The interest in soils initially came from geologists and from F.H. King, who became the first professor of agricultural physics. The first soil map in Wisconsin was prepared as part of a statewide geologic survey conducted in the 1870s. Because agricultural development was relatively slow, the need for soil mapping was not emphasized until the early 1900s. Since then, all counties have been mapped in detail and several statewide soil maps have been produced. In this paper we trace the development of soil mapping in Wisconsin, including the development of reconnaissance maps between 1882 and 1993.