

Soil Profile Descriptions in Bill's Woods

Permit 2005-7

December 8, 2005

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Primary aim of project: Instruction

Results/accomplishments (09/05-12/05)

During this time period, 17 students enrolled in Soil Science 325 utilized the three soil pits in Bill's Woods for developing their skills in standardized site and soil descriptions. Three groups of 6-8 students (under the direction of Fred Madison, Mark Krupinski, and Cynthia Stiles) visited the three pits over the course of four weeks (mid-September to mid-October). Activity is mainly limited to areas directly in around the pits with minimal off-trail reconnaissance related to slope measurements and vegetation assessments. Three class reports were generated.

Recommendations

My class suggests that we come up with general educational signage that describes what the soil pits are, what people can see when they look into the pits (horizons and how can one tell them apart, biologically-made features, evidence of past glacial activity), and try to limit the size of the active pit area to a three foot perimeter around each pit. Some rearrangement of present materials would have to be made to accommodate this. Also, the pit at the bottom of the hill closest to the trail should probably be reclaimed and this pit location moved over away from the trails so that hikers do not disrupt the educational activities and vice-versa. This would require the use of a small backhoe, or several good grave-digging individuals to make this happen