

Pennsylvania Association of Professional Soil Scientists celebrates 50 years

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Scenes from 2025 Pennsylvania Soils Conference in June 2025—top left: Biochar production at Metzler's Forest Products in Mifflin County, PA. Top center: Dr. Patrick Drohan, Penn State University, explaining the effect on soils of Pennsylvania's history of charcoal hearths for iron ore production. Top right: Soil monoliths from Greenwood Furnace State Park charcoal hearths, Huntingdon County, PA. Bottom: Group picture of attendees.

The Pennsylvania Association of Professional Soil Scientists (PAPSS) celebrated its 50th anniversary on June 17–18, 2025 in Bellefonte, PA during the Pennsylvania Soils Conference. The two-day event explored the theme “Building Resilient Pennsylvania Soil Systems.”

On the first day, attendees listened to presentations highlighting statewide efforts in soil conservation, research, and management with speakers from Penn State University, USDA–NRCS, and other institutions. The program also included discussions on soil health, contaminants, and the evolution of soil mapping in Pennsylvania. The day ended with a celebratory dinner recognizing five decades of PAPSS.

On the second day, attendees toured several central Pennsylvania sites, including biochar projects, historical charcoal hearths, forest and stream restoration areas, and local farms—offering hands-on insights into how science and stewardship continue to shape the state’s soil systems.

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