

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS  
GEOTECHNICAL UNIT



SUBSURFACE INVESTIGATION

SOIL AND ROCK LEGEND, TERMS, SYMBOLS, AND ABBREVIATIONS

SOIL DESCRIPTION										GRADATION										ROCK DESCRIPTION										TERMS AND DEFINITIONS									
SOIL IS CONSIDERED TO BE THE UNCONSOLIDATED, SEMI-CONSOLIDATED OR WEATHERED EARTH MATERIALS WHICH CAN BE PENETRATED WITH A CONTINUOUS FLIGHT POWER AUGER, AND WHICH YIELDS LESS THAN 100 BLOWS PER 30 cm ACCORDING TO STANDARD PENETRATION TEST (AASHTO T206, ASTM D-1586). SOIL CLASSIFICATION IS BASED ON THE AASHTO SYSTEM AND BASIC DESCRIPTIONS GENERALLY SHALL INCLUDE: CONSISTENCY, COLOR, TEXTURE, MOISTURE, AASHTO CLASSIFICATION, AND OTHER PERTINENT FACTORS SUCH AS MINERALOGICAL COMPOSITION, ANGULARITY, STRUCTURE, PLASTICITY, ETC. EXAMPLE: <i>VERY STIFF, GRAY SILTY CLAY, MOST WITH INTERBEDDED FINE SAND LAYERS, HIGH PLASTIC, A-7-6</i>										WELL GRADED - INDICATES A GOOD REPRESENTATION OF PARTICLE SIZES FROM FINE TO COARSE UNIFORM - INDICATES THAT SOIL PARTICLES ARE ALL APPROXIMATELY THE SAME SIZE (ALSO POORLY GRADED). GAP-GRADED - INDICATES A MIXTURE OF UNIFORM PARTICLES OF TWO OR MORE SIZES.  THE ANGULARITY OR ROUNDNESS OF SOIL GRAINS ARE DESIGNATED BY THE TERMS: ANGULAR, SUBANGULAR, SUBROUNDED, OR ROUNDED.										HARD ROCK IS NON-COASTAL PLAIN MATERIAL THAT WHEN TESTED, WOULD YIELD SPT REFUSAL, AN INFERRED ROCK LINE INDICATES THE LEVEL AT WHICH NON-COASTAL PLAIN MATERIAL WOULD YIELD SPT REFUSAL. SPT REFUSAL IS PENETRATION BY A SPLIT SPOON SAMPLER EQUAL TO OR LESS THAN 2.5 cm PER 50 BLOWS. IN NON-COASTAL PLAIN MATERIAL, THE TRANSITION BETWEEN SOIL AND ROCK IS OFTEN REPRESENTED BY A ZONE OF WEATHERED ROCK. ROCK MATERIALS ARE TYPICALLY DIVIDED AS FOLLOWS: NON-COASTAL PLAIN MATERIAL THAT YIELDS SPT N VALUES > 100 BLOWS PER 30 cm. FINE TO COARSE GRAIN IGNEOUS AND METAMORPHIC ROCK THAT WOULD YIELD SPT REFUSAL IF TESTED. ROCK TYPE INCLUDES GRANITE, GNEISS, GABBRO, SCHIST, ETC. FINE TO COARSE GRAIN METAMORPHIC AND NON-COASTAL PLAIN SEDIMENTARY ROCK THAT WOULD YIELD SPT REFUSAL IF TESTED. ROCK TYPE INCLUDES PHYLLITE, SLATE, SANDSTONE, ETC. COASTAL PLAIN SEDIMENTS CEMENTED INTO ROCK, BUT MAY NOT YIELD SPT REFUSAL. ROCK TYPE INCLUDES LIMESTONE, SANDSTONE, CEMENTED SHELL BEDS, ETC.										ALLUVIUM (ALLUV.) - SOILS WHICH HAVE BEEN TRANSPORTED BY WATER. AQUIFER - A WATER BEARING FORMATION OR STRATA. ARENACEOUS - APPLIED TO ROCKS THAT HAVE BEEN DERIVED FROM SAND OR THAT CONTAIN SAND. ARGILLACEOUS - APPLIED TO ALL ROCKS OR SUBSTANCES COMPOSED OF CLAY MINERALS, OR HAVING A NOTABLE PROPORTION OF CLAY IN THEIR COMPOSITION, AS SHALE, SLATE, ETC. ARTESIAN - GROUND WATER THAT IS UNDER SUFFICIENT PRESSURE TO RISE ABOVE THE LEVEL AT WHICH IS ENCOUNTERED, BUT WHICH DOES NOT NECESSARILY RISE TO OR ABOVE THE GROUND SURFACE. CALCAREOUS (CALC.) - SOILS WHICH CONTAIN APPRECIABLE AMOUNTS OF CALCIUM CARBONATE. COLLUVIUM - ROCK FRAGMENTS MIXED WITH SOIL DEPOSITED BY GRAVITY ON SLOPE OR AT BOTTOM OF SLOPE. CORE RECOVERY (REC.) - TOTAL LENGTH OF ALL MATERIAL RECOVERED IN THE CORE BARREL DIVIDED BY TOTAL LENGTH OF CORE RUN AND EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE. DIKE - A TABULAR BODY OF IGNEOUS ROCK THAT CUTS ACROSS THE STRUCTURE OF ADJACENT ROCKS OR CUTS MASSIVE ROCK. DIP - THE ANGLE AT WHICH A STRATUM OR ANY PLANAR FEATURE IS INCLINED FROM THE HORIZONTAL. DIP DIRECTION (DIP AZIMUTH) - THE DIRECTION OR BEARING OF THE HORIZONTAL TRACE OF THE LINE OF DIP, MEASURED CLOCKWISE FROM NORTH. FAULT - A FRACTURE OR FRACTURE ZONE ALONG WHICH THERE HAS BEEN DISPLACEMENT OF THE SIDES RELATIVE TO ONE ANOTHER PARALLEL TO THE FRACTURE. FESSILE - A PROPERTY OF SPLITTING ALONG CLOSELY SPACED PARALLEL PLANES. FLOAT - ROCK FRAGMENTS ON SURFACE NEAR THEIR ORIGINAL POSITION AND DISLOADED FROM PARENT MATERIAL. FLOOD PLAIN (F.P.) - LAND BORDERING A STREAM, BUILT OF SEDIMENTS DEPOSITED BY THE STREAM. FORMATION (FM) - A MAPPABLE GEOLOGIC UNIT THAT CAN BE RECOGNIZED AND TRACED IN THE FIELD. JOINT - FRACTURE IN ROCK ALONG WHICH NO APPRECIABLE MOVEMENT HAS OCCURRED. LEDGE - A SHELF-LIKE RIDGE OR PROJECTION OF ROCK WHOSE THICKNESS IS SMALL COMPARED TO ITS LATERAL EXTENT. LENS - A BODY OF SOIL OR ROCK THAT THINS OUT IN ONE OR MORE DIRECTIONS. MOTTLED (MOT.) - IRREGULARLY MARKED WITH SPOTS OF DIFFERENT COLORS, MOTTLING IN SOILS USUALLY INDICATES POOR AERATION AND LACK OF GOOD DRAINAGE. PERCHED WATER - WATER MAINTAINED ABOVE THE NORMAL GROUND WATER LEVEL BY THE PRESENCE OF AN INTERVENING IMPERVIOUS STRATUM. RESIDUAL SOIL - SOIL FORMED IN PLACE BY THE WEATHERING OF ROCK. ROCK QUALITY DESIGNATION (R.Q.D.) - A MEASURE OF ROCK QUALITY DESCRIBED BY: TOTAL LENGTH OF ROCK SEGMENTS EQUAL TO OR GREATER THAN 10 CENTIMETERS DIVIDED BY THE TOTAL LENGTH OF CORE RUN AND EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE. SAPROLITE (SAP.) - RESIDUAL SOIL WHICH RETAINS THE RELIC STRUCTURE OR FABRIC OF THE PARENT ROCK. SILL - AN INTRUSIVE BODY OF IGNEOUS ROCK OF APPROXIMATELY UNIFORM THICKNESS AND RELATIVELY THIN COMPARED WITH ITS LATERAL EXTENT, WHICH HAS BEEN EMPLACED PARALLEL TO THE BEDDING OR SCHISTOSITY OF THE INTRUDED ROCKS. SLICKENSIDE - POLISHED AND STRIATED SURFACE THAT RESULTS FROM FRICTION ALONG A FAULT OR SLIP PLANE. STANDARD PENETRATION TEST (PENETRATION RESISTANCE) (SPT) - NUMBER OF BLOWS (N) OF A 63.5 kg HAMMER FALLING 0.76 METERS REQUIRED TO PRODUCE A PENETRATION OF 30 cm INTO SOIL WITH A 5 cm OUTSIDE DIAMETER SPLIT SPOON SAMPLER. SPT REFUSAL IS LESS THAN 2.5 cm PENETRATION WITH 50 BLOWS. STRATA CORE RECOVERY (SREC.) - TOTAL LENGTH OF STRATA MATERIAL RECOVERED DIVIDED BY TOTAL LENGTH OF STRATUM AND EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE. STRATA ROCK QUALITY DESIGNATION (S.R.Q.D.) - A MEASURE OF ROCK QUALITY DESCRIBED BY: TOTAL LENGTH OF ROCK SEGMENTS WITHIN A STRATUM EQUAL TO OR GREATER THAN 10 CENTIMETERS DIVIDED BY THE TOTAL LENGTH OF STRATA AND EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE. TOPSOIL (T.S.) - SURFACE SOILS USUALLY CONTAINING ORGANIC MATTER.									
SOIL LEGEND AND AASHTO CLASSIFICATION										MINERALOGICAL COMPOSITION										COMPRESSIBILITY										PERCENTAGE OF MATERIAL									
GENERAL CLASS. GRANULAR MATERIALS (< 75% PASSING #200) SILT-CLAY MATERIALS (> 75% PASSING #200) ORGANIC MATERIALS										MINERAL NAMES SUCH AS QUARTZ, FELDSPAR, MICA, TALC, KAOLIN, ETC. ARE USED IN DESCRIPTIONS WHENEVER THEY ARE CONSIDERED OF SIGNIFICANCE.										SLIGHTLY COMPRESSIBLE LIQUID LIMIT LESS THAN 30 MODERATELY COMPRESSIBLE LIQUID LIMIT 31-50 HIGHLY COMPRESSIBLE LIQUID LIMIT GREATER THAN 50										ORGANIC MATERIAL GRANULAR SOILS SILT-CLAY SOILS OTHER MATERIAL TRACE OF ORGANIC MATTER 2 - 3% 3 - 5% TRACE 1 - 10% LITTLE ORGANIC MATTER 3 - 5% 5 - 12% LITTLE 10 - 20% MODERATELY ORGANIC 5 - 10% 12 - 20% SOME 20 - 35% HIGHLY ORGANIC >10% >20% HIGHLY 35% AND ABOVE									
CONSISTENCY OR DENSENESS										GROUND WATER										MISCELLANEOUS SYMBOLS										ROCK HARDNESS									
PRIMARY SOIL TYPE COMPACTNESS OR CONSISTENCY RANGE OF STANDARD PENETRATION RESISTANCE (N-VALUE) RANGE OF UNCONFINED COMPRESSIVE STRENGTH (kN/m <sup>2</sup> )										WATER LEVEL IN BORE HOLE IMMEDIATELY AFTER DRILLING. STATIC WATER LEVEL AFTER 24 HOURS. PERCHED WATER, SATURATED ZONE OR WATER BEARING STRATA SPRING OR SEEPAGE										ROADWAY EMBANKMENT WITH SOIL DESCRIPTION SOIL SYMBOL ARTIFICIAL FILL OTHER THAN ROADWAY EMBANKMENTS INFERRED SOIL BOUNDARIES INFERRED ROCK LINE ALLUVIAL SOIL BOUNDARY DIP/DIP DIRECTION OF ROCK STRUCTURES SOUNDING ROD SPT TEST BORING AUGER BORING CORE BORING MONITORING WELL PIEZOMETER INSTALLATION SLOPE INDICATOR INSTALLATION SPT N-VALUE SPT REFUSAL SAMPLE DESIGNATIONS S - BULK SAMPLE SS - SPLIT SPOON SAMPLE ST - SHELBY TUBE SAMPLE RS - ROCK SAMPLE RT - RECOMPACTED TRIAXIAL SAMPLE CBR - CBR SAMPLE										VERY HARD CANNOT BE SCRATCHED BY KNIFE OR SHARP PICK. BREAKING OF HAND SPECIMENS REQUIRES SEVERAL HARD BLOWS OF THE GEOLOGIST'S PICK. HARD CAN BE SCRATCHED BY KNIFE OR PICK ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY. HARD HAMMER BLOWS REQUIRED TO DETACH HAND SPECIMEN. MODERATELY HARD CAN BE SCRATCHED BY KNIFE OR PICK, GOUGES OR GROOVES TO 6 mm DEEP CAN BE EXCAVATED BY HARD BLOW OF A GEOLOGIST'S PICK. HAND SPECIMENS CAN BE DETACHED BY MODERATE BLOWS. MEDIUM HARD CAN BE GROOVED OR GOUGED 1 mm DEEP BY FIRM PRESSURE OF KNIFE OR PICK POINT. CAN BE EXCAVATED IN SMALL CHIPS TO PIECES 25 mm MAXIMUM SIZE BY HARD BLOWS OF THE POINT OF A GEOLOGIST'S PICK. SOFT CAN BE GROOVED OR GOUGED READILY BY KNIFE OR PICK. CAN BE EXCAVATED IN FRAGMENTS FROM CHIPS TO SEVERAL CENTIMETERS IN SIZE BY MODERATE BLOWS OF A PICK POINT. SMALL, THIN PIECES CAN BE BROKEN BY FINGER PRESSURE. VERY SOFT CAN BE CARVED WITH KNIFE. CAN BE EXCAVATED READILY WITH POINT OF PICK. PIECES 25 mm OR MORE IN THICKNESS CAN BE BROKEN BY FINGER PRESSURE. CAN BE SCRATCHED READILY BY FINGERNAIL.									
TEXTURE OR GRAIN SIZE										ABBREVIATIONS										EQUIPMENT USED ON SUBJECT PROJECT										FRACTURE SPACING									
U.S. STD. SIEVE SIZE OPENING (MM) 4 10 40 60 200 270 4.76 2.0 0.42 0.25 0.075 0.053										AR - AUGER REFUSAL BT - BORING TERMINATED CL - CLAY CPT - CONE PENETRATION TEST CSE - COARSE DMT - DILATOMETER TEST DPT - DYNAMIC PENETRATION TEST e - VOID RATIO F - FINE FOSS. - FOSSILIFEROUS FRAC. - FRACTURED FRAGMENTS HI. - HIGHLY MED. - MEDIUM MICA - MICACEOUS MOD. - MODERATELY NP - NON PLASTIC PMT - PRESSUREMETER TEST SAP. - SAPROLITE SD. - SAND, SANDY SL. - SILT, SILTY SLI. - SLIGHTLY TCR - TRICONE REFUSAL W - MOISTURE CONTENT V. - VERY VST - VANE SHEAR TEST γ <sub>d</sub> - UNIT WEIGHT γ <sub>d</sub> - DRY UNIT WEIGHT										DRILL UNITS: <input type="checkbox"/> MOBILE B- <input type="checkbox"/> BK-51 <input type="checkbox"/> CME-45C <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CME-550 <input type="checkbox"/> PORTABLE HOIST <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER ADVANCING TOOLS: <input type="checkbox"/> CLAY BITS <input type="checkbox"/> 152 mm CONTINUOUS FLIGHT AUGER <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 203 mm HOLLOW AUGERS <input type="checkbox"/> HARD FACED FINGER BITS <input type="checkbox"/> TUNG-CARBIDE INSERTS <input type="checkbox"/> CASING <input type="checkbox"/> W/ ADVANCER <input type="checkbox"/> TRICONE _____ mm STEEL TEETH <input type="checkbox"/> TRICONE _____ mm TUNG-CARB. <input type="checkbox"/> CORE BIT <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER HAMMER TYPE: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AUTOMATIC <input type="checkbox"/> MANUAL CORE SIZE: <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> H HAND TOOLS: <input type="checkbox"/> POST HOLE DIGGER <input type="checkbox"/> HAND AUGER <input type="checkbox"/> SOUNDING ROD <input type="checkbox"/> VANE SHEAR TEST <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER										VERY WIDE MORE THAN 3 m WIDE 1 TO 3 m MODERATELY CLOSE 30 TO 100 cm CLOSE 5 TO 30 cm VERY CLOSE LESS THAN 5 cm TERM THICKNESS VERY THICKLY BEDDED > 1 m THICKLY BEDDED 0.5 - 1 m THINLY BEDDED 0.05 - 0.5 m VERY THINLY BEDDED 10 - 50 mm THICKLY LAMINATED 2.5 - 10 mm THINLY LAMINATED < 2.5 mm									
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