

Towards a National Soil Health Strategy

Soil Conservation Council of Canada

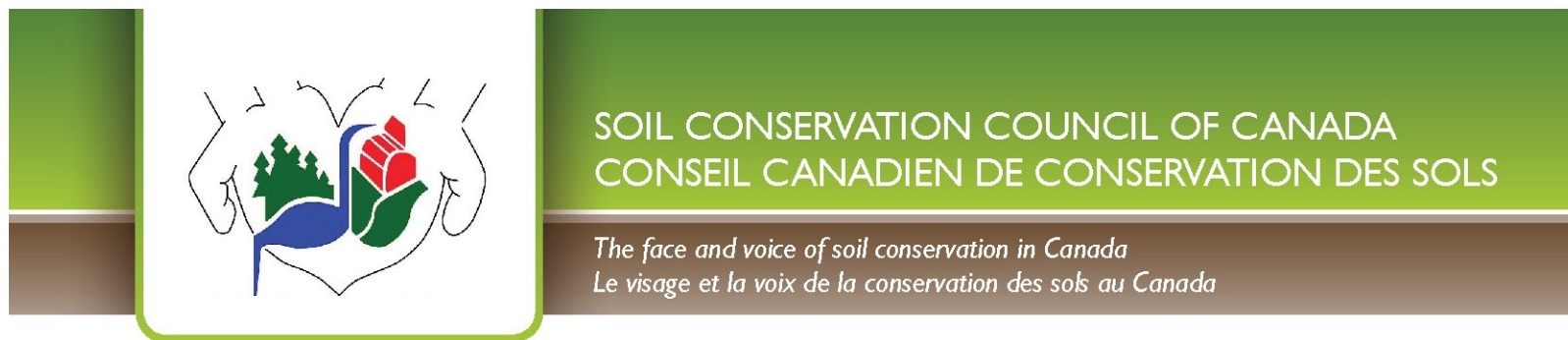


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SCCC role in the NSHS

- SCCC mandate going back to 1987 has been to advocate for soil health and conservation.
- We remain well positioned to bring soil health and conservation stakeholders together
- The Ag Industry will collectively do most of the work on keeping our soil healthy, so it just makes sense that leadership comes from our industry. **The NSHS will provide direction for that response.**
- SCCC is prepared to provide initial leadership in bringing soil stakeholders together in a collaborative process to build an industry strategy to lead action on soil health in Canada.



Who needs to be involved

- National and regional agriculture organizations
 - producer and ag commodity organizations
 - conservation organizations with a stake in soil health
 - agri-food business and food processors and exporters
 - residual producers
- Science community
- National NGO's with a stake in soil health
- Governments
- General Public
- Others?



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Linked initiatives (examples)

- Ontario Soil Health Strategy
- Senate of Canada Study on Canadian Soil Health
- AAFC's Sustainable Agriculture Strategy
- Provincial Strategies
 - Ontario
 - PEI
 - Quebec
- Canadian Roundtable on Sustainable Crops
- Recruiting Soil to Tackle Climate Change



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The NSHS defined

The NSHS will be an industry-led framework and plan for collective action to maintain and enhance the soils in Canada, with an immediate view (by 2030) and longer term (by 2050)

- Collaborative process for setting objectives, goals and priority actions for the agrifood industry
- Fostering agri-food industry's long-term commitments to meeting soil health needs
- Maintaining stakeholder engagement – ongoing renewal of NSHS



Phase 1 Planning and Engagement

- SCCC has convened a group of 22 potential stakeholders that are prepared to lead and invest in moving a national plan forward.
- Tasked with developing broader consensus on the scope of a NSHS that meets the needs of stakeholders across Canada.
 - Make a clear case for the NSHS
 - Create a funding and support framework
 - Engage and influence agri-business decision makers and senior government.
 - Develop an approach for the Phase 2 implementation of the NSHS.

(6-8 months with a budget of \$100 K)



Phase 2 Implementation

In Phase 2 there will be broader stakeholder engagement to seek additional contributions and consensus on the NSHS implementation.



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Proposed Engagement Material

1. Science-Based Soil Health Actions (Research)

The NSHS will focus on improving our understanding of the production, environmental, and economic impacts of soil degradation and methods to stop, reverse or avoid such impacts in the future.

2. Learning, Education and Technology Transfer (Extension)

The NSHS will focus on initiatives and partnerships that create information and distribution networks for soil health and conservation knowledge.



Proposed Engagement Material (con't)

3. Supporting Public and Private Interests in Soil Health (Resources)

The NSHS will inform the development of science-based policy and programs on how to promote soil health and conservation in Canada.

4. Public Engagement (Communications)

The NSHS will focus on engaging more Canadians on the importance of soil health and conservation and to make a personal contribution.



Progress to Date

April 2023 -**SCCC internal draft of Concept paper completed.**

May 17 - **Meeting 1 of NSHS Stakeholders (20 invited,12 attended)**

May 25 - **Meeting 1 of NSHS Working Group - developed consensus on NSHS concept**

June 1 - **Meeting 2 of NSHS Working Group – refined Phase 1**

June 8 - **Meeting 3 of NSHS Working Group –consensus on phase 1**

June15 - **Meeting 4 of NSHS Working Group – planning NSHS Stakeholders Meeting 2 June 29**

June15 - **Briefing Sen Black**

June 21 - **Meeting with SAS Soils Soil health Working Group**



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NSHS Stakeholders Meeting 1 take aways

- Importance of staying aligned with Senate study
- Establish clear linkages with SAS Soil Health Working Group
- Strong support for the industry led approach of NSHS, but remain inclusive
- Improve the explanation of W5+H of NSHS
- Start informal talks with other stakeholders
- Build the draft logic for Phase 2



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Soil Health Stakeholders are invited to review and comment on the draft concept paper distributed for this meeting.

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