

# Soil Suborders

Suborders are groups of soils within each soil order. They indicate a major feature or environmental condition influencing the character and behavior of the soil. Suborder names have two components, each of which tells something about the suborder. Each name consists of a syllable identifying its order (for example, "oll" from the Mollisol order) and a prefix signaling a particular suborder attribute (for example, "Aquoll," a wet Mollisol).

Many suborders are based on the degree of soil wetness or the amount and action of the precipitation it receives. Others are based on the characteristics of the parent material, or the degree of soil development expressed by the kinds of soil horizons present. Very cold soils are broken out at the suborder level, as are some soils with excessive accumulations of soluble salts. Relationships among these suborder criteria are illustrated in the diagram on the right, and each of the suborder prefixes is defined on the next page.

Colors (excluding gray) on the suborder maps show areas dominated by a particular suborder. The sum of all brightly colored areas equals the area dominated by a given soil order, as shown on the Soil Orders map. All of the suborder-dominated areas shown here contain at least some soils in other suborders—the scale of these maps does not allow all of the natural variability that exists in the soil landscape to be shown.

Gray areas on these maps illustrate areas where soil of a given order exists but is not dominant. On the Vertisol map, for example, the few

areas in south-central Oregon that are dominated by Vertisols are in fact dominated by wet Vertisols, the Aquerts. Vertisols, however, are much more widely distributed in Oregon, but only as minor components of the soil landscape assemblage. This map shows clearly that Vertisols are present throughout the Willamette Valley, in a large part of Jackson County and throughout large areas of Lake and Harney Counties.

