

## NEWS RELEASE

### **Em. Prof. Delvin S. Fanning Awarded 1<sup>st</sup> Pons Medal at 8<sup>th</sup> International Acid Sulfate Soils Conference**

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016 Prof. Leigh Sullivan from Federation University in Australia, and Chair of the Acid Sulfate Soils Working Group of the International Union of Soil Sciences, announced that **Prof. Emeritus Delvin S. Fanning** of the University of Maryland had been selected to be the recipient of the 1<sup>st</sup> Pons Medal, and awarded the medal to Prof. Fanning at a mid-day ceremony at the conference.

This new medal was recently approved by the International Union of Soil Sciences to be awarded at the meeting of the Acid Sulfate Soils Working Group/Commission (approximately once every four years) to a distinguished scientist recognized for their contributions to the application of acid sulfate soil science through publication, innovative research, leadership, education and service. The medal is named after the late Leen Pons, who was Professor of Regional Soil Science at Wageningen University in The Netherlands, and has been credited with helping to bring acid sulfate soils and related phenomena to the center stage of environmental science. Professor Fanning spent the last 20 years of his career (as well as these 17 years following his “retirement” in 1999), in the study of acid sulfate soils and in advocacy for solutions to environmental problems associated with acid sulfate phenomena.

The 8<sup>th</sup> International Acid Sulfate Soils Conference was held in College Park, MD from July 17-23, 2016, and was hosted by the UMD Department of Environmental Science and Technology. Other sponsors included the Acid Sulfate Soils Working Group of the International Union of Soil Sciences, UMD College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Soil Science Society of America, Mid-Atlantic Association of Professional Soil Scientists, Virginia Association of Professional Soil Scientists, Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, and American Society of Mining and Reclamation. Over 70 delegates from 13 countries participated in the conference, which had technical sessions on July 18, 19, and 21. There were also three field tours held in conjunction with the conference: 1) a pre-conference tour on July 17 to visit the Hart-Miller Island dredge deposition site; 2) a mid-conference tour on July 20 that visited the UMD Research and Education facility in Upper Marlboro and the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC) in Edgewater; and 3) a post-conference tour on July 22-23 to Southern Maryland and the Richmond and Fredericksburg, VA areas.

Previous Acid Sulfate Soils Conferences have been held in Wageningen, the Netherlands (1972), Bangkok, Thailand (1981), Dakar, Senegal (1986), Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam (1992), Tweed Heads, Australia (2002), Guangzhou, China (2008), and Vaasa, Finland (2012). The next conference is tentatively scheduled to be held in Thailand in 2020.



Prof. Leigh Sullivan (Federation Univ. in Australia), Chair of the Acid Sulfate Soils Working Group of the International Union of Soil Sciences, congratulates and awards Prof. Emeritus **Delvin S. Fanning** with the 1<sup>st</sup> Pons Medal at a ceremony during the 8<sup>th</sup> International Acid Sulfate Soils Conference on July 21, 2016 in College Park, MD.