Published online: 21 January 2024

DOI: 10.1002/saj2.20614

#### ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Fundamental Soil Science

Accepted: 27 November 2023

Abstract

# Impact of no-till, crop rotation, cover crop, and drainage on soil physical and hydraulic properties

John T. McMaine<sup>1</sup> I Todd Trooien<sup>1</sup> Peter Sexton<sup>2</sup>

Conservation agriculture and associated soil health practices potentially enhance soil

resilience by improving the soil's physical, chemical, and biological properties and

processes. This study assessed the impact of tillage (conventional tillage [CT] and no-

till [NT]); crop rotation: 2-year corn (Zea mays L.)-soybean (Glycine max L.), 3-year

corn-soybean-oat (Avena sativa L.), and 4-year corn-soybean-oat-wheat (Triticum

aestivum L.)]; cover crops (cover crop [CC] and no cover crop [NC]); and drainage

(tile drainage [TD] and without drainage [ND]) on soil organic matter (SOM), bulk

density, wet aggregate stability (WAS), and field-saturated hydraulic conductivity

 $(K_{\rm fc})$ . Soil samples were collected over 2 years apart from five depths (0–10, 10–20,

20–30, 30–60, and 60–90 cm) and analyzed for SOM, bulk density, and WAS. In-situ infiltration tests were conducted in each plot to determine field-saturated hydraulic

conductivity. This study showed that NT practice significantly increased SOM by

5.4%, WAS by 7.7%, and bulk density by 6.7% within 0-10 cm soil profile but

decreased  $K_{\rm fs}$  by 47.6% compared to CT through increased bulk density in the top-

soil. NT increased SOM for every soil depth and, similarly, increased WAS for every

depth but only statistically significant increases occurred at 0-10 cm and 60-90 cm.

Further, higher crop diversity decreased bulk density and increased WAS. Nine years of CC and six years of tile drainage practices had no significant effect on SOM, bulk

Ajoy Kumar Saha<sup>1,3,4</sup> Christopher Graham<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering, South Dakota State University, Brookings, South Dakota 57007, USA

<sup>2</sup>Department of Agronomy, Horticulture and Plant Science, South Dakota State University, Brookings, South Dakota 57007, USA

<sup>3</sup>Department of Agriculture, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, Pine Bluff, Arkansas 71601, USA

<sup>4</sup>Department of Irrigation and Water Management, Sylhet Agricultural University, Sylhet, Bangladesh 3100

#### Correspondence

Ajoy Kumar Saha and John T. McMaine, Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering, South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD 57007, USA. Email: ajoy.saha@jacks.sdstate.edu and john.mcmaine@sdstate.edu

Assigned to Associate Editor Sanjit Deb.

#### Funding information

South Dakota Water Resources Institute; BioXFEL Science and Technology Center; Natural Resources Conservation Service, Grant/Award Number: NR186740XXXXG007; Ducks Unlimited

# 1 | INTRODUCTION

Soil, water, and nutrients are essential components for a healthy plant community in most agroecosystems. Soil under-

**Abbreviations:** ACP, agricultural conservation practice; CC, cover crop; CT, conventional tillage; ND, without drainage; NT, no-till; SOM, soil organic matter; TD, tile drainage; WAS, wet aggregate stability.

pins this system as a properly functioning soil under effective management practices and provides resilience to plants against extreme weather events through the continued supply of water and nutrients under fluctuating conditions. Parent material, organic matter, and soil biology govern many critical functions within the soil system (Wander et al., 2019). Gradually, national and global leaders are focusing on soil health

Soil Science Society of America Journal

This is an open access article under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial License, which permits use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited and is not used for commercial purposes.

© 2023 The Authors. Soil Science Society of America Journal published by Wiley Periodicals LLC on behalf of Soil Science Society of America.

density, WAS, and  $K_{\rm fs}$ .

240

practices to achieve a more sustainable agriculture system under different climate scenarios (Kassam et al., 2010).

Many agricultural practices can influence soil health. For example, soil disturbance through tillage has a large effect on numerous soil functions; however, reduced tillage practices generally improve soil health by preserving microbial community size and function (Zuber & Villamil, 2016). Moreover, minimum or zero tillage increases soil organic matter (SOM), enhances nutrient cycling, reduces bulk density (Sapkota et al., 2012), and builds soil structure (Pagliai et al., 2004). Over the last few decades, researchers have reported various changes to soil quality under no-till (NT) compared to conventional tillage (CT). For example, in long-term NT, bulk density in the surface soil was decreased along with increased soil organic carbon (Blevins et al., 1983; Rhoton, 2000). Likewise, NT increased soil aggregate stability by 19% for 0- to 2.5-cm soil depth after 4 years of practice (Rhoton, 2000). In contrast, Thomas et al. (2007) observed that after 9 years of NT practice, the bulk density was greater than CT; however, they found higher organic matter (organic carbon [C] and total nitrogen) and exchangeable potassium in the NT at 0- to 10-cm depth than under conventional and reduced tillage.

A well-designed crop rotation is one of the keys to soil health management strategy to cope with impending climatic change (Gaudin et al., 2015). Crop diversity nurtures a diverse range of soil flora and fauna and contributes to building soil structure, utilizing nutrients from different soil depths, and preventing pests and diseases. In a broader sense, diverse agricultural management practices impact different functions of soil's physical, chemical, and biological properties (Connolly, 1998; Franzluebbers et al., 2021; Jangid et al., 2008; Sapkota et al., 2012).

Similarly, cover crop (CC) practices have also been promoted as a sustainable strategy to improve soil health (Freidenreich et al., 2022) and are widely recommended by conservation specialists as a part of conservation agriculture to cover the soil with living mulch. CC adoption lags in the United States due to various factors (economical, biological, farm operation, farmers education, and government policy) even though CC practices contain many positive values for soil and environmental health (Sarrantonio & Gallandt, 2003). The benefits of CCs adoption include enhancing soil organic C (Blanco-Canqui et al., 2015), reducing soil erosion (Strock et al., 2004), improving subsurface tile water quality (Ruffatti et al., 2019), increasing infiltration rate (Blanco-Canqui, 2018), and reducing bulk density (Blanco-Canqui et al., 2011; Çerçioğlu et al., 2019). CC utilization can also improve soil hydraulic conductivity by leaving preferential water flow channels in the soil profile after CC roots degrade (Çerçioğlu et al., 2019). Some researchers reported that CC use increases field volumetric water content by an average of 20%-35% at the upper soil layer (0- to 20-cm depth; Blanco-Canqui

#### **Core Ideas**

- Long-term no-till (NT) has a significant impact on soil physical and hydraulic properties.
- NT increased soil bulk density, soil organic matter (SOM), and wet aggregate stability (WAS) by 6.7%, 5.4%, and 7.7%, respectively, for 0- to 10-cm depth but decreased  $K_{\rm fs}$  by 47.6% within profile than conventional tillage (CT).
- Compaction decreased at 0–10 cm in CT but increased within the 10–60 cm soil profile.
- NT with more diverse rotation and cover crop (CC) practices showed limited or no positive impact on  $K_{fs}$  for silt clay loam.
- CC and tile drainage(TD) had minimal impact on SOM, bulk density, WAS, and  $K_{fs}$  under silt clay loam in southeastern South Dakota.

et al., 2011; Calderon et al., 2016; Haruna & Nkongolo, 2015), organic matter content by 74% (Nieto et al., 2013), infiltration capacity by 14%–43% (Mailapalli et al., 2011), saturated hydraulic conductivity by 64% (Çerçioğlu et al., 2019), and decreased soil bulk density by 4%–5% (Blanco-Canqui et al., 2011).

Lastly, including tile drainage can create a better soil ecosystem: tile drainage reduces water logging in the root zone, increases root depth, and enhances crop growth by providing better aeration in the root zone (Kokulan, 2019; Skaggs et al., 1994). This makes the soil system more conducive for plant and microbe growth through better respiration capacity thanwithout drainage systems. In addition, the drier soil warms faster (Easton et al., 2017), which provides more active microbial communities. Jacinthe et al. (2001) found that tile-drained systems have a higher readily mineralizable C, basal soil respiration, and metabolic quotient (qCO<sub>2</sub>) or ratio of the rate of CO<sub>2</sub>-C evolution during the 20-day incubation/microbial biomass C). A more active microbial community in a tile drainage system will convert higher crop residues to organic matter and release organic nutrients. Tile drainage systems allow deep root systems that increase organic matter and decrease bulk density at deeper depths (Easton et al., 2017). Drained systems increase infiltration capacity and reduce the magnitude of peak runoff rate and total runoff volume than undrained systems (Golmohammadi et al., 2017).

The Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils (ITPS) estimated that, globally, 33% of the land is moderately to highly degraded (ITPS, 2015). The ITPS stated that soil erosion, SOM loss, nutrient depletion, and loss of soil biodiversity are the four major threats to the soil's ability to function. Therefore, conventional farming practices (intensive tillage, mono-cropping, excess nutrient application, etc.) are increasingly challenged in meeting ecological and environmental needs to maintain soil, air, and water quality, biodiversity, and human health.

Agricultural conservation practices (ACPs) such as NT, CC, and drainage management could address these challenges by regenerating soil physical and hydraulic properties that significantly influence plant root development and movement of water and nutrients into plant bodies from the soil profile and reduce soil erosion. Sustainable soil management is expected to improve soil health or ecosystem services. FAO recommends practicing all ACPs for the highest benefit and sustainable soil management. Farmers practice single or combinations of ACPs in their natural fields.

Several years are required to change soil properties and productivity through continuous soil health practices, depending on the weather, soil type, land management, and cropping pattern (Bindraban et al., 2000; Bünemann et al., 2018; Doran, 1996; Doran & Parkin, 2015). Most researchers investigated ACP impacts on soil properties for the short or medium term (3-10 years) and analyzed soil up to 0- to 30-cm soil layer (Aziz et al., 2013; Ghimire et al., 2019; Graham et al., 2021). Some research has identified longer term (>25 years) effects of soil health practices (Fuentes et al., 2004; Tarkalson et al., 2006) but less research has been conducted under South Dakota climate conditions (Alhameid et al., 2020; Bawa et al., 2021; Graham et al., 2021; Ozlu et al., 2019). Limited research has investigated soil properties change in deeper soil depths and in colder and drier climates. The interactive effect of tillage, rotation, CC, and tile drainage on soil physical and hydraulic properties has been little studied in the Northern Great Plains of the United States.

Therefore, the specific objectives of this study are to investigate the effect of crop rotation, tillage, CCs, and drainage on bulk density, SOM, wet aggregate stability (WAS), and saturated hydraulic conductivity within 0- to 90-cm depth. This study also explored the interaction across these variables. This study hypothesizes that ACPs significantly impact the soil profile (0–90 cm). The second hypothesis is that an individual or combination of ACPs will provide better soil functioning than conventional practices.

#### 2 | MATERIALS AND METHODS

# **2.1** | Experimental site and treatments description

Experimental plots were located at the South Dakota State University Southeast Research Farm (SERF) near Beresford, South Dakota (SD (43°02′ 58″N, 96°53′30″W) (see Figure 1). In 1991, a long-term rotation study was initiated at SERF

utilizing three crop rotations: 2-year corn (Zea mays L.)soybean (Glycine max L.); 3-year corn-soybean-oat (Avena sativa L.); and 4-year corn-soybean-oat-wheat (Triticum aestivum L.) in a randomized complete block design to assess the impact of tillage and crop rotation on soil quality and crop production. Each crop rotation was split into two levels of tillage (CT and NT), comprising a total of six plots (each size: 18.2 m by 91.4 m) per replication. The experiment was conducted with three replications separated by a 9.1-m alley. In 2013, cover crop treatments (CC and no cover crop [NC]) were included in each tillage treatment (subplots: 9.1 m by 91.4 m). In 2017, tile drainage was installed on each end of the plot (9.1 m from the edge of the road and covered all six plots in replications), which drained 20% of plot area on each plot side and kept the middle 60% undrained. Therefore, each tillage plot was laid out as a split plot for both cover crops (CC and NC) and drainage treatments (tile drainage [TD] and without drainage [ND]). NT fields were maintained with zero disturbance unless planted with a furrow opener. In tilled plots, a fall chisel plow was used after corn and small grain harvest, and in Spring, a field cultivator was used prior to planting. Regarding CC treatment, rye CCs were planted in half of the corn plot (within tillage treatments) after harvesting, and mixed-species CC consisting of rye/radish/turnips/pea mixed were planted in half of the plot (within tillage treatments) after small grains. See Table 1 for further details on farm management practices (cash crop planting date, tillage operation, fertilizer application, CC planting date, and seed rate) after the addition of CC and tile drainage practices.

The current study was conducted for 3 years (2020–2022) to investigate the impact of 31 years of NT practice, 9 years of CC, and 6 years of tile drainage on soil physical properties.

## 2.2 | Climate

The site has a 70-year average precipitation of 645 mm per year and a mean monthly air temperature ranging from  $-8.7^{\circ}$ C in January to 23.4°C in July (Figure 2). During the study period, the annual precipitation values were lower than average: 369, 599, and 374 mm, respectively, for 2020, 2021, and 2022 (see Figure 2b).

#### 2.3 | Soil sampling and lab analysis

Using a truck-mounted hydraulic probe (Giddings Machine Company), undisturbed soil cores were collected (0–90 cm from surface) and separated into five depths 0–10 cm, 10–20 cm, 20–30 cm, 30–60 cm, and 60–90 cm to identify the impact of crop rotation, tillage, CCs, and tile drainage practice with a total of 360 observations. Samples were collected in Spring 2021, Fall 2021, and Spring 2022 and combinely



**FIGURE 1** Location and layout of the experimental field at South Dakota State University Southeast Research Farm (SERF), Beresford, SD. CC, cover crop; CT, conventional tillage; NC, no cover crop; NT, no-till.

analyzed for SOM, pH, texture, bulk density, and WAS. Fall and Spring sampling were done respectively after harvesting (November) and prior to planting (April) of cash crop.

SOM was measured by the loss on ignition method (Schulte & Hopkins, 1996). Briefly, oven-dry (at 105°C) soil samples were ignited in a muffle furnace for 2 h at 360°C, and the

percentage of weight loss of the soil sample was recorded as SOM. Soil pH was determined by 1:1 soil-water (Ward Laboratories Inc.)—20 g of air-dried soil was dispensed in 20 mL of deionized water for a 1:1 ratio. The soil slurry was placed in a horizontal shaker for 30 min and measured with a calibrated pH meter.

**TABLE 1** Farm management practice details in the experimental plot during 2012–2022.

Rotation	Crop	Fertilization	Crop planted	Cover crop planted	
2022					
2 Year	Soybean	Not applied	May 13, 2022: Plant AG26XF1 soybean, 140,000 s/ac	August 10, 2022: plant 3/4 radius, 1/4 turnips; re-planted on November 8, 2022: Hazlett rye cover crop; 60 lb/ac	
3 Year	Soybean	Not applied	May 13, 2022: plant AG26XF1 soybean, 140,000 s/ac	August 10, 2022: plant 3/4 radius, 1/4 turnips; re-planted on November 8, 2022, plant hazlett rye cover crop; 60 lb/ac	
4 Year	Corn	April 21, 2022: urea 217 lb/ac	May 10, 2022: plant P0622AML Corn, 33,000 s/ac	August 10, 2022: Drilled 3/4 radius, 1/4 turnips; re-planted on November 8, 2022, drilled hazlett rye cover crop; 60 lb/ac	
2021					
2 Year	Corn	April 15, 2021: urea 178 lb/ac; AMS 62 lb/ac; July 8, 2021: urea (untreated) 60 lb/ac and urea 130 lb/ac	April 30, 2021: plant DKC53-56, 32,000 s/ac	September 8, 2021: drilled broadleaf cover crop mix 30 lb/ac; JD drill setting #7	
3 Year	Corn	<ul> <li>April 15, 2021: urea 102 lb/ac; AMS 62 lb/ac of product using a commercial spreader;</li> <li>April 30, 2021: UAN banded 20 gal/ac 28%</li> <li>July 8, 2021: urea (untreated) 60 lb/ac; urea 130 lb/ac</li> </ul>	April 30, 2021: plant DKC53-56, 32,000 s/ac	September 8, 2021: drilled broadleaf cover crop mix 30 lb/ac	
4 Year	Rye	March 22, 2021: urea 155 lb/ac, AMS 42 lb/ac	March 22, 2021: red clover, 5 lb/ac and sweet clover 5 lb/ac	October 7, 2021: drilled rye 70 lb/ac	
2020					
2 Year	Soybean	Not applied	May 12, 2020: plant soybean PI021XX,150,000 s/ac	August 7, 2020: drilled radish/pea/rye mixed 25 lb/ac	
3 Year	Oat	March 17, 2020: urea 165 lb/ac (N 76 lb/ac, AMS 35 lb/ac (7 lb N, 8 lb S)/ac	April 7, 2020: plant saddle oats, 100 lb/ac	August 7, 2020: drilled radish/pea/rye mixed 25 lb/ac	
4 Year	Oat	March 17, 2020: urea 165 lb/ac (N 76 lb/ac, AMS 35 lb/ac (7 lb N, 8 lb S)/ac	April 7, 2020: plant saddle oats, 100 lb/ac	August 7, 2020: drilled radius/pea/rye mixed 25 lb/ac	
2019					
2 Year	Corn	May 6, 2019: urea 140 lb/ac and AMS 24 lb/ac	May 15, 2019: plant corn DKC53-56RIB,33,700–31,7000 s/ac	August 20, 2019: drilled cover crop mix; 16 lb/ac	
3 Year	Soybean	Not applied	May 16, 2019: plant soybean AG21 × 7,140,000 s/ac	August 20, 2019: drilled cover crop mix; 16 lb/ac	
4 Year	Soybean	Not applied	May 16, 2019: plant soybean AG21 × 7,140,000 s/ac	August 20, 2019: drilled cover crop mix; 16 lb/ac	
2018					
2 Year	Soybean	Not applied	May 18, 2018: plant soybean ASGROW AG24×7, 140,000 s/ac	August 3, 2018: drilled cover crop 15 lb/ac; hairy vetch 15 lb/ac	
3 Year	Corn	May 9, 2018: Surface band with N @ 50 lb/ac; May 16, 2018: urea [41#N] 90 lb/ac, AMS 40 lb/ac [8.4 #N; 9.6# S]	May 9, 2018: plant corn DKC54-38RIB, 34,000 s/ac	August 3, 2018: drilled cover crop 15 lb/ac; hairy vetch 15 lb/ac	

wiley.com/terms

and

onditions) on Wiley Online Library for rules of use; OA articles are governed by the applicable Creative Commons License

243

(Continues)

### TABLE 1 (Continued)

Rotation	Crop	Fertilization	Crop planted	Cover crop planted	
4 Year	Corn	May 9, 2018: Surface band with N @ 50 lb/ac; May 16, 2018: urea [41#N] 90 lb/ac, AMS 40 lb/ac [8.4 #N; 9.6# S]	May 9, 2018: plant corn DKC54-38RIB, 34,000 s/ac	August 3, 2018: drilled cover crop 15 lb/ac; hairy vetch 15 lb/ac	
2017					
2 Year	Corn	May 10, 2017: urea, AMS, sulfur (340 # urea, 43# AMS, 10# elemental sulfur)	May 16, 2017: planted corn DKC56-45RIB, 32,000 s/ac	November 8, 2017: drilled hazlet rye cover 50 lb/ac	
3 Year	Oat	April 3, 2017: urea 175 lb/ac and sulfur 15 lb/ac with a commercial spreader	May 16, 2017: drilled oat, 100 lb/ac	August 14, 2017: drilled cover crop mix 24 lb/ac	
4 Year	Wheat	April 3, 2017: urea 175 lb/ac and sulfur 15 lb/ac with a commercial spreader	NA	August 14, 2017: drilled cover crop mix 24 lb/ac	
2016					
2 Year	soybean	April 14, 2016: MAP 100 lb/ac	June 8, 2016: plant soybean P22T39R and P20T79R2, NA s/ac	July 20, 2016: drilled broadleaf cover crop mix, NA lb/ac	
3 Year	soybean	April 14, 2016: MAP 100 lb/ac	June 8, 2016: plant soybean P22T39R and P20T79R2, NA s/ac	July 20, 2016: drilled broadleaf cover crop mix, NA lb/ac	
4 Year	Oat	Not applied	April 14, 2016: hayden oats, 90 lb/ac	August 17, 2016: drilled mix cover crop, NA lb/ac	
2015					
2 Year	Corn	March 24, 2015: MAP 150 lb/ac with commercial spreader; April 15, 2015: Sprayed 28% liquid nitrogen 160 lb/ac	June 2, 2015: plant corn P9188AMX, 33,000 s/ac	October 30, 2015: drilled rye planted, NA lb/ac	
3 Year	Corn	March 24, 2015: MAP 150 lb/ac with commercial spreader; April 15, 2015: Sprayed 28% liquid nitrogen 160 lb/ac	June 2, 2015: plant corn P9188AMX, 33,000 s/ac	October 30, 2015: drilled rye planted, NA lb/ac	
4 Year	Soybean	March 24, 2015: MAP 150 lb/ac with commercial spreader	May 22, 2015: plant soybean P25T51, 150,000 s/ac	August 11, 2015: drilled mix cover crop, 25–35 lb/ac	
2014					
2 Year	Soybean	April 2, 2014: Potash broadcast with spreader 80 lb K <sub>2</sub> O/ac (133 lb potash/ac);	May 23, 2014: plant soybean AG2135, 150,000 s/ac	August 21, 2014: drilled cover crop, NA lb/ac	
3 Year	Oat	April 2, 2014: Potash broadcast with spreader goal 80 lb K <sub>2</sub> O/ac (133 lb potash/ac); April 25, 2014: Spread dry fertilizer urea 100 lb/ac	April 12, 2014: drill oat, NA lb/ac	August 21, 2014: drilled cover crop, NA lb/ac	
4 Year	Corn	April 2, 2014: K <sub>2</sub> O (potash) 80 lb /ac broadcast with spreader; April 10, 2014: Sprayed 28% liquid nitrogen with varying rates; May 5, 2014: urea 260 lb/ac (120-0-0); June 26, 2014: UAN 15 gal/ac	May 16, 2014: plant corn PIO0193AM, 32,300 s/ac	November 10, 2014: drilled rye, NA lb/ac	

(Continues)

#### TABLE 1 (Continued)

Rotation	Crop	Fertilization	Crop planted	Cover crop planted
2013				
2 Year	Corn	May 9, 2013: liquid fertilizer 10-34-0 (10% nitrogen and 34% phosphate) 6 gal/ac	May 14, 2013: plant corn DKC 59–83, 28,900 s/ac	August 20, 2013: drilled broadleaf cover crop mix, NA lb/ac; October 10, 2013: Rye cover crop, NA lb/ac
3 Year	Soybean	Not applied	June 3, 2013: plat soybean AG2031, 152,480 s/ac	August 20, 2013: drilled broadleaf cover crop mix, NA lb/ac; October 10, 2013: Rye cover crop, NA lb/ac
4 Year	Oat	Not applied	3Aril 30, 2013: drill oats, 70 lb/ac	August 20, 2013: drilled broadleaf cover crop mix, NA lb/ac; October 10, 2013: Rye cover crop, NA lb/ac
2012				
2 Year	Soybean	May 21, 2012: urea treated and untreated, 62 lb/ac	May 21, 2012: plant soybean AG1832, NA s/ac	August 27, 2012: drilled winter wheat, some radish, rapeseed, and turnip mix, NA lb/ac
3 Year	Corn	May 9, 2012: liquid fertilizer 10-34-0 (10% nitrogen and 34% phosphate) 10 gal/ac	May 9, 2012: plant corn DKC 59-35, 30,000 s/ac	August 27, 2012: drilled winter wheat, some radish, rapeseed, and turnip mix, NA lb/ac
4 Year	Winter wheat	October 3, 2012: MAP 50 lb/ac	October 3, 2012: drill winter wheat 27–35 s/19 in.	August 27, 2012: drilled winter wheat, some radish, rapeseed, and turnip mix, NA lb/ac

Note: In conventional tillage fields, disking corn stalks before the winter (fall tillage). No artificial irrigation water was applied.

Abbreviations: AMS, ammonium sulfate [(NH<sub>4</sub>)<sub>2</sub> SO<sub>4</sub>]; gal/ac, gallon per acre; JD drill/planter, John Deere drill/planter; lb/ac, pound per acre; MAP, mono ammonium phosphate; NA, information not available; s/ac, seed per acre; UAN, urea ammonium nitrate.

Soil texture (the percentages of sand, silt, and clay) was analyzed by integral suspension pressure using a PARIO meter (Meter Group Inc.) for each plot from five different depths. The soil textural class showed that the experimental plot's soil class was dominated mainly by the percentage of silt, and the USDA textural classification varied from silt to silty clay loam (see Figure 3). To analyze soil texture, 50 g air-dry soil was taken after sieving with a 2-mm sieve, and then the sample was placed in the oven at 105°C. Once dry, SOM was removed using hydrogen peroxide (30%), and the sample was placed in the oven at 105°C to record soil's exact dry mass (Durner et al., 2017). In this study, no other binding agents, such as iron oxides or carbonates were removed. After SOM pretreatment, a 1 L soil suspension was prepared by adding deionized water and dispersion solution (50 g sodium hexametaphosphate per liter) and the solution was shaken overnight. A PARIO device (Durner & Iden, 2021) was placed inside the homogenized suspension and ran using plus mode. After 2.5 h, a fixed amount of soil suspension was drained (as effluent) above the PARIO pressure sensor and collected in a beaker. The effluent was dried in the oven at 105°C and dry mass was recorded. After draining the effluent, the rest of the suspension in the sedimentation cylinder was (wet) sieved with a 53-µm sieve and the retained sand particles (size 53-2000 µm) were placed in an oven at 105°C. Dry sand was then sieved with 500-, 250-, and 53-µm sieves. Finally, the particle density soil (2.65 g/cm<sup>3</sup>), dispersion mass (5 g), dry effluent mass, and

the percentage of retained sand within 2000–500  $\mu$ m, 500– 250  $\mu$ m, and 250–53  $\mu$ m were input in the PARIO control panel to fit particle size distribution and get soil texture results (percentage of sand, silt, and clay).

The soil bulk density  $(\rho_{\rm h})$  was analyzed using the core method (Blake & Hartge, 1986). For measuring bulk density, the soil cores were dried in a convection oven at 105°C until a constant mass was obtained. Then,  $\rho_{\rm b}$  was calculated by dividing the mass of oven-dry soil by the total soil volume (solids and pores together). The WAS was analyzed for a set of soil samples collected in Spring 2021, Fall 2021, and Spring 2022 by following the standard procedure (Kemper & Rosenau, 1986). The wet sieving apparatus (Eijkelkamp, Soil & Water, Model no. 08.13) was designed according to the specifications of Kemper (1965). A 4 g of sieved, air-dried aggregate subsample was taken into a 60-mesh screen sieve (opening 0.25 mm). Before submerging aggregates into distilled water, the soil aggregates were premoistened using capillary action by placing a sieve with aggregates over wet tissue paper for 10 min. Then, the sieve with soil aggregates was placed with sufficient distilled water in the weighing and numbered cans. Aggregates were washed for 3 min at 35 rpm. The unstable soil particles were detached from soil aggregates and collected in distilled water cans. The retained stable soil aggregate (with sand) was further washed in 100 mL dispersing solution cans (containing 2 g sodium hexametaphosphate/L deionized water for soil pH > 7 or 2 g sodium hydroxide/L deionized water for



**FIGURE 2** Meteorological 70-year average of monthly maximum temperature, minimum temperature, and precipitation in Beresford, SD. (b) Monthly precipitation comparison between 70-year average and precipitation during the study period 2020–2022 (Southeast South Dakota Research Farm, 2022).



**FIGURE 3** Distribution of sand, silt, and clay on soil texture triangle of 18 experimental plots for the soil sample collected in spring 2022. Legends with red, blue, black, green, and purple color dots indicating soil texture for 0- to 10-, 10- to 20-, 20- to 30-, 30- to 60-, and 60- to 90-cm depths, respectively.

soils pH < 7) for 10–20 min to correct the sand fraction in soil aggregate stability analysis. Washing time in dispersion solution varies depending on the presence of clay particles in soil aggregates that require longer to release stable soil particles into the dispersion solution. The wet sieving stopped when only sand particles were retained over the sieve. Stable and unstable soil particle-containing cans were placed in a convection oven at 110°C and dried until constant weight. The following equation was used to calculate the WAS:

WAS = 
$$\frac{(W_{\text{stable}})}{(W_{\text{unstable}} + W_{\text{stable}})} \times 100\%$$
 (1)

where WAS is the wet aggregate stability (%),  $W_{\text{stable}}$  is the weight of dry soil obtained in dispersing solution cans having 0.2 g subtracted to exclude dispersing solute, and  $W_{\text{unstable}}$  is the weight of the dry soil obtained in distilled water cans.

#### 2.4 | In situ infiltration test

In the summer of 2021 and 2022, in situ infiltration tests were conducted with SATURO, an automated field dual-head infiltrometer (METER Group Inc., ISO 9001:2005) to identify the impact of crop rotation, tillage, and CCs (36 total treatments over 2 years: three rotation levels × two tillage levels× two CCs levels × three replications). The SATURO was designed to be an automated instrument to measure field-saturated hydraulic conductivity ( $K_{fs}$ ) by the end of the field test run. It uses a dual-pressure head approach to eliminate the need to assume an alpha value for the three-dimensional flow from a single-ring infiltrometer, and thus, it reduces the error in hydraulic conductivity assessment (METER Group Inc, 2017; Reynolds & Elrick, 1990).

In this field test, a single ring (inner diameter of 14.4 cm and insertion depth of 10 cm) was used in every in situ field test. The SATURO control unit maintains a 5 cm constant water level (with a water level sensor) and a specific pressure head inside the infiltrometer head (with the help of constant circulating water and an air pump). The SATURO unit ponded water on the ground surface for 150 min, including 30 min soak time and 120 min for three pressure cycles. This allows sufficient time to achieve steady-state flux at two different pressure heads, with configurations set according to the SAT-URO manual based on the soil type and condition (METER Group Inc, 2017). For each field test, a pressure cycle consisted of a 20 min low-pressure head at 5 cm and a 20 min high-pressure head at 15 cm controlled inside the infiltrometer. It allowed water to infiltrate through the soil profile in controlled (two different) pressure heads and constant ponding depth (5 cm). SATURO control unit generated real-time infiltration rates, water level, pressure head, and estimated  $K_{fs}$ at the end of each test.

### 2.5 | Statistical analysis

Using R statistical software, histogram and Shapiro–Wilk tests were performed and found that each specific depth's data were unimodal in histogram (graphic distribution) and were normally distributed for p < 0.05 (in statistical test). The main and interaction effects were tested using the analysis of variance (ANOVA) function (aov) from the package "agricolae" in R statistical software (R Core Team, 2022) for the combined data set by considering seasonal sampling as replicating the number of observations. ANOVA was used to test the main and interaction effect of tillage, rotation, CC, drainage, and depths on soil physical and hydraulic properties. Fisher's least significant difference, a commonly used post hoc test for agricultural research, was used for grouping treatments based on multiple treatment mean comparisons. The statistical differences were stated as significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

### **3** | **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### 3.1 | Effect of tillage on bulk density, SOM, WAS, and field-saturated hydraulic conductivity

The variation of soil bulk density, SOM, WAS, and  $K_{\rm fs}$  under tillage treatment are presented in Figure 4. We found that NT significantly affected soil bulk density, SOM, WAS, and  $K_{\rm fs}$ . NT significantly increased bulk density, SOM, and WAS across the soil depth 0–90 cm by 1.5%, 7%, and 6.3%, respectively, but decreased  $K_{\rm fs}$  by 47.6% compared to CT (see Figure 4a,c,e,g). Gantzer and Blake (1978) investigated the physical characteristics of clay loam soil in the US corn belt under NT and CT systems and found that bulk density was significantly higher in the NT than in CT.

The bulk density for topsoil (0-10 cm) under the NT was 6.7% higher than the CT. The significantly lower saturated hydraulic conductivity in NT could be due in part to the higher bulk density in the NT compared to the CT. In previous studies, several researchers reported that the long-term NT cultivation increased soil macroporosity and structural stability, thus increasing saturated hydraulic conductivity (Nebo et al., 2020; So et al., 2009). At the same time, many researchers found that the NT and CT soils had similar saturated hydraulic conductivity (Conyers et al., 2019; Fuentes et al., 2004; Liao et al., 2022), while others reported that the NT reduced the hydraulic conductivity (Blanco-Canqui et al., 2017a; Gantzer & Blake, 1978; Heard et al., 1988; Soracco et al., 2019). There is a common concept about the CT system that the macro pores of the top layer in the CT system are quickly clogged/trapped with finer particles during heavy rainfall; thus, it breaks/prevents downward water flow



**FIGURE 4** Illustration of the variation of (a and b) soil bulk density, (c and d) soil organic matter, (e and f) wet aggregate stability, and (g) field-saturated hydraulic conductivity due to the effect of tillage treatments. Panels (a), (c), and (e) represent the variation of average bulk density, organic matter, wet aggregate stability, respectively, for 0- to 90-cm soil depth. (b, d, and f) Representation of the variation of bulk density, organic matter, wet aggregate stability respectively for each specific soil depth (0–10, 10–20, 20–30, 30–60, and 60–90 cm). (g) The variation of field-saturated hydraulic conductivity for the soil profile is shown. CT means conventional tillage and NT means no-till. The error bar indicates the standard error. Groups sharing the same superscript letter a, b, c, d, e, f, g, and h at the top of the error bar are not significantly different at p = 0.05.

and reduced infiltration capacity. This phenomenon was not observed in this study period due to the significantly lower precipitation observed during the in situ infiltration test (in June–August 2021 and 2022), see Figure 1c. Moreover, 30 years of the undisturbed soil profile and the additional impact of heavy machinery use for field operations (planting, spraying, fertilizing, and harvesting) in the NT plots may have contributed to soil compaction (for 0- to 20-cm depth). Several researchers similarly reported that bulk density is greater in NT than in the CT field under different soil, crop pattern, and climate conditions (Blanco-Canqui et al., 2022; Jabro et al., 2021; Thomas et al., 2007; Topa et al., 2021).

In contrast, some researchers have observed a decrease in bulk density under NT after 5–7 years of practice (Blevins et al., 1983; Fiorini et al., 2020). Interestingly, the NT practice has a lower bulk density for 20- to 30-cm soil depth and 30- to 60-cm soil depth by 1.5% and 2.9%, respectively, and almost unchanged for 60- to 90-cm soil depth compared to CT (See Figure 4b). This indicates that CT systems increased soil compaction at deeper depths (20–90 cm), supporting the commonly understood theory that tillage operation/heavy traffic movement creates a plow pan or hard pan below the Ap horizon (Birkás et al., 2004; Botta et al., 2006; Jabro et al., 2014; Temesgen et al., 2009; Zink et al., 2010).

Our study found that the NT system increased SOM and WAS for every soil depth (0-10, 10-20, 20-30, 30-60, and 60-90 cm), indicating differential organic matter turnover and distribution through the 0-90 cm soil profile when compared to CT. Previous work has shown that in NT systems, a reduction in mineralization rates stimulates liter concentration (i.e., crop residues), which directly influences the SOM (Alvarez & Steinbach, 2009). Moreover, this effect also directly influences the stability of soil aggregates and improved soil structure. More specifically, NT significantly increased SOM for 0- to 10-cm soil depth, 20- to 30-cm soil depth, and 30- to 60-cm soil depth by 5.4%, 6.6%, and 13.5%, respectively, and WAS increased by 7.7% and 10.7% for 0- to 10-cm soil depth and 60- to 90-cm soil depths, respectively. Other researchers observed similar results: SOM and WAS increased in the NT field (Castro Filho et al., 2002).

However, as measured in this study, the NT system decreased field-saturated hydraulic conductivity, which could negatively impact water infiltration during rainfall. Previous studies also observed similar outcomes (Blanco-Canqui et al., 2017a; Jones et al., 1994) that infiltration under the NT was lowered compared to moldboard plowed tillage system and had no differences from disk and cheisel plow tillage systems. As the topsoil compacted significantly in the NT field, it is expected that rainwater entry into the top layer would be a great limitation in silty clay loam soil, even with NT practices over 30 years.

## 3.2 | Effect of rotation on soil bulk density, SOM, WAS, and field-saturated hydraulic conductivity

Crop rotations significantly impacted soil bulk density and SOM but did not show any considerable variation for WAS and  $K_{\rm fs}$ . Bulk density was significantly higher for the 2-year rotation than the 3-year and 4-year rotations but did not vary considerably across all depths. It was found that a longer rotation provides lower bulk density which may sup-

port the concept of diverse microbial species actively working in the field. The average bulk density under 2-year rotations  $(1.35 \text{ g/cm}^3)$  was 1.5% higher than the 3- and 4-year rotations  $(1.33 \text{ g/cm}^3)$  (Figure 5a). However, the 3-year rotation (corn–soybean–oat) showed significantly less compacted topsoil (0–10 cm) and  $1.21 \text{ g/cm}^3$  compared to the other two rotations (bulk density of  $1.28 \text{ g/cm}^3$  and  $1.25 \text{ g/cm}^3$  for 2year and 4-year rotations, respectively). In contrast, Alhameid et al. (2020) found a 4-year rotation had low bulk density for 0- to 7.5-cm soil depth and 7.5- to 15-cm soil depth from >25 years of rotation study under silt clay loam soil.

The lowest SOM was observed in the 3-year rotation across the 0-90 cm soil profile and each specific soil depth compared to the 2-year and 4-year rotations (Figure 5c,d). The average SOM under the 3-year rotation was 3.4%, whereas the 2-year and 4-year had average SOM of 3.6% for 0- to 90-cm depth (Figure 5c). The topsoil (0-10 cm) organic matter decreases in order from 4-year (5.1%) > 2-year (5.0%) > 3-year (4.8%). Past research has found that higher crop rotations supply diverse crop biomass, which slows down the decomposition rate and reduces carbon emissions to the atmosphere (Bayer et al., 2009); thus, diverse crop rotations produce higher SOM. The SOM at 60- to 90-cm depth was significantly higher for the 2-year rotation than other diverse rotations. The trend of SOM for 10- to 20-, 20- to 30-, 30- to 60-, and 60- to 90-cm depth ranked as 2-year > 4-year > 3-year rotation. The 2-year rotation might receive more crop biomass as corn was planted once every 2 years and might supply a bulk amount of crop residue after harvest, significantly contributing to the higher organic matter in a corn-soybean rotation.

In this study, longer rotations did not affect aggregate stability, as our study results showed that variation of WAS was not significant between rotation treatments. Diverse crop rotation increased average WAS for 0- to 90-cm soil depth and for 0–10 and 10–20 cm topsoil (Figure 5e,f). Field-saturated hydraulic conductivity was not significantly affected by 30 years of rotation treatment, and it measured higher for 2-year rotation (14.3 cm/h) than for 4-year (12.6 cm/h) followed by 3-year rotation (11.4 cm/h).

# **3.3** | Effect of CCs and drainage on soil bulk density, SOM, WAS, and field-saturated hydraulic conductivity

In this study, the CC did not significantly impact bulk density, SOM, WAS, and  $K_{\rm fs}$  within CC treatment. CC practices slightly increased the SOM within soil profile (at 0- to 90-cm soil depth) and in specific soil depth (0–10, 10–20, 20–30, 30–60, and 60–90 cm). However, the variations were minimal and nonsignificant within the CC treatments. Past research reported that the CC has been practiced in this region to remove excess water, scavenge residual nutrients, add more



**FIGURE 5** Illustration of the variation of (a and b) bulk density, (c and d) soil organic matter (SOM), (e and f) wet aggregate stability (WAS), and (g) field-saturated hydraulic conductivity ( $K_{fs}$ ) due to the effect of rotation treatments. Panels (a), (c), and (e) represent the variation of average bulk density, SOM, and WAS, respectively, for 0- to 90-cm soil depth. (b, d, and f) Representation of the variation of bulk density, SOM, and WAS, respectively, for each specific soil depth (0–10, 10–20, 20–30, 30–60, and 60–90 cm). (g) The variation of  $K_{fs}$  for the soil profile is shown. 2-year = corn-soybean, 3-year = corn-soybean–oat, 4-year = corn-soybean–Oat–wheat rotation. The error bar indicates the standard error. Groups sharing the same superscript letter a, b, c, d, e, f, g, and h at the top of the error bar are not significantly different at p = 0.05.

biomass, and improve soil fertility (Brennan & Boyd, 2012; Fageria et al., 2005). CC treatment was established in this study in 2013; however, after 7 years, it had no considerable impact on the soil physical and hydraulic properties. Additionally, during this study period, minimal CC biomass was observed (by visual inspection) in the establishment period (in fall and winter) due to the adverse climatic condition (drought and very cold, respectively, at Beresford in southeastern South Dakota). The limited CCs biomass production was observed during 9 years of field study with CC practice (by visual inspection and no biomass data recorded), resulting in the smallest variation of SOM. Thus, it does not significantly alter other soil properties (soil bulk density, WAS, and field-saturated hydraulic conductivity). Ruis et al. (2020) similarly reported that due to the low biomass production (<1 Mg/ha) from single and mixed species, the CC had limited effects on soil properties after 4 years of CC study in southcentral and eastern Nebraska. However, several researchers found that CC practices reduce bulk density (Çerçioğlu et al., 2019; Ruis et al., 2020), increase WAS (Ruis et al., 2020; Steele et al., 2012), and enhance saturated hydraulic conductivity (Cercioğlu et al., 2019). In contrast, some researchers also reported that CC had no significant influence on bulk density (Nouri et al., 2019), SOM (Steele et al., 2012), WAS (Blanco-Canqui et al., 2017b; Nouri et al., 2019; Velykis et al., 2014), and  $K_{fs}$  (Haruna et al., 2018; Irmak et al., 2018).

Similarly, the tile drainage (TD) system has no significant impact on the bulk density, OM, and WAS compared to the without drainage (ND) system. It was expected that microbial activity (Jacinthe et al., 2001) and deep root systems (Easton et al., 2017) in tile drainage systems would alter soil bulk density and organic matter and thus would reflect in WAS as well. However, our study results revealed that 6 years of tile drainage practices along with silty clay loam soil has limited drainage treatment effects. From 2020 to 2022, soil sampling years were dry, having recorded precipitation as 369, 599, and 374 mm, respectively. The long term average annual precipitation for this study area was 645 mm. It may also show that the influence of TD on these properties are only significant under prolonged wet conditions.

# **3.4** | Effect of interaction of treatments on soil bulk density, organic matter, WAS, and field-saturated hydraulic conductivity

The soil bulk density, organic matter, and WAS were not significantly influenced by interaction treatment except interaction of tillage  $\times$  rotation. The topsoil had the most impact by tillage  $\times$  rotation; however, there were some significant impacts in deeper depth. Under 2-year and 3-year rotation at 0–10 cm, the bulk density was significantly higher in the NT (1.32 and 1.26 g/cm<sup>3</sup>) than the CT (1.23 and 1.15 g/cm<sup>3</sup>) sys-

tem, see Table 2. Alhameid et al. (2020) found that NT 4-year rotation had lower bulk density  $(1.19 \text{ g/cm}^3)$  for 0–7.5 cm than CT. For 10- to 20-cm depth, the bulk density was significantly higher in the CT system than in NT under the 3-year rotation. NT tillage significantly increased bulk density for 0- to 10-cm soil depth (see Figure 4c) but the inclusion of 4-year and 2-year rotation in NT significantly decreased bulk density at 30- to 60-cm depth than the CT (see Table 2). There were no significant differences at 20- to 30-cm depth and 60to 90-cm depth. Conversely, the NT field in all rotations had higher organic matter and WAS than CT across all depths. More specifically, the 4-year rotation with the NT system had a significantly higher SOM for 0- to 10-, 20- to 30-, 30- to 60-, and 60- to 90-cm depth compared to CT under 2-year and 3-year rotations. Similarly, the 4-year rotation with the NT system had significantly higher WAS for 0- to 10-cm depth than the CT under 2-year and 3-year rotations.

Bulk density, SOM, and WAS values did not significantly differ among 2-year, 3-year, and 4-year rotation under NT field at every depth except bulk density (1.29 g/cm<sup>3</sup>) at 30- to 60-cm depth. Bulk density for the 4-year rotation was significantly lower than the 2-year rotation (1.33 g/cm<sup>3</sup>; Table 2). In contrast, rotation significantly affects CT systems with respect to bulk density, SOM, and WAS.

The  $K_{\rm fs}$  was significantly higher by 63% in the CT system compared to NT under the 2-year rotation, but it did not vary substantially within tillage treatment under 3-year and 4-year rotations. The  $K_{fs}$  decreased with increasing crop rotation in the CT system, and  $K_{fs}$  increased with increasing crop rotation in the NT system (see Table 2). The  $K_{\rm fs}$  was found higher in the CT system under different rotations 2year (20.8 cm/h) > 4-year (15.1 cm/h) > 3-year (14.2 cm/h)compared to the NT system as found as 2-year (7.7 cm/h) > 3year (8.6 cm/h) > 4-year (10 cm/h). The CT  $\times 2$ -year rotation showed significantly higher  $K_{fs}$  than any NT system rotations. Previous research reported that increasing soil compaction (higher bulk density) reduces the water infiltration capacity, thus decreasing saturated hydraulic conductivity (Bormann & Klaassen, 2008). Thus, the higher bulk density for 0- to 20-cm soil depth in the NT system may have resulted in lower field-saturated hydraulic conductivity than in the CT system.

# **3.5** | Correlations of soil physical and hydraulic properties

Soil bulk density, SOM, WAS, and soil pH were significantly correlated with each other for p < 0.001 (Figure 6). Bulk density was negatively correlated with SOM and WAS. Previous research also reported similar correlation between bulk density and SOM (Heuscher et al., 2005; Zacharias & Wessolek, 2007). Conversely, SOM had a strongly negative correlation

**TABLE 2**Comparison of the impacts of tillage × rotation interaction treatment on soil bulk density, soil organic matter, wet aggregate stability,and field-saturated hydraulic conductivity. Soil bulk density, soil organic matter, and wet aggregate stability were presented for 0- to 10-, 10- to 20-,20- to 30-, 30- to 60-, and 60- to 90-cm soil depths. The field-saturated hydraulic conductivity represented the soil profile.

Treatment		Depth				
Tillage	× Rotation	0–10 cm	10–20 cm	20–30 cm	30–60 cm	60–90 cm
		Bulk density (g/cm <sup>3</sup> )				
	2 Year	1.23b	1.33a	1.29a	1.37a	1.49a
СТ	3 Year	1.15c	1.26b	1.31a	1.37a	1.45a
	4 Year	1.23bc	1.34a	1.28a	1.33ab	1.46a
	2 Year	1.32a	1.35a	1.28a	1.33bc	1.50a
NT	3 Year	1.26ab	1.36a	1.29a	1.36ab	1.48a
	4 Year	1.27ab	1.36a	1.28a	1.29c	1.45a
		Soil organic matter (%)				
	2 Year	4.88bc	4.33a	3.87ab	2.75abc	1.9a
СТ	3 Year	4.65c	3.93b	3.61b	2.55c	1.4b
	4 Year	4.96abc	4.21ab	3.84ab	2.68bc	1.67ab
	2 Year	5.04ab	4.30a	4.02a	3.09a	1.85a
NT	3 Year	4.99ab	4.21ab	4.01a	2.92abc	1.73a
	4 Year	5.24a	4.23a	4.04a	3.06ab	1.95a
		Wet aggregate stability (%)				
	2 Year	76.2c	68.2a	74.6a	75.1ab	68.0ab
СТ	3 Year	78.4bc	69.9a	74.1a	73.4b	61.6b
	4 Year	81.7abc	72.0a	72.6a	75.1ab	67.3ab
	2 Year	83.9ab	73.6a	78.2a	78.3ab	69.5ab
NT	3 Year	83.3ab	73.9a	73.8a	79.7a	74.6a
	4 Year	87.4a	74.2a	76.6a	76ab	73.9a
	2 Year			20.8a		
СТ	3 Year			14.2ab		
	4 Year			15.1ab		
	2 Year			7.7b		
NT	3 Year			8.6b		
	4 Year			10b		

Note: Mean values followed by different lowercase letters between each treatment within each depth represent significant differences at p < 0.0.5

Abbreviations: CT, conventional tillage; NT, no-till.

<sup>a</sup>Field saturated hydraulic conductivity is for the whole soil profile.

 $(R^2 = -0.76)$  with soil pH. WAS had moderately positive correlation with SOM ( $R^2 = 0.33$ ) and negative correlations with bulk density ( $R^2 = -0.28$ ) and soil pH ( $R^2 = -0.34$ ).

The field saturated hydraulic conductivity largely depends on the pore size distribution and connectivity of macropores within the soil profile. Although soil physical properties and management practices influenced pore size distribution, the field saturated hydraulic conductivity exhibits relatively high spatial variability (Picciafuoco et al., 2019; Usowicz & Lipiec, 2021). We found that the field saturated hydraulic conductivity (for soil profile) had weak correlation between soil bulk density, SOM, WAS, and soil pH of five different soil depths (0–10, 10–20, 20–30, 30–60 and 60–90 cm). This regression correlation indicates that the field-saturated hydraulic conductivity is a more complex parameter and not governed by any specific soil parameters.

### 4 | CONCLUSION

Soil hydro-physical properties are affected by agricultural management and in turn affect crop growth, field water balance, soil microbiology, and nutrient cycling. Although significant research has been performed on the effects of tillage, CCs, and drainage on soil physical properties, very few have explored the interaction across these variables. In



**FIGURE 6** Scatter plot and correlation coefficient (*r*) between soil variables bulk density, soil organic matter (SOM), wet aggregate stability (WAS), and soil pH in the study region. In scatter plot, color points represent different soil sampling depths.

addition, there has been little investigation in the Northern Great Plains of the United States, which is likely to see continued conversion of both crop ground and non-crop ground to the corn and soybean rotation that is common in the midwestern United States.

This research demonstrated the impact that tillage has on soil physical and hydraulic properties, in particular, WAS,  $K_{\rm fs}$ , and organic matter. More diverse crop rotation decreased bulk density and increased SOM and WAS. CCs (9 years after establishment) and tile drainage (6 years after establishment) had minimal impact on SOM, bulk density, WAS, and  $K_{\rm fs}$ under silty clay loam and South Dakota climate conditions. Overall, the research demonstrated that agricultural management practices have some potential to alter and improve soil physical and hydraulic properties but did not demonstrate that stacking practices (NT plus CCs) had a significant effect. This may be due to the limited time that the CCs and tile drainage had been established in these plots, or it may be due to challenging growing conditions that prevented the effects of these practices from being fully realized since establishment.

As corn and soybean rotations continue to migrate north and west in response to climate and market drivers, it will be important to continue to identify practices and combinations of practices that increase resilience of agricultural systems to climate extremes. Although these management systems show promise and partially reflect past research, some results diverge from past research in other locations. This may indicate that a longer establishment period is needed in colder, drier climates, or these systems perform better in different soils. Further research is needed for longer periods of time in additional soils in the Northern Great Plains of the United States to identify agricultural systems that benefit farm productivity and environmental health in the face of a more extreme climate.

#### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Ajoy Kumar Saha: Conceptualization; data curation; formal analysis; methodology; software; validation; visualization; writing—original draft; writing—review and editing. John T. McMaine: Conceptualization; data curation; funding acquisition; investigation; methodology; project administration; supervision; validation; visualization; writing review and editing. Todd Trooien: Investigation; methodology; supervision; validation; writing—review and editing. Peter Sexton: Conceptualization; investigation; methodology; resources; supervision; validation; writing—review and editing. Christopher Graham: Investigation; methodology; supervision; validation; writing—review and editing.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank the USDA-NRCS (Conservation Collaboration Grant), South Dakota Water Resources Institute, NSF, and Ducks Unlimited Project for providing funds. Sincere appreciation goes to all of the research team

254

Soil Science Society of America Journal

who worked throughout the phases of in-situ infiltration test, soil sampling, and soil analysis; these include: Lena Ouandaogo, Pavan Kulkarni, Mustafa Aydogdu, John Maursetter, Kristen Almen, Keely Moriarty, Morghan Hurst, Shelby Meeker, Farhana Akhter, Sumit Ghosh, Umar Javed, Philip Adalikwu, Zach Jannusch, Maryam Sahraei, and Myranda Hentges. Appreciation also goes to the team at the SDSU Southeast Research Farm.

#### ORCID

*Ajoy Kumar Saha* https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2096-1592 *John T. McMaine* https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0800-4706

#### REFERENCES

- Alhameid, A., Singh, J., Sekaran, U., Ozlu, E., Kumar, S., & Singh, S. (2020). Crop rotational diversity impacts soil physical and hydrological properties under long-term no- and conventional-till soils. *Soil Research*, 58(1), 84–94. https://doi.org/10.1071/SR18192
- Alvarez, R., & Steinbach, H. S. (2009). A review of the effects of tillage systems on some soil physical properties, water content, nitrate availability and crops yield in the Argentine Pampas. *Soil and Tillage Research*, 104(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.still.2009.02.005
- Aziz, I., Mahmood, T., & Islam, K. R. (2013). Effect of long term notill and conventional tillage practices on soil quality. *Soil and Tillage Research*, 131, 28–35. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.still.2013.03.002
- Bawa, A., MacDowell, R., Bansal, S., McMaine, J., Sexton, P., & Kumar, S. (2021). Responses of leached nitrogen concentrations and soil health to winter rye cover crop under no-till corn–soybean rotation in the northern Great Plains. *Journal of Environmental Quality*, 52(3), 422–433.
- Bayer, C., Dieckow, J., Amado, T. J. C., Eltz, F. L. F., & Vieira, F. C. B. (2009). Cover crop effects increasing carbon storage in a subtropical no-till sandy Acrisol. *Communications in Soil Science* and Plant Analysis, 40(9–10), 1499–1511. https://doi.org/10.1080/ 00103620902820365
- Bindraban, P. S., Stoorvogel, J. J., Jansen, D. M., Vlaming, J., & Groot, J. J. R. (2000). Land quality indicators for sustainable land management: Proposed method for yield gap and soil nutrient balance. *Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment*, 81(2), 103–112. https://doi.org/10.1016/ S0167-8809(00)00184-5
- Birkás, M., Jolánkai, M., Gyuricza, C., & Percze, A. (2004). Tillage effects on compaction, earthworms and other soil quality indicators in Hungary. *Soil and Tillage Research*, 78(2), 185–196. https://doi. org/10.1016/j.still.2004.02.006
- Blake, G. R., & Hartge, K. H. (1986). Bulk density. In A. Klute (Ed.), Methods of soil analysis: Part 1 physical and mineralogical methods (pp. 363–375). Soil Science Society of America, American Society of Agronomy. https://doi.org/10.2136/sssabookser5.1.2ed.c13
- Blanco-Canqui, H. (2018). Cover crops and water quality. Agronomy Journal, 110(5), 1633–1647.
- Blanco-Canqui, H., Hassim, R., Shapiro, C., Jasa, P., & Klopp, H. (2022). How does no-till affect soil-profile compactibility in the long term? *Geoderma*, 425, 116016. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoderma. 2022.116016
- Blanco-Canqui, H., Mikha, M. M., Presley, D. R., & Claassen, M. M. (2011). Addition of cover crops enhances no-till potential for improving soil physical properties. *Soil Science Society of America Journal*, 75(4), 1471–1482.

- Blanco-Canqui, H., Sindelar, M., Wortmann, C. S., & Kreikemeier, G. (2017b). Aerial interseeded cover crop and corn residue harvest: Soil and crop impacts. *Agronomy Journal*, 109(4), 1344–1351. https://doi. org/10.2134/agronj2017.02.0098
- Blanco-Canqui, H., Shaver, T. M., Lindquist, J. L., Shapiro, C. A., Elmore, R. W., Francis, C. A., & Hergert, G. W. (2015). Cover crops and ecosystem services: Insights from studies in temperate soils. *Agronomy Journal*, 107(6), 2449–2474. https://doi.org/10. 2134/agronj15.00866
- Blanco-Canqui, H., Wienhold, B. J., Jin, V. L., Schmer, M. R., & Kibet, L. C. (2017a). Long-term tillage impact on soil hydraulic properties. *Soil and Tillage Research*, 170, 38–42.
- Blevins, R. L., Smith, M. S., Thomas, G. W., & Frye, W. W. (1983). Influence of conservation tillage on soil properties. *Journal of Soil* and Water Conservation, 38(3), 301–305.
- Bormann, H., & Klaassen, K. (2008). Seasonal and land use dependent variability of soil hydraulic and soil hydrological properties of two northern German soils. *Geoderma*, 145(3–4), 295–302. https://doi. org/10.1016/j.geoderma.2008.03.017
- Botta, G. F., Jorajuria, D., Balbuena, R., Ressia, M., Ferrero, C., Rosatto, H., & Tourn, M. (2006). Deep tillage and traffic effects on subsoil compaction and sunflower (*Helianthus annus* L.) yields. *Soil* and Tillage Research, 91(1–2), 164–172. https://doi.org/10.1016/j. still.2005.12.011
- Brennan, E. B., & Boyd, N. S. (2012). Winter cover crop seeding rate and variety affects during eight years of organic vegetables: I. Cover crop biomass production. *Agronomy Journal*, 104(3), 684–698. https://doi. org/10.2134/agronj2011.0330
- Bünemann, E. K., Bongiorno, G., Bai, Z., Creamer, R. E., De Deyn, G., de Goede, R., Fleskens, L., Geissen, V., Kuyper, T. W., & Mäder, P. (2018). Soil quality—A critical review. *Soil Biology and Biochemistry*, 120, 105–125.
- Calderon, F. J., Nielsen, D., Acosta-Martinez, V., Vigil, M. F., & Drew, L. (2016). Cover crop and irrigation effects on soil microbial communities and enzymes in semiarid agroecosystems of the central Great Plains of North America. *Pedosphere*, 26(2), 192–205.
- Castro Filho, C., Lourenço, A. de F., Guimarães, M., & Fonseca, I. C. B. (2002). Aggregate stability under different soil management systems in a red latosol in the state of Parana, Brazil. *Soil and Tillage Research*, 65(1), 45–51. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0167-1987(01) 00275-6
- Çerçioğlu, M., Anderson, S. H., Udawatta, R. P., & Alagele, S. (2019). Effect of cover crop management on soil hydraulic properties. *Geoderma*, 343, 247–253. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoderma.2019.02. 027
- Connolly, R. D. (1998). Modelling effects of soil structure on the water balance of soil-crop systems: A review. *Soil and Tillage Research*, 48(1–2), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0167-1987(98)00128-7
- Conyers, M., Van Der Rijt, V., Oates, A., Poile, G., Kirkegaard, J., & Kirkby, C. (2019). The strategic use of minimum tillage within conservation agriculture in southern New South Wales, Australia. *Soil and Tillage Research*, 193, 17–26. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.still. 2019.05.021
- R Core Team. (2022). R: A language and environment for statistical computing. R Foundation. https://www.R-project.org/
- Doran, J. W. (1996). Soil health and global sustainability. In R. J. MacEwan & M. R. Carter (Eds.), Soil quality is in the hands of the land manager (pp. 46–52). University of Ballarat.
- Doran, J. W., & Parkin, T. B (2015). Quantitative indicators of soil quality: A minimum data set. In J. W. Doran & A. J. Jones (Eds.),

14350661, 2024, 2, Downloaded from https:

onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/saj2.20614 by Readcube (Labtiva Inc.), Wiley Online Library on [04/06/2024]. See the Terms and Conditic

ons (https

onlinelibrary.wiley.com/term

-and-c

ons) on Wiley Online Library for rules of use; OA articles are governed by the applicable Creative Commons

*Methods for assessing soil quality* (pp. 25–37). Soil Science Society of America. https://doi.org/10.2136/sssaspecpub49.c2

- Durner, W., & Iden, S. C. (2021). The improved integral suspension pressure method (ISP+) for precise particle size analysis of soil and sedimentary materials. *Soil and Tillage Research*, *213*, 105086. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.still.2021.105086
- Durner, W., Iden, S. C., & von Unold, G. (2017). The integral suspension pressure method (ISP) for precise particle-size analysis by gravitational sedimentation. *Water Resources Research*, *53*(1), 33–48.
- Easton, Z. M., Bock, E., & Collick, A. S. (2017). Factors when considering an agricultural drainage system (Report No. BSE-208). Virginia State University.
- Fageria, N. K., Baligar, V. C., & Bailey, B. A. (2005). Role of cover crops in improving soil and row crop productivity. *Communications in Soil Science and Plant Analysis*, 36(19–20), 2733–2757. https://doi.org/ 10.1080/00103620500303939
- Fiorini, A., Boselli, R., Maris, S. C., Santelli, S., Perego, A., Acutis, M., Brenna, S., & Tabaglio, V. (2020). Soil type and cropping system as drivers of soil quality indicators response to no-till: A 7-year field study. *Applied Soil Ecology*, 155, 103646. https://doi.org/10.1016/j. apsoil.2020.103646
- Franzluebbers, A. J., Broome, S. W., Pritchett, K. L., Wagger, M. G., Lowder, N., Woodruff, S., & Lovejoy, M. (2021). Multispecies cover cropping promotes soil health in no-tillage cropping systems of North Carolina. *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation*, 76(3), 263–275. https://doi.org/10.2489/jswc.2021.00087
- Freidenreich, A., Bhat, M., & Jayachandran, K. (2022). Adoption and perception of cover crop implementation for tropical fruit growers. *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation*, 77(2), 158–171. https://doi. org/10.2489/jswc.2022.00084
- Fuentes, J. P., Flury, M., & Bezdicek, D. F. (2004). Hydraulic properties in a silt loam soil under natural prairie, conventional till, and no-till. *Soil Science Society of America Journal*, 68(5), 1679–1688.
- Gantzer, C. J., & Blake, G. R. (1978). Physical characteristics of Le Sueur clay loam soil following no-till and conventional tillage. *Agronomy Journal*, 70(5), 853–857. https://doi.org/10.2134/agronj1978. 00021962007000050035x
- Gaudin, A. C. M., Tolhurst, T. N., Ker, A. P., Janovicek, K., Tortora, C., Martin, R. C., & Deen, W. (2015). Increasing crop diversity mitigates weather variations and improves yield stability. *PLoS One*, 10(2), e0113261. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0113261
- Ghimire, R., Ghimire, B., Mesbah, A. O., Sainju, U. M., & Idowu, O. J. (2019). Soil health response of cover crops in winter wheat–fallow system. *Agronomy Journal*, 111(4), 2108–2115. https://doi.org/10. 2134/agronj2018.08.0492
- Golmohammadi, G., Rudra, R., Prasher, S., Madani, A., Youssef, M., Goel, P., & Mohammadi, K. (2017). Impact of tile drainage on water budget and spatial distribution of sediment generating areas in an agricultural watershed. *Agricultural Water Management*, 184, 124–134. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.agwat.2017.02.001
- Graham, C., van Es, H., & Sanyal, D. (2021). Soil health changes from grassland to row crops conversion on Natric Aridisols in South Dakota, USA. *Geoderma Regional*, 26, e00425. https://doi.org/10. 1016/j.geodrs.2021.e00425
- Haruna, S. I., & Nkongolo, N. V. (2015). Cover crop management effects on soil physical and biological properties. *Procedia Environmental Sciences*, 29, 13–14.
- Haruna, S. I., Nkongolo, N. V., Anderson, S. H., Eivazi, F., & Zaibon, S. (2018). In situ infiltration as influenced by cover crop and tillage

management. Journal of Soil and Water Conservation, 73(2), 164–172. https://doi.org/10.2489/jswc.73.2.164

- Heard, J. R., Kladivko, E. J., & Mannering, J. V. (1988). Soil macroporosity, hydraulic conductivity and air permeability of silty soils under long-term conservation tillage in Indiana. *Soil and Tillage Research*, *11*(1), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1016/0167-1987(88)90027-X
- Heuscher, S. A., Brandt, C. C., & Jardine, P. M. (2005). Using soil physical and chemical properties to estimate bulk density. *Soil Science Society of America Journal*, 69(1), 51–56. https://doi.org/10.2136/ sssaj2005.0051a
- Irmak, S., Sharma, V., Mohammed, A. T., & Djaman, K. (2018). Impacts of cover crops on soil physical properties: Field capacity, permanent wilting point, soil-water holding capacity, bulk density, hydraulic conductivity, and infiltration. *Transactions of the ASABE*, 61(4), 1307–1321. https://doi.org/10.13031/trans.12700
- ITPS. (2015). Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soil: State of the world's soil resources report. FAO Publication. https://www.fao.org/ 3/i5199e/i5199e.pdf
- Jabro, J. D., Iversen, W. M., Evans, R. G., Allen, B. L., & Stevens, W. B. (2014). Repeated freeze-thaw cycle effects on soil compaction in a clay loam in northeastern Montana. *Soil Science Society of America Journal*, 78(3), 737–744. https://doi.org/10.2136/sssaj2013.07.0280
- Jabro, J. D., Stevens, W. B., Iversen, W. M., Sainju, U. M., & Allen, B. L. (2021). Soil cone index and bulk density of a sandy loam under no-till and conventional tillage in a corn-soybean rotation. *Soil and Tillage Research*, 206, 104842. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.still.2020.104842
- Jacinthe, P. A., Lal, R., & Kimble, J. M. (2001). Organic carbon storage and dynamics in croplands and terrestrial deposits as influenced by subsurface tile drainage. *Soil Science*, 166(5), 322–335.
- Jangid, K., Williams, M. A., Franzluebbers, A. J., Sanderlin, J. S., Reeves, J. H., Jenkins, M. B., Endale, D. M., Coleman, D. C., & Whitman, W. B. (2008). Relative impacts of land-use, management intensity and fertilization upon soil microbial community structure in agricultural systems. *Soil Biology and Biochemistry*, 40(11), 2843–2853. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.soilbio.2008.07.030
- Jones, O. R., Hauser, V. L., & Popham, T. W. (1994). No-tillage effects on infiltration, runoff, and water conservation on dryland. *Transactions* of the ASAE, 37(2), 473–479.
- Kassam, A. H., Friedrich, T., & Derpsch, R. (2010). Conservation agriculture in the 21st century: A paradigm of sustainable agriculture. *European Congress on Conservation Agriculture*, 10, 4–6.
- Kemper, W. D. (1965). Aggregate stability. In C. A. Black (Ed.), Methods of soil analysis: Part 1 physical and mineralogical properties, including statistics of measurement and sampling (pp. 511–519). American Society of Agronomy, Soil Science Society of America. https://doi.org/10.2134/agronmonogr9.1.c40
- Kemper, W. D., & Rosenau, R. C. (1986). Aggregate stability and size distribution. In A. Klute (Ed.), *Methods of soil analysis: Part 1 physical and mineralogical methods* (pp. 425–442). SSSA. https://doi.org/ 10.2136/sssabookser5.1.2ed.c17
- Kokulan, V. (2019). Environmental and economic consequences of tile drainage systems in Canada. Canadian Agri-Food Policy Institute. https://capi-icpa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/2019-06-14-CAPI-Vivekananthan-Kokulan-Paper-WEB.pdf
- Liao, K., Feng, J., Lai, X., & Zhu, Q. (2022). Effects of environmental factors on the influence of tillage conversion on saturated soil hydraulic conductivity obtained with different methodologies: A global meta-analysis. *Soil*, 8(1), 309–317. https://doi.org/10.5194/ soil-8-309-2022

- Mailapalli, D. R., Horwath, W. R., Wallender, W. W., & Burger, M. (2011). Infiltration, runoff, and export of dissolved organic carbon from furrow-irrigated forage fields under cover crop and no-till management in the arid climate of California. *Journal of Irrigation and Drainage Engineering*, 138(1), 35–42.
- METER Group Inc. (2017). SATURO infiltrometer manual. Meter Group. http://library.metergroup.com/Manuals/ 20496\_SATURO\_Manual.pdf
- Nebo, G. I., Manyevere, A., Araya, T., & Van Tol, J. (2020). Shortterm impact of conservation agriculture on soil strength and saturated hydraulic conductivity in the South African semiarid areas. *Agriculture*, 10(9), 414. https://doi.org/10.3390/agriculture10090414
- Nieto, O. M., Castro, J., & Fernández-Ondoño, E. (2013). Conventional tillage versus cover crops in relation to carbon fixation in Mediterranean olive cultivation. *Plant and Soil*, 365(1–2), 321–335.
- Nouri, A., Lee, J., Yin, X., Tyler, D. D., & Saxton, A. M. (2019). Thirtyfour years of no-tillage and cover crops improve soil quality and increase cotton yield in Alfisols, Southeastern USA. *Geoderma*, 337, 998–1008. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoderma.2018.10.016
- Ozlu, E., Sandhu, S. S., Kumar, S., & Arriaga, F. J. (2019). Soil health indicators impacted by long-term cattle manure and inorganic fertilizer application in a corn-soybean rotation of South Dakota. *Scientific Reports*, 9(1), 11776. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-019-48207-z
- Pagliai, M., Vignozzi, N., & Pellegrini, S. (2004). Soil structure and the effect of management practices. *Soil and Tillage Research*, 79(2), 131–143. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.still.2004.07.002
- Picciafuoco, T., Morbidelli, R., Flammini, A., Saltalippi, C., Corradini, C., Strauss, P., & Blöschl, G. (2019). A pedotransfer function for fieldscale saturated hydraulic conductivity of a small watershed. *Vadose Zone Journal*, 18(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.2136/vzj2019.02.0018
- Reynolds, W. D., & Elrick, D. E. (1990). Ponded infiltration from a single ring: I. Analysis of steady flow. *Soil Science Society of America Journal*, 54(5), 1233–1241. https://doi.org/10.2136/sssaj1990. 03615995005400050006x
- Rhoton, F. E. (2000). Influence of time on soil response to no-till practices. Soil Science Society of America Journal, 64(2), 700–709. https://doi.org/10.2136/sssaj2000.642700x
- Ruffatti, M. D., Roth, R. T., Lacey, C. G., & Armstrong, S. D. (2019). Impacts of nitrogen application timing and cover crop inclusion on subsurface drainage water quality. *Agricultural Water Management*, 211, 81–88. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.agwat.2018.09.016
- Ruis, S. J., Blanco-Canqui, H., Elmore, R. W., Proctor, C., Koehler-Cole, K., Ferguson, R. B., Francis, C. A., & Shapiro, C. A. (2020). Impacts of cover crop planting dates on soils after four years. *Agronomy Journal*, 112(3), 1649–1665. https://doi.org/10.1002/agj2.20143
- Sapkota, T. B., Mazzoncini, M., Bàrberi, P., Antichi, D., & Silvestri, N. (2012). Fifteen years of no till increase soil organic matter, microbial biomass and arthropod diversity in cover crop-based arable cropping systems. *Agronomy for Sustainable Development*, 32(4), 853–863. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13593-011-0079-0
- Sarrantonio, M., & Gallandt, E. (2003). The role of cover crops in North American cropping systems. *Journal of Crop Production*, 8(1–2), 53– 74. https://doi.org/10.1300/J144v08n01\_04
- Schulte, E. E., & Hopkins, B. G. (1996). Estimation of soil organic matter by weight loss-on-ignition. In F. R. Magdoff, M. A. Tabatabai, & E. A. Hanlon (Eds.), *Soil organic matter: Analysis and interpretation* (pp. 21–31). SSSA special publications. Soil Science Society of America. https://doi.org/10.2136/sssaspecpub46.c3

- Skaggs, R. W., Brevé, M. A., & Gilliam, J. W. (1994). Hydrologic and water quality impacts of agricultural drainage. *Critical Reviews in Environmental Science and Technology*, 24(1), 1–32. https://doi.org/ 10.1080/10643389409388459
- So, H. B., Grabski, A., & Desborough, P. (2009). The impact of 14 years of conventional and no-till cultivation on the physical properties and crop yields of a loam soil at Grafton NSW, Australia. *Soil* and Tillage Research, 104(1), 180–184. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.still. 2008.10.017
- Soracco, C. G., Villarreal, R., Melani, E. M., Oderiz, J. A., Salazar, M. P., Otero, M. F., Irizar, A. B., & Lozano, L. A. (2019). Hydraulic conductivity and pore connectivity. Effects of conventional and no-till systems determined using a simple laboratory device. *Geoderma*, 337, 1236–1244. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoderma.2018. 10.045
- Southeast South Dakota Research Farm. (2022). Southeast South Dakota experiment farm annual progress report, 2022 (Report No. 283). Agricultural Experiment Station and Research Farm Annual Reports. South Dakota State University. https://openprairie.sdstate. edu/agexperimentsta\_rsp/283
- Steele, M. K., Coale, F. J., & Hill, R. L. (2012). Winter annual cover crop impacts on no-till soil physical properties and organic matter. *Soil Science Society of America Journal*, 76(6), 2164–2173. https:// doi.org/10.2136/sssaj2012.0008
- Strock, J. S., Porter, P. M., & Russelle, M. P. (2004). Cover cropping to reduce nitrate loss through subsurface drainage in the northern US Corn Belt. *Journal of Environmental Quality*, 33(3), 1010– 1016.
- Tarkalson, D. D., Hergert, G. W., & Cassman, K. G. (2006). Longterm effects of tillage on soil chemical properties and grain yields of a dryland winter wheat–sorghum/corn–fallow rotation in the Great Plains. Agronomy Journal, 98(1), 26–33. https://doi.org/10.2134/ agronj2004.0240
- Temesgen, M., Hoogmoed, W. B., Rockstrom, J., & Savenije, H. H. G. (2009). Conservation tillage implements and systems for smallholder farmers in semi-arid Ethiopia. *Soil and Tillage Research*, 104(1), 185– 191. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.still.2008.10.026
- Thomas, G., Dalal, R., & Standley, J. (2007). No-till effects on organic matter, pH, cation exchange capacity and nutrient distribution in a Luvisol in the semi-arid subtropics. *Soil and Tillage Research*, 94(2), 295–304. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.still.2006.08.005
- Topa, D., Cara, I. G., & Jităreanu, G. (2021). Long term impact of different tillage systems on carbon pools and stocks, soil bulk density, aggregation and nutrients: A field meta-analysis. *Catena*, 199, 105102. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.catena.2020.105102
- Usowicz, B., & Lipiec, J. (2021). Spatial variability of saturated hydraulic conductivity and its links with other soil properties at the regional scale. *Scientific Reports*, *11*(1), 8293. https://doi.org/10. 1038/s41598-021-86862-3
- Velykis, A., Satkus, A., & Masilionytė, L. (2014). Effect of tillage, lime sludge and cover crop on soil physical state and growth of spring oilseed rape. Zemdirbyste-Agriculture, 101(4), 347–354. https://doi. org/10.13080/z-a.2014.101.044
- Wander, M. M., Cihacek, L. J., Coyne, M., Drijber, R. A., Grossman, J. M., Gutknecht, J. L. M., Horwath, W. R., Jagadamma, S., Olk, D. C., Ruark, M., Snapp, S. S., Tiemann, L. K., Weil, R., & Turco, R. F. (2019). Developments in agricultural soil quality and health: Reflections by the research committee on soil organic matter management.

Frontiers in Environmental Science, 7, 109. https://doi.org/10.3389/ fenvs.2019.00109

- Zacharias, S., & Wessolek, G. (2007). Excluding organic matter content from pedotransfer predictors of soil water retention. Soil Science Society of America Journal, 71(1), 43-50. https://doi.org/10.2136/ sssaj2006.0098
- Zink, A., Fleige, H., & Horn, R. (2010). Load risks of subsoil compaction and depths of stress propagation in arable Luvisols. Soil Science Society of America Journal, 74(5), 1733-1742. https://doi.org/10.2136/ sssaj2009.0336
- Zuber, S. M., & Villamil, M. B. (2016). Meta-analysis approach to assess effect of tillage on microbial biomass and enzyme activities. Soil

Biology and Biochemistry, 97, 176-187. https://doi.org/10.1016/j. soilbio.2016.03.011

How to cite this article: Saha, A. K., McMaine, J. T., Trooien, T., Sexton, P., & Graham, C. (2024). Impact of no-till, crop rotation, cover crop, and drainage on soil physical and hydraulic properties. Soil Science Society of America Journal, 88, 239-257. https://doi.org/10.1002/saj2.20614