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| **Formative Element** | **Connotation** |
| Alb | Presence of albic horizon |
| Anthr | Modified by humans |
| Aqu | Aquic conditions |
| Ar | Mixed horizons |
| Arg | Presence of argillic horizon |
| Calc | Presence of a calcic horizons |
| Camb | Presence of a cambic horizon |
| Cry | Cold |
| Dur | Presence of a duripan |
| Fibr | Least decomposed stage |
| Fluv | Flood plain |
| Fol | Mass of leaves |
| Gyps | Presence of a gypsic horizon |
| Hem | Intermediate stage of decomposition |
| Hist | Presence of organic materials |
| Hum | Presence of organic matter |
| Orth | The common ones |
| Per | Perudic moisture regime |
| Psamm | Sandy texture |
| Rend | High carbonate content |
| Sal | Presence of a salic horizon |
| Sapr | Most decomposed stage |
| Torr | Torric moisture regime |
| Turb | Presence of cryoturbation |
| Ud | Udic moisture regime |
| Vitr | Presence of glass |
| Ust | Ustic moisture regime |
| Xer | Xeric moisture regime |
| Formative Element | Connotation |
| Acr | Extreme weathering |
| Al | High aluminum, low iron |
| Alb | An albic horizon |
| Anhy | Very dry |
| Anthr | An anthropic epipedon |
| Aqu | Aquic conditions |
| Argi | Presence of an argillic horizon |
| Calci, calc | A calcic horizon |
| Cry | Cold |
| Dur | A duripan |
| Dystr, dys | Low base saturation |
| Endo | Implying a ground water table |
| Epi | Implying a perched water table |
| Eutr | High base saturation |
| Ferr | Presence of iron |
| Fibr | Least decomposed stage |
| Fluv | Flood plain |
| Fol | Mass of leaves |
| Fragi | Presence of fragipan |
| Fragloss | See the formative elements "frag" and "gloss" |
| Fulv | Dark brown color, presence of organic carbon |
| Glac | Ice lenses or wedges |
| Gyps | Presence of gypsic horizon |
| Gloss | Presence of a glossic horizon |
| Hal | Salty |
| Hapl | Minimum horizon development |
| Hem | Intermediate stage of decomposition |
| Hist | Presence of organic materials |
| Hum | Presence of organic matter |
| Hydr | Presence of water |
| Kand, kan | 1:1 layer silicate clays |
| Luv | Illuvial |
| Melan | Black, presence of organic carbon |
| Moll | Presence of a mollic epipedon |
| Natr | Presence of natric horizon |
| Pale | Excessive development |
| Petr | A cemented horizon |
| Plac | Presence of thin pan |
| Plagg | Presence of plaggen epipedon |
| Plinth | Presence of plinthite |
| Psamm | Sandy texture |
| Quartz | High quartz content |
| Rhod | Dark red color |
| Sal | Presence of salic horizon |
| Sapr | Most decomposed stage |
| Somb | Presence of sombric horizon |
| Sphagn | Presence of Sphagnum |
| Sulf | Presence of sulfides or their oxidation products |
| Torr | Torric moisture regime |
| Ud | Udic moisture regime |
| Umbr | Presence of umbric epipedon |
| Ust | Ustic moisture regime |
| Verm | Wormy, or mixed by animals |
| Vitr | Presence of glass |
| Xer | Xeric moisture regime |