Decision tree:

- Are there gravel or cobbles in the top 100 cm (and no permafrost)?
- Is there permafrost between 75–150 cm and no persistent water table?
- Is there permafrost above 75 cm and no persistent water table?
- Is the surface (~10–30 cm) saturated but only for part of the growing season?
- Is the surface (~0–30 cm) saturated for the entire growing season?

Drainage class:

- Well-drained
- Moderately well-drained
- Somewhat poorly drained
- Poorly drained
- Very poorly drained

Characteristics:

- Little moisture in the surface
  - Thin organics (<20 cm, often much less)
  - Oxidized colors in mineral soil
- Moderate surface moisture
  - Silty mineral soil
  - Blocky structure
- Considerable surface moisture
  - Clay mineral soils
  - Blocky structure
  - Slightly oxidized colors in mineral
- When not saturated surface still moist
  - Clay mineral soils
  - Gleyed mineral soil
  - Mottles
  - Massive structure
- Saturated surface
  - Gleyed mineral soil

Slope modifier:

If the slope of the site is greater than 5%, the site should be better drained by one drainage class. For example, a somewhat poorly drained site would become a moderately well-drained site.