

FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL SOIL SCIENTISTS REGISTRY OF CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL SOIL SCIENTISTS

Mission

Recognizing the soil as a natural body and one of our most valued resources, and recognizing that the public demands evidence of professional competence from those whose activities affect land use, the Florida Association of Environmental Soil Scientists (FAESS) is hereby dedicated to foster the profession of Soil Science and to further the increase and dissemination of information concerning all phases of soil science, in order to contribute to the general welfare of the people of the State of Florida.

Introduction

In cooperation with the Soil Science Society of America (SSSA), the FAESS has established a protocol through which soil scientists will be certified. Certification as a Professional Soil Scientist is based on measuring individual's qualifications against standards determined by the SSSA Soils Certifying Board and the FAESS Soils Certifying Board. Individuals are certified by a board made up of certified Professional Soil Scientists. These board members are nominated by the FAESS Soils Certifying Board and appointed by the FAESS president.

Purpose

Professional standards are needed for those whose activities affect the well-being of the general public. Professional standards have been recognized in such professions as medicine, law, engineering, and geology. Problem solving in land use, crop production, waste management, and the use of agricultural chemicals create a need for the services of professionals. Such professionals must be able to show evidence of their qualifications. A certification program that identifies professionals for educational, scientific, and service activities with public and private agencies is in the public interest. The FAESS maintains a registry of certified Professional Soil Scientists who meet these standards.

Determining Eligibility

Certification is based on scholarly preparation and work experience supported by references. Individuals certified by FAESS have met the educational and practical experience standards, subscribe to the Code of Ethics, and qualify for identification and recognition as professionals. Credentials of applicants are reviewed by the Soils Certifying Board. Certification is for individuals only. The designation of CPSS may not be used in such a manner as to indicate that a business, firm, or agency is a certified entity. Further, the professional designation may not be used in any way to connote FAESS endorsement of a business, firm, agency, consulting service, product, or program.

Minimum Requirements for Eligibility

1. Education Requirements

a. Possess a bachelor's degree from a U.S. or Canadian institution with a major in soil science or a closely allied field of science, meet the minimum core requirements, and have five years of professional experience, subsequent to the bachelor's degree, working in the area of soil science. Experience while working toward an advanced degree does not qualify.

b. Possess a master's or doctoral degree from a U.S. or Canadian institution with a major in soil science or closely allied field of science, meet the minimum core requirements, and have three years of professional experience, subsequent to the bachelor's degree, working in the area of soil science. Experience while working toward an advanced degree does not qualify.

2. Work Experience

a. Applicants are required to demonstrate the percentage of work experience in soil science.

(1) Activities such as farm management, consulting, research, extension, and teaching require a minimum of 70% of the applicant's time working directly within the area of certification for any time period to count fully as work experience.

(2) Work experience less than 70% will be prorated.

(3) Work experience must be in the area of application. A work experience summary will be attached to any other applications submitted by the applicant.

3. References

a. Applicants must submit five references that are familiar with their work and professional experience. References must be familiar with work experience used to meet certification requirements and knowledgeable of agronomy, crops, and soils. The applicant will need to designate the time period for which the reference has personal knowledge of his or her work experience history.

(1) At least one individual must be associated with the applicant's employment; such as an immediate supervisor, client, or coworker.

4. Core Requirements

a. Soils applicants must meet the minimum core requirements as outlined at: http://www.soils.org/certifications/pdf/soil_sci_cert.pdf.

5. Exam Requirements

a. Certification is exam based and all applicants for Professional Soil Scientist are required to pass the SSSA's *Fundamentals and Professional Practice Soil Science*

Examinations. An individual must pass the Fundamentals Examination before they can take the Professional Practice Examination.

6. Florida-specific Training Course

a. For certification, applicants for Professional Soil Scientist are required to satisfactorily complete a training course specific to soils encountered in Florida. The course will be offered at least annually.

Renewal

1. Annual Renewal

a. Certification may be renewed by earning the required Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and paying the appropriate annual fee. Included in the required CEUs, the registrant will be required to attend the Florida-specific training course at least once every 3 years.

b. Renewal is due annually on 31 December and is considered delinquent if not paid within 30 days after this due date. After 31 January, certification will be reinstated with payment of the annual fee plus a late fee. The registrant's name will be dropped from the active Registry if the fee is not paid by 1 April. After 12 months, reapplication is required.

(1) After recertification has lapsed for 12 months, the individual must reapply following the current rules of application.

(2) For lapsed Certified Professional Soil Scientist this includes:

(a) Taking and passing the SSSA's Council of Soil Science Examiners' Fundamentals of Soil Science Examination and Council of Soil Science Examiners' Professional Practice of Soil Science Examination.

(b) Meeting the education requirements.

(c) Submitting appropriate references.

(d) Meeting experience requirements.

(e) Completion of the Florida-specific training course.

c. Continual training and education is required of all Certified Professional Soil Scientists to keep abreast of rapidly changing conditions, techniques, and requirements in their field. Therefore, to ensure the validity and integrity of certification, Professional Soil Scientists must submit evidence of continuing education to maintain their certified status. During each 2-year period of certification, a minimum of 40 CEUs must be accumulated. The Florida-specific training course must be completed at least once every 3 years. Details of the recertification program are provided at the time one becomes certified.