

SOIL SCIENTIST QUALIFICATIONS

State of Connecticut

From Connecticut General Statutes (Revised to 2011), *Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act, Chapter 440, Sec. 22a-38.*

Definitions:

"Soil scientist" means an individual duly qualified in accordance with standards set by the federal Office of Personnel Management"

Note: A soil scientist does not need to be ARCPACS or SSSA (Soil Science Society of America) certified or listed in the Registry of the SSSSNE (Society of Soil Scientists of Southern New England) to delineate state wetlands.

Federal Soil Scientist

From the US Office of Personnel Management, *Operating Manual for Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions, Section IV-B:*

Qualification Standard for Soil Scientist:

A. degree with a major in soil science or a related discipline. The study must have included 30 semester hours or equivalent in biological, physical, or earth science, including a minimum of 15 hours in such subjects as soil genesis, pedology, soil chemistry, soil physics, and soil fertility.

OR

B. combination of education and experience-courses equivalent to a major in soil science or a related discipline that included at least 30 semester hours in the biological, physical, or earth sciences. At least 15 of these semester hours must have been in the areas specified in the areas specified in A above, plus appropriate experience or additional education.

Society of Soil Scientist of Southern New England

The SSSSNE annually publishes a listing of its members who meet their qualifications for Professional and Basic Members.

Professional Member Status:

1. Requires a BS degree with 30 semester hours, or equivalent, in biological, physical, chemical, and earth sciences, including at least 15 semester hours of soil science courses meeting the following distribution, and approval of the Board of Directors.

A. A minimum of three credits in soil genesis, classification, morphology, and mapping

AND

B. The remaining soil science courses in at least three of the following six categories

1. introductory soil science
2. soil chemistry/fertility
3. soil physics
4. soil microbiology/biochemistry
5. soil survey interpretations/soils and land use/
soils and the environment
6. independent study/seminar/geology (three credit maximum). Course must be related to soil science;

AND

2. Requires three years of professional experience, or equivalent, in soil science that meets the approval of the Board of Directors.

Basic Member Status: Requires the educational background as outlined for Professional Member Status, but does not meet the three-year professional experience requirement.

For further information:

<http://nesoil.com/ssssne/membership.htm>

Society of Soil Scientists of Southern New England
PO Box 258
Storrs, CT 06268

Soil Science Society of America Soil Certification (formerly known as ARCPACS certification)

This is the only national certification program available to soil scientists. There are four certification options available in the area of soil science:

Certified Professional Soil Scientist (CPSS)
Certified Professional Soil Classifier (CPSC)
Associate Professional Soil Scientist (APSS)
Associate Professional Soil Classifier (APSC)

Eligibility requirements:

1. Minimum of a bachelor's degree with a major in the area for which application is made, or a closely allied field of science and meet the minimum core requirements.

Core requirements are 15 semester credits soil science (a soil classifier must include 5 semester hours in soil genesis, morphology, classification, interpretation, or mapping within the 15 semester credits of soil science), 6 semester credits plant or soil biology (formerly "alternate crops"), and 3 semester credits additional core courses.

2. Five years of professional experience, subsequent to the bachelor's degree, working in the area of certification. Experience while working toward an advanced degree does not qualify. Three years of experience is necessary for those with Masters degrees or PhD's.

3. Five references familiar with work experience; at least one must be associated with applicants employment.

As of January 1, 1998, qualification as a CPSS or CPSC requires passing two exams developed by the Soil Science Society of America (in addition to the requirements outlined in 1, 2, and 3 above):

Fundamentals exam - to be taken by graduating seniors and those without experience. After passing this exam, applicants would be APSS's or APSC's.

Professional practice exam - to be taken after required experience is achieved.

For further information:

<http://www.soils.org/certification/>

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