

**SC SOIL CLASSIFIERS ADVISORY COUNCIL
U.S. FOREST SERVICE
4931 BROAD RIVER ROAD
COLUMBIA, SC 29212
MINUTES OF MEETING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2008**

Members Present:

Charles M. Ogg
Bill R. Smith
M. Lance Brewington
Randall K. Fowler
Dennis J. DeFrancesco

Others:

Don Winslow
Sherri F. Moorer
Donnie Bradshaw
Caroline Edwards
Bob Eppinette
Chris Fincham
Jacob Presley
Troy Smith
Ben Stuckey
John Thorp

Chairman Ogg called the meeting to order at 10:05 A.M.

Ms. Moorer introduced Don Winslow to council. Mr. Winslow is Chief of Staff for the SC Department of Natural Resources.

Council welcomed Dennis J. DeFrancesco.

MOTION: Motion to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2008 meeting as read was made by Lance Brewington. Randall Fowler seconded the motion. Council unanimously concurred.

Old Business

1. Ms. Moorer welcomed Dennis J. DeFrancesco to council. Mr. DeFrancesco will serve a five year term on council. His term will be July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2013.
2. Ms. Moorer told council that Buford Mabry of the SC Department of Natural Resources – Legal Department reviewed their law for possible implementation of a continuing education requirement on license renewals. Mr. Mabry determined that Section 40-65-180, which establishes requirements for license renewals, only requires payment of a fee and re-examination if a license has lapsed. Therefore, the law would have to be changed in order to add a continuing education requirement to license renewals.

Mr. DeFrancesco asked what the process would be to get the law changed. Mr. Winslow said there are two ways to do it: Have it incorporated in the agency legislative package, or to approach a legislator who would be willing to sponsor the changes. He suggested that they consider approaching a legislator if they know one that would support their cause. The SC

Department of Natural Resources started on their legislative package for 2009 three months ago, so the earliest they would be able to go that route would be 2010. With the big agenda that the department faces, he suggested that it would be best for them to do this privately. The only potential problem to changing the law is people in other fields or the general public may begin to question certain aspects of the standing law and the proposed changes. Mr. Fowler reminded council that they considered changes to the law several years ago, and this is the issue that caused them to drop their pursuit of legislative changes. When they found out that the current law would allow them to license people by comity, they decided not to pursue it. Dr. Smith pointed out that the soil classifiers registration program is still a small program, and it might be difficult to get support for legislative changes. Mr. Fincham said that the slow economy might help with that issue. Many people are looking for work, which could result in more applications coming through the program. Ms. Moorner agreed that there has been increased interest in the program since they opened up licensure by comity. They have licensed ten new people, which is a significant number considering the size of the program. Mr. Thorp said getting continuing education credits might be a challenge as well, and they need to make sure they have a way for people to meet the requirement before implementing it. Ms. Moorner asked Mr. Bradshaw if Georgia has a continuing education requirement. Mr. Bradshaw said Georgia requires twenty hours of CEU's every two years, and ten of those hours must be in the field. Courses must be approved by the department. The Georgia Soil Science Society handles most of the training and even offers site by site training. They also link with the University of Georgia. He suggested that if SC is considering a continuing education requirement; they should get in contact with Clemson University for their support. NRCS would also be helpful and supportative in these efforts. Mr. Fowler told council that Bob Eppinette has contacts with legislators and might be able to offer assistance through the Soil Science Society of SC. Mr. DeFrancesco said it sounds like they need to research the issue. He proposed that council put legislative changes on hold for now until they have an opportunity to talk through the Soil Science Society of SC and gather more information.

New Business

1. Ms. Moorner invited Chris Fincham, the new soil scientist with the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) to address council with any issues or concerns from their agency. Mr. Fincham E-mailed the SC Soil Classifiers a copy of a form he would like to implement for soil work on engineered septic systems and asked for comments or suggestions to improve it. Currently there is no standard form used, so he modified a form he used on his work in Ohio to fit the work done in SC. He said this form would be the minimum that DHEC would accept and feedback would be extremely helpful. Efforts are underway to provide regional training more often than twice a year. He is also working to make sure all of the DHEC offices statewide are aware of the SC Soil Classifiers Registration Program. He said that his goal, like ours, is to promote the profession and make sure that people are aware of our program and are properly licensed before performing soil classifying work in SC.
2. Ms. Moorner was notified that Clyde M. Livingston, Jr. filed complaints with DHEC and the SC Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation charging that SC Soil Classifiers are performing geology services; specifically well drilling. Both departments have asked for a review of the complaint and a formal response from the SC Soil Classifiers Advisory Council. Council agreed that the work they do with borings for soil descriptions is pedologic investigation, not geologic.

Ms. Moorer will send a letter to DHEC and the SC Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation to notify them of this decision.

3. Ms. Moorer asked council if they responded to an E-mail she forwarded to them from Bill Melven, District Manager of the Lexington Soil and Water Conservation District. Mr. Melven sent an E-mail to Ms. Moorer asking if there is a review of work if a soil classifier changes a soil series name on a NRCS soil map. Mr. DeFrancesco said he spoke with Mr. Melven and told him the NRCS Maps are the standard database used by county staffs, and therefore only NRCS can change them. A soil classifier's client must make any appeals for changes to them. The Advisory Council has no jurisdiction in these matters. Mr. Melven was satisfied with the result.
4. Mrs. Moorer told council she would like to encourage the continuation of the Soil Science Society of SC. While she cannot be directly involved because she is an employee of the board, she believes it is a good idea for the soil classifiers to have a private group dedicated to their profession. This is especially important with the growth of their program and increased interest in the profession.
5. Caroline Edwards of the Consulting Soil Scientists of the Carolinas addressed council. She said they recently held their first field day as Consulting Soil Scientists, and it was a great training day for the profession. She would like to work with the Soil Science Society of SC to organize a field day to include groups from the Carolinas and Georgia in the future.

MOTION: Motion to adjourn for lunch was made by Dennis DeFrancesco. Randall Fowler seconded the motion. Council unanimously concurred. The meeting adjourned for lunch at 11:45 A.M.

Other Business

Chairman Ogg called the meeting to order at 1:30 P.M.

1. Mr. DeFrancesco suggested several changes to the Soil Classifiers Application. He suggested that they convert it to an Adobe Acrobat fillable form, delete the Social Security Number and Place of Birth fields, and require that all applicants submit three examples of field work. Mrs. Moorer said she would ask their data processing department if they had the ability to convert the application to an Adobe Acrobat fillable form. She also agreed that it would enhance security of the applications if they removed the field asking for the social security number. The only time she needs it is when new council members are appointed, and she is required to call the nominee to extend the offer. She can gather the data needed for the background check during this call. Likewise, the place of birth information has not been used during her tenure in this position. She asked council if the work examples would help them to determine each candidate's work experience. Council agreed on the modifications for the application and that three work examples is a fair and reasonable amount of information to help them fully assess each candidate's qualifications.

2. Mr. Fowler told council he received a soil evaluation report for Seaside Plantation on Edisto Island, SC. The report was performed by Tim Coyle of Yellow Gold Soil Evaluators, LLC. It arrived in the mail with no return address or identifying information from the sender. Mr. Coyle is a former sanitarian with DHEC and is not a registered soil classifier in SC. Mr. Fowler asked council to review the report to determine if it is soil classification. Council determined that it does constitute soil classifying work and a cease and desist letter should be sent to Mr. Coyle. They also suggested that a letter be sent to Leonard Gordon of DHEC, informing their employees be that they will no longer be covered by Section 40-65-240 to do soil classifying work if they terminate employment with DHEC. They must apply for registration with our board if they want to continue to work in this area privately.

3. Next scheduled meeting: To be announced.

Review of Candidates

Council approved candidates for registration as follows:

1. James Lee Beeson, Jr.:
BS Agronomy 1984 – NC State University
NC Soil Scientist #1114
SC Soil Classifier #78
Licensed September 17, 2008

2. Chris J. Fincham:
BS Agriculture 1997 – Ohio State University
Passed ARCPACS – October 19, 2007
SC Soil Classifier #79
Licensed September 17, 2008

3. M. Brent Hall:
BSA Environmental Soil Science 1997 –
University of Georgia
Passed GA Soil Classifiers Exam – May 6, 2000
GA Certified Soil Classifier #145
SC Soil Classifier #80
Licensed September 17, 2008

4. Timothy Paul Harlan:
BS Technical Agriculture 1981 –
Eastern Kentucky University
Passed GA Soil Classifiers Exam – December 6, 2000
GA Certified Soil Classifier #159
NC Soil Scientist #1200
SC Soil Classifier #81
Licensed September 17, 2008

5. Steven J. Melin:
Master of Soil Science 2005 – NC State University
Passed ARCPACS – October 2003
NC Soil Scientist #1254

SC Soil Classifier #82
Licensed September 17, 2008

6. James Wendell Overby: BS Forestry 1992 – NC State University
Passed NC Practical Examination – November 15, 1997
NC Soil Scientist #1218
SC Soil Classifier #83
Licensed September 17, 2008

Disapproved Candidates

1. Council reviewed the application of Carline J. Edwards and deemed it incomplete. While Ms. Edwards meets the education and examination requirement in our law, there is not sufficient information on file to determine if she meets the experience requirement. Council asked that she provide additional information regarding her employment history and provide three (3) examples of her field work for review.
2. Council reviewed the application of Kenneth Lee Owens and deemed it incomplete. While Mr. Edwards meets the education and examination requirement in our law, there is not sufficient information on file to determine if he meets the experience requirement. Council asked that he provide additional information regarding his employment history and provide three (3) examples of his field work for review.

There being no further business:

MOTION: Motion to adjourn was made by Bill Smith. Charles Ogg seconded the motion. Council unanimously concurred. The meeting adjourned at 3:35 P.M.