

VAPSS Newsletter

Virginia Association of Professional Soil Scientists Newsletter

Volume 32, Issue 2

VAPSS FALL MEETING

It 's time for the Fall Meeting already. The VAPSS annual membership meeting, field trip introduction and mixer will be held Wednesday evening, October 5, at the Koger Center Holiday Inn Select. The following day (Oct. 6), the field program will focus on the accurate description of soils to current NRCS standards. Participants will be able to observe and describe soils from large backhoe pits in a suite of upland soils featuring the Pamunkey and Newflat soil series grading down into poorly drained soils in local drainageways. The accurate description and interpretation of soil redoximorphic features in relation to local monitoring well data will be emphasized. In contrast, we will also examine and describe soils across a wide array of human altered landscapes including a reclaimed sand & gravel mine, a created tidal freshwater wetland and several areas of recently oxidized and weathered dredge sediments. Overall, the discussion at each soil location will focus on (A) the interpretation of soil morphology relative to various land uses and (B) the use of soil morphology to delineate disturbed vs. undisturbed soil materials.

VAPSS push for Licensure

Most of you should have already seen the letter on Page 3. It's VAPSS letter to legislators and many have already gone to legislators in the state. Now is the time to get the word out. The legislative session will be here soon and we need to get on with it **before** the election.

Why do we need licensure? I'll give you one example that illustrates it for me. I got a call the other day from a lawyer wanting to talk to an AOSE. This lawyer goes through this big story about why he needs an AOSE, and in my opinion, he needs the opinion of a good soil scientist and I tell him so and what the difference is. He definitely has soil problems and questions. It didn't matter, he views the AOSE as licensed specialist and the CPSS as a general practitioner.

Prior to the AOSE program the non soil scientist EHS's (who became AOSE's) used to (and still do) consult and confer with professional soil scientists as experts on the broader soils interpretive picture of a soil landscape. **It was generally agreed that soil scientists had specialized knowledge of soils** beyond that of a field sanitarian, EHS, AOSE!

The public perception of that was distorted by **licensure** of quasi soils professionals outside the scope of the established CPSS board. This trend will continue as long as we allow soils professionals to be divided among and against themselves by state regulation. We need to reclaim the soil evaluation and interpretation profession. Think about it, the only state licensed soil evaluators (AOSE's) are not regulated by the state board for soils professionals (CPSS). Is that a good model for the soils profession and users of soils information or a good model for perpetuating the confusion and division ?

Call for Nominations

Now is the time to submit your nominations for VAPSS 2011 Board of Directors. Nominations are currently being solicited for President and Secretary. Submit to Lexi Jones (dirt_rocks@yahoo.com).

Win This AUGER

An AMS Signature Series Soil Auger with a 3 1/4 inch regular auger bucket, rubber-coated handle, and 5-foot extension will be raffled off at the Fall Meeting. The auger is worth \$267.00 and all proceeds from the raffle will benefit the Capital Campaign in support of licensure in 2011. Raffle tickets are being sold for \$20.00 each ticket. Make sure you buy several tickets to increase your chances of winning this awesome new auger and to support VAPSS. The raffle will be held at the VAPSS Fall Meeting in Richmond. Be sure to attend the VAPSS Fall Meeting.



VAPSS.org now online

Check out VAPSS new redesigned website at www.vapss.org. After many trials and tribulations the new website is up and running and it looks great. Thanks to President –elect Lexi Jones for the tremendous effort in getting the website switched over from the old system and redoing just about the whole thing. Constitution and bylaws, T Shirts, mission statement, membership info, newsletters, and a new discussion forum are all there. Contact Lexi about logging on to the discussion forum.

LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP AVAILABLE FOR A LIMITED TIME!

Your VAPSS Board is offering, for a limited time, LIFETIME MEMBERSHIPS! This limited time offer is for sole purpose of raising funds for our Licensure effort - Capital Campaign 2011! Help support our future!

Lifetime memberships are available NOW until October 8, 2010. These memberships will activate starting with the 2011 calendar year.

Lifetime membership are \$750 (reminder that dues are scheduled to increase to \$100 in 2011).

VAPSS Board

Officers for 2010 are;

Ryan Reed (rreed@loudoun.gov)-Past President
Ann Ruff (ALRuffSoilMom@aol.com)-President
Lexi Jones (dirt_rocks@yahoo.com)- President Elect
Matt Tolley (Matt.Tolley@loudoun.gov)- Treasurer
David Hall (davidh@swva.net)-Secretary

Board Members

Bruce Legge (blegge@marshandlegge.com)
Alex Blackburn (ablackbu@loudoun.gov)
Greg Monnett (greg@enviro-utilities.com)
Kevin Seaford (kevin.seaford@timmons.com)
Sue Brown (suebrown@vt.edu)-Executive Secretary

Contact a board member with questions, suggestions, or comments about VAPSS.

Letter to Legislators

September 2010

Dear Virginia Legislator(s):

The Virginia Association of Professional Soil Scientists (VAPSS) is seeking Licensure of the Professional Soil Scientists (LPSS) during the 2011 General Assembly and is seeking your support and/or sponsorship.

Throughout last century, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and many other states made large investments in the Cooperative Soil Survey to classify and map of the soils types in each county. These soil surveys were made by public sector soil scientists who specialized in the characterization and interpretation of soils. Increasingly, the state and federally sponsored programs that made interpretive soil scientists available to jurisdictions, residents and other stakeholders to evaluate and ensure the proper use of soils information are being eliminated or severely curtailed. As the government run survey program gives way to a predominantly private program of soil evaluation and interpretation for specific land uses, it is critical to maintain a workforce of soil scientists educated, trained, and experienced in the field of soil science.

Licensure will help ensure that this workforce is maintained and that current and future soil scientists remain qualified to perform this work. Currently, 15 other states have adopted Licensure of Soil Scientists, with several other stated currently working towards licensure.

As a non-renewable resource vital to Virginia, soils need to be understood, interpreted and characterized by the appropriate professionals not only to protect life, property, health and public welfare of existing residents, but to perpetuate this knowledge for generations to come. Virginia has had an existing Board of Professional Soil Scientists in the Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR) since 1987. The Board of Professional Soil Scientists has existing regulations that define qualifications for certification, examination and experience, and standards of practice and conduct for Professional Soil Scientists (18 VAC 145-20).

It is our opinion that our profession and Virginia would benefit from regulating soil scientists as licensed professionals rather than certified professionals. Licensing of this profession will eliminate those who are practicing soil science (not regulated under other licenses) outside of their skills, abilities, and expertise and will prevent the misinterpretation of information and soils. This will serve to protect the quality of groundwater, surface water, human health, integrity of structures and viability of agricultural resources. **VAPSS proposes to modify the existing law and regulations applicable to Certified Professional Soil Scientist (CPSS) by striking the word “certified” and replacing it with “licensed”.**

No other changes are proposed. No additional expenses to the Commonwealth of Virginia will result from this change and any increased cost to the Board will be offset by the Licensed Professional Soil Scientists (LPSS) and/or candidates for licensure. This would be a self-supporting program and at no cost to tax payers. Soil evaluations and site characterizations will be conducted and authorized through the licensure of LPSS under the existing DPOR Board of Professional Soil Scientists.

VAPSS would appreciate your support and/or sponsorship and we look forward to working with you during the 2011 General Assembly. Please contact Alexis Jones, VAPSS president-elect, {email: dirt_rocks@yahoo.com; phone: 434.594.1390} if you have any questions or concerns.

**Virginia Association of
Professional Soil Scientists
Newsletter**

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www.VAPSS.org

Since 1978.



To VAPSS members everywhere

If you know someone else who would be interested in VAPSS please forward this to them.

Important Announcement

Submit your articles or announcements for the next Newsletter by the end of november via email to davidh@swva.net or by fax to 540 381-9430.

Thanks to all of you who contributed to this issue. There wouldn't be a newsletter without you.

VAPSS is currently soliciting donations for Capital Campaign 2011 as we move forward to seek Licensure of Professional Soil Scientists! The Capital Campaign 2011 donations will be used to offset lobbyist costs, which may include, but is not limited to, visits or meetings with officials (i.e. senators, delegates) in local/district offices; discussions with officials at inter-governmental meetings (i.e. Commonwealth gatherings) and trips or excursions organized for officials; letters, petitions and other forms of contact with decision makers; etc.

If you wish to make a donation to the VAPSS Capital Campaign 2011, please complete the form below and mail, along with your donation, to:

Sue Brown
VAPSS
Virginia Tech/CSES
238 Smyth Hall - 0404
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061



Help VAPSS in their Capital Campaign 2011:

| | |
|---|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Titanium \$1,000 | Name: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Platinum \$500 | Address: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gold \$250 | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Silver \$100 | Phone: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bronze \$50 | Email: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____ | |

Please denote 'Capital Campaign 2011' in the memo line on your donation.