

VAPSS Newsletter

Virginia Association of Professional Soil Scientists Newsletter

Volume 32, Issue 2

FALL SESSION—2010—A Success!

The VAPSS fall meeting was held on the evening of October 5, 2010 at the Koger Center in Richmond that contained the VAPSS business meeting and an introduction to the field trip. The following day, October 6, we spent the day in the field at the Shirley Plantation! The field program will focus on the accurate description of soils to current NRCS standards. Participants observed and described 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 was emphasized. In addition, we had the opportunity to 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 focused 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. We had a fabulous time and a great turn out!



VAPSS pushes for Licensure—2011

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?

This AUGER...has a NEW owner!

An AMS Signature Series Soil Auger with a 3 1/4 inch regular auger bucket, rubber-coated handle, and 5-foot extension was raffled off at the Fall Meeting last week! BRUCE LEGGE is the proud owner of this NEW auger! The proceeds from this raffle benefited the Capital Campaign in support of licensure in 2011.

We appreciate the support from all of our members who participated in the raffle!



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.

And VAPSS now has an official email—vapss@vapss.org

LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP AVAILABLE FOR A LIMITED TIME.....EXTENDED!!!!

Your VAPSS Board has voted to extend the LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP deadline! 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 UNTIL DECEMBER 31, 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—Elections were held at the FALL 2010 MEETING—RESULTS!!

Officers for 2011 are (newly elected members are **BOLD**):

Ann Ruff (ALRuffSoilMom@aol.com)—Past President
Lexi Jones (dirt_rocks@yahoo.com)—President
Kevin Seaford (Kevin_Seaford@golder.com)—President Elect

Matt Tolley (Matt.Tolley@loudoun.gov)— Treasurer

Joe Felton (felton76@msn.com)-Secretary

Board Members:

Bruce Legge (blegge@marshandlegge.com)

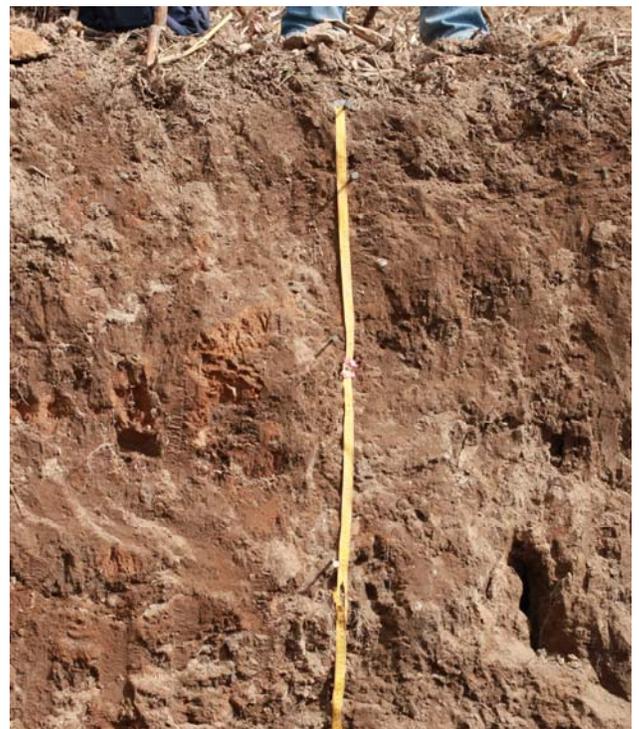
Alex Blackburn (ablackbu@loudoun.gov)

Greg Monnett (greg@enviro-utilities.com)

Mark Smith (mark.smith@soilconsultants.net)

Sue Brown (suebrown@vt.edu)—Executive Secretary

Contact a board member with questions, suggestions, or comments about VAPSS. Or Email VAPSS directly at vapss@vapss.org



Letter to Legislators

October 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 requesting your support. The Commonwealth of Virginia and many other states have made large investments in the Cooperative Soil Survey to classify and map the soils types in each county. The correct interpretation of these surveys and accurate evaluation of soils is of significant importance to the entire ecological system and impacts both the economy and public welfare in Virginia. Soil scientists who specialize in the characterization and interpretation of soils created these soil surveys and worked with state and federally sponsored programs to ensure the proper use of soils information.

Currently, these programs are being eliminated or severely curtailed with the government run survey program giving way to a predominantly private program of soil evaluation and interpretation for specific land use. Licensure will help maintain a field of qualified soil scientists qualified to perform this work. As a precious resource vital to Virginia, soils need to be understood, interpreted and characterized by the appropriate professionals to ensure the protection of life, property, health and public welfare of Virginia residents. Currently, fifteen other states have adopted Licensure of Soil Scientists with several other states currently working toward licensure.

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). We believe Virginia residents would benefit from regulating soil scientists as licensed professionals rather than certified professionals. Licensing will help prevent the misinterpretation of information and soils by eliminating those who are practicing soil science (not regulated under other licenses) outside of their skills, abilities and expertise. 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 applicable existing law and regulations to require licensure for Certified Professional Soil Scientist (CPSS).**

Licensure will not require additional expenses to the Commonwealth of Virginia. Any increase in cost to the Board will be offset by the Licensed Professional Soil Scientists (LPSS) and/or candidates for licensure. In addition, our national affiliate, the Soil Science Society of America (SSSA), has offered to administer the exam, provide standards of practice, experience/educational criteria, etc. to aid DPOR and the Commonwealth, as they do with all other licensed states. Soil evaluations and site characterizations will be conducted and authorized by the existing Board. Licensure of Professional Soil Scientists would be a self-supporting program that protects the public and is at no cost to tax payers.

VAPSS would appreciate your support and we look forward to working with you during the 2011 General Assembly. Please contact Alexis Jones, VAPSS president {email vapss@vapss.org; phone 434.594.1390} if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



VAPSS President

**Virginia Association of
Professional Soil Scientists
Newsletter**

David Hall, CPSS, Editor
111 N Franklin St
Christiansburg VA 24073

Phone: 540 381-0309
Fax: 540 381-9430
Email: davidh@swva.net

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 December via email to Joe Felton at felton76@msn.com.

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.