
United States
Department of
Agriculture

**Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service**

National Biology Handbook

Subpart A—General Information

Part 602

Training Opportunities

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602.00 Introduction

Learning, for most, is a lifetime pursuit. Opportunities to acquire additional knowledge come in many ways. Spending time in the field and working with cooperators and fellow resource professionals are primary sources of continuing education. Often referred to as "on-the-job" training, locating and using local resource professionals, land managers, and Agency colleagues can be a primary source of accessing new information.

At times, individuals may seek more advanced information in a particular discipline that is not available through local sources. This section is intended to offer direction to those looking to gain additional training in the area of biological resources. Most of the training resources mentioned in this section can be accessed on the World Wide Web. Figure 602-1 lists some Federal agencies that are good sources of biological resource information. Keep in mind, however, that there are myriad local and regional training opportunities provided through local conservation districts, producer groups, and environmental organizations as well as local community colleges, state colleges, and universities.

602.01 State government

Many state and territorial fish and game agencies have training for their employees. Those sessions are often accessible to resource professionals who work in that particular location. Some examples of training opportunities available in most states include training in water resources, forestry, parks and recreation, conservation, and land management.

Individual states and territories can be accessed through the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Web site:

[http://www.iafwa.org/documents/
state_and_provinces_website_links.htm](http://www.iafwa.org/documents/state_and_provinces_website_links.htm)

A growing number of colleges and universities now offer courses referred to as Distance Education through the Internet. Virtually any institution of higher learning with natural resources courses is most likely to offer training through distance education.

Figure 602-1 Federal agencies offering biological resource information

Organization	Web site
Natural Resources Conservation Service	http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/
Bureau of Land Management	http://www.blm.gov/nhp/index.htm
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	http://www.fws.gov/
U.S. Geological Survey	http://www.usgs.gov/
U.S. Army Corp of Engineers	http://www.usace.army.mil/
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration	http://www.noaa.gov/
National Marine Fisheries Service	http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/
National Riparian Service Team	http://www.or.blm.gov/nrst/
Environmental Protection Agency	http://www.epa.gov/enviroed

Training in fisheries and wildlife can be accessed through the National Association of University Fisheries and Wildlife Programs. Additionally, specific offerings from selected universities are provided:

- Oregon State University
- Colorado State University
- University of Missouri
- Pennsylvania State University

Excellent sources of training are local, state, regional, and national sections or chapters of professional societies or associations. Examples of those offering certification and training are:

- American Fisheries Society
- Ecological Society of America
- The Nature Conservancy
- The Wildlife Society
- Society for Conservation Biology
- Society for Ecological Restoration
- Society for Range Management
- Society of Wetland Scientist
- Xerces Society

Other examples of accessible training can be located through the local or state native plant society. Virtually every state has state and local chapters. An example is the South Carolina Native Plant Society.

602.02 Private and non-profit organizations

Wide arrays of private and not for profit organizations offer training opportunities. The Natural Resources Conservation Service has Memoranda of Agreements with several organizations that provide training including:

- Bat Conservation International
- National Audubon Society

Other locations for training opportunities are:

- Bird observatories—Point Reyes, Alaska, Cape May, Idaho, Great Basin, and Whitefish Point
- Natural history museums—Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, High Desert Museum, and Illinois State Museum

Most of the training resources listed are directly related to aquatic and terrestrial biological topics. An expansion of the topic area to include associated ecological processes or natural resource disciplines would, of necessity, create a much broader area in which to search further for training to meet your needs.