

Training Curriculum for Soil Scientist Group – First Three Years

Preface

The following list is a recommended progression of official trainings grouped within broad career advancement stages. Courses are listed within recommended career timeframes, to which there is no requirement implied, simply a guide to supervisory expectations of job duty skill acquisition with experience.

Elective courses are highly recommended, but not required within the curriculum. Nor are electives limited to those courses listed on this curriculum -- individuals are encouraged to tailor their trainings to fit their needs.

Offerings are not restricted to the level in which they occur and should not be used as a means of determining promotion eligibility.

These curricula do not in any way reflect the training necessary to fulfill the requirements for specific OPM job series, nor do they serve in any way to change the existing OPM-defined requirements for the specific job series.

MLRA SOIL SCIENTIST TRACK

Beginner

CORE COURSES

Year 1

- Basic Soil Survey – Field and Lab (NRCS-NEDC-000012)
- Conservation Planning, Part 1 (NRCS-NEDC-000019)*
- ArcGIS Pro Basics (ESRI Academy)
- Getting Started with ArcGIS Pro (ESRI Academy)
- Introduction to Field Office Technical Guide (NRCS-NEDC-000149)*
- NASIS Basic (Guides)
- NRCS Mentor and Protégé Training (NRCS-NEDC-LOCAL-000003)
- Spatial Analysis Workshop (NRCS-NEDC-000271)
- Understanding Map Projections and Coordinate Systems (ESRI Academy)

Year 2

- Cultural Resources Training Series, Part 1 (NRCS-NEDC-000141)
- Digital Soil Survey Data Editing (NRCS-NEDC-000250)
- Introduction to Digital Remote Sensing (NRCS-NEDC-000028)
- Introduction to Image Interpretation (NRCS-NEDC-000275)
- NASIS – Understanding Soil Interpretations (NRCS-NEDC-000279)
- Nitrogen Management and Concerns – No. 2 (NRCS-NHQ-000039)*
- Overview of water Quality Resource Assessment – No.1 (NRCS-NHQ-000038)*
- Plant ID (Local and Regional Field Botany Courses)
- Basics of Plant Identification for Conservation Planning (NRCS-NEDC-000450; AgLearn Web-Based Training)
- Sediment Management for Water Quality – No. 4 (NRCS-NHQ-000041)*

- Statistics for Soil Survey Part 1 (NRCS-NEDC-000400)
- Water Bodies – No. 5 (NRCS-NHQ-000042)*

Year 3

- Cultural Resources Training Series, Part 2 (Offered by state)
- Developing Metadata (ESRI Academy)
- Introduction to Digital Soil Mapping (NRCS-NEDC-000333)
- Learning ARCGIS Spatial Analysis (ESRI Academy)
- Soil Geomorphology Institute (NRCS-NEDC-000110)

*Note: Courses indicated by asterisk can be replaced by enrollment and successful completion of Conservation Planning Bootcamp (NRCS-NEDC-000164)

SELF-STUDY AND ON THE JOB TRAINING (OJT; All recommended to be completed within the first two years of employment with NRCS)

- National Soil Survey Handbook
 - Part 600 Introduction
 - Part 601 National Cooperative Soil Survey Organization
 - Part 607 Initial Soil Survey Preparation
 - Part 608.1 Responsibilities and Organization
 - Part 614 Applying Soil Taxonomy
 - Part 618 Soil Properties and Qualities
 - Part 622 Ecological and Interpretive Groups
 - Part 627 Legend Development and Data Collection
 - Part 630 Benchmark Soils
 - Part 631 Soil Survey Investigations
 - Part 638 Soil Data Systems
 - Part 639 NASIS
 - Part 647 Soil Map Development
 - Part 649 Land Resource Regions (LRR) and Major Land Resource Areas (MLRA)
 - Part 651 Advanced Soil Survey Information
- Soil Data Access Help
- [Farmer's Guide to 2018 Farm Bill Programs](#)
- Communication and Outreach
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- OJT Modules
 - 001-0025 Map Unit Design and Mapping Soils
 - 101-135 Soil Description
 - 201-214 Soil Classification
 - 301-310 Documentation
 - 401-419 Sampling and Characterization
 - 501-507 Soil Survey Information
 - 601-606 Equipment and Operation

RECOMMENDED ELECTIVE COURSES

Agency Knowledge

- Basic Field Conservation Orientation (Detail in field service center for 2-3 weeks)
- Orientation for New Employees (NRCS-NEDC-000013)
- Wetland Identification for Food Security Act Purposes – Phase 1: Basic Concepts module (NRCS-NEDC-000268)
- Wetland Identification for Food Security Act purposes – Phase 2: Application (NRCS-NEDC-000254)
- Hydric Soils for Wetland Delineation (NRCS-NEDC-000022)
- Soil Health and Sustainability for Field Staff (NRCS-NEDC-000050)
- Using Basic Soil Survey Information in Conservation Planning (NRCS-NEDC-000416)
- Nitrogen Management and Concerns (NRCS-NHQ-000039)
- Ecological Site Descriptions (NRCS-NEDC-000428)

Basic Skills

- MS Excel Series (AgLearn Web-based learning)
- Technical Writing in the SPSD (Online)

Work Life

- Emotional Intelligence 2.0 (Audio book USDA-BOOK-49926)
- What is Emotional Intelligence? (AgLearn Web-based learning)
- Start Young for Your Best Retirement (AgLearn 734633_Linkedin)