

Training Curriculum for RSS/SSS Soil Scientist Group – Full Career

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.

RESOURCE/STATE SOIL SCIENTIST TRACK

Beginner

CORE COURSES

Year 1

- Basic Field Conservation Orientation (Detail in field service center for 2-3 weeks)
- Conservation Planning Part 1 (NRCS-NEDC-000019)
- Conservation Planning Part 2 (NRCS-STATE)
- Conservation Planning Part 3 (NRCS-STATE)
- Fundamentals of Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Provisions Training (OJT)
- Introduction to ArcGIS (ESRI Academy)
- Introduction to the Field Office Technical Guide (NRCS-NEDC-000149)
- NASIS Basic (Guides)

Years 2-3

- Introduction to Digital Remote Sensing (NRCS-NEDC-000028)
- Introduction to Image Interpretation (NRCS-NEDC-000275)
- NASIS – Understanding Soil Interpretations (NRCS-NEDC-000279)
- Soil Health and Sustainability for Field Staff (NRCS-NEDC-000050)
- Soil Technology – Application of Soil Data Viewer and ArcGIS in Technical Soil Services (NRCS-NSSC-000001)
- Technical Soil Services (NRCS-NEDC-000249)
- USDA Cross Training Programs: NRCS Wetland and Highly Erodible Land Compliance (USDA-CTP-NRCS-006)
- Wetland Identification for Food Security Act purposes – Phase 1: Basic Concepts (NRCS-NEDC-000268)

- Wetland Identification for Food Security Act purposes – Phase 2: Applications (NRCS-NEDC-000254)
- Hydric Soils for Wetland Delineation (NRCS-NEDC-000022)

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

- Technical Soil Services Handbook
- National Soil Survey Handbook
 - Part 600 Introduction
 - Part 601 National Cooperative Soil Survey Organization
 - Part 608.1 Responsibilities and Organization
 - Part 621 Soil Potential Ratings
 - Part 624 Soil Quality
 - Part 655 Technical Soil Services
- [Farmer's Guide to 2018 Farm Bill Programs](#)
- Communication and Outreach
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

RECOMMENDED ELECTIVE COURSES

Agency Knowledge

- NRCS Mentor and Protégé Training (NRCS-NEDC-LOCAL-000003)
- Orientation for New Employees (NRCS-NEDC-000013)
- Using Basic Soil Survey Information in Conservation Planning (NRCS-NEDC-000416)
- Nitrogen Management and Concerns (NRCS-NHQ-000039)
- Ecological Site Descriptions (NRCS-NEDC-000428)
- NRI Grazing Land On-Site Data Collection Train the Trainer (NRCS-NEDC-000352)

Basic Skills

- MS Excel Series (AgLearn Web-based learning)
- MS Access 2016 trainings (AgLearn Web-based training)
- Technical Writing in the SPSD (Online)

Technical Skills

- Conservation Planning Bootcamp (NRCS-NEDC-000164)
- Introduction to Digital Soil Mapping (NRCS-NEDC-000333)
- Plant ID (Local and Regional Field Botany Courses)
- Basics of Plant Identification for Conservation Planning (NRCS-NEDC-000450; AgLearn Web-Based Training)

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)

RESOURCE/STATE SOIL SCIENTIST TRACK

Intermediate

CORE COURSES

Early Mid-career

- Cultural Resources Training Series, Part 1 (NRCS-NEDC-000141)
- Discipline Specific Ecology (Range, Pasture, Forestry – depending upon State needs)
- Ecological Site Descriptions (NRCS-NEDC-000428)
- Hydrology Tools for Wetland Restoration and Determination (NRCS-NEDC-000025)

Mid-career

- Advanced Hydric Soils for Soil Scientists (NRCS-NEDC-000024)
- Managing for Excellence (NRCS-NEDC-000010)
- NASIS – Designing and Developing Soil Interpretations (NRCS-NEDC-000302)
- Science of Interpretations (NRCS-NEDC-000288)

RECOMMENDED ELECTIVE COURSES

Basic Skills

- Becoming an Effective Presenter (TBD)
- Conquering the Challenges of Public Speaking (AgLearn Web-based learning)
- How to Use DigiTop (National Agricultural Library interface)
- MS Access (Web-based learning)

Leadership

- USDA Aspiring Leader Program (AgLearn self-assigned curriculum)

Technical Skills

- Remote Sensing for Soil Survey Applications (NRCS-NEDC-000244)
- Soil Technology – Measurement and Data Evaluation (NRCS-NEDC-000038)
- Spatial Analysis Workshop (NRCS-NEDC-000271)
- USACE Wetland Delineation Manual (Reg 4) for Clean Water Act (external)
- Wetland Identification for Food Security Act purposes – Phase 3: Labels, Exemptions & Admin Process (NRCS-NEDC-000404)

Work Life

- Emotional Intelligence: Building Self-Management Skills (AgLearn Web-based learning)
- Emotional Intelligence at Work (AgLearn Web-based learning)
- Time Management (AgLearn Web-Based books)

RESOURCE/STATE SOIL SCIENTIST TRACK

Advanced/Leadership

CORE COURSES

- USDA Team Leader program (AgLearn self-assigned curriculum)

RECOMMENDED ELECTIVE COURSES

Agency Knowledge

- Effective Ecological Collaborations (New Course)

Leadership

- Emotionally Intelligent Leadership (AgLearn Web-based learning)
- Everything You Need to Know About Leadership in 60 Seconds (AgLearn Web-based learning)
- 151 Quick Ideas for Delegating and Decision Making (AgLearn Web-based learning)
- 151 Quick Ideas to Improve Your People Skills (AgLearn Web-based learning)
- Supervising for Excellence (NRCS-NEDC-000011)
- USDA Leadership Essentials Certificate Program (Self-assigned curriculum)

Technical Skills

- Soil Geomorphology Institute (NRCS-NEDC-000110)
- Soil Science institute (NRCS-NEDC-000110)

Worklife

- Just Listen: Discover the Secret of Getting Through to Absolutely Anyone (AgLearn Web-based learning)
- 100 ways to Motivate Yourself (AgLearn Web-based learning)