

National Bulletin: 430-24-5

Date: 01/11/2024

Subject: SOI–Nomination Period for the 2024 Soil Science
Institute

Action Required By: March 29, 2024

Purpose: This national bulletin announces the nomination period for the 2024 Soil Science Institute (SSI) planned for July 15 through August 2, 2024.

Expiration Date: September 30, 2024.

Background: The 2024 SSI will be hosted by the North Carolina State University and taught primarily by university staff. Key topics will include soil genesis, soil physics, chemistry, mineralogy, fertility, microbiology, organic agriculture, soil ecology, soil health, hydrology, hydric soils, water quality, sediment and erosion, soil and water remediation, wastewater application, acid sulfate soils, subaqueous soils, air quality, ecological sites, statistics, and using geophysical tools.

Explanation: Week 1 of SSI (July 15-19, 2024) is virtual synchronous learning. Weeks 2 and 3 of SSI (July 22-August 2, 2024) are in-person synchronous learning taught on campus at the North Carolina State University in Raleigh, North Carolina. Field trips are required.

The SSI target audience is mid- to late-career soil scientists and ecological site specialists at the GS-9 through GS-14 level with formal college or graduate education and 10 years of experience or more. This experience can include soil and ecological site mapping, classification, correlation, interpretation, and other technical soil services. This training prepares employees to:

- Apply new knowledge of developing and gathering soil survey information.
- Provide and explain correct soils information to other disciplines for water quality, soil quality, hydric soils, and other new priorities.
- Explain the new technologies being developed in the field of soil science and better understand the literature regarding soil science information.
- Explain the interrelationship of soil chemical and physical properties, site features, and climate to the users of soil information.

Action Required: NRCS staff should work with the appropriate management groups to nominate individuals to attend the 2024 SSI. Soil survey regional directors may nominate employees within the Soil and Plant Science Division (SPSD) purview in their region. State soil scientists, with concurrence of their state conservationist, may nominate participants outside the SPSD purview. National Cooperative Soil Survey (NCSS) partners like the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and Bureau of Indian Affairs are invited to nominate participants by way of their organization leadership.

Soil survey regional directors, state soil scientists, and NCSS partners must submit nominated individuals' names and positions to Cory Owens at cory.owens@usda.gov by close of business on **Friday, March 29, 2024**.

The SPSD Training Team will make every effort to accommodate requests. However, a maximum of 30 participants will be accepted to the 2024 SSI. Additional nominees will be placed on a substitute waiting list. Travel for this course is centrally funded and appropriate travel codes will be provided upon successful nomination and an approved budget for fiscal year 2024. Enrollment in AgLearn will be completed manually by the training coordinator upon successful nomination.

Contact: If you have any questions or concerns, contact Cory Owens, national resource soil scientist for partners training, at (971) 712-6323 or cory.owens@usda.gov.