

National Bulletin: 360-24-11

Date: 4/9/2024

Subject: PER–Request for Participants: Forestland Soil
Health Pilot Training

Action Requested By: June 14, 2024

Purpose: This national bulletin requests state conservationists and directors of the Caribbean and Pacific Islands areas or their designees to submit participants for the Forestland Soil Health pilot training course offered by the Soil Health Division (SHD).

Expiration Date: September 30, 2024.

Background: The SHD has developed a Forestland Soil Health pilot training course to meet the needs of conservation planners working on private, state, or tribal forestlands. There is a growing need for NRCS conservationists to provide producers and partners with technical assistance on identifying soil health indicators and viable conservation solutions for soil health concerns (such as developing a soil health management system) on working forestlands.

Explanation: In response to changing climate and exacerbating effects of drought, wildfire, reduced soil moisture, and other factors, the in-person Forestland Soil Health training course is in pilot phase and will serve to expand the knowledge and application of soil health practices and management systems on forestlands in the conservation planning process. The course will focus on soil health practices and principles related to climate-smart agriculture that improve forestland resistance and resilience to wildfire effects, pest infestations, soil erosion, and other concerns. The course will also cover current science on soil health metrics, soil health principles, use and management principles to enhance soil health, and key course design and implementation considerations. All content is designed to convey knowledge, confidence, and expertise to participants.

This pilot course seeks input from state specialists on the content, delivery, and efficacy of the course. Participants who attend the pilot will receive AgLearn credit for the course. Participant evaluations will be used to refine the content and delivery of the official Forestland Soil Health course content.

Participants should hold state-level technical leadership positions, such as a state foresters, state soil health specialists, state water quality specialists, area soil scientists, area resource conservationists, and supervisory district conservationists or team leaders. Feedback should focus on the content, effectiveness, and quality of the course.

Training Dates: September 17–19, 2024, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EDT, all days.

Training Location: The [Joseph W. Jones Ecological Research Center](#) (aka, The Jones Center), 3988 Jones Center Drive, Newton, GA 39870.

Actions: State conservationists, or their designees, should use the [AgCMS Attendee Detailed Cost Analysis spreadsheet](#) to enter their selected attendees and associated cost data (in Columns B through Q) and the email address of the state training officer for each attendee (in Column R) by **June 14, 2024**. This should be completed only after obtaining supervisory approval for each recommended participant.

Participants and state training officers will be notified by Loretta Metz of their selection no later than **June 28, 2024**. The SHD will submit the final AgCMS spreadsheet as required.

The appropriate state training officer for each participant must enroll the selected participants in the AgLearn course (NRCS-SHD-000004) no later than **July 12, 2024**. All information on course enrollment, course location, accommodations, airports, and other details will be provided in the June 28, 2024, selection notification.

Contact: For any questions on the Forestland Soil Health pilot training course, email Loretta Metz, National Soil Health Program coordinator, at Loretta.Metz@usda.gov.