



**MAINE ASSOCIATION
OF PROFESSIONAL
SOIL SCIENTISTS**

July 25, 1995

Mr. Colen R. Peters, President
Maine Association of Wetland Scientists
Timson & Peters
P.O. Box 150
Hallowell, Maine 04347

RE: Committee on Minimum Qualifications for Professionals who Map Hydric Soils
as they relate to Wetland Delineation

Dear Colen:

This letter is a follow up to a meeting held on July 12, 1995 between representatives of MAPSS and MAWS concerning the establishment of minimum qualification standards for professionals who map hydric soils as they relate to wetland delineation. This first meeting of the committee was held from 6:00 to 7:45 PM at Pats Pizza in Augusta with Hugh Durgin, Betsy Day, Jennifer West and myself in attendance.

The purpose of the meeting was to draft interim minimum qualification standards that could be used by our organizations, DEP, local planning boards or Code Enforcement Officers, and others in lieu of a Wetland Delineator or Scientist certification program. In addition, we also had the goal of deciding which option for certification would be pursued at this point in time. I am happy to report the meeting was a success in that we did reach tentative agreement on the major issues. The following is a summary of the items that were tentatively agreed to on July 12.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL WHO MAP HYDRIC
SOILS AS THEY RELATE TO WETLANDS

- A. Army Corp of Engineer Certification, when it is established for Maine
- B. A Combination of Education and Work Experience that will be Approved on a Case-by-Case Basis by a Joint Review Panel of MAPSS and MAWS, with the following minimum qualification standards:
1. Education
 - a. College level course work in Soil Morphology and Mapping, or
 - b. A combination of course work and workshop(s), or training that will indicate knowledge and understanding of principles in soil mapping, soil

morphology, and soil descriptions to be determined on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the review panel.

AND

2. Experience.

- a. One year (or a full field season) under the direction or supervision of a qualified Maine Certified Soil Scientist, or
- b. One year (or a full field season) of work experience in mapping of Hydric Soils as they relate to wetland delineation with evidence of written reports that have received peer review (DEP, Corp, or LURC Review). Major projects that may not require a full year of work but that are of sufficient detail and complexity to prove competence may also be allowed at the discretion of the review board.


Also at the meeting we agreed to finalize plans for a specific vehicle of certification within one years time. No decision was made as to how to approach the Board of Certification for Soil Scientists and Geologists. After discussing the issues with Dave Rocque I suggest that we(MAPSS) make a written inquiry to the Board of Certification concerning the potential for inclusion of a specialty of Hydric Soil Mapping under Certification for Soil Scientists.

Again, let me state that MAPSS considers final resolution an urgent matter, needing immediate attention. However, we will not have enough time to finalize these standards and obtain membership review prior to the next Board of Certification for Soil Scientists and Geologists that is scheduled for August 23. As I mentioned in my previous letter to you, the MAPSS Executive Committee feels that an interim set of minimum qualifications for "Qualified Professionals" and a final decision on the method of certification for hydric soil delineators should be established by September 30, 1995. Soon after that date, I intend to schedule a special meeting with the entire MAPSS membership to discuss the recommendations of the working committee.

Seems early for final if it's before MAPSS

On an unrelated matter I would happy to work with MAWS on a fall workshop on the new Hydric Soil Indicators. My intent all year has been to have a workshop for MAPSS on this subject. Perhaps we can plan something together. One suggestion that makes sense to me would be to revisit the sites at the University of Maine that we looked at during a fall workshop a few years ago. It might be interesting and valuable to compare the old hydric soil indicators against the new ones on sites we have already discussed and documented in great detail. Please call me if you would like to discuss these or other matters.

Sincerely,


Stephen H. Howell
President-MAPSS