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SINCE 1948

October 28, 2013

Senator Mark Jansen
PO Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909

RE: REGISTERED FORESTER (SB- 481, SB-482, SB-483, SB-384)

Dear Senator Jansen:

I am the current President of the Michigan Chapter of the Association of Consulting Foresters (ACF), a national organization of private consulting forestry businesses that has been in existence since 1948. I have contacted your office several times desiring to speak with you about keeping Registered Forester and we have somehow not connected.

Let me say first that the Michigan ACF applauds your efforts to make Michigan Government leaner and more efficient. I think it is wise to look at Government programs that are ineffective and unnecessary and you are to be commended for your efforts. However, we believe eliminating the Registered Forester designation and deregulating forestry is a bad idea and we support keeping REGISTERED FORESTER and eliminating SB 481,482,483,484 from consideration.

Most of our members are Registered Foresters as well as being Certified Foresters (CF) through the Society of American Foresters (SAF) as well as ACF members. Of the three designations, ACF is the most meaningful to us since reference, experience and ethics requirements are the most stringent. It is also a designation restricted to those Foresters who work primarily for forest landowners for a fee and have a **fiduciary responsibility** to their Forest Landowner clients. This is a very important distinction and many astute forest landowners understand this distinction and have benefited from working with ACF members. However, the general public does not understand this distinction or even the CF designation. They do however; understand that a Forester that is Registered with the State of Michigan would necessarily be a legitimate Forester with a Degree in Forestry from an accredited University and also have the requisite experience and references to accompany the education requirement. They also would also rightly assume that there would is a complaint system in place by the state that would deal with "bad actors" and whereby a license could be revoked by the state. Currently it is not illegal for anyone to reference themselves as a "Forester" and many timber buyers, biologists, ecologists, or natural resource workers, etc., who are not Foresters do exactly that. They have "FORESTER" written on their business cards and refer to themselves in this manner, when they have do not have a degree in "Forestry". It is however, illegal for one who is not a "Registered Forester" to refer to call themselves a "Registered Forester", when they are not, so this is very important to those of us who legitimately meet

the standard set up by the State. Let me say that there are many timber buyers, wildlife biologists, tree service workers, nursery workers, horticulturalist, and ecologist of every stripe who are "Registered Foresters" and as Consulting Foresters we applaud this. Our common bond is that we all meet the criteria set up by the state to be called a "Registered Forester". This is very important protection for the general public and especially for forest landowners to help insure the credibility of the science and practice of Forestry in Michigan. The current Registered Forester legislation has served Michigan Forests and Forest landowners well to help insure the credibility of this very important profession in Michigan. **A profession that helps support approximately 27,600 direct Michigan jobs, $1.3 billion in employee compensation, $8.1 billion in total output and a $14.6 billion contribution to the state's economy.**

In an age where more emphasis is being placed on properly managing Michigan's Renewable Forest resource (ie: Qualified Forest Program) and the important economic value of Michigan's Forest Industry ((ie: Governors Forestry Summit 4/23/13); the importance of sound, scientific management of Michigan's forests cannot be overstated. The Credibility of Forestry and Foresters is very important and deregulating forestry would send the wrong message and take forest management in Michigan in a backward direction.

It has also been discovered that the high costs incurred by the State for administering this program were incorrect and that the Registered Forester income exceeds the administration costs incurred by the state. In addition, our group would support a modest increase in dues to support strengthening Registered Forester.

Senator Jansen, I would respectfully ask you to reconsider and remove REGISTERED FORESTER from the list of professions being deregulated. Please remove SB 481,482,483,484 from consideration. I am happy to meet with you at your convenience to discuss is very important issue.

Sincerely yours,

Mark P. Janke, CF, ACF
Michigan Chapter ACF – President
Michigan Registered Forester #545
Certified Tree Farm Inspector
NRCS- TSP (Technical Service Provider)
FSP- DNR- Forest Stewardship Plan Writer

Cc. Senator Rick Scott, Senator Tonya Schuitmaker, MDNR Director Keith Creagh, Bill O'Neil- DNR- State Forester, Lynn Wilson, ACF- Executive Director, Amy Trotter- MUCC, Bill Botti- Executive Director- Michigan Forest Association, Scott Robbins- Michigan Forest Products Council & Michigan Tree Farm Committee, Dr. Richard Kobe- Chair, Dept of Forestry, Michigan State University.

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To: Senator Jansen

Date: November 6, 2013

You asked for further clarification regarding "forester silos".

NOTE: The Natural Resources Conservation Service - Technical Services Provider (NRCS-TSP) program and the United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Stewardship Program (USDA-FSP) are both programs funded by the FARM BILL. These programs are dependent upon Congressional, Administration and Budget priorities, meaning they are subject to change and thus could **go away** at any time.

The Certified Forester (CF) program is administered by SAF (Society of American Foresters). Membership in (SAF) and the (CF) program have decreased since the early 2000's and therefore could technically **go away** at any time as well, though this is not anticipated.

I have cut and pasted the definitions from their own websites for your convenience. Please excuse the formatting differences.

1. (NRCS- TSP) program: Keeps list of individuals who have completed training and are eligible to participate in this program which is primarily the writing of Forest Management plan. Only speaks to the USDA NRCS-TSP program and is **administered by NRCS.**

Forest Management Plan (106) Option 1 - Certification	**Certified Forester:** Certification by at least one of the following: 1) Be a full-member and certified with Consulting Foresters of America, Incorporated (ACF), or 2) Certified Forester by the Society of American Foresters (SAF). **Conservation Planning Training:** Successful completion of the NRCS approved training course (available in AgLearn): Conservation Planning-Part 1 (Modules 1-5). **Forest Management Plan Development:** Develop a Conservation Activity Plan that meets the Forest Management Plan (106) criteria listed in Section III of the eFOTG and submit the plan by email, or send a paper copy by mail to your resident State TSP Coordinator. **Forestry License:** A current Forestry License as required by law in the state of practice. **FOTG Knowledge:** Knowledge of the NRCS electronic Field Office Technical Guide as related to the specific criteria to be addressed in the development and implementation of a NRCS Forest Management Plan. **National Planning Procedures Handbook:** Knowledge and understanding of National Planning Procedures Handbook – Title 180 - Part 600
Forest Management Plan (106) Option 2 - Education & Experience	**Conservation Planning Training:** Successful completion of the NRCS approved training course (available in AgLearn): Conservation Planning-Part 1 (Modules 1-5). **Forest Management Plan Development:** Develop a Conservation Activity Plan that meets the Forest Management Plan (106) criteria listed in Section III of the eFOTG and submit the plan by email, or send a paper copy by mail to your resident State TSP Coordinator. **Forestry Education OR Forestry License:** Forestry Education: Bachelor or higher level degree in forestry or a related natural resource degree with a concentration in forestry. OR Forestry License: A current Forestry License as required by law in the state of practice.

	Forestry Experience: 5 years experience and knowledge in successful planning, design, layout, inspection, or management of forestry or agroforestry practices associated with this category. **Forestry References:** Provide two locations or customer references where technical service has been provided that can verify your experience and proficiency planning, designing, installation/layout, and checkout of Forestry/Agroforestry practices. **FOTG Knowledge:** Knowledge of the NRCS electronic Field Office Technical Guide as related to the specific criteria to be addressed in the development and implementation of a NRCS Forest Management Plan. **National Planning Procedures Handbook:** Knowledge and understanding of National Planning Procedures Handbook – Title 180 - Part 600 **Proficiency with Forest Inventory and Planning Tools:** Provide documentation of knowledge, skills and abilities to utilize inventory and planning tools (e.g., prisms/angle gauges/relaskop, site index, stocking guides)

2. (USDA- FSP) Forest Stewardship Program (FSP) in Michigan: Keeps list of individuals who have completed training and are eligible to participate in this program. Only speaks to the (USDA FSP) Michigan and is **administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources – Forest Resources Division.**

Minimum qualifications to apply for and maintain your certification as a plan writer in (USDA-FSP):

1. Have a four-year degree in Forestry or related Natural Resource field OR have a two-year degree in Forestry or related Natural Resource field with approved experience.
2. Maintain six hours of approved continuing education in natural resource management yearly and submit documentation to the Forest Stewardship Coordinator.
3. Present yourself in a professional manner in both appearance and conduct, and provide service to your clients in a timely manner.

3. Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) Qualified Forest (QF) Program: Keeps list of individuals who are eligible to work with this program. This designation is specifically to define who can write plans for Michigan's "Qualified Forest Program." This only speaks to the Qualified Forest Program and is **administered by MDARD** (QFP). See MDARD definition attached.

4. Society of American Foresters maintains the Certified Forester (CF)) a national credentialing program, to certify individual credentials. It includes minimum qualifications, a code of ethics, continuing education requirements and has a complaint mechanism. It is not part of the occupational code and does not have standing in Michigan. "The Society of American Foresters supports state credentialing requirements for foresters implemented through state licensing and registration mandates."
The program only speaks to the (CF) program and is **administered by the Society of American Foresters (SAF).**

What are a Certified Forester's qualifications?

You can be assured you are hiring a qualified forester when you hire a Certified Forester. The Certified Forester program ensures that foresters:

- Meet the profession's educational requirements
- Have at least five years of professional forestry experience
- Adhere to standards of professional practice
- Pass a rigorous competency exam that measures knowledge and skills
- Participate in continuing education

5. The Michigan Registered Forester Regulation is part of the occupational code. It includes minimum credentials, a code of ethics, and has a complaint mechanism in place. History has shown that individuals who take the time to become registered are professional. Consumers of forestry services can rely on them. While the Michigan Registered Forester Regulation is voluntary, other professions respect the functions that are defined in the occupational code. Without its inclusion in the Occupational Code other professions will define what a Forester can and cannot do. This will result in more regulation and higher management expenses as well as an additional competitive disadvantage for the Michigan forest products industry. This longstanding program has legal Standing in Michigan and is being **successfully administered through the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA).**

SUMMARY: The only credentialing for Foresters with legal standing in Michigan that is Included in the Occupational code is the Registered Forester (RF) Regulation. The Registered Forester designation has served the Profession of Forestry well in Michigan and is supported by **Governor Snyder's own TIMBER ADVISIORY COUNCIL,** The Michigan Forest Association (MFA) **FOREST LANDOWNER GROUP),** The MSU – Forestry Department (the longest-standing undergraduate forestry program in the United States (**FORESTRY EDUCATION**), The Michigan Forest Products Council (MFPC-**FOREST INDUSTRY GROUP)** and the Michigan Association of Consulting Foresters M-ACF **(PROFESSIONAL CONSULTING FORESTERS).**

REGISTERED FORESTER is the longest standing credentialing system for Foresters in Michigan. **Registered Forester predates the other 4 programs.** The Registered Forester program has been properly housed in The Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA). The Michigan Chapter of ACF would support strengthening the Michigan Registered Forester designation. The existing Registered Forester Regulation is currently sustainable with fees exceeding annual expenses by over $3,700.00 per year. In addition, M-ACF would support an increase in fees if this would solve the State's concern over future sustainability of the Regulation.