



THE REGISTERED FORESTER

Fall 2010

DO I KNOW YOU?

More than likely you, as a registered forester, have been asked from time to time to provide a reference to an aspiring applicant. In some cases this is straight forth and simple, like how long you have known this person. In other times, though, there is uncertainty in what the appropriate answer is, like "Is the applicant currently practicing professional forestry?" Have you ever wondered if anyone really uses these references and if they are important? Well, the answer is yes and yes. In fact did you realize you signed an affidavit when you became registered that you would safeguard against anyone getting registered who wasn't qualified? (See Rule #9 of the Rules of Professional Conduct)

This is how it works; there are five qualifications needed to apply for registration; 1) graduation from an approved/accredited forestry school, 2) pass the oral or written exam, 3) have two years experience in the practice of forestry, 4) be a person of good character and reputation, and 5) be a citizen of the United States or, if not a citizen of the United States, a person who is legally present in the United States with appropriate documentation from the federal government. (See Code of Alabama 1975, Section 34-12-4.) The fourth one is really where the references come in. Because each applicant is asked to give information on the professional experience following graduation this information is used to primarily validate the two years experience. The references are used to validate good character and reputation.

Using the contact information provided by the applicant on their application form, each of these references is contacted by the ABSORF Executive Assistant, Alexis London. They are either asked to fill out a reference form online or mail one in. These completed references are then attached to the applicants' other documentation (professional experience, transcript, etc.) and reviewed at the next quarterly Board meeting. Based on this information an applicant is either approved to take the registration test or asked to provide additional qualifications.

The Reference Form contains questions related to character "reputation and standing in the community" and "position of trust", as well as professional qualifications. The questions of character at times can seem difficult to answer but are critical to the review process. Please feel secure in knowing that all answers are kept strictly confidential and neither the applicant, nor any non-board member has access to them. In other words, speak the truth whether it is positive or negative. Remember there are at least four other references the board uses in making decisions. The more information provided on a reference form the better; simple yes or no answers make it difficult for the Board to assess the applicant.

Sometimes there is confusion on the professional qualification questions. Because an applicant is applying for registration, you might be hesitant to say they are practicing professional forestry because they are not registered yet. Remember there are several ways to practice forestry without a registration, such as working under the direct supervision of a registered forester, etc.

Please take seriously too, the question of whether the applicant is qualified either through their education and/or experience. Many applicants now follow non-traditional educational routes to forestry and the board no longer requires graduation from an accredited SAF

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RECOVERY – A LONG WAY OFF

Nothing is worse than being in a valley and not knowing where and when the recovery is coming. When I look back over the tough economic times in the lumber business, they really weren't as bad as I thought at the time. You might ask why is that? We did make it through those difficult times but the older I get, the more I realize all of the bad things that can happen. This current recession could mess up our retirement, or at least postpone it. Both seem bad to me as I have some very high dreams and plans when I retire. When I listen to people who have lost 40 to 50 percent of their 401K money, they really don't have much time to make it back up. As I look at lumber prices, they are just about as low as they can get. Except for a small spike in the spring market of 2010, these prices have really been bad the last two years. One of the reasons is that in this country we have lost over two million houses to foreclosure since January 2008. Right now we have 11 million homes that are underwater on their mortgage; that means that they owe more than the house is worth. That means that 23 percent of American home owners are in trouble, which is a problem for all of us. According to some experts, 6 million more homes will be lost in foreclosure in the next three years. That will mean that about 50 percent of the people that are underwater right now, will lose their house in foreclosure.

What do all these numbers mean??? We in the mighty United States of America built less than 600,000 houses in 2009; we are building even less than that number for 2010. Also, if those 6 million houses in foreclosure go on the market in the next three years, the lumber mills and landowners will be in a holding pattern at best. Lumber mills and solid wood products have a hard time in these times of recession. If we are not careful, we will run out of cash reserves that we have accumulated over the years. I am ready to start talking about how bad this recession WAS, not how long it is going to LAST.

Gerald Schwarzauer

2010 ASBORF MEETING

On June 17 and 18, the Annual Association of Southeastern Boards of Registration for Foresters met at Pine Mountain Georgia.

Those states in attendance were Arkansas, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Pennsylvania (Guest). I served as chairman for the meeting.

Each state presented their requirements for registration, along with potential changes and concerns. Many of the states reported they are going through or looking at some degree of changing their requirements.

Some of the key topics discussed were testing and test questions, two year graduate registration and field and experience considerations. We also discussed the CFE auditing requirements (for Alabama we audit 5% of online and 5% of mail-ins).

Louise Murgia from the National S.A.F. office attended our meeting and wants our organization to select a member to be an ex-officio member on the Certified Forester Board. This would give the various member states an opportunity to have input and evaluate the CF testing procedure. Currently there are three states; North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia that use the CF test for their state Board of Registration test. The states are allowed to attach a section that is specific to their states forestry issues and concerns.

Darrell Gates

THE LAST FIVE YEARS

This will be my last contribution to "The Registered Forester" as a Board member. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the other Board members, Alexis and Olivia for their service on the Board. While serving on the Board I have gained an appreciation for the volume of work the Board performs on a regular basis. I fully expect the Board to continue to serve the citizens of Alabama by providing a professional forester designation in the future. This service has been a growth opportunity for me, personally and professionally. Thank you for deciding to be an Alabama Registered Forester!

Frank Walburn

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forestry school but moreover approve courses/curriculum based on subject guidelines. This can be tricky and it is important to make sure all applicants are truly qualified professionally.

Of course they still have to pass the test! Then they too, will be asked to sign a Rules of Professional Conduct affidavit that includes rule #9 and they too, will vow to "aid in safeguarding against the registration of persons unqualified because of lack of good moral character or of adequate training". And so it continues!

Ruth Seawell

UPDATE YOUR ROSTER INFORMATION

Please take a moment to review your current roster information online at <http://asbrf.alabama.gov/rosterof-foresters.asp>. To submit changes, fax the form below to 334-240-9387 or submit the online Change of Address form at <http://asbrf.alabama.gov/vs2k5/changeofaddress.aspx>.

Change of Address Form

Full Name _____ License Number: _____

Title: _____

Company: _____

Business Address: _____

Business City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ County _____

Business Phone: _____ Business Fax: _____

Business E-mail: _____

Home Address: _____

Home City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ County _____

Home Phone: _____ Home Fax: _____

Home E-mail: _____

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