International Application for Certification
Professional Wetland Scientist or Wetland Professional in Training

IN APPLYING FOR CERTIFICATION AS A WETLAND PROFESSIONAL (PWS or WPIT), PLEASE BE PREPARED TO SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING, USING THE ONLINE APPLICATION:

CHECKLIST

1 Contact Information
1 List of College/University Education by category
1 List of Additional Wetland coursework
1 List of Qualifying Experience
1 Statement of Expertise Essay (for PWS & upgrade only)
1 Transcripts/Course completion certificates
1 Contact information for five (5) references, including 1 SWS Member and 2 PWS References
1 Five Completed References
1 Application Fee

Application Instructions - Form A

Please use the following information as a guide when filling out the Society of Wetland Scientists Professional Certification Program Application. Applications must be submitted using the online application procedure.

I. BASIC APPLICANT INFORMATION
Complete the information requested on the online application form.

II. CODE OF ETHICS AND PRACTICE FOR PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY
All applicants must acknowledge on the application that they have read and will conform to the SWSPCP Inc. Code of Ethics and Practice for Professional Activity.

III. COLLEGE / UNIVERSITY EDUCATION:
All applicants must submit information that documents completion of the educational requirements leading to a college or university baccalaureate degree (B.S., B.A, etc.) or higher degree, and should have the following, or equivalent, coursework acquired through a collegiate program:
(15 hours of class time = 1 Credits.)

1) Biological Sciences: Fifteen (15) Credits in biological sciences including courses such as general biology, botany or zoology; general ecology; plant, animal, aquatic or wetlands ecology; invertebrate zoology; taxonomy; marine science; fisheries biology; plant physiology, plant taxonomy, plant pathology, plant morphology; relevant environmental sciences; and similar courses.
2) **Physical Sciences**: Fifteen (15) Credits in courses in soils, chemistry, hydrology, physics, geology, sedimentology, oceanography, coastal processes, environmental engineering, and similar courses.

3) **Quantitative Sciences**: Six (6) Credits in courses in math, computer sciences, basic statistics, population dynamics, experimental statistics, and similar courses.

**IV. ADDITIONAL WETLAND RELATED EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PWS CERTIFICATION:**
Fifteen (15) semester hours (or equivalent in short courses or continuing education courses) of wetland-related coursework must be completed and documented for PWS certification. Examples of recommended courses, continuing education, and/or training needed to attain additional competency include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Wetland Plant Taxonomy; Advanced Plant Taxonomy; Wetland Hydrology; General Hydrology; Soil Morphology, Classification, and Mapping; Hydric Soil Identification; Wetland Restoration and Creation; Wetland delineation/Evaluation/Classification; Applied Wetland Ecology and Management; Wetland Creation/Mitigation; Wetland Ecology.
- Stream Delineation, Assessment, and Management

A maximum of 5 Credits, or equivalent, may be included for stream-related training. Attendance at professional meetings or symposia will not qualify to meet this requirement. Professional short courses may not be used to satisfy the collegiate training requirements for biological, physical or quantitative science requirements. However, wetland-related courses taken at a College/University and used to fulfill the biological, physical or quantitative science categories may also be used to fulfill the additional education requirements. For example, a wetland ecology course included in the biological sciences category, or a soil morphology class included in the physical science category may also be used to fulfill the category IV Additional Educational Requirements category.

Provide the following information for specialized wetland courses taken outside of the university setting where no official college credit was generated:

- Name, date, location and sponsor of the course
- The number of classroom and/or field hours completed
- Provide copies of course certificates

**Credit Hours:**

The educational requirements are expressed in terms of Credits. For Colleges/Universities on a quarter system, equivalent semester hours = quarter hours x 0.67. Applicants who attended educational institutions granting credits in different units should convert their credits to Credits according to the above definitions. For this conversion, one Credit = 15 hours of classroom/lab/field instruction. Credit equivalents for private-, governmental-, and academically-sponsored professional short courses and technical training will be based on the same conversion (1 Credit = 15 hours of classroom/lab/field instruction). For example, a 36-hour wetland delineation course = 2.4 equivalent Credits. The panel expects that the minimum number of Credit equivalents for each of the major categories will be met. Professional work experience can not be substituted for formal educational deficiencies.

It is the applicant’s responsibility to provide full documentation of education. When course titles do not describe content, a short, written description or course syllabus should be provided. Applicants who do not clearly meet the stated minimum educational requirements but believe they satisfy their content should submit detailed documentation of comparable qualifications.

**V. QUALIFYING EXPERIENCE:**
In addition to the minimum collegiate courses required, a Professional Wetland Scientist (PWS) must meet specific experience, wetlands-related education, and statement of expertise essay requirements as outlined below. Professional experience begins following conferral of the first degree at a baccalaureate or higher level. Certification as a PWS requires a minimum of five (5) years of full-time professional experience. Relevant experience must be gained within ten (10) years prior to applying for the PWS. Experience must demonstrate the application of current technical knowledge to problems and programs dealing with wetland resources and activities. Relevant experience may be gained while working in the private (e.g., consulting, industry, non-profit), public (e.g., local, state, federal government), and/or academic sectors.

Full-time work experience is defined as a minimum 75% of daily/weekly/monthly duties devoted specifically to
wetland science. Work experience below the 75% threshold will be credited on a pro-rated basis. Experience is calculated based upon applicant's description and documentation of percentage of time applied to relevant wetlands work. Therefore, it is the applicant's responsibility to fully document for each experience the percentage of time devoted specifically to professional wetland activities, providing month/year dates for each period(s) of experience. NOTE: The terms "research" and "project(s)" used below are generic.

Examples of qualifying experience include:
1) Engaging in research that includes field or laboratory observations, analysis of data, and preparation of a publication for recognized journals and/or published reports to private/ public clients, (500 to 1000 words) should be a full description of the applicant's expertise and basis for score.
2) Directing a research project with supervisory responsibility over several technicians
3) Serving as a leader or assistant leader on wetland-related projects requiring independent judgment and action
4) Teaching a college course or equivalent in wetlands science
5) Working as a wetland specialist, scientist, or manager in the public (local, state, or federal agency) or private (industry, consultant, developer) sector
6) Directing a state-wide or district-wide wetlands program, conducting wetland restoration projects, wetland program planning, or conducting wetland delineation or evaluation.

Examples of non-qualifying experience include:
1) Teaching below the college level,
2) Carrying out routine responsibilities such as data collections without statistical analysis, professional writing of someone else’s work, making routine plant identifications, conducting bioassay or other analytical laboratory determinations,
3) Providing input to or review of environmental impact statements - unless as a wetland specialist,
4) Working as an undergraduate or graduate research or teaching assistant, 5) Involvement in wetland studies as an administrative function without application of principles and concepts of wetland sciences.

Time spent obtaining advanced academic degrees may apply toward professional experience subject to the following guidelines:
1) Experience credit normally will be given only upon completion of curriculum and research judged by the panel as relevant to the wetland profession.
2) Up to two (2) years of credit will be allotted for a Master’s degree, up to three (3) years of credit for a Ph.D., and up to four (4) years of credit for a Master’s and a Ph.D. Credit allowed will be on a case-by-case basis based on relevance to the wetland sciences. The applicant should outline the wetlands relevance of the work leading to the degree(s) to ensure experiential credit is given.
3) When time intervals for education and employment overlap, a detailed explanation must be provided of the relevant portions of each. Experience must be gained within the ten (10) years prior to the date the application is signed.

VI. ADDITIONAL SUPPORTIVE INFORMATION
List up to five wetland-related publications, technical/administrative reports, or oral reports/presentations where indicated in the application. Also list other involvement as a wetland scientist, such as professional society memberships, offices held, honors and other similar duties.

VII. STATEMENT OF EXPERTISE ESSAY FOR PWS CERTIFICATION
Applicants select one to a maximum of three expertise areas from the application list of expertise areas to focus upon for their expertise statement. The list of expertise areas is based upon the Body of Knowledge and its subsequent revisions. Applicants are to prepare a statement of their expertise from their documented education and work experience.

The expertise statement (500 to 1000 words) should be a full description of the applicant's expertise and description of his or her role within the broad range of wetland science as defined by the SWSPCP, Inc. Body of Knowledge. The expertise statement will allow for an objective review by the Certification Review Panel of an applicant's fulfillment of the SWSPCP, Inc. Body of Knowledge with respect to their personal expertise.

The statement of expertise essay will be assessed on a maximum of twenty (20) points, with fourteen (14) points or more (70%) constituting a passing grade. The essay will be assessed by the review panel using the following criteria:
• Relationship of the applicant's area(s) of expertise to the basic educational requirements – 2 points max.
• Relationship of applicant’s area(s) of expertise to the additional education requirements (specialized wetland course work and/or professional training) – 5 points max.
• Relationship of applicant’s area(s) of expertise to wetland-related work experience – 10 points max.
• Overall quality of essay – 3 points max.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Knowledge Areas</th>
<th>Expertise Areas (Choose no more than 3)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Soils and Geology</td>
<td>Soil morphology and geomorphological features</td>
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<td>Soil-water-biotic relationships</td>
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<td>Hydric soil variability/identification</td>
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<td>Hydrologic measurements/monitoring</td>
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<td>Surface/subsurface Hydrology</td>
<td>Surface/subsurface hydrology measurements/monitoring</td>
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<td>Seasonality/annual variance in wetland hydrology</td>
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<td>Hydrologic indicators in wetlands/floodplains</td>
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<td>Water chemistry/geochemistry related to wetland impacts</td>
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<td>Biota</td>
<td>Hydrophyte identification/taxonomy</td>
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<td>Wetland dependent fish, wildlife, macroinvertebrates</td>
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<td>Protected/ invasive species management</td>
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<td>Microbiological functions</td>
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<td>Ecological Function/Assessment</td>
<td>Application of ecological principles in determining important wetland specific functions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Use of wetland assessment methodologies in decision making</td>
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<td>Valuation of important ecological functions</td>
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<td>Compensatory Mitigation</td>
<td>Regulations and guidance documents in developing compensatory wetland/stream mitigation</td>
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<td>Design and construction for wetland/stream enhancement, restoration, creation</td>
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<td>Development/research of best practices combining wetland science and engineering in wetland/stream compensatory mitigation</td>
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<td>Delineation/mapping</td>
<td>Wetland delineation criteria and field methods</td>
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<td>Interpretation/creation of topographic/soils maps and aerial photography as delineation/assessment tools</td>
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<td>Integration of GPS/GIS as wetland identification, assessment, and management tools</td>
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<td>Regulatory and Environmental Impact Assessment</td>
<td>Local/state/federal regulations and legal decisions</td>
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<td>Interpretation/use of Section 404(b)1 guidelines in establishing priorities of avoidance, alternatives, minimization, and compensation</td>
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<td>Roles and integration of CEQ, NEPA, and CWA in wetland assessment, regulatory review, and wetland management programs</td>
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<td>Wetland education/ research/ outreach</td>
<td>College/University teaching consistent with wetland science principles</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Wetland science research/publication in technical reports or peer-reviewed literature</td>
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<td>Extension/outreach related to wetland sciences</td>
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VIII. PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES:
Names, addresses, and phone numbers of at least five (5) references must accompany the application for certification. One of the five references must be a member of the Society of Wetland Scientists. One reference must be an employer, supervisor, or client. Two references must be from Professional Wetland Scientists. At least one PWS reference must complete Form C. For PWS, two of your references must be from professionals employed outside your own organization. Do not list personnel that you supervise. Indicate category of each reference. Categories of references may overlap – for example, one reference that is both a SWS member and a PWS may count for both, but five references must always be provided.

Your listed references will be contacted by the Business office via email and directed to complete their completed reference online.

Individuals who live outside the continental United States must provide five letters of reference. These individuals do not have to be members of the Society of Wetland Scientists or Professional Wetland Scientists, although it is encouraged to attempt to get an individual from either organization where possible.

UPGRADING FROM WPIT TO PWS:
For an individual certified as a Wetland Professional in Training to apply for certification as a Professional Wetland Scientist, it is not necessary to complete the full application. The individual should document course work and other training and experience since the last application that will fulfill completely the requirements for PWS certification, and a statement of expertise essay must be included as indicated in Section VII above. Professional accomplishments and publications should also be highlighted. The name and address of at least one new reference, preferably an individual certified as a PWS, should be included with the application, along with a check or money order for the difference between the WPIT and PWS application fees. If the upgrade application is more than two years from the date a WPIT was awarded, three new Form Cs must be requested and completed to reflect a current assessment of the applicant's professional work experience. The SWSPCP, Inc. Business Office will attach a copy of the original application to the new material for submission to the Certification Panel. Review and approval of the upgrade application will then proceed in the same way as an original application.

SCHEDULE OF INTERNATIONAL FEES:

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<tr>
<th>Professional Wetland Scientist (PWS)</th>
<th>SWS Member</th>
<th>$100 US</th>
<th>Non-Member</th>
<th>$140 US</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wetland Professional In Training (WPIT)</td>
<td>$30 US</td>
<td>$60 US</td>
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Upon certification, an annual certification maintenance fee of $75 will be required to maintain the SWSPCP Registry. Newly certified PWS and WPITs are not required to pay the maintenance fees in the year in which they are certified. Fees for a WPIT applying for PWS after obtaining work experience will be an additional amount at the time of application for PWS certification.

Checks must be in US funds, drawn upon a US bank, and made payable to: SWS Professional Certification Program. Checks made payable to SWS will be returned. Application fees are non-refundable.

TRANSCRIPTS:
Copies of ALL academic transcripts translated to English are required for all degrees conferred. Photocopies of certified or notarized forms are acceptable. DO NOT have transcripts sent separately; upload them with your application.

NOTIFICATION:
All applicants will be notified upon determination of acceptance or denial of certification.