#### GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

#### SESSION 1995

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# HOUSE BILL 826 Committee Substitute Favorable 6/5/95

Short Title: Licensing of Soil Scientists.	(Public)
Sponsors:	
Referred to:	
April 11, 1995	
A BILL TO BE ENTITLED	

2 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE LICENSING OF SOIL SCIENTISTS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. The General Statutes are amended by adding a new Chapter to read:

"CHAPTER 89F.

### "NORTH CAROLINA SOIL SCIENTIST LICENSING ACT.

7 "**§ 89F-1. Short title.** 

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17 18 This Chapter may be cited as the North Carolina Soil Scientist Licensing Act.

"§ 89F-2. Purpose.

The purposes of this Chapter are to protect life, property, health, and public welfare through the regulation of the practice of soil science in the State of North Carolina; to define the practice of soil science as a profession, establishing minimum professional standards of ethical conduct, professional responsibility, and required education and experience; and to prevent abuses of the practice of soil science by untrained or unprincipled individuals.

- "§ 89F-3. Definitions.
- As used in this Chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:
  - (1) 'Board' means the North Carolina Board for Licensing of Soil Scientists.

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- (2) 'Good moral character' means character as tends to ensure the faithful discharge of the duties of the licensed soil scientist.
  - (3) <u>'License' means a certificate issued by the Board recognizing the individual named in this certificate as meeting the requirements for licensing under this Chapter.</u>
  - (4) 'Professional soil scientist' means a person who is licensed as a soil scientist under this Chapter.
  - 'Public practice of soil science' means any service or work, the adequate <u>(5)</u> performance of which requires education in the physical, chemical, and biological sciences, as well as soil science; training and experience in the application of special knowledge of these sciences to the use and management of soils by accepted principles and methods; investigation, evaluation, and consultation, in which the performance is related to the public welfare for safeguarding of life, health, property, and the environment, except as specifically exempted. 'Public practice of soil science' includes, but is not limited to, investigating and evaluating the interaction between water, soil, nutrients, plants, and other living organisms which are used to prepare soil scientists' reports for: subsurface ground absorption systems, including infiltration galleries; land application of residuals such as sludge, septage, and other wastes; spray irrigation of wastewater; soil remediation at conventional rates; land application of agricultural products; and processing residues. bioremediation, and volatilization; soil erodibility and sedimentation; identification of hydric soil; and redoxomorphic features.
  - (6) 'Qualified soil scientist' means a person who possesses all of the qualifications specified in this Chapter for licensing, except that he or she is not licensed.
  - (7) 'Responsible charge of work' means the independent control and direction by the use of initiative, skill, and independent judgment of soil science work or the supervision of such work.
  - (8) 'Soil' means the site or environmental setting consisting of soil material, saprolite, weathered materials, and soil rock interface. 'Soil' includes the solid materials, waters, gases, and other biological, chemical, and contaminant materials in the soil environment.
  - (9) 'Soil science' means the science dealing with soils as an environmental resource. 'Soil science' includes the following tasks: soil characterization, classification, and mapping, and the physical, chemical, hydrologic, mineralogical, biological, and microbiological analysis of soil per se, and to its assessment, analysis, modeling, testing, evaluation, and use for the benefit of mankind when specifically required to complete the investigation and evaluation of interactions between water, soil, nutrients, plants, and other living organisms described in subdivision (5) of this section. 'Soil science' does not

1		include design or creative works, the adequate performance of which
2		requires extensive geological, engineering, or land surveying education,
3		training, and experience or requires licensing as a geologist under
4		Chapter 89E of the General Statutes or as a professional engineer or
5		land surveyor under Chapter 89C of the General Statutes.
6	<u>(10)</u>	'Soil scientist' or 'professional soil scientist' means a person who is
7		trained and educated in soil science.
8	<u>(11)</u>	'Soil scientist-in-training' means a person who has taken and
9		successfully passed the portion of the professional examination covering
10		fundamental or academic soil science subjects, prior to his or her
11		completion of the number of years of experience in soil science work as
12		required by this Chapter.
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14	<del></del>	in the practice of soil science without assuming the responsible charge
15		of work.
16	"§ 89F-4. Nor	th Carolina Board for Licensing of Soil Scientists.
17		North Carolina Board for Licensing of Soil Scientists is created. The
18		Board for Licensing of Soil Scientists shall administer the provisions of
19		compliance with Chapter 150B of the General Statutes.
20		Board shall consist of seven members to be appointed as follows:
21	$\overline{}$ $\overline{(1)}$	One member appointed by the Governor, which member shall be a soil
22	<del></del>	scientist employed by a federal or State agency.
22 23	<u>(2)</u>	One member appointed by the Governor, which member shall be a soil
24	<del></del>	scientist employed by a local government agency.
25	<u>(3)</u>	One member appointed by the Governor, which member shall be a soil
26	<del>~ ~</del>	scientist employed by an institution of higher education.
27	<u>(4)</u>	One member appointed by the General Assembly upon recommendation
28	<del>***</del>	of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, which member shall be
29		a soil scientist who is privately employed.
30	<u>(5)</u>	One member appointed by the General Assembly upon recommendation
31	<del>\</del>	of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, which member shall be
32		a member of the public who is not a soil scientist.
33	<u>(6)</u>	One member appointed by the General Assembly upon recommendation
34	(5)	of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, which member shall be a
35		soil scientist who is privately employed.
36	(7)	One member appointed by the General Assembly upon recommendation
37	<del>\' / /</del>	of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, which member shall be a
38		member of the public who is not a soil scientist.
39	(c) A m	ajority shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of Board business.
10		shall be selected from two nominees submitted by the Board for each

appointment under subdivisions (1) through (7) of subsection (b) of this section.

- 1 (d) The Board may remove any member only for neglect of duty, malfeasance,
  2 violating a provision of this Chapter, conviction of a felony or other crime, or moral
  3 turpitude.
  4 (e) Each member of the Board shall be a citizen of the United States and shall
  5 have been a resident of this State for at least six months immediately preceding his or her
  - (f) Members shall serve for three-year terms. No member shall serve more than two consecutive three-year terms without an interruption in service of at least one year.
  - (g) Each term of service on the Board shall expire on the thirty-first day of January of the year in which the term expires. The Board shall appoint a person for the remainder of the unexpired term, if a vacancy occurs.
  - (h) An ex officio member of the Board shall function as liaison with the Soil Science Society of North Carolina. This member will be appointed annually by the president of the Soil Science Society of North Carolina.
  - (i) Members of the Board may receive compensation for their services and be reimbursed annually for expenses incurred in the performance of duties required by this Chapter at the rates prescribed in G.S. 138-5, subject to the availability of funds.
  - (j) The Board may employ the necessary personnel for the performance of its functions and shall fix their compensation within the limits of funds available to the Board.

# "§ 89F-5. Duties of the Board.

(a) The Board shall:

election.

- (1) Administer and enforce the provisions of this Chapter.
- (2) Elect from its membership a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Secretary-Treasurer, and adopt rules to govern its proceedings.
- (3) Examine and pass on the qualifications of all applicants for licensing under this Chapter and issue a license to each successful applicant.
- (4) Hold a meeting within 30 days after its members are first elected and thereafter shall hold at least two regular meetings each year.
- (5) Establish and receive fees as required by this Chapter. In establishing fees, the Board shall consider exemptions from fees or a reduction in licensing fees for those persons otherwise qualified for licensing under this Chapter, but who perform soil science work or services less than 15 days per year.
- (6) Adopt rules that establish standards or approve reasonable standards for licensing and renewal of licenses of soil scientists, including adopting examination materials and accreditation standards of any duly professionally recognized accrediting agency.
- (7) Establish reasonable standards for continuing professional education for soil scientists. No examination shall be required for a renewal of a license.

- 1 (8) Have any other powers and duties as are necessary to implement the
  2 provisions of this Chapter and adopt any rules needed to implement this
  3 Chapter.
  4 (b) The Board may adopt a seal which may be affixed to all licenses issued by the
  - (b) The Board may adopt a seal which may be affixed to all licenses issued by the Board.
  - (c) The Board may authorize expenditures deemed necessary to carry out the provisions of this Chapter and all expenses shall be paid upon the warrant of the Board Secretary-Treasurer. The Board Secretary-Treasurer shall deposit funds received by the Board in one or more funds in the banks or other financial institutions carrying deposit insurance and authorized to do business in North Carolina. Interest earned on such funds may remain in the funds account and may be expended as authorized by the Board to carry out the provisions of this Chapter. Expenditures shall not exceed the revenues of the Board during any fiscal year. The Board may procure personal property in accordance with the provisions of Article 3 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes.

# "§ 89F-6. Corporate, partnership, or sole proprietorship practice of soil science.

A corporation or partnership may engage in the practice of soil science in this State. The person connected with the corporation, partnership, or sole proprietorship in responsible charge of work must be licensed as a professional soil scientist under this Chapter. The exemptions to licensing under G.S. 89F-7 that apply to individuals under this Chapter apply to corporations and partnerships. All such corporations shall be subject to the provisions of Chapter 55B of the General Statutes.

## "§ 89F-7. Exemptions.

- (a) Subject to subsection (b) of this section, any person who publicly practices or offers to publicly practice soil science in this State is subject to the provisions of this Chapter.
  - (b) The following persons are exempt from the provisions of this Chapter:
    - (1) Persons engaged solely in teaching soil science or engaged solely in soil science research in this State unless he or she performs soil scientist work and services for which a license is required under this Chapter.
    - (2) Officers and employees of the United States, the State, or counties who practice solely in the capacity of this employment.
    - Officers and employees of companies engaged in the practice of soil science, when the officers and employees practice soil science solely in the capacity of their employment and who do not offer their professional services to the public for hire.
    - (4) A subordinate to a soil scientist licensed under this Chapter or a soil scientist-in-training insofar as the subordinate or soil scientist-in-training acts solely in such capacity. The subordinate or the soil scientist-in-training shall not practice soil science for others and shall not describe or represent himself or herself as a soil scientist.

#### "§ 89F-8. Limitations.

This Chapter shall not prevent:

The practice of any profession or trade for which a license is required 1 (1) 2 under any other law of this State. 3 **(2)** Registered professional engineers from lawfully practicing soil 4 mechanics, foundation engineering, or other professional engineering 5 practices for which a license is required pursuant to Chapter 89C of the 6 General Statutes. 7 Registered land surveyors licensed pursuant to Chapter 89C of the (3) 8 General Statutes from practicing surveying. 9 <u>(4)</u> Architects licensed pursuant to Chapter 83A of the General Statutes or 10 licensed landscape architects licensed pursuant to Chapter 89A of the General Statutes from lawfully practicing architecture or landscape 11 12 architecture. 13 (5) Geologists licensed pursuant to Chapter 89E of the General Statutes 14 from practicing geology. 15 (6) The public practice of soil science by a person not a resident of, and having no established place of business in, this State, when such 16 17 practice does not exceed in the aggregate more than 30 days in any 18 calendar year, provided: Such person is duly licensed to practice such profession in 19 20 another state where the requirements for a license are not less than those specified in this Chapter for obtaining the license 21 required for such work; and 22 Such nonresident shall file with the Board within 10 days of 23 <u>b.</u> 24 entering this State for commencing such work, a statement giving his or her name, residence, the number of his or her license and 25 by what authority issued, and, upon the completion of the work, a 26 statement of the time engaged in such work within the State. 27 The practice of a person not a resident and having no established place 28 (7) of business in this State, or the practice of a person who has recently 29 30 become a resident of this State, or practicing or offering to practice in this State for more than 30 days in any calendar year the profession of 31 soil science, if: 32 33 He or she is licensed in another state or is a qualified soil 34 scientist: 35 If he or she has filed an application for a license with the Board <u>b.</u> and has paid the fee. 36 Such practice is a provisional practice of soil science and shall continue 37 only for such reasonable time as the Board requires to consider the 38 applicant for licensing as a soil scientist under this Chapter. 39 40

# "§ 89F-9. Applications.

An application for a license as a soil scientist shall be made under oath, shall show the applicant's education and a summary of the applicant's soil science experience, and shall show any other relevant criteria as determined by the Board.

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## "§ 89F-10. Minimum qualifications.

- (a) To be eligible for a license as a soil scientist in North Carolina, an applicant shall satisfy the following minimum qualifications:
  - (1) Be of good moral and ethical character as attested to by four letters of reference, two of which shall be written by qualified soil scientists, and an agreement signed by the applicant to adhere to the Code of Professional Conduct adopted pursuant to G.S. 89F-17.
  - (2) Hold at least a bachelor of science degree from an accredited college or university with a minimum of 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours in agricultural, biological, physical, or earth sciences and at least 15 semester hours or an equivalent number of quarter hours in soil science. Equivalent education or professional experience may be determined by the Board in lieu of a bachelor of science degree.
  - Successfully pass an examination established by the Board, which examination shall be designed to demonstrate whether the applicant has the necessary knowledge and requisite skill to exercise the responsibilities of the public practice of soil science.
  - (4) Subject to subsection (b) of this section, have at least three years of professional soil science work under the supervision of a qualified soil scientist or a minimum of three cumulative years work in responsible charge of work satisfactory to the Board.
- (b) Completion of advanced degrees in soil science may be substituted for a portion of the experience requirement. The Board may, in its discretion, grant one year of professional experience for a masters of science degree and two years of professional experience for a doctoral degree. The Board may consider, in lieu of the above professional soil science work required under subdivision (4) of subsection (a) of this section, the cumulative total of professional soil science work or soil research of persons teaching upper level soil science courses at the college or university level, so long as this work or research can be demonstrated to the Board to be of a sufficiently responsible nature to be equivalent to the professional soil science work.
- (c) Applicants who meet all licensing requirements except for the experience requirements may be recognized as a soil scientist-in-training. Upon completion of the experience requirement, the soil scientist-in-training may apply for full licensing as a soil scientist.
- (d) The Board shall determine whether the applicant demonstrated that the applicant performed the work experience in a responsible position. The adequacy of the required supervision and the experience shall be determined by the Board in accordance with standards established by the Board by rule.

#### "§ 89F-11. Examinations.

Examinations shall be formulated and conducted by the Board at the time and place as determined by the Board, but shall be held at least annually.

### "§ 89F-12. Comity.

A person who holds a license to engage in the practice of soil science on the basis of comparable licensing requirements issued to that person by a proper authority by another state, by a territory, or by a possession of the United States or the District of Columbia, and who, as determined by the Board, meets the requirements of this Chapter based upon verified evidence, may, upon application, be licensed without taking an examination pursuant to G.S. 89F-10(a)(3).

# "§ 89F-13. Issuance, renewal, and replacement of licenses.

- (a) The Board shall issue a license upon payment of a license fee to any applicant who has satisfactorily met all the requirements of this Chapter. Licenses shall state the full name of the registrant, shall have a serial number, and shall be signed by the Chair and Secretary-Treasurer of the Board, under the seal of the Board. The issuance of a license by the Board shall be prima facie evidence that the person named on the license is entitled to all the rights and privileges of a licensed soil scientist for the period the license remains in full force and effect.
- (b) Unless a license is renewed, a license shall expire at such interval as may be determined by the Board. All applications for renewal shall be filed with the Board. Applications for renewal shall be accompanied by a renewal fee established by the Board. A license that has expired for failure to renew may be restored after application and payment of a restoration fee established by the Board so long as the applicant satisfies all other provisions of this Chapter.
- (c) If a license is lost, destroyed, or mutilated, the Board may issue a replacement license subject to rules adopted by the Board.

#### "§ 89F-14. Seals; requirements.

Upon the issuance of a license, each soil scientist shall obtain from the Secretary-Treasurer a seal bearing the licensee's name and the legend 'Licensed Soil Scientist-State of North Carolina'. The Board shall insure that the design of the seal is easily distinguished from other professional seals. All drawings, reports, or other soil science papers or documents involving soil science work that are prepared or approved by a licensed soil scientist or a subordinate under his or her direction shall be signed by the soil scientist and impressed with the seal. The impression of the seal indicates his or her responsibility for the soil science work.

# "<u>§ 89F-15. Records.</u>

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- (a) The Board shall keep a public record of its proceedings and a register of all applications for licensing.
  - (b) The register under subsection (a) of this section shall show:
    - (1) The name, the age, and the residency of each applicant.
    - (2) The date of application.
    - (3) The place of business of the applicant.
    - (4) The applicant's education and other qualifications.
  - (5) Whether or not an examination was required.
    - (6) Whether the applicant was licensed.
    - (7) Whether a license was granted.
- 43 (8) The dates of any actions by the Board.

- 1 (9) Such other information as may be deemed necessary by the Board.
  2 All official records of the Board or affidavits by the Secretary-Treasurer as to the content
  3 of these records shall be prima facie evidence of all matters required to be kept in the
  4 registers.
  - (c) The Board shall treat as confidential and not subject to disclosure, except to the extent required by law or by rule of the Board, individual test scores and applications and material relating to the applications.

# "§ 89F-16. Roster of licensed professional soil scientists.

The Secretary-Treasurer of the Board shall keep a record and shall publish annually a roster showing the names and places of business and residence addresses of all soil scientists licensed under this Chapter. Copies of this roster shall be made available to the public upon request and payment of a reasonable fee, established by the Board, for copying.

# "§ 89F-17. Code of Professional Conduct.

The Board shall prepare and adopt by rule a Code of Professional Conduct that shall be made known in writing to every licensee and applicant for licensing under this Chapter and that shall be published by the Board. Publication of the Code of Professional Conduct is due notice to all licensees of its contents. The Board may revise and amend this Code of Professional Conduct. Prior to adoption of any revision or amendments, all licensed members and the public shall receive due notice and an opportunity to be heard.

## **"§ 89F-18. Complaints.**

Any person may file written charges of violations of this Chapter or any rules adopted pursuant to this Chapter with the Board against any licensee. Any charges or allegations shall be in writing, shall be sworn to by the person making them, and shall be filed with the Secretary-Treasurer of the Board. The Board shall investigate reasonably all valid complaints.

# "§ 89F-19. Prohibitions; unlawful acts.

- (a) It is unlawful for any person other than a licensed soil scientist or a subordinate under the soil scientist's direction to conduct or participate in any public practice of soil science or prepare any soil science reports, maps, or documents related to the public welfare or the safeguarding of life, health, property, or the environment.
- (b) It is unlawful for any person to publicly practice, or offer to publicly practice, soil science in this State, or to use in connection with his or her name, or otherwise assume, or advertise, any title or description tending to convey the impression that he or she is a licensed soil scientist, unless that person has been duly licensed or is exempted under the provisions of this Chapter.
- (c) It is unlawful for anyone other than a soil scientist licensed under this Chapter to stamp or seal any soils-related plans, maps, reports, or other soils-related documents with the seal or stamp of a licensed soil scientist, or use in any manner the title 'soil scientist', unless that person is licensed under this Chapter.
- (d) It is unlawful for any person to affix his or her signature to, or to stamp or seal, any soils-related plans, maps, reports, or other soils-related documents after the licensing of the person named thereon has expired or has been suspended or revoked.

1995 GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA It is unlawful for a soil scientist licensed under this Chapter to prepare plats 1 2 and maps as defined in Chapter 89C unless he or she is licensed as a registered land 3 surveyor under Chapter 89C of the General Statutes. 4 "§ 89F-20. Disciplinary procedures. 5 The Board may, consistent with the provisions of Chapter 150B of the General 6 Statues, refuse to grant or to renew, suspend, or revoke the license of any person licensed 7 under this Chapter who: 8 (1) Has violated the provisions of this Chapter or a rule adopted by the 9 Board. 10 (2) Who has been convicted of a misdemeanor under this Chapter, Who has been convicted of a felony, or 11 (3) 12 (4) Who has been found by the Board to have been guilty of gross unprofessional conduct, dishonest practice, incompetence, fraud, deceit 13 14 in obtaining a license, or in aiding or abetting by fraud or deceit another 15 person's obtaining a license. In lieu of revoking a license, the Board may enter a probationary order and 16 (b) 17 assess a civil penalty not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1000). In determining the 18 amount of a penalty under this section, the Board shall consider the following factors: 19 The degree and extent of harm to the natural resources of the State, to (1) 20 the public health, or to private property resulting from the violation. 21 (2) The duration and gravity of the violation. The effect on water quality. 22 (3) 23 **(4)** The cost of rectifying the damage. 24 The cost to the State of enforcement procedures. (5) The prior record of the violator in complying or failing to comply with 25 (6) 26

this Chapter or a rule adopted pursuant to this Chapter.

# "§ 89F-21. Reissuance of license.

The Board may, by a vote of the quorum, reissue a license to any person whose license has been revoked if the Board finds, after written application by the applicant, that there is good cause to justify the reissuance of the license.

# "§ 89F-22. Misdemeanor.

## Any person who:

- Willfully practices soil science publicly or offers to practice soil science (1) publicly for other natural or corporate persons in this State without being licensed in accordance with the provisions of this Chapter;
- Presents, or attempts to use as his or her own, the license or the seal of (2) another soil scientist;
- Gives any false or forged evidence in the course of applying for a (3) license under this Chapter;
- Falsely impersonates any other licensed soil scientist; (4)
- Attempts to use an expired or revoked license, or practice at any time (5) while the license is suspended or revoked;
  - Violates the provisions of this Chapter; (6)

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shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor.

# "§ 89F-23. Injunctive relief.

The Board may seek injunctive relief to enjoin and restrain any natural or corporate person from violating this Chapter. The Board shall not be required to post bond in connection with obtaining either provisional, preliminary, or permanent injunctive relief.

### "§ 89F-24. Legal advisor.

Seal

The Attorney General or his designee shall act as legal advisor to the Board.

## "§ 89F-25. Fees.

Fees for the following are to be determined by the Board, but shall not exceed any amount specified in this section:

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Application \$50.00

Renewal 85.00

Examination 125.00

License 85.00

Replacement license 50.00

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# Fees shall be paid to the Board at the times specified by the Board."

Sec. 2. Notwithstanding the provisions of G.S. 89F-10, as enacted in Section 1 of this act, the Board shall waive the examination for licensure for applicants who apply for licensure under Chapter 89F of the General Statutes, as enacted in Section 1 of this act, no later than one year after the initial Board is appointed and who otherwise satisfy the licensing requirements of Chapter 89F of the General Statutes.

Sec. 3. Notwithstanding the provisions of G.S. 87F-4, as enacted in Section 1 of this act, the Board of the North Carolina Registry of Certified Professional in Soils shall submit two nominees for each appointment to the North Carolina Board for Licensing of Soil Scientists, and the initial members appointed pursuant to G.S. 89F-4(b)(5) and G.S. 89F-4(b)(7) shall serve one-year terms, initial members appointed pursuant to G.S. 89F-4(b)(1), G.S. 89F-4(b)(1) and G.S. 87F-4(b)(3) shall serve two-year terms, and initial members appointed pursuant to G.S. 87F-4(b)(4) and G.S. 87F-4(b)(6) shall serve for three-year terms.

Sec. 4. G.S. 89F-19, as enacted in Section 1 of this act, becomes effective January 1, 1997. The remainder of this act becomes effective January 1, 1996.