

Frequently Asked Questions Registered Forester Program

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Why do we need to update the Registered Forester Program?

Two primary reasons: 1) To upgrade the standards of the program to include continuing education and reinstate the Michigan Board of Forestry to provide oversight; 2) To increase the professional standard for any forester in Michigan that wants to be a registered forester by showing a higher standard of accountability and qualifications.

Why do we need to update the Occupational Code?

The existing Occupational Code was enacted in 1980 and has had no updates since that time. The job duties and descriptions of types of work that a forester does in Michigan has changed drastically in that timeframe. Also, there is an opportunity to further clarify proper roles and job duties of foresters especially as it pertains to duties performed by professional surveyors.

Why isn't the Registered Forester Program remaining under Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) where it has been since 1980?

LARA examined all licensing and registration programs and determined the Registered Forester program as well as many others should be eliminated. Governor Snyder accepted the majority of the recommendations to deregulate but asked the MDNR to examine alternatives to the Registered Foresters program.

Why is the Registered Forester Program being moved to MDNR and not to a non-profit or for-profit organization?

There are two primary reasons why DNR will be the "house" for the improved program. One is that Governor Snyder specifically asked the DNR was to assist in providing alternatives regarding the services for the program. The second primary reason is that we believe that the DNR is the most stable, least expensive and most viable option available.

Will the Occupational Code be deregulated once the Registered Forester Program is moved out of LARA?

The Occupational Code cannot be removed or deregulated by LARA without legislative action. Currently, there is no legislation pending that would do this.

How do we update the language in the forester Occupational Code?

Any updates or changes to any Occupational Code will take legislative action. A bill writer and bill sponsor would be sought to accomplish this at the same time that the registered forester program is updated to conserve costs and time.

Where can I read the current Occupational Code for foresters?

Click [HERE](#) or go to www.michigan.gov/lara and search for it. Article 21, Public Act 299 of 1980, as amended.

Why are there all the new qualifications and continuing education credits?

Qualifications and continuing education credits were added to improve the quality of the program and ensure that the foresters who wish to be a registered forester have achieved a higher standard of knowledge and work experience.

Why is the Society of American Foresters (SAF) going to be responsible for the continuing education credit tracking and not the MDNR or another group?

SAF has a system in place that has been working well for some time to track continuing education credits for the Certified Forester program that they provide. They provide credit tracking for other states just like they will for Michigan. The cost to do so is more affordable than MDNR doing the same function.

Has simply adopting the SAF Certified Forester as a standard been considered?

Yes. A portion of the forestry community believed this involved too much continuing education, did not offer a Michigan-specific program, and did not have legal standing in the State of Michigan.

Will the term Michigan Registered Forester be trademarked to protect the term?

That is a task the Michigan Board of Foresters marketing committee would undertake.

Will any of this prevent someone from calling themselves a forester or registered forester in Michigan?

No. Use of either term is not regulated.

Is this going to become a mandatory program for foresters in Michigan in the future?

Some foresters would like to see registration of foresters mandatory. Currently, there are no plans to make registration mandatory. Our objective and recommendation is to operate the voluntary program for 3-5 years and then determine if any changes are necessary to enhance the program.

How much will the new Registered Forester Program cost a forester?

\$200 every 2 years. This does not include any costs to obtain the needed 24 continuing education credits every 2 years.

How can that increase in cost be justified over the cost when LARA was overseeing the program?

\$200/2 years. Break down: 25% for continuing education tracking, 50% for staff to handle applications, renewals, billing, etc.; 25% for Board of Forester expenses such as insurance for directors and officers, marketing of the program, & meetings. The program under LARA was little more than people applying and paying their fees. We are implementing a considerable amount more information to be monitored, and the Board of Foresters will be tasked with marketing and outreach to grow the program.

Where can I find a draft of the current registered forester proposal?

There is a link on the home page of the Michigan SAF website that provides access to the proposal, and related documents.

How, exactly, will the program raise public perception of, or confidence in, forestry or foresters?

This will be a work-in-progress over time, and some of this work will be initiated by the marketing committee of the Michigan Board of Foresters. It may take years to start to raise the awareness, unless strong effort is put in by the forestry groups around the state to communicate the needs to contract with a Registered Forester vs. a forester or a logger or a timber buyer.

When will the program be implemented?

To be determined. The entire shift of the program from LARA to MDNR will be handled legislatively and there is little way to put a timeline on the process right now.

Will LARA refund the balance of my current registered forester fee?

Not likely.