

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE**

**Division 1. Administration**

**Chapter 2.5. Department of Forestry and Fire Protection**

**Article 3. Professional Foresters**

**§ 750. Short title.**

This article may be known and cited as the Professional Foresters Law.

**§ 751. Purpose.**

The purpose of this article is to declare the existence of a public interest in the management and treatment of forest resources and timberlands of this state and to provide for the regulation of persons who practice the profession of forestry and whose activities have an impact upon the ecology of forested landscapes and the quality of the forest environment, and through that regulation to enhance the control of air and water pollution, the preservation of scenic beauty, the protection of watersheds by flood and soil erosion control, the production and increased yield of natural resources including timber, forage, wildlife, and water and outdoor recreation, to meet the needs of the people.

**§ 752. Professional forester; scope of license and expertise.**

(a) "Professional forester" as used in this article, means a person who, by reason of his or her knowledge of the natural sciences, mathematics, and the principles of forestry, acquired by forestry education and experience, performs services, including, but not limited to, consultation, investigation, evaluation, planning, or responsible supervision of forestry activities when that professional services require the application of forestry principles and techniques.

(b) A professional forester is licensed to perform forestry services only in those areas of expertise in which the person is fully competent as a result of training or experience. In order for a professional forester to fulfill all of his or her responsibilities with regard to a particular activity on a site, if the expertise that is prudently required exceeds the expertise possessed by the professional forester in that regard, the professional forester may need to utilize the services of other qualified experts including but not limited to: archaeologists, botanists, civil engineers, ecologists, fisheries biologists, geologists, hydrologists, land surveyors, landscape architects, range scientists, soil scientists, or wildlife biologists. Nothing in this article shall preclude those other environmental professionals from the application of their knowledge in their field of expertise outside the practice of forestry.

**§ 753. Forestry.**

"Forestry" as used in this article refers to the science and practice of managing forested landscapes and the treatment of the forest cover in general, and includes, among other things, the application of scientific knowledge and forestry principles in the fields of fuels management and forest protection, timber growing and utilization, forest inventories, forest economics, forest valuation and finance, and the evaluation and mitigation of impacts from forestry activities on watershed and scenic values, to achieve the purposes of this article. The practice of forestry applies only to those activities undertaken on forested landscapes. The professions listed in Section 772 are not practicing forestry when mitigating or recommending mitigation of impacts

from previous forestry activities on related watershed or ecological values within their area of professional expertise or when recommending those mitigations for proposed timber operations. However, public and private foresters are required to be licensed pursuant to this article when making evaluations and determinations of the appropriate overall combination of mitigations of impacts from forestry activities necessary to protect all forest resources.

**§ 754. Forested landscapes.**

"Forested landscapes" means those tree dominated landscapes and their associated vegetation types on which there is growing a significant stand of tree species, or which are naturally capable of growing a significant stand of native trees in perpetuity, and is not otherwise devoted to non-forestry commercial, urban, or farming uses.

**§ 755. Person.**

"Person" as used in this article means any natural person.

**§ 756. Supervision of forestry work by registered professional forester.**

Nothing in this article prohibits any person from engaging in those activities otherwise restricted to professional foresters, certified specialists or qualified but exempt certificants, provided a registrant is in charge of the professional practice or work of that person and all professional work or documents are done by or under the supervision of registrant.

**§ 757. Landowner; exception.**

The provisions of this article do not apply to any landowner who is a natural person and who personally performs services of a professional forester, when such services are personally performed on lands owned by him.

**§ 758. Professional forester not authorized to practice civil engineering, land surveying or landscape architecture.**

This article shall not be construed to authorize a registered professional forester to practice civil engineering as defined in Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 6700) of Division 3 of the Business and Professions Code or to practice land surveying as defined in Chapter 15 (commencing with Section 8700) of Division 3 of the Business and Professions Code or to practice landscape architecture, as defined in Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 5615) of Division 3 of the Business and Professions Code.

**§ 759. Rules and regulations.**

The Board may by regulation adopt such rules and regulations pursuant to Chapter 4.5 (commencing with Section 11371) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code, as it determines are reasonably necessary to enable it to carry into effect the provisions of this article.

**§ 760. Meetings to consider registration matters; time.**

The board shall consider matters pertaining to the registration of professional foresters at least once every six months at regular meetings and may, as necessary, meet solely for the purpose of considering matters to carry out the provisions of this article.

**§ 760.5. Staff personnel; executive officer; civil service.**

The board may hire the clerical and secretarial employees, technical personnel, and other staff who are necessary and budgeted to properly assist the work of the board in carrying out the purposes of this article. This staff personnel shall be subject to the relevant system and procedures of the state civil service. The provisions of the State Civil Service Act contained in Part 2 (commencing with Section 18500) of Division 5 of Title 2 shall of the Government code

apply to that personnel. The executive officer shall be an employee exempt from civil service.

**§ 761. Records.**

The board shall keep a complete record of all applications for registration and certification and the board's action thereon.

**§ 762. Certificates of specialization.**

The board may by regulation provide for the issuance of certificates of specialization in such fields of specialization as the board may by regulation establish.

**§ 763. Examining committee; membership; duties.**

(a) The board shall establish an examining committee of at least seven members composed of the following, who shall be appointed by the board and serve at its pleasure:

(1) Two public members with one selected from the membership of the board.

(2) At least four professional foresters in good standing representing a broad cross section of employment and expertise.

(3) At least one certified specialist pursuant to Section 772 in good standing. If a certified specialist is not available to serve on the committee, this position will be replaced by an additional professional forester in good standing.

(b) The examining committee shall do the following:

(1) Examine all applicants for registration as professional foresters and for specialty certificates.

(2) Recommend to the board applicants for the license of professional forester and applicants for specialty certificates who fulfill the requirements of this article.

(3) Review complaints, which review may include independent investigations or expert witness evaluations, and make disciplinary recommendations to the board.

(4) Establish ad hoc committees as needed with representatives of certified specialists.

(5) Recommend to the board whether an independent certification program qualifies for recognition under Section 754.

(6) Recommend adoption of the rules and regulations or changes in rules and regulations which may be needed to effect this article.

**§ 764. Examining committee; compensation; expenses.**

Any person appointed to serve upon the examining committee shall receive one hundred dollars (\$100) for each day during which he or she is engaged in the performance of his or her official duties, except that the compensation of each member shall not exceed in any one fiscal year the sum of one thousand dollars (\$1,000). In addition, each member shall be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of his or her duties, including travel, at state rates.

**§ 765. Examining committee; appeals.**

The examining committee shall adhere to the rules and regulations of the board. Any applicant for a license pursuant to this article who contends that he has been aggrieved by any action taken by the examining committee with respect to his/her qualifications may appeal to the board in accordance with rules or regulations prescribed by the board. The board on such appeal may administered an oral or written examination to the applicant as an aid in determining whether the applicant is qualified under the terms of this article.

**§ 766. Necessity of registration.**

On and after July 1, 1973, it shall be unlawful for any person to act in the capacity of, or to use the title of, a professional forester without being registered pursuant to this article, unless exempted from the provisions thereof.

**§ 767. Application for license; fee.**

An applicant for a license pursuant to this article shall apply to the board. Such application shall be accompanied by the payment of a fee in an amount fixed by the provisions of this article.

**§ 768. Demonstration of experience and knowledge.**

The board shall require an applicant to demonstrate such degree of experience and such general knowledge of the profession of forestry as the board deems necessary for the protection of the public.

**§ 769. Qualifications.**

An applicant shall meet all of the following qualifications:

- (a) Be good moral character and have good reputation for honesty and integrity.
- (b) Furnish evidence of having seven years of experience in forestry work. Possession of degree of bachelor of science, or equivalent degree as determined by the board, with a major in forestry, shall be deemed equivalent to four years of experience in the actual practice of forestry work. At least three of the seven years of experience shall include having charge of forestry work, or forestry work under the supervision of a person registered, or qualified for, but exempt from registration under the provision of this article. Work completed prior to July 1, 1973, shall qualify if it was under the supervision of a qualified forester, as defined in Section 754. The award of a master of forestry degree shall be acceptable as evidence of one year of such qualifying experience.
- (c) Has successfully completed such examination or examinations as are prescribed by the board.

**§ 770. Examinations.**

- (a) Examinations shall be given by the board as often as it is deemed necessary, but at least every six months.
- (b) The examination may consist of written and oral portions. A grade of 75 percent shall be necessary for successful completion of the examination.

**§ 771. Reexamination.**

An applicant failing in an examination may be examined again upon filing a new application and paying the application fee.

**§ 772. Certified specialist; registration; specialties.**

Instead of being registered as a professional forester, an applicant may request to be registered as a certified specialist in one or more fields of forestry. Nothing in this article shall authorize the Board to certify or otherwise license wildlife biologists, fisheries biologists, botanists, ecological restorationists, stream restorationists, hydrologists, or geologists. Registration in a specialty area does not prohibit a professional forester from providing services within that professional forester's area of expertise. Any public agency or professional society may submit for board recognition its independent certification program as full qualification without examination for the board's certificate of specialization. That certification as a specialist shall be granted provided the board determines the program fully protects the public interest in that area of practice encompassed by the program. Those certificants are subject to board registration and discipline with review by that specialty.

**§ 773. Licenses and specialty certificates; expiration.**

Licenses and specialty certificates issued pursuant to this article shall be valid for two years and shall expire on July 1 of each alternating year.

**§ 774. Denial of license; reapplication conditions.**

(a) Issuance of a license may be denied if sufficient evidence is received by the board of the commission or doing by the applicant of any act which, if committed or done by a licensee, would be grounds for the suspension or revocation of his license.

(b) In any decision denying an application, the board may provide that it will accept no future application from the applicant until he complies with specified conditions. No condition may be required by the board that is not just and reasonable.

**§ 775. Investigations; suspension or revocation of license.**

The board may upon its own motion, and shall upon the verified complaint in writing of any person, cause investigation to be made of the actions of any person licensed pursuant to this article and may temporarily suspend or permanently revoke the license of any person who is guilty of or commits any one or more of the acts or omissions constituting cause for disciplinary action.

**§ 776. Limitations of actions; law governing.**

Any accusation against a registrant or certificant shall be filed within five years after the act or omission alleged as the ground for disciplinary action. The proceedings under this article shall be conducted in accordance with Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 11500) of Part 1 Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code and the board has all the powers granted in the chapter.

**§ 777. Mode of discipline.**

If the board finds against the registrant, the board, in its decision, may terminate all operations of the registrant during the period fixed by the decision, except those operations the board determines that the person may complete. The board may impose upon the registrant compliance with specific conditions as may be just in connection with his or her operations, and may further provide that, until the conditions are complied with, no application for restoration of the suspended or revoked registration shall be accepted by the board.

The board shall provide public notice of the suspension or revocation pursuant to this section.

The board may issue a private reprimand when a registrant commits a failure of responsibility which warrants a lesser level of discipline than suspension. The issuance of a private reprimand does not prohibit the board from using the subject of the private reprimand in an accusation, within the statute of limitations, seeking suspension or revocation resulting from a subsequent complaint, to establish a pattern of lesser failures of professional responsibility. If the evidence is insufficient to support a private reprimand or an accusation, the executive officer for registration may send a letter expressing the examining committee's concerns.

**§ 778. Causes for disciplinary action.**

A registrant or certificant shall be subject to disciplinary action who:

(a) Has been convicted of a felony substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a registered professional forester. A conviction within the meaning of this section means a plea or verdict of guilty or a conviction following a plea or nolo contendere. Any action which the board is permitted to take following the establishment of a conviction may be taken when the time for appeal has elapsed or when an order granting probation is made suspending the imposition of sentence, irrespective of a subsequent order under the provisions of Section 1203.4 of the Penal Code.

(b) Has been found guilty by the board of any deceit, misrepresentation, fraud, material misstatement of fact, incompetence, or gross negligence in his or her practice.

(c) Has been guilty of any fraud or deceit in obtaining his or her registration or certification.

(d) Aids or abets any person in the violation of any provision of this article.

(e) Fails in any material respect to comply with the provisions of this article.

**§ 778.5. Criteria development; disciplinary action.**

The board shall develop criteria to determine whether a felony is substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties or a registered professional forester in order to aid it when considering the denial, suspension, or revocation of a license.

**§ 779. Violations; misdemeanor.**

Any person who violates any of the provisions of this article is guilty of a misdemeanor.

**§ 780. Deposit of fees.**

The fees received pursuant to this article shall be deposited in the Professional Foresters Fund in the State Treasury, which fund is hereby created.

**§ 781. Use of fees; emergency expenditure.**

All fees received pursuant to the provisions of this article shall be available, when appropriated by the Legislature, for the administration of this article; provided, that in the event that moneys need to be expended from the Professional Foresters Registration Fund for emergencies for which not appropriation, or an insufficient appropriation, has been made by law, and which in the judgment of the Director of Finance constitutes a case of actual necessity, but limited to purposes of administration of this article which have been specifically approved by the Legislature in budget acts or other legislation, the Director of Finance may authorize an emergency expenditure in an amount determined by him from such fund; provided, further, that the Director of Finance shall file with the Joint Legislature Budget Committee within 10 days after approval of such emergency expenditure, copies of all executive orders, expenditure authorizations, and allotments made pursuant to this section, and stating the reasons for, and the amount of, such expenditures.

**§ 782. Fee schedule.**

The board shall establish by regulation the amount of fees within the following ranges, and based on a determination by the board of the amount of revenues reasonably necessary to carry out this article:

(a) The application fee for registration or each certificate of specialization shall be not less than fifty dollars (\$50) and not more than two hundred dollars (\$200).

(b) The registration fee and certificate of specialization fees and renewal fees shall be not less than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) and not more than two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) per year. Every licensed person shall, on or before July 1 of the year of expiration, pay the renewal fee.

(c) The fee for issuance of a duplicate display registration document or certificate of specialization shall be not less than five dollars (\$5.00) and no more than twenty-five dollars (\$25).

(d) The penalty fee for failure to apply for a renewal shall be not less than ten dollars (\$10) and not more than twenty-five dollars (\$25) for each month of delinquency. In return for the payment of the renewal fee and any applicable late fees, a renewal registration card shall be issued.

(e) A registrant or certificant may, upon written notice to the board, be granted a withdrawal period without penalty not to exceed five years. A reinstatement application shall be accompanied with a fee of not less than fifteen dollars (\$15.00) and not more than fifty dollars (\$50), for registration or each certificate of specialization.

**§ 783. Default in payment of renewal fee; effect.**

In case any person defaults in payment of the renewal fees, his or her registration may be revoked by the board on 60 days notice in writing from the board, unless within this time the fee is paid, together with penalty, not exceeding the amount fixed by this article. Upon payment of the fee and penalty within one year, the board shall reinstate the person's registration.

PROFESSIONAL FORESTERS REGISTRATION

Daniel R. Sendek, Executive Officer

P.O. Box 944246

Sacramento, CA 94244

(916) 653-8031

***DISCLAIMER:*** *Publication of this portion of the California Public Resources Code pertaining to the Registration of Professional Foresters is intended to inform the general public. It is not intended to be authoritative.*

Revised: 1993; as amended by SB 1094.