

Soil Science Legislative Activity

The following is a document detailing the activity surrounding state-level legislation and the advancements in regards to soil science licensing.

March 14, 2012

Great news from Virginia:

Soil Scientists in VA just got into the Dept of Conservation and Receptions regulations to be certified plan reviewers for Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (yes, soil scientists were not in that law! BUT now we can develop E&S plans!!! yipee! another victory for soil scientists in VA!!

January 18, 2012

South Carolina is working on moving their new licensing regulations through the legislature this year. At a State House subcommittee meeting today, the proposed new regulations sailed through the subcommittee with no comments.

April 11, 2011

Virginia's Licensing Bill was signed into law by the Governor on Friday!!! Congratulations Virginia Soil Scientists and to VAPSS for all their hard work!

April 4, 2011

The comment period for the South Carolina rules is open, please see below!

March 23, 2011

Comment period on rules for South Carolina will be opening soon! See below on how to comment.

March 10, 2011

Update on rules from South Carolina.

March 8, 2011

WA will be back to their legislature next year. See below for details.

March 3, 2011

WA is hitting a deadline for their bill to continue - if you are in WA or can help please do! See message below.

March 1, 2011

Both the SSSA and the NSCSS have sent letters of support to Texas. Copies posted below.

February 28, 2011

Great news from Virginia - success in the legislature! See note from Lexi below!

February 18, 2011

Kevin Raley from TN passed along the response to SSSA's comment letter, it is posted below.

February 17, 2011

More information from Texas! If you hold a TX Geoscience License, please respond and contact legislators! See below!

February 15, 2011

If you are licensed in Texas you will want to pay attention to this! See below!

February 5, 2011

Good news out of Washington! See below!

February 4, 2011

More GREAT NEWS from Virginia - see below!

January 26, 2011 (part 2)

GREAT NEWS just in from Virginia!!! See the update below!

January 26, 2011

Well, I missed Monday, but there have been two updates already this week! One from Tennessee who had their Rules Hearing on Monday (1/24) and Virginia who is moving forward with their legislation in the House and the Senate. Read below - the updates have dates on them. As always, let me know if you have questions at dgibas@soils.org.

January 17, 2011

State legislative sessions are now underway. Keep checking back for updated information or to find contact information for active states. If you have information that you would like posted about your state, please contact me at dgibas@soils.org. This week I have added Washington and hope to add some information for Virginia and Ohio in the next few days.

I will update this page via a dated entry every Monday, but please also check below for individual state updates

January 10, 2011

The state legislative sessions are just getting underway for 2011 and there are several states that have proposed legislation pertaining to soil science. This site will list legislation by state. Under each state there is also a person listed as the contact for additional information from that state or Dawn Ferris can also be contacted at dgibas@soils.org for overall questions.

South Carolina

South Carolina passed legislation for soil science licensing last year. The bill, as passed is can be viewed by clicking on the link below. Currently SC is working on rules to support their legislation. Their legislature starts January 11, 2011 and they will be moving forward with a full rules package during this session. You can follow progress with legislation and regulations on the SC Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation - Office of Board Services at <http://lironline.com/POL/soil/>

[South Carolina Soil Science Licensing](#) 

Sherri Moorer from SC provided this update (March 9, 2011)

Yes, we are making progress. The Soil Science Society of South Carolina hired a lobbyist to help them get the exemptions proposed for our statute. That proposed language was presented in the House on February 24 – I've attached the bill for your information. You can also look this up online by going to <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/regnsrch.htm> . Type 3744 in the Document Number box and click "Retrieve Document" to pull up the document with the most up to date information on the bill's status. Since this is a relatively simple change, they hope to get it passed this session so we can close up that hole in our law to legally allow exemption of appropriate folks here in SC.

The first draft of our proposed regulations has also been submitted for publication in the State Register for March (that comes out the last Friday of the month). I've attached the text of what will appear there. They will be in an open comment period during the month of April. I'm planning to post those to our website soon, but I want to talk to the council members at the March 22nd meeting before I do that. I doubt the regulations will go before the legislature for review this session, since it will be so late before they're ready. It will be May if we're lucky and don't have to have an Administrative Hearing, and even later if there are protests and we do have a hearing. The session ends in June, so our goal is to have those ready to present at the very beginning of the 2012 legislative session.

South Carolina Update 3/23/11

South Carolina is moving through their legislative process and a comment period will be opening soon (3/25/11) on proposed rules. Please see the following from Sherri Moorers:

The proposed statute-changes to include exemptions in our law is scheduled for discussion at the Senate Labor, Commerce and Industry Subcommittee Meeting this afternoon at 3:00. They were reviewed last week, but the subcommittee carried it over to this week's meeting because they wanted additional information. The Soil Science Society of South Carolina has retained a lobbyist to assist with this legislation, and he was able to get the requested information to the senators. Hopefully, we'll pass with a favorable review and go to Senate Committee soon. I'll let you know how that goes.

The proposed regulations are scheduled for publication in the State Register this Friday, March 25. The open comment period for the regulations is March 25 – April 24. Since the State Register is a publication that most laypeople aren't familiar with, we've also posted these regulations on our website at <http://www.llronline.com/POL/soil/PDF/Soil%20to%20LC%20Proposed.pdf> . **All comments on these regulations should come to me – they can be sent to me at the address, FAX number or E-mail address in my signature line below.** Once I get confirmation that they have been published, I'll notify the SC Licensees that they're out there and open for comment (I want to wait for confirmation because I was told they'd publish earlier in the year, and they didn't).

Sherri F. Moorers, Program Assistant
SC Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation
Board of Architectural Examiners
Board of Landscape Architectural Examiners
Board of Professional Engineers & Surveyors
Soil Classifiers Advisory Council
110 Centerview Drive, Post Office Box 11419
Columbia, SC 29211-1419
Telephone: (803) 896-4618
FAX: (803) 896-4427
E-mail: moorers@llr.sc.gov
Internet: www.llronline.com

South Carolina Update 4/11/2011

This message is to notify you that proposed regulations for our program have been published in the SC State Register. These regulations are proposed to conform to recent changes in our law. You can view these regulations on our website at <http://www.llronline.com/POL/soil/PDF/Soil%20to%20LC%20Proposed.pdf> .

All comments should be submitted to me in writing no later than 5:00 P.M. on Monday, April 25, 2011. You can submit comments or questions by E-mail at moorers@llr.sc.gov, by FAX at (803) 896-4427, or by U.S. Mail at:

SC Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation

Soil Classifiers Advisory Council

Attention: Sherri F. Moorer, Program Assistant (it's very important you address it to my attention)

110 Centerview Drive

Post Office Box 11417

Columbia, SC 29211-1417

Please be sure to bookmark our website at <http://www.llronline.com/POL/soil/> to stay informed of important information and news regarding soil classifying in SC. Updates on the progress of these proposed regulations will be posted on the "Board News" tab.

Sincerely,

Sherri F. Moorer, Program Assistant
Board of Architectural Examiners
Board of Landscape Architectural Examiners
Board of Professional Engineers and Surveyors
Soil Classifiers Advisory Council
110 Centerview Drive, Post Office Box 11419
Columbia, SC 29211
Telephone: (803) 896-4618
FAX: (803) 896-4427
E-mail: moorers@llr.sc.gov
Internet: <http://www.llronline.com>

Tennessee

Tennessee passed legislation on soil science licensing last year. Currently they are working on rules to support that legislation. The first set of rules being proposed is a partial set of rules that will get the program up and running in order to support the grandfathering period for the licensing act. The grandfathering period ends July 1, 2011, which means that rules need to address how soil scientists can apply to be grandfathered in as licensed. The state has issued a Notice of Rulemaking Hearing and comments are being accepted at this time. The Hearing is on January 24, 2011. The document is posted here and comments should be sent to Kevin Raley (kevin.raley@gmail.com) prior to that date. Kevin is also the contact for any questions regarding legislation in TN. He is a soil scientist that has been involved in getting the licensing act through the legislature as well as being a key person involved with the rules.

[Notice of Rulemaking Hearing](#) 

[Soil Science Licensing Act](#) 

SSSA has submitted a comment letter for the Rulemaking Hearing: [TN Rule Hearing Jan 2011](#) 

Tennessee

Tennessee Update 1/25/11

The Rulemaking Hearing was held yesterday for Tennessee's legislation. Kevin Raley reports the following:

The rule hearing was fairly uneventful. In all there were four respondents with comments: a soil scientist from West TN (not involved with the state association), myself, SSSA, and Steven Majchrzak (assistant commissioner of regulatory boards). All of the comments were well taken. Attending the meeting were two attorneys from C&I (Ms. Wiseman and Mr. Robert Herndon), the administrator that will oversee our program, an assistant director of the department, myself and, Phillip Dickerson (president of SSAT).

The comment from Mr. Majchrzak was with regards to our numbers and he basically asked us if we could indicate any data on potential numbers to expect with regards to applications. I indicated to them that there are approx. 50 active soil consultants in TN right now that would immediately need to apply. However, I also indicated to them that given recent interest in our certified membership tier within SSAT, that number may more accurately be close to 100. Hopefully, we can get this number way above this which is what has to happen in order for our program to succeed; maybe not by getting new members in SSAT but by allowing those who have taken the exams and passed to apply for the license.

In my mind, the comment that SSSA made with regards to the "within the last 2 years" stipulation was the most important with regards to getting new soil professionals licensed and for bolstering our numbers. My only verbal comment at the hearing today was this same comment (and I know that it was rather redundant and I apologized to Mr. Herndon for this). It was well taken and nobody seemed to know why it was really even in there. I guess that we will have to wait and see if anything will come of it.

It was explained to us that all comments will be responded to in writing by Mr. Herndon (attorney for C&I) and that once the preliminary rules have been agreed upon, they will be passed along to the dept. of the sec. of state and placed on hold for 90 days. On top of this, our new governor has placed a hold on all new rules (hearing and making) for 45 days (circa last week sometime).

Tennessee Update 2/18/2011

A response to the comment letter from SSSA has been received and can be found here: [TN Response Letter](#) 

Good news, some changes will be made due to the comments and others will be discussed as their rule making process continues!

Texas

From the Texas Association of Professional Geoscientists web page:

As you may already know, there has been a proposal made THIS LEGISLATIVE SESSION to place the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists (TBPG) into suspension for two years. What this means to the Professional Geoscientist community is presently unclear at this time. TAPG is currently monitoring the situation and attending meetings concerning the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists (TBPG) and will be updating you as soon as we get more information. By any standard...long or short term... this is a clear threat to your licensure or promises to be if the TBPG gets dissolved or placed under an umbrella Board system which does not care or understand Geoscientist issues and worse yet.. legislate matters important to PG's.

What we do need right now ...is for non-members to join TAPG or members to recruit new members immediately. TAPG is THE association with your PG licensure in mind year round. We are facing a serious threat. We ask that you support the association supporting your profession.

Texas Update 2/17/2011

From: Current Issues and Discoveries in Soil Science in Texas [\[mailto:SOILTALK@LISTSERV.TAMU.EDU\]](mailto:SOILTALK@LISTSERV.TAMU.EDU) On Behalf Of Charles T. Hallmark

Sent: Thursday, February 10, 2011 2:28 PM

To: SOILTALK@LISTSERV.TAMU.EDU

Subject: Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists and Governor's Budget Proposal

Subscribers,

Many of you have contacted me about the "fate" of the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists, and the fact that our board was listed as "funding suspended" in the Governor's budget. Many have asked my opinion, what the future for the board will be, etc., and what you can do.

As a Board Member, I am specifically forbidden from lobbying. However, I can give testimony and facts concerning the business of the Board.

There are three budgets that lawmakers work with during a session: Proposed House budget, proposed Senate budget, and proposed Governor's budget. In both the House and Senate Budgets, the TBPG are included, though with cuts that we can live within. The House and Senate will begin hearings and testimony on their budgets shortly. The TBPG is scheduled before the Senate Finance Committee on Feb. 24, (begins at 9 a.m. but one waits until our agenda item is discussed). Selected staff and board members will be present to give testimony. To my knowledge, the schedule for appearing before the House committee has not been posted, but will be late February to mid-March.

At committee hearings, the TBPG will give testimony and facts to support our budget request and funding, plus the important work that geoscientists perform for the public. Eventually, the Senate and House budgets will be negotiated by committee to a single budget bill that will be passed by both Senate and House and go to the Governor for signature. We hope to be included in that bill. The Governor would have the opportunity to sign the bill into law, veto the entire bill, or, rather unique to Texas, line-veto items in the bill before signing it into law.

As of December 31, 2010, we have 5015 total geoscience licensees of which 339 are age 65 or older. Further, we have 357 registered firms offering geoscience services, and 9 geoscientists-in-training (GIT). The GIT program is new as it was only authorized by the last legislature, and took about a year to get into our rules and to accept applications. Those interested in that program, please see our website at <https://tbpg.state.tx.us/>

I think it is the House version of their proposed budget (for FY 2012) that I worked up these figures, which are approximate. That proposed budget allowed 8 FTEs (full time employees), and appropriated \$650,900 from the General Fund for TBPG operations. That represents a reduction in funding of \$66,560 or 9.2% from the current fiscal year's (FY 2011) appropriation. The estimated revenue generated through licenses and registrations for next fiscal year is \$1,187,600. All of that goes into the General Fund from which we would get our \$650,900 appropriation. So, of the funds that TBPG generate, about 55% is returned to our board for operations, and 45% remains in the General Fund to be used as the legislature selects.

The TBPG is scheduling a special board meeting on Feb. 18, 10 a.m. to discuss our approach to these proposed budgets. The agenda for that meeting should be posted by the end of this week. All board meetings are open to the public, except for a few restricted discussions which require "closed sessions" (mostly personnel items) during the "open" meetings. Please understand that we had already begun preparing for the Senate and House committee appearances, but the Governor's proposed budget was just recently released so we need to gather to formulate a board response. As these are open meetings, each of you are welcome to attend, and give remarks if you would like.

Also, as citizens you are able and should contact your legislators, the Governor's Office, and the TBPG and express your concerns, thoughts and opinions. The legislative committee meetings are also open to the public, so you can attend and support your position for or against items on the committee agenda of that day.

As a board member, I will try to keep you informed but do understand that I cannot take a position of requesting you to take a specific action that I think would benefit the board. "State agencies and their boards are specifically prohibited from advocating for or against the passage of any particular piece of legislation." However, licensees may speak freely as can groups such as PSSAT (<http://pssat.org/>) and the Texas Association of Professional Geoscientists (<http://tapgonline.org/>). I am a member of both organizations and appreciate their efforts to further geosciences in our state.

Tom Hallmark, PG

NOTE From SSSA: SSSA will be submitting a letter to a variety of officials (to be posted here once sent) asking that the TBPG be preserved. We encourage those that are licensed in TX or other states to also write letters of support

for maintaining the Texas Board. The NSCSS is also composing a letter. It is important that the legislators hear from licensees and understand why licensing is important to the health, safety, welfare of the public and the environment of Texas.

[SSSA letter to Governor Perry](#) 

[NSCSS letter to Governor Perry](#) 

Virginia

While Virginia has had their own state certification program for a number of years, the Virginia Association of Professional Soil Scientists (VAPSS) is leading the effort this session to change that to licensing. VAPSS has spent a lot of time both raising money for a lobbyist and raising awareness of why soil scientists should be licensed over the past year or so. They succeeded in raising money through donations and by offering lifetime memberships and also asked for (and received) a \$5,000 match from SSSA that is available to states pursuing licensing legislation. They have also spent a lot of time with other professionals, organizations and their legislators talking about why licensing is important and needed and why it should replace the current certification.

The efforts of VAPSS appear to be working; I received an update from VAPSS Executive Board member Lexi Jones this morning. Lexi reports that they are excited to announce that last night the bill passed through the House General Laws Subcommittee. The bill will be heard by the House full committee tomorrow morning. She also said that they had no opposition in the committee last night, which she attributes to the "months and months of hard work working with engineers, the Health Department, the Home Builders, the Onsite Soil Evaluators, the Department of Professional Occupation and Regulation, etc." They have also sent a letter to their legislators, which can be found on their website: <http://vapss.org/Licensure.html>

SSSA also sent some information to VAPSS outlining a justification for licensure vs. certification to aid their lobbyist in conversations with legislators. I get a lot of questions about this as soil scientists contemplate going through this process, so I have posted it below because it applies to everyone, not just Virginia.

[Licensing Justification](#) 

Virginia Update 1/26/11

Lexi Jones updated what is going on in Virginia - and it all sounds good! Read below:

Well we are in the final of the three day hearing for the House. We have gone uncontested the first two days...and are hoping for final house passing today. I will let you know what I hear.

We will be heard by the FULL Senate General Laws And Technology committee on Wednesday 2/2/2011. We were a little nervous that we were not referred to a subcommittee on the senate side. But found out that it is in our favor. They will refer bills only to a subcommittee if they feel there is a need to KILL the bill or that there may be lots of questions and opposition. So here we are going directly to the full committee. We have 3 patrons to the senate bill (our House bill only had 1). So that is exciting. We are busy talking with the full committee, as we originally just concentrated on the subcommittee.

Once we are heard and hopefully passed on the senate side, we will start lobbying with the Governor's office, as he has the final say so (and could veto it if he wanted). So that is ur final task after the senate. Well....AND the house and senate bill will flip to each side, BUT the bills are the exact same...so we don't see any issues there.

I will update as I get more info..and YES our upfront work has definitely paid off.

Virginia Update 1/26/11 Part 2

GREAT NEWS!! Lexi Jones reports the following:

We just PASSED the FULL HOUSE of DELEGATES 98-Y, 0-N....COMPLETELY UNCONTESTED!

Virginia Update 2/4/11

We passed yesterday uncontested on the Senate side. Now we just watch them during the switch over...house bill goes to senate AND senate bill goes to house. They are the same exact bill so no problem there. Now we work on the Governor's office just to be sure they don't have any questions/problems! THIS IS SO AMAZING!

Virginia Update 2/28/11

We are just waiting for the Governor to SIGN our BILLS! We have passed unanimously in the house and senate AND in cross over! So we will be licensed soil scientists soon! Won't be enacted until July 1, 2013, The Dept. of Professional and Occupational Regulation takes 18 months to enact a new licensure!

BUT EXCITING!

Washington

Washington soil scientists are back at their legislature again this year hoping that this will be the year that they can get legislation passed for soil scientists. The soil scientists have joined forces with the wetland scientists to pass a bill that covers both professions. I am told by Lisa Palazzi, who has been working diligently on soil science legislation for the state of Washington for many years that they expect to have official Senate and House bill numbers this week, at which time the bill language can be tracked. The current Code Revisor's text of the bill will be posted on their website. Lisa will also post news to their website at <http://www.soilandwetlandscientistscertification.net/>. Please visit this site for historical and current information on what has been happening in Washington and a copy of the current proposed bill language. You will also find examples of harm that has been done by "professionals" that show why the legislation is necessary, a podcast developed by the proponents of the bill discussing the protection of the public health and welfare, along with bill sponsors and letters of support. Contact information for Lisa is also available on this site.

Washington Update 1/21/11

The following is an update provided by Lisa Palazzi:

A quick update on our current status at the legislature with our ongoing effort to pass a bill describing a state certification program for wetland scientists and soil scientists. Please take a look at the attached summary above for additional information. (my note - this can be found on their website provided in the above post on WA)

We met with Rep. Steve Kirby the other day. He is a bill co-sponsor, and is the Chair of the House Business and Financial Committee – a new committee as of this session with a completely new group of Representatives. Rep. Kirby was very welcoming. He encouraged us to also contact the Senate and get a concurrent hearing from their committee. As a result, we have hearings scheduled **next week**. The Senate Bill has been scheduled for hearing on next Tuesday 1/25/11 at 1:30 PM and the House Bill has been scheduled for hearing on Friday, 1/28/11 at 1:30 PM.

It is of VITAL IMPORTANCE, maybe more than ever before, that we get people to Olympia to testify in support or even just to show up in numbers greater than our opponents at these hearings. **Please get the word out so we can fill the hearing room with supporters on both days.**

If one cannot attend in person, testimony can be emailed to all committee members and staff and to our sponsors and staff. Copies of written testimony can be handed in at the hearing as well.

We REALLY need to hear from people who live in the Committee member's Districts. But ANY emails of support to ANY Legislator (House or Senate) is needed since we hope to get these bills through not just these

committees, but also The Rules Committee (both House and Senate) and then to the Floor (both House and Senate).

Please note that we may ask you to send several emails of support to your Legislators throughout this session as we move through other committees and onto the floor of the House and Senate. The emails need not be long; they just need to clearly state that you are a constituent and you want your Legislators to support this bill. This just takes a few minutes of time to help by sending an email, but it makes an enormous difference to the outcome in Olympia.

Thanks, Lisa Palazzi

Washington Update 2/5/11

From Lisa Palazzi:

This is due in part to some of you helping with getting the word out. The Committee members were definitely hearing from their constituents, and it made a HUGE difference – in particular with some of the members from east of the Cascades who are on the fence between wanting consumer protection but not wanting “more government”. Thanks so much for your help! Please pass the word and thanks to our supporters.

Here is the rest of the process (and it is not that simple...):

1. First, we need to go through Ways and Means Committees in both the House and the Senate. This is hopefully easy due to this program being self-funded (i.e., no fiscal impact to the state). In the Senate Ways and Means, our prime sponsor is the Chair of that Committee, so I think we are OK there. The House is always more of an unknown.
2. Then we go through the Rules Committee in both Houses. That is where people sit in a room, and they go around the room three times, and each member gets to take three “pulls”, which means they send three of their most favorite bills to the floor for a vote. We have bill sponsors on both the House and Senate Rules Committee, so hopefully, that will not be a problem either – dependent on how many favorites they have.....
3. Then we are sent to the floors of both Houses. If we get through there without any language changes.... Then no need to check back in with the other Body to agree on changes --
4. Then we send the bill to the Governor for signature!

Washington Update 3/3/11

From Lisa Palazzi - note the short time-frame (March 7) and help needed to keep the bill moving!

Hello all:

Sorry for this less personal email, but I am just giving a broad update about SB 5225 in blind CC format to a wide range of people who have helped recently with emails to their Legislators or Committee Members this session.

Sen. Fraser very kindly used one of her pulls to send SB 5225 to Green Sheet in the Rules Committee tonight!!

This is a REALLY amazing accomplishment! Feel free to send her a thank you; it always helps.

Now we work some more to have her or another member of the Rules Committee send it from the Green Sheet to the Calendar (which means to send it out of Rules to the Senate floor to get it scheduled for a vote). **So we**

have two more steps to the floor vote before the March 7th deadline!!! We think that Rules will meet again in the next 24-48 hours, so we need to send – AGAIN – emails to Rules Committee members asking them to use a pull to send SB 5225 from the Green Sheet to the Senate floor.

Our best bets for this next pull are: Sen. Jeanne Kohl-Welles (kohl-welles.jeanne@leg.wa.gov), Sen. Karen Fraser (karen.fraser@leg.wa.gov); Sen. Phil Rockefeller (phil.rockefeller@leg.wa.gov); Sen. Nick Harper (harper.nick@leg.wa.gov); Lt. Gov. Brad Owen (owen.brad@leg.wa.gov); Sen. Mary Margaret Haugen (haugen.marymargaret@leg.wa.gov); and Sen. Scott White (scott.white@leg.wa.gov), but if you are a constituent – go ahead and ask your Senator to use their pull – or contact your local Senator (not on Rules) in any case, and ask them to send a request to any of these Committee members for a pull of SB 5225 from the Green Sheet to the Senate floor.

Thanks a million!!

Lisa Palazzi

Here is a list of the entire Rules Committee emails:

owen.brad@leg.wa.gov; prentice.margarita@leg.wa.gov; hewitt.mike@leg.wa.gov; brown.lisa@leg.wa.gov;
carrell.mike@leg.wa.gov; eide.tracey@leg.wa.gov; harper.nick@leg.wa.gov; haugen.marymargaret@leg.wa.gov;
keiser.karen@leg.wa.gov; king.curtis@leg.wa.gov; kline.adam@leg.wa.gov; mcauliffe.rosemary@leg.gov.wa;
linda.parlette@leg.wa.gov; cheryl.pflug@leg.wa.gov; phil.rockefeller@leg.wa.gov; mark.schoesler@leg.wa.gov;
val.stevens@leg.wa.gov; scott.white@leg.wa.gov; joseph.zarelli@leg.wa.gov; Kohl-Welles.Jeanne@leg.wa.gov

Washington Update 3/8/11

SB 5225 did make it into the Senate from the Rules Committee about midday on Monday. Thanks for all of your support and help on that!!

We were very hopeful until after 5:00 last night, but the bill was never scheduled for a Senate floor vote, so could not get past the mid-term deadline for passing a bill from either the Senate or the House. That means that we are done for this year. Just so you understand the process, every bill has a life of 2 years. This was the first of our two-year period, and we made a lot of progress – all the way to the Senate floor on one side, and to House Appropriations on the other side. That is a phenomenal accomplishment, and will help us enormously next year. We will be coming back next year to pick up and start again, but one step back from where we left off this year. So that means, in the Senate, SB 5225 will be starting again in Rules, and in the House, HB 1313 will be starting again in the House Policy Committee – Business and Financial Services.

The Year 1 session is one month longer than Year 2, and Year 2 is usually reserved for budget issues. In this tough economic time, many issues this year (Year 1) were budget or economy related, and despite our program being self-funded (i.e., expenses are covered by participant fees -- so no impact on the state budget), many Legislators (particularly new ones) just noted that it had an attached fiscal note and did not look further. We also were up against a significant mis-information campaign where some Legislators were convinced it was a practice act (has not been since 2007) and taxpayer funded (not allowed under state law) -- which would be more expensive and less inclusive. Some were not aware that 2 different State-run Sunrise Review reports had recommended that these two professions be regulated to protect the public from harm.

Next Year, it is very important that we start the Session already engaged and ready to go since we will have one less month to get through, and the midterm deadline (which we could not meet yesterday) comes earlier. But we are poised to pass through the Senate very quickly – as long as we can get out of Rules ASAP; and we already passed through the House Policy Committee this year, so we should be able to do that again next year, as long as we have the same or better support from constituents contacting their Legislators on both sides of the Aisle asking for support and making sure that our self-funded, consumer protection, Title Act program is correctly defined. We do need people willing to come to Olympia and testify in person at various Hearings, and ideally, some of those people will be consumers – not just potential program participants. So we need to find some more developers, engineers, surveyors, single-family home owners.... who are willing to come and testify on our behalf. Those people made a huge difference this year. Please start thinking about that now.

If you have an interesting story about coming after somebody else and cleaning up a bad job – feel free to tell it, but please do not use client or consultant names or addresses, to avoid uncomfortable and potentially litigious situations. Pictures are worth a thousand words as they say, but they need to be pictures that a lay-person can understand. For example, a picture of a hydric soil is not going to resonate with a legislator, but a flooding home tells the story very well.

If you are interested in helping us work on strategy for next year over the summer, please contact me, and we'll make it happen.

Thanks for all of your help and support,

Lisa Palazzi

Pacific Rim Soil & Water, Inc.
1220 4th Avenue East
Olympia, WA 98506
360-236-1899 (main office)