



Certification Program Handbook

Procedures, policies, and
guidelines for all credentials
within the Certified Forester™
program

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Society of
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**Certified
Forester™**

Proven Professionals.
Advice You Can Trust.

Certified Forester™ Standards of Professional Practice

Every Certified Forester (CF) and applicant for Certified Forester status agrees to:

1. Make every effort to periodically review and follow all applicable state and federal regulations governing environmental quality and, specifically, the stewardship and management of forest resources;
2. Make every effort to recognize and inform prospective clients or employers of the responsibility to conserve forest resources and to maintain environmental quality in management recommendations;
3. Refrain from providing a professional opinion or recommendation for an area of expertise for which the individual is not qualified by either academic preparation or experience and to refer clients or employers to other natural resource professionals when the expertise of such individuals shall best serve the interests of the public, the forestry profession, and the client/employer;
4. Use only truthful and clear statements in any advertising or statement of qualifications;
5. Refrain from misrepresenting CF certification, or one's individual CF status, including the misuse of application status, trademark, certificate, or other related credentials;
6. Refrain from any misrepresentation on an application; willful submission of incorrect information in recertification; or failure to include relevant information in any communication to the Certification Review Board or SAF National Office; and to
7. Pay all required fees, as set forth in the certification requirements.

Further, every CF and CF applicant agrees that violation of the standards listed above may be a basis for adverse action, including denial or revocation of certification or recertification in accordance with Certification Review Board (CRB) Administrative Rules, and that:

- Certification may be suspended, and may be revoked pending review by the CRB, following final action resulting in revocation or suspension of a CF's state forestry registration or licensing credential, or related professional credential or professional membership;
- A conviction of, plea of guilty to, or plea of nolo contendere to a felony related to forestry practices or to public health or welfare or a misdemeanor that relates directly to forestry practices, may be grounds for denial, revocation, or suspension of certification; and that
- The CF shall report any revocation, suspension, conviction, or plea as described above to SAF within thirty (30) days of the final action. An individual convicted of such a felony or misdemeanor may be ineligible to apply for certification or recertification for a period of three (3) years from the exhaustion of appeals, probation, parole, or final release from confinement (if any) whichever is later.

Adopted by SAF Council 1994. Document revised April 2003 and September 2005

The mission of the Society of American Foresters is to advance the science, education, technology, and practice of forestry; to enhance the competency of its members; to establish professional excellence; and to use the knowledge, skills, and conservation ethic of the profession to ensure the continued health and use of forest ecosystems and the present and future availability of forest resources to benefit society.

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Introduction

Professional standards are developed for those whose activities influence the well being of the general public. Providing a consistent, national credential in forestry is a service offered by the Society of American Foresters (SAF), a nonprofit, scientific, and educational organization. SAF advocates wise stewardship in forest resources management to the public, practicing foresters, and the forestry profession.

The SAF established the national Certified Forester (CF) credential in 1994. Initially the CF assessed academic preparation, professional experience, adherence to standards of professional practice, and commitment to continuing education for professionals engaged in forestry. In 2003, a competency examination was added to assess an applicant's forestry knowledge, skills, and abilities. The program was expanded to include an examination for a Certified Forester/Forest Certification Auditor (CF/FCA) in 2003 along with the Candidate Certified Forester® (CCF®) credential in 2005.

Certified Foresters must meet stringent education standards, pass the written examination, participate in continuing education, and adhere to standards of practice, conducting all forestry activities in a responsible, professional manner consistent with state and federal regulations governing environmental quality and forest management practices.

Certification Objective

The program promotes excellence in the stewardship of our nation's forest resources through enhanced professionalism in forestry. The program advances this through the development, maintenance, promotion, and administration of an examination-based professional forester certification that mandates professional development and commitment to standards of professional practice.

The Certified Forester/Forest Certification Auditor specialized credential further defines and recognizes expertise in aspects of forestry. This is consistent with the SAF Task Force on Forestry Education Accreditation report, which called for SAF to certify individual competency in specialized forestry areas, such as urban forestry or timber harvesting.

The Candidate Certified Forester credential will inspire every forestry graduate and those returning to the profession to consider becoming a CF and consequently be aware of the certification program and its values to them and to society. The CCF credential will be upheld to the rigorous requirements of the CF credential including a collegiate education; maintaining continuing forestry education; and following the *Professional Standards of Practice*.

NOTE: The program may supplement or complement state laws that certify, register, or license foresters. However, the credentials within the program are not a substitute for such statutory requirements.

Requirements for Eligibility

To qualify to take the certification examination, all applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements. A letter granting certification examination eligibility will be awarded to successful applicants, who use the letter to register for the certification examination.

Only current Certified Foresters qualify for the Certified Forester/Forest Certification Auditor exam.

Commitment to CF Standards of Professional Practice

Every CF or CCF and applicant agrees to the CF Standards of Professional Practice, as found on the front inside cover of this handbook. Signing the Certification Examination Application indicates acceptance of and willingness to comply with the Standards.

Certified Forester Credential (CF)

Each applicant must have five-years or more of qualifying professional experience within the past 10 years, and can only include experience following conferral of the first qualifying degree. Employment prior to conferral of first qualifying degree, including academic internships and cooperative work agreements, cannot count toward the experience requirement.

Candidate Certified Forester (CCF)

Applicants who possess the required education but who do not have sufficient professional forestry-related experience may apply for the Candidate Certified Forester (CCF). Those candidates applying to be Certified Foresters but who fail to meet the experience requirement (so long as they have met the education requirement) will automatically be awarded the CCF.

Applicants having professional forestry experience must list the experience under the relevant area of professional forestry-related work experience – Resource Assessment, Stakeholder Analysis and Relations, Management Planning; or Execution of Management Plan, as set forth in Section II, Experience Requirement. Any applicant demonstrating five or more years of qualifying professional experience in two of the four areas within the past 10 years will be required to submit an application for the Certified Forester credential. Applicants must pass the CF exam within one year after meeting the experience requirements; failure to meet this requirement will result in loss of the CCF credential.

Qualifying experience must follow the conferral of the first qualifying forestry degree. Employment prior to graduation, including academic internships and cooperative work agreements, does not count toward the experience requirement.

Education Requirement

Minimum education criteria can be met through one of three options described in detail below. It is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate that he or she meets fully all eligibility criteria before being granted permission to sit for the CF examination.

Option 1

An earned degree at the baccalaureate or master's level from a SAF-accredited or SAF-candidate curriculum.

NOTE: No doctoral or non-US degree programs and very few masters' degree programs are or have ever been SAF-accredited. Associate programs will be eligible for accreditation beginning in 2009. An applicant with a degree from an SAF-accredited associates program must meet all education requirements provided in Option 3 to qualify for Certified Forester.

A list of institutions with accredited programs can be found on the Certified Forester website (www.certifiedforester.org). **Please verify that a degree is accredited.** SAF staff is able to assist you in determining whether your degree was received from an accredited program.

Option 2

An earned degree at the baccalaureate, master's, or doctorate level in forestry from a non-SAF accredited curriculum so long as the degree content is approved by the Qualifications and Administration Committee (QAC) of the SAF Certification Review Board as meeting the course content in the subject matter areas outlined in Option 3 below.

Option 3

A baccalaureate degree in a related natural resources field along with a minor or an associate's degree in forestry. Examples of "related natural resources field" include, but are not limited to, environmental studies, wildlife management, range management, or ecology.

If the baccalaureate degree is not in forestry, the degree content must be approved by the QAC.

The QAC will review the degree content to ensure that it contains courses or significant course content totaling between 56-72 credit hours, but in any event no less than 56 credit hours in forestry-related coursework.

A "credit hour" shall be the equivalent of a semester credit hour, and not a quarter credit hour. One semester credit hour is equal to 1.5 quarter hours. A one semester credit hour course consists of 15 contact hours of class, lecture or recitation. A contact hour is defined as a minimum of 50 minutes in a 1 hour period. Two laboratory hours (a minimum) are equal to 1 contact hour of class, lecture or recitation.

The credit hours required in the following forestry-related coursework areas, a-d, total 51; the remaining 5 hours may be in any of the forestry-related coursework areas. For purposes of this section, "forestry-related coursework" shall include the following subject matter areas:

a. Ecology and Forest Biology

Courses or significant course content, but in no event less than 15, of the credit hours from the following areas:

- Dendrology; forest vegetation, or plant taxonomy
- Forest Soils; or advanced soils (junior level or higher)
- Forest ecology/ biology; silvics; wildlife biology/ecology; conservation biology; or wetland ecology
- Forest entomology and pathology; integrated pest management
- Fire ecology; or wildfire management

b. Measurement of Forest Resources

Courses or significant course content, but in no event less than 12, of the credit hours from the following areas:

- Forest mensuration; forest resource measurements
- Land surveying; photogrammetry/remote sensing; principles and applications of geographic information systems
- Forest resource inventory; forest inventory design, sampling methods and analysis; statistics

c. Management of Forest Resources

Courses or significant course content, but in no event less than 15, of the credit hours from the following areas:

- Silviculture; or advanced forest ecology (senior level or higher)
- Forest resource management plans – design, development, implementation and analysis (timber, watershed, wildlife, recreation, endangered species – combinations – or urban forest applications)
- Forest engineering; forest operations; timber/forest resource harvesting

d. Forest Resource Policy, Economics and Administration

Courses or significant course content, but in no event less than 9, of the credit hours from the following areas:

- Forest/natural resource policy – policy development and administration, law and regulation development and implementation
- Forest/natural resource economics – markets, human resources, finance, business management
- Professional ethics; responsibility and integrity, standards of practice, client/public/professional relationships

Every applicant must submit an original certified final transcript showing the date and name of the professional forestry degree earned. **Photocopies will not be accepted.** If more than one degree is required to show coverage of required courses, all transcripts must be submitted.

For those applicants applying under options 2 or 3, applications must include a course description or syllabi to verify that the eligibility requirements have been met. Applicants may be requested to submit additional documentation.

Forestry graduates from all countries are invited to apply for certification; however, collegiate credits taken outside the United States often vary from the American system. Applicants who have earned credits from non-US programs must organize and present course titles, credits, and contents in the format listed in the application. SAF reserves the right to require independent verification of coursework completed at a non-U.S. based institution.

Experience Requirement

The experience requirement for the Certified Forester credential and the Candidate Certified Forester credential are different and determine which credential is appropriate. *NOTE: If an individual is eligible by virtue of education and experience to take the CF Exam, SAF will not grant said individual CCF status.*

ALL APPLICANTS must provide accompanying information, including a résumé (examples can be found at www.certifiedforester.org), to demonstrate that professional experience is adequate in two of the four areas below:

a. Resource Assessment

- Collect preliminary data for a parcel of forest land (e.g., soils, cover types, access, stream and riparian areas, and legal and regulatory environment) using both on-the-ground and external data collection methods to identify the inventory strategy required for the property and to determine general condition, land capabilities, and management options.
- Inventory selected resources to establish management direction and to facilitate achieving the stated objectives using accepted quantitative and/or qualitative methods.
- Inventory forest condition (e.g., weeds, insect, disease surveys, fuel loading, and damage) using accepted survey methods in order to establish the basis for decision-making.
- Delineate property boundaries using appropriate methods and licensed surveyors when required in order to determine the scope of the area to be managed.
- Perform a resource supply-and-demand assessment for a discrete geographical area to determine availability and market conditions.
- Determine potential productivity of the land base for identified resources using accepted procedures in order to evaluate management options.

b. Stakeholder Analysis and Relations

- Identify potential stakeholders using relevant sources (e.g., landowner consultation, regulatory bodies, ownership records, lease documents, regionally important resource professionals and/or groups) to discern the level of their involvement in developing a strategy or management plan.
- Evaluate the relative importance of each stakeholder's position to determine its level of impact on management planning and implementation, using legal and objective criteria.
- Solicit input as appropriate by engaging stakeholders to incorporate their concerns effectively in management planning and implementation.
- Review management options and their implications through consultation to assist the landowner in establishing objectives.
- Advocate the importance of science-based forest policies, laws, and practices using appropriate channels of communication and influence to ensure the long-term capacity of the land to provide the variety of goods and services required by society.

c. Management Planning

- Confirm land ownership using legal records to assure authority to make management decisions.
- Describe the management goals determined in the stakeholder analysis in order to establish priorities and direction for management.
- Describe the existing resource condition using the resource assessment to provide a basis for developing science-based management options.
- Develop management options by evaluating economic and operational factors to meet owner objectives.

- Establish management options using stakeholder input, existing laws and regulations, and the resource assessment in order to select the preferred option to meet owner objectives and address foreseeable conflicts.
- Identify applicable standards, regulations, and practices by reviewing appropriate federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and voluntary practices to develop compliance strategies.
- Describe operational methods and techniques by formulating the silvicultural system and associated practices as appropriate to achieve the established owner objectives.
- Establish monitoring and adjustment strategies in order to ensure that owner objectives are met and conflicts mitigated by defining applicable procedures.

d. Execution of Management Plan

- Implement the management plan using specified activities (e.g., surveying, harvesting, reforestation, site preparation, hazard reduction, road building) and in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and voluntary practice standards in order to meet the owner objectives.
- Develop a budget by estimating costs and revenues for specified activities in order to fund the management plan.
- Prepare contracts or work plans by developing and negotiating detailed specifications in order to implement the management plans.
- Administer contracts or work plans to ensure monitoring and enforcing specifications meet management plan objectives.
- Monitor activities by measuring specified variables and indicators in order to ensure that the goals of the management plan are met.
- Identify changes as they occur by monitoring indicators in order to adapt the management plan.

Experience Credit for Advanced Education

Time spent in pursuit of an advanced academic degree may be credited toward professional experience, subject to the following:

- A maximum of one (1) year of experience credit will be allowed for completion of the master's degree, a maximum of two (2) years' credit for the PhD, and a maximum of three (3) years' credit for a master's and PhD.
- Experience credit will be given only upon completion of advanced degree(s) in forest resources management or a closely related discipline.
- Applicants requesting experience credit for advanced degree work in forestry or a closely related discipline must request this credit on the Professional Experience Form of the CF application.

The applicant must fully document, for each experience, the time devoted specifically to activities of a professional forester. The SAF staff or the Certification Review Board (CRB) will determine whether an applicant's experience meets the requirements. Applicants may be requested to submit additional documentation.

Extensions

Upon acceptance into the program, CCFs will be given up to 10-years to complete their experience requirement and will be notified of their specific experience eligibility window. No extensions will be granted for the experience requirement.

The Certification Examination

Applicants taking the Certification Examination are required to follow the guidelines and policies relating to examination administration and examination security.

Applications with full payment will be reviewed by the SAF staff to assess eligibility for the exam. Once SAF approves the Certification Examination Application, it will notify the individual of his or her eligibility. CF applicants who have not satisfied the experience and education requirements or CFF applicants who have not satisfied the education requirements will be determined ineligible and receive a refund; however, a \$50 administrative fee will be accessed. **Please review the eligibility criteria carefully.** Any candidate may contact the SAF staff for clarification on eligibility prior to submitting an application.

The eligibility letter confirms that a candidate is eligible to take the examination, provides complete details for scheduling an examination, and provides eligibility window, which varies between the different credentials within the CF program.

CF and CF/FCA credentials – The eligibility window for applicants is 12 months after the date of eligibility letter.

CCF credential –The applicant is eligible take the exam at any time after receiving the eligibility letter. Upon completing the 5-year experience requirement, an individual is considered to be an applicant for the CF credential; thus, the 12-month eligibility window will apply.

Format and Content – CF Exam

The Certified Forester examination is currently computer based and includes 150 multiple-choice questions. The exam questions:

- were developed by work groups of professional foresters
- were independently validated by professional foresters
- are referenced to current resources from forestry textbooks and other reference sources, and
- satisfy the test specifications of a job analysis.

The allotted time to complete the exam is 3 hours. Additional exam details will be provided at the time of registration.

Format and Content – Forest Certification Auditor Exam

The Forest Certification Auditor specialized examination is currently computer based and includes 65 multiple-choice questions focused on auditing in forests and forestry-related settings. Any Certified Forester in good standing may submit an application for the CF/FCA exam. **Individuals with the CCF credential do not qualify for this exam.**

The Forest Certification Auditor exam has no forestry questions; forestry knowledge is assessed prior to awarding the initial CF. The exam questions:

- were developed and independently validated by work groups of US and Canadian foresters and forest auditors experienced in a range of certification systems, including SFI, FSC, and Tree Farm,
- are referenced to current resources from forest certification and auditing reference sources, and
- satisfy the test specifications of the sustainable forest management auditor job analysis.

The allotted time to complete the CF/FCA exam is 1 ½ hours. Additional exam details will be provided at the time of registration.

While forestry content experts wrote the questions for both exams and validated their appropriateness for the examination, testing professionals reviewed the questions to ensure that they perform as intended.

Both exams are available in hundreds of testing centers around the country, and can be scheduled during the centers' business hours. Schroeder Measurement Technologies, Inc administers the exams and will work directly with each individual in scheduling the time and location.

Passing Score

The passing scores for the Certification and Forest Certification Auditor Examinations are determined by a criterion-referenced approach called the Modified Angoff Technique. This technique is currently considered by testing professionals to be one of the most defensible methods available for establishing a passing score because it relies on the pooled judgments of content experts. This approach asks a group of professional foresters to review each item on the examination and determine the probability that minimally knowledgeable candidates will answer each item correctly. The final passing score for the examination is based on this pooled judgment and the calculation of the standard error of the mean. Finally, item analysis and reliability indices are calculated for each question.

Because not every candidate sits for the same form or version of the exam, the score for each form or version will differ. The "scaled score" is a way of putting all scores, regardless of the version of the exam a candidate takes or the total number of items on the exam, on the same scale or frame of reference. The exams use a scaled scores that range from 0 (0 items correct) to 100 (all items correct). A passing scaled score is for the exam is 75.

Special Examination Accommodations

Any candidate may request a modification to the examination administration procedure due to disability, handicap, or other condition that may impair the ability of the candidate to take the test. To request special testing accommodations, candidates must indicate the needs on the application. Following application processing, SAF or its vendor will send candidates a Special Accommodations Form. Upon submission of documentation which establishes the disability and a reasonable accommodation of such disability, SAF or its vendor will make the necessary arrangements for accommodation.

Examination Site Requirements

Only the individuals named on the registration roster will be permitted to take the examination. Unless otherwise specified in the eligibility letter, individuals must present two signature-bearing forms of identification to be admitted to the testing center. Both forms of identification must have the same

name as given on the examination application. One form of identification must bear a photograph. Examples of photo-bearing identification are a valid driver's license, an employee ID, a passport, or a military ID. Examples of signature-bearing identifications include credit and bank (ATM) cards. Unacceptable forms of identification include library cards and Social Security cards.

Individuals are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times at the testing center. Test site personnel will dismiss any disruptive candidates from the site. No refunds will be given to candidates expelled or required to leave the test site due to disruptive behavior.

No visitors are permitted in testing rooms (including children). Individuals may bring only a non-programmable calculator into the room. No food, beverages, coats, book bags, luggage, pagers, cellular telephones, tape recorders, other electronic devices, or other personal items will be allowed. Smoking is prohibited.

All examination materials are the property of SAF and must be returned to the proctors upon leaving the test site. All candidates must agree that they will not reveal the contents of the examination to anyone. Failure to keep examination questions confidential may result in permanent disqualification from eligibility for certification and/or revocation of certification, as well as other legal action.

Examination Results

Candidates receive exam results immediately after taken the exam. However, the exam is rescored and the results are immediately sent to SAF from Schroeder Measurement Technologies, Inc. Once SAF receives the results, SAF will send one of the following:

- Applicants that successfully pass the exam will receive a certificate and other materials.
- Applicants that do not successfully pass the exam will receive information about reexamination.

Reexamination

Applicants that do not receive a passing score on the test can register to retake the exam. Applicants must pass the exam within the eligibility window. The applicant will be required to submit a reexamination fee of \$150.00 for SAF members and \$200.00 for non-members.

Extensions

Applicants who will not be able to take the Certification Examination or the Forest Certification Auditor Examination within the 12-month eligibility window may request an extension.

An extension can be obtained by submitting a written request stating the reason for the extension prior to the eligibility window's expiration date. A one-time six-month extension will be given at no additional cost to the candidate.

A no-cost extension **will not** be granted once the applicant's eligibility window has exceeded. However, an applicant may take the exam within six months of the end of the eligibility window by submitting a \$125 late fee.

Applicants who do not take the examination within eighteen months of the date of their eligibility letter, regardless of whether they have been granted an extension, must submit the full certification fee again.

Under rare special circumstances (*i.e.*, medical emergency, birth of a child, death of an immediate family member), SAF may allow an extension at no additional cost once an applicant's window expiration date lapses. Special circumstances must either immediately precede or coincide with the window expiration date. All such circumstances must include supporting documentation, such as a doctor's note.

Deferrals and Requests for Refunds

NOTE: *SAF must receive all deferral and refund requests in writing at least thirty days prior to the exam. So that SAF may administer its exam fee policies fairly, no exceptions will be made.*

If an individual has registered for the exam and discovers that the exam date is no longer feasible, the individual may defer to another testing date. Only one deferral will be permitted. An applicant must submit the request, in writing, to SAF. In the deferral request, indicate confirmed test date and the requested test date. A deferral fee of \$75 must be included with the written request. Deferral requests without payment will not be honored.

Under rare special circumstances (*i.e.*, medical emergency, birth of a child, death of an immediate family member), SAF may allow a deferral to a future test date. Special circumstances must either immediately precede or coincide with the administration of the exam. All such circumstances must include supporting documentation, such as a doctor's note, within 60 days of the test date.

Applicants may request a refund. All refund requests must be submitted thirty days prior to the scheduled exam date. Requests within thirty days will not be granted. A \$50 administrative fee will be charged to the applicant. Only the exam candidate may request a cancellation. Cancellation notices by employers or other third parties will not be honored.

Applicants who request a refund also cancel their eligibility status. Individuals who re-apply in the future will be requested to submit a new application and application fee.

SAF Test Security and Confidentiality Policy

The CF and CF/FCA examinations, item bank, scoring keys, answer sheets, work sheets, and any other test or test-related materials remain the sole and exclusive property of SAF. These materials are confidential and are not available for review by any person or agency for any reason.

Examination scores are confidential and will not be disclosed unless directed by valid and lawful subpoena or court order. Anyone who violates the SAF Test Security and Confidentiality Policy may be subject to disciplinary or legal action(s) by the Society of American Foresters.

Requirement Overview

To maintain CF certification, a CF must:

- recertify every three years;
- continue to comply with the CF Standards of Professional Practice;
- accumulate 60 continuing forestry education (CFE) credit hours; and
- pay applicable renewal and recertification fees.

To maintain the CCF credential, a CCF must:

- renew every year;
- continue to comply with the CF Standards of Professional Practice;
- accumulate 15 continuing forestry education (CFE) credit hours annually;
- submit evidence of any forestry related work (qualifying experience will be applied to the CF experience requirement) annually; and
- pay applicable renewal fees.

(CF/FCA with a recertification date AFTER February 1, 2011)

To maintain the CF/FCA credential, a CF/FCA must:

- recertify every three years; (recertification date corresponds to CF recertification date)
- continue to comply with the CF Standards of Professional Practice;
- accumulate 20 continuing forestry education (CFE) credit hours; and
- pay applicable renewal and recertification fees.

Continuing Forestry Education

An active program of professional development keeps foresters abreast of the rapidly expanding scientific and technical knowledge and methods associated with forest resources. Prior to recertification, or annual renewal (CCF), a CF and CCF must complete continuing forestry education and submit evidence of meeting the requirements. More detailed information about the CFE categories can be found at www.safnet.org/education/cfecategory.cfm

The CRB categorizes continuing education activities into the following three types.

- Live Programs – educational workshops, seminars, conferences, lectures, live videoconference, field trips, or phone broadcasts.
- Subscription Self-Study – credit awarded through quizzes contained within professional periodicals.
- Online Self-Study – educational programs with quizzes or a system that can track attendance on the Internet.

Category 1 – Core Education

All category 1 activities MUST satisfy ALL of the following conditions:

- (1) It is an organized program of learning conducted in a setting physically suitable to continuing forestry education objectives.
- (2) Speakers must be qualified to address their topics and be considered experts in their presentation subject by virtue of special education, training, and/or experience.
- (3) The subject matter must directly relate to the approved content area for the appropriate credential. Individual presentations within a workshop or conference may qualify while others do not.
- (4) The program content must be of a technical level and nature such that it supplements and builds upon the knowledge necessary to ensure professional competency. Training sessions targeted specifically for landowners do NOT meet this criterion.
- (5) The program content cannot be:
 - specific to protocols of an individual organization, company, or agency;
 - about organization-specific procedures and operations;
 - employee training in organization-specific practices/policies.

However, attendance can be limited to individuals of a particular organization.

Depending on the program content, an activity will be classified under a specific credential:

- Cat 1-CF Certified Forester, including Candidate Certified Forester
- Cat 1-FCA Certified Forester/Forest Certification Auditor

If the program content falls under the approved content area, but does not meet all the criteria of category 1, it must be assigned to category 2.

Category 1-CF

Program content must be directly related to the Topics / Knowledge content areas defined for the four Certified Forester Domains

Domain	Topics / Knowledge
<p>Resource Assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding soil properties and processes specific to forested areas • Understanding photo interpretation and remote sensing • Understanding how to use GIS and GPS in data collection and maintenance • Understanding the interactions between forest ecological factors and ecosystem services • Understanding forest measurements, land surveying concepts, inventory and sampling techniques, and new technology • Identifying impacts from forest insects and diseases • Identifying basic aquatic and terrestrial flora & fauna • Understanding how climate, fire, pollution, genetics, insects, diseases, invasive species affect forest health and productivity • Understanding how to access and evaluate current economic and market conditions
<p>Stakeholder Analysis & Relations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications including conflict resolution, mediation, how to conduct effective stakeholder surveys and meetings, and techniques • Understanding how polices, federal, state, and local laws and regulations directly govern the practice of forestry, including voluntary standards and guidelines • Understanding changing forest landowner demographics and identifying stakeholders • Understanding how social, cultural, political, legal, educational, economic and institutional histories influence the practice of forestry
<p>Management Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding hydrology, water quality, and watershed functions and management and constraints • Understanding the relationship between forest management and wildlife, fisheries, range, or wetlands management • Understanding how tax policies impact forest management • Understanding of silvicultural principles and techniques to achieve objectives • Developing management plans with specific objectives including forest products, recreation, non-timber products, wildlife • Developing a fire risk assessment and understanding of suppression techniques, • Understanding fire weather and prescribed fire methods • Understanding how to use GIS in land management planning • Analyzing economic, environmental, and social consequences of forest resource management strategies and decisions • Analyzing inventory data and projecting future forest, stand and tree conditions • Understanding basic real estate and legal records such as land records, deeds, and land surveys
<p>Execution of Management Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing harvesting plans including road maintenance, roadbed stabilization, timber appraisal, and logging costs • Understanding methods to achieve silvicultural objectives • Understanding contract law and interpreting contract specifications • Recognizing and determining the impact and severity caused by catastrophic agents and corrective methods such as rehabilitation or salvage harvesting • Understanding harvesting systems, techniques, and methods and how economic impacts effect harvesting schedules • Understanding reforestation methods and measuring success rates • Understanding control methods and pesticide application technologies for forest insects and diseases and vegetation management • Understanding professional ethics • Understanding how cost share programs impact the management plan

Category 1-FCA

Program content must be directly related to the Topics / Knowledge content areas defined for the three Forest Certification Auditor Domains

Domain	Topics / Knowledge
Gathering & Reviewing Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication skills including interviewing and group facilitation • Understanding of professional ethics and identifying conflict of interest • Understanding of types of evidence required for specific SFM Certification Systems • Understanding of international protocols such as ISO 14001 • Understanding basic project management techniques such as organization, timeline development, and scheduling
Analysis, Interpretation & Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding standards required by various SFM certification systems • Understanding the definition of conformance and nonconformance • Analyzing evidence to determine conformance or nonconformance of SFM standards • Understanding the concepts of chain-of-custody
Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the minimum reporting requirements of various SFM Certification Systems • Utilizing leadership skills in a team setting • Knowledge of technical writing and developing reports

Category 2 – Related Education

Category 2 activities directly benefit professionals, but do not meet the requirements for Category 1. Category 2 activities **MUST** satisfy ALL of the following conditions:

- (1) It is an organized program of learning conducted in a setting physically suitable to continuing forestry education objectives.
- (2) Speakers must be qualified to address their topics and be considered experts in their presentation subject by virtue of special education, training, and/or experience.
- (3) The program content must be of a technical level and nature such that it supplements and builds upon the knowledge necessary to ensure professional competency and performance.
- (4) The program content cannot be:
 - specific to protocols of an individual organization, company, or agency
 - about organization-specific procedures and operations
 - employee training in organization-specific practices/policies

However, attendance can be limited to individuals of a particular organization.

Type of program	Examples
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized sessions not directly related to the CF-1 or FCA-1 Topics / Knowledge content areas • Organized sessions that meet the content area of CF-1 or FCA-1, but do not meet the required conditions • The content is clearly capable of improving the professional performance of the individual completing them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer science • OSHA or similar • Personnel management • Business/Marketing skills • Public relations skills • First Aid/Logging safety • Logging/Pesticide equipment maintenance • General Agriculture • Wildlife, fisheries, and ornithology (when not related to forest management)

University Courses

Formal university or college courses can be awarded CFE credit hours. Such courses will be evaluated as Cat 1-CF, Cat 1-FCA or Category 2 based on course description and content. Credit will not be allowed for courses in which the individual is earning a first degree in forestry or natural resources. Individuals must submit a transcript and course syllabus to receive CFE credit. Requests must be directed to the national office staff.

Category 3 - Profession Development and Volunteer Activities

Category 3 activities must satisfy ALL the following conditions:

- (1) Professional activities undertaken outside of normal job responsibilities
- (2) The subject matter qualifies under category 1, such as presentations in a classroom, field, or lab setting; writing and publishing of forestry or forestry-related subject matter; or, service to the profession through volunteer work

Type of activity	Examples	Credit Hours Allowed
Presentations, teaching, and publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juried articles published in juried journals. 	First author – 10 Second author – 7 Third author – 5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-juried articles published in non-juried publications such as, <i>Northern Woodlands</i>, <i>Tree Farmer Magazine</i>, <i>And National Woodlands</i>, State Society Newsletters, newspapers, magazines, or non-juried articles published in any SAF publication. 	≤ 500 words – 2 > 500 and ≤ 1000 – 3 > 1000 - 5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional / technical presentations and conducting workshops. 	2 credit hours for each presentation of 30 – 60 minutes Activities lasting < a total of 30 minutes do not accrue credit
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non professional/ non technical presentations and conducting workshops such as Project Learning Tree, Walk in the Woods, K-12 classroom presentations, radio/television broadcasts, and other forest related activities. 	0.5 credit hours for each presentation of 30 – 60 minutes Activities lasting < a total of 30 minutes do not accrue credit
Professional development activities that involve active participation and significant contribution to the profession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service on state or local boards or equivalent of forestry related service organizations (e.g., Tree Farm, state Stewardship Committee, The American Chestnut Foundation, Woodland Owners Associations, RC&D forestry committees, NRCS and soil conservation boards). • Service on county or local municipal boards affecting land use planning and zoning (e.g., planning commission and board of zoning appeals). 	2 credit hours per calendar year
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service on a national or state board of directors or equivalent of a profession representing forestry or allied natural resource professions. • Active participation as a member of a committee e.g. a policy committee that drafts legislation that is passed by a federal or state legislature. 	5 credit hours per calendar year for chairing the board or a subcommittee of the board. 2 credit hours per calendar year for active committee involvement.

Credit Hour Determination

The following activities **do not qualify** for credit:

- (1) Introductory, welcome, and closing remarks
- (2) Opening ceremonies/award presentations
- (3) Exhibits or poster sessions*
- (4) Coffee, meal breaks, and banquet/social events
- (5) Cultural performances, entertainment, or recreational activities
- (6) Business meetings or committee meetings of volunteer organizations, state credentialing boards, companies, and agencies
- (7) Transportation time to a specific site, loading and unloading, and dislocation to a point of interest
- (8) Work experience or on-the-job training

* - Poster presentations in which the authors speak regarding poster subject matter does qualify for CFE.

Live Training/Events

Determine a daily total of credit hours by adding all minutes with an interaction between learner and instructor. If the event is multi-day event, the daily totals are added together for a final total. Hours are rounded down to the nearest 30-minute session.

Example: A learning event has six 50-minute sessions with organized, interactive learning over two days; three sessions each day. Each day would be computed as $3 \times 50 = 150$. Divide the total number by 60 (minutes) = 2.5 for each day. The total number of credit hours would be computed as: $6 \times 50 = 300$ total minutes. Divide the total number by 60 (minutes) = 5 CFE credit hours.

The same method is used to calculate credit hours for field trips. However, only the time when an interaction occurs between the learner and instructor is used in the calculation. Travel time is not part of the calculation.

Credit hours approved for an event are the maximum which may be claimed by the participant. If the participant attends only a portion of an approved course, credit can only be claimed for that portion.

Subscription Self-Study and Online Self-Study

The number of credit hours is based on an accurate word count for text-based materials, and on an accurate word count plus listening/viewing time for mixed text and audio/visual materials.

A reading speed of 180 words per minute is used to calculate the number of clock hours that may be awarded for text-based programs. One hour of continuing education credit may be awarded for a minimum of 10,800 words of text. Audio/visual materials are evaluated the same as live events.

For peer reviewed articles and/or publications multiply number of hours by 1.5. Subscription and online home study activities must meet all the requirements of category 1 or 2.

Specific CFE Requirements – Certified Forester

(Individuals with a recertification date BEFORE February 1, 2011)

To meet the recertification requirements, continuing education activities, totaling 60 CFE credit hours, must conform to the following guidelines:

Cat 1-CF and/or Cat 1-FCA (30) Thirty hours, minimum, per three-year period.

In addition up to 30 hours maximum per three-year period may be distributed Categories 2 and 3.

Category 2 – Not to exceed 30 CFE hours during a three-year period.

Category 3 – Not to exceed 25 CFE hours during a three-year period.

(Individuals with a recertification date AFTER February 1, 2011)

To meet the recertification requirements, continuing education activities, totaling 60 CFE credit hours, must conform to the following guidelines:

Cat 1-CF - (40) Forty hours, minimum, per three-year period.

In addition up to 20 hours maximum per three-year period may be distributed among Cat 1-FCA, and Categories 2 and 3.

Specific CFE Requirements – Forest Certification Auditor

(Individuals with a recertification date AFTER February 21, 2011)

To meet the recertification requirements, continuing education activities, totaling 20 CFE credit hours, must conform to the following guidelines:

Cat-1-FCA - (20) Twenty hours, minimum, per three-year period.

These 20 hours can also be used for the Certified Forester credential.

Specific CFE Requirements – Candidate Certified Forester

Candidate Certified Forester credential must be renewed annually.

To meet the recertification requirements, continuing education activities, totaling 15 CFE credit hours, must conform to the following guidelines:

Cat 1-CF – Ten (10) hours, minimum, annually.

In addition up to 5 hours maximum, annually, may be distributed among Cat 1-FCA, and Categories 2 and 3.

Submitting CFE credits

CFE credits can be submitted at any time prior to recertification or renewal. Those individuals who do not meet the continuing education requirement have a 90-day grace period that begins the day after the recertification date. Individuals will also be assessed a \$25.00 late fee.

CFE credits can be submitted to two ways:

Option 1 – Online

A Certified Forester or Candidate Certified Forester can enter their continuing education hours in the CFE database on the SAF website at www.safnet.org/events/cfe. An individual submits a username (membership ID number or Certified Forester or Candidate Certified Forester number) and password (last name). This information is directly imported into the individual's record. This system also allows individuals to submit additional meetings and activities. This system is connected with the SAF online education calendar.

This method does NOT require any further submission of information of the activity to the national office.

Submitting personal information regarding credit hours online is a matter of efficiency and not of trust. The online CFE database accepts the individual's word that they attended the entire program.

Option 2 – Fax, Mail, or E-mail

Individuals may choose to submit CFE credit hours via fax, mail, or e-mail hard copy on the form titled "Logging for Personal Continuing Forestry Education." Individuals must provide complete agendas for all courses attended if they need evaluation for hours and categories.

The agenda must have the following information:

- A complete agenda including times for presentations, breaks, meals
- Names and titles of presenters
- Brief description of individual presentations
- Field Trips: length of time at each stop

Incomplete agendas will be evaluated in part or not at all.

This method will cause a delay in updating an individual's record since a member of the national office staff must enter it manually. This is not a preferred option if hours must be submitted quickly to meet the continuing education requirements of the CF program or state credential program.

Certified Foresters must request individual requests for evaluation directly to the national office, not to CFE Coordinators. Only meeting providers can request CFE coordinators to evaluate meetings.

Audits

The Certification Review Board will conduct periodic audits of randomly selected records. The CRB will utilize attendance records submitted by meeting providers. If providers did not submit attendance records, individuals must present acceptable documentation which includes the following items:

Cat 1-CF; Cat 1-FCA; and Cat 2 (one of the following)

- Program receipt which contains the name of meeting, date, and provider name
- Certificate of completion /attendance with individuals name; date; program title; and provider's name
- Receipt for hotel or airfare with individual's name; date; and location
- Proof of passing and/or finishing any self-study courses
- Attendance list from program provider including individuals name; date; program title; and provider's name.

⇒ A copy of the final meeting agenda with date; speaker names; and presentation descriptions must be in addition to any of the above items.

Category 3

- Meeting agenda listing provider's name; program title; dates; individual's name, presentation name, and length of presentation.
- Copy of individual article with publication's name and date.
- Letter or certificate from organization verifying volunteer activities. Please contact SAF directly to verify SAF activities.

Individual Appeals of Approved Credit Hours

Certified Foresters and Candidate Certified Foresters can appeal SAF staff rejection of continuing forestry education within the CF program. That appeals process is documented in the *Administrative Rules and Procedures for the Certification Review Board*. Please check with other credentialing boards regarding individual appeals.

Requesting a Report of Personal Activities

The CFE database allows individuals to receive and print a report of the courses submitted at that time. A full report of personal activities is automatically sent to Certified Foresters and Candidate Certified Foresters prior to recertification and after each CFE submission. SAF members may request a report of personal CE activities by contacting Pat Cillay, education manager, at cillayp@safnet.org or 866/897-8720 ext. 122.

International Society of Arboriculture Continuing Education Units

The Certification Review Board accepts Continuing Education Units (CEU) from the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) for the Certified Forester program. Individuals must submit an official ISA CEU report stating the individuals' name; course name and date, and number of CEUs. If the appropriate CFE category cannot be determined, SAF will request additional information.

CFE Credits Determined by State Boards of Licensure

Not all state boards of licensure accept or use the SAF CFE standards and guidelines for state licensure or registration. Please check with each board to determine their CFE or continuing education guidelines and standards. A listing of state boards can be found at www.certifiedforester.org.

Inactive Status

CFs and CCFs called to active military duty can request an inactive status by writing to the SAF national office and including a copy of military orders. During the inactive status, the individual will not be required to submit continuing education or fees. Upon written notification that the military duty is fulfilled, the individual will be returned to active status. No fees will apply for reinstatement of active status.

Certification Fees

Certification development and administration costs are borne by the Society of American Foresters. Beyond the certification fees, the program is partially subsidized by SAF members through financial contributions to maintain a viable scientific and educational organization and by volunteer service on the Certification Review Board. Therefore, nonmembers are assessed a differential fee for certification. Fees may be periodically adjusted to sustain the program.

Note: *So that SAF may administer its policies regarding exam fees fairly, no exceptions will be made.*

Certified Forester Fee Structure	Certified Forester/ Forest Certification Auditor Fee Structure	Candidate Certified Forester Fee Structure
Examination Application Fee <i>SAF members – \$260</i> <i>non-SAF members – \$335</i>	Examination Application Fee <i>SAF members – \$160</i> <i>non-SAF members – \$210</i>	Examination Application Fee <i>SAF members – \$260</i> <i>non-SAF members – \$335</i>
Annual Renewal Fee <i>SAF members – \$35</i> <i>non-SAF members – \$60</i>	Annual Renewal Fee <i>Included in CF annual renewal fee</i>	Annual Renewal Fee <i>SAF members – \$35</i> <i>non-SAF members – \$60</i>
Recertification Fee <i>SAF members – \$50</i> <i>non-SAF members – \$75</i>	Recertification Fee <i>Included in CF recertification fee</i>	

The application fee is required for first-time applicants or those who are reapplying due to loss of eligibility. The application fee includes the cost of the CF exam, one administration of the on-line practice test, and the CF study guide.

The 90-day grace period for recertification, annual, and renewal fees begins the day after an individual's renewal date and includes an administrative fee of \$25. After 90 days, an individual's credential will be revoked.

The 90-day grace period for submitting and/or completing continuing forestry education begins the day after an individual's recertification date, and includes an administrative fee of \$25. After 90 days, an individual's credential status will be revoked.

Additional time, beyond the 90-day grace period, to fulfill the continuing forestry education requirement may be granted on case-by-case basis. The national office must receive requests, in writing, before the end of the 90-day grace period. **No extensions will be given to requests after 90 days.**

Certification Procedures

Certification Review Board

The Certification Review Board (CRB) oversees and audits Certified Forester program implementation, evaluates and periodically reviews program processes and procedures, and makes recommendations on program guidelines and standards to the SAF Council. The CRB investigates questionable compliance and other concerns regarding certification and recertification and serves as the initial appellate body on eligibility decisions. Except for revocation for nonpayment of fees or noncompliance with the continuing education requirement (upon which SAF staff may act), only the CRB may revoke or suspend certification once granted.

The CRB consists of eight SAF member volunteers representing a diversity of geographic regions and forest resources employers, and one public member.

SAF Staff

The Society of American Foresters (SAF), a nonprofit organization, is the national scientific and educational organization representing the forestry profession in the United States. SAF's mission is to advance the science, education, technology, and practice of forestry; to enhance the competency of its members; to establish professional excellence; and, to use the knowledge, skills, and conservation ethic of the profession to ensure the continued health and use of forest ecosystems and the present and future availability of forest resources to benefit society.

SAF staff administers the Certified Forester (CF) program, at the direction of the SAF Executive Vice President and the CRB. Staff is located at 5400 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, MD, 20814, and may be reached at 301-897-8720 or cf@safnet.org.

Audits

The CRB routinely conducts audits of existing certification records to assess compliance with requirements. SAF staff and CRB have the authority to grant or deny certification examination eligibility and to request additional information from applicants and CFs regarding applications and adherence to the certification requirements.

Release of Information

The applicant or CF agrees to cooperate promptly and fully in any review of eligibility or certification status, including submitting such documents and information deemed necessary to confirm the information in the application. The applicant authorizes SAF staff or the CRB to communicate any and all information relating to the status of applicants, CFs, or CCFs, including but not limited to the outcome of disciplinary proceedings, to state and federal authorities and others.

Use of CF Logo and Registered Marks

The Certified Forester logo is registered with the US Patent and Trademark Office (registration number 2857453) and may only be used by individuals who have been granted certification.

The CF certificate, the registered marks, and other related designations may only be used in ways described in this and other CF documents. The CF shall immediately relinquish, refrain from using, and correct at the CF's expense, any outdated or inaccurate use of the CF designations upon request by SAF.

Certification is for individuals. The Certified Forester designation may not be used to indicate that a business, firm, or agency is a certified entity. Further, Certified Forester designation(s) may not be used in any way to convey SAF endorsement of a business, firm, agency, consulting service, product, or program.

Individuals with the Candidate Certified Forester credential **may not utilize** the terms Certified Forester, CF, or its logo.

The terms Candidate Certified Forester® and CCF® are registered with the US Patent and Trademark Office (registration numbers 3266204 and 3269924) and may only be used by individuals who have been granted certification.

Denial, Revocation, or Suspension of Certification

The CRB may deny, revoke, suspend, or otherwise act upon an individual's status when a CF, CCF, or applicant is not in compliance with stated requirements and procedures.

CFs and CCFs are required to adhere to all CF Standards of Practice and to comply with CF program policies and procedures, including timely payment of fees and recertification requirements. Each CF, CCF, and applicant bears the burden for documenting and maintaining compliance with all requirements.

SAF shall deny, revoke or suspend certification only in accordance with the CRB Administrative Rules and Procedures, a copy of which can be found at www.certifiedforester.org. However, no appeal may be made based upon nonpayment of fees.

Application Appeals Procedures and Waiver

Any individual may appeal a negative certification eligibility decision by submitting a written appeal to the Certification Review Board (5400 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, MD, 20814-2198), including supporting documentation. Please see the CRB Administrative Rules and Procedures for the appeals process to be followed of a denial of eligibility, found at www.certifiedforester.org. Decisions of the CRB regarding eligibility shall be final.

An applicant, by submitting a signed application, waives all claims against and hereby indemnifies and holds harmless SAF, its directors, officers, staff, Certification Review Board, volunteers, agents, and employers from and against all claims, damages, losses, and expenses, including reasonable attorneys' fees, for actions of SAF arising out of applicant's application for or participation in the SAF Certified Forester program and use of the SAF certification mark or other reference to the SAF CF program.

Society of American Foresters
5400 Grosvenor Lane
Bethesda, Maryland 20814-2198

www.safnet.org
www.certifiedforester.org