

**CONSTITUTION of the PROFESSIONAL SOIL SCIENTISTS ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA**

**Article I.** The name of this organization shall be the “Professional Soil Scientists Association of California,” abbreviated “PSSAC.”

**Article II.** The purpose of this Association shall be:

- To promote proper use, management, and conservation of the soil resource;
- To establish standards and qualifications for professional soil scientists engaged in the study of the nature, distribution, and behavior of soils;
- To identify and recognize qualified soil scientists;
- To provide the public with the means of recognizing qualified soil scientists in the interest of public health and welfare; and
- To advance the competency and ethical conduct of professional soil scientists.

**Article III.** The affairs of the Association shall be managed by an Executive Council with the approval of a Board of Directors.

**Article IV.** The operation of the Association shall be guided by a set of By-Laws which shall set forth criteria and procedures for the following:

1. Goals of the Association
2. Classes and Requirements of Membership
3. Composition of the Board of Directors and the Executive Council
4. Term of Office
5. Election of Officers
6. Duties of Officers and Executive Secretary
7. Appointment of Committees
8. Amounts and Payment of Dues and Fees
9. Notice and Location of Meetings
10. Location of Principal Office
11. Compensation to Officers
12. Affiliations with Other Organizations
13. Consultants Directory
14. Disposition of Property

**Article V.** The Constitution shall be subject to a change of amendment by a two-thirds vote of the responding members. Amendment of the By-Laws shall require a majority vote of the responding members. Such votes for amendment of the Constitution or By-Laws must be preceded by at least thirty days’ notice or response time.

**Article VI.** The Association may be dissolved by a resolution requesting dissolution and passed by a majority of the membership.

**Article VII.** This Association is organized for non-profit purposes and pecuniary gain or profit, if any, shall not inure to the benefit of the members thereof.

## **BY-LAWS of the PROFESSIONAL SOIL SCIENTISTS ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA**

**Article I.** Goals of the Association.

- (1) To achieve public recognition of soil scientists and the practice of soil science to promote wise use of the soil resource.
- (2) To provide opportunities for members to increase their knowledge and awareness of advances in soil science.
- (3) To educate the public about soils and soil science.

**Article II.** Classes and Requirements of Membership.

Section 2.01. The Association shall have six classes of members designated as Professional Members, Emeritus Professional Members, Regular Members, Associate Members, Student Members and Honorary Members.

Section 2.02. Eligibility and qualifications for classes of membership.

- (1) **Professional Members** are individuals who support the goals of the association and pay their dues; Professional Members may vote in Association elections, serve on the Board of Directors, and on committees.

**Professional Members** are either SSSA Certified as a Professional Soil Scientist (CPSS) (<https://www.soils.org/certifications>); OR (a) meet the educational requirements for Soil Science Series 0470 as outlined by the United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM)—with a degree in soil science or a closely related discipline that included 30 semester hours or equivalent in biological, physical, or earth science, with a minimum of 15 semester hours in such subjects as soil genesis, pedology, soil chemistry, soil physics, and soil fertility—plus (b) five years professional soils work experience. A master's degree in soil science or a closely related field of study counts toward one year of professional experience. A doctorate degree in soil science or a closely related field counts toward two years' experience. Experience credits for any combination of master's and doctorate degrees may not exceed three years.

Only Professional Members or Emeritus Professional Members may serve on the Board of Directors. Only Professional Members may be listed in the Consultants Directory. Professional Members must subscribe to SSSA Soils Certifying Board Code of Ethics (Articles II to V). As evidence of qualification, prospective Professional Members shall describe and submit:

- (a) Personal, education, major fields of study, and professional memberships and affiliations;
- (b) Professional services, including one or more of the six areas of specialization:
  1. Soil Scientist - Soil genesis, morphology, classification, mapping, and stratigraphy;
  2. Soil Scientist - Soil chemistry, toxic and hazardous substances, waste management, and environmental assessment;
  3. Soil Scientist - Soil reclamation, conservation, and erosion control;
  4. Soil Scientist - Soil fertility, plant nutrition, and water management;
  5. Soil Scientist - Soil physics, hydraulics, mechanics, and mineralogy;
  6. Soil Scientist - Soil microbiology and biochemistry.
- (c) Training and experience giving dates of employment, name and address of employer, and principal duties and responsibilities;
- (d) Professional publications;
- (e) References (including name, address, and phone number) of three Professional Members and/or SSSA certified soil scientists with whom the applicant has worked; and
- (f) Official transcript of university or college courses (optional).

(2) **Emeritus Professional Members** are individuals who meet all the requirements of Professional Members, but who no longer actively work in the field of soil science. They will receive discounted annual dues and meeting rates as determined by the Board of Directors, and will receive all other privileges of Professional Membership.

(3) **Regular Members** are individuals who meet the educational requirements for Professional membership but who have not yet met the experience requirements. Regular Members may not hold office but may serve on committees. As evidence of qualification, prospective Regular Members shall provide the same detailed information as specified in Section 2.02[1]

(4) **Associate Members** are individuals who support the goals of the Association, and are non-voting members, and cannot hold office or serve on committees.

(5) **Student Members** are students majoring in a natural resources major; student members can receive reduced dues rates. Student members are non-voting members and cannot hold office or serve on committees.

(6) **Honorary Members** are selected by the board in recognition of service or contributions to the profession. Honorary Members are non-voting members, and cannot hold office or serve on committees.

### **Article III.** Composition of Board of Directors and Executive Council.

Section 3.01. The Board of Directors shall consist of seven (7) members including the President, President-Elect, Secretary-Treasurer, the immediate Past-President, and three (3) Directors at Large from the following three areas of California: North, Central, and South. The seven members together shall hereafter be known as the Board.

Section 3.02. The Executive Council shall consist of the President, President-Elect, Secretary-Treasurer, and the immediate Past-President.

Section 3.03. The Board may (optionally) recruit and appoint Associate Directors at Large. Associate Directors shall be non-voting Board members in general, but can vote by proxy when designated by an elected Board member. The Associate Director positions will be beneficial to PSSAC by providing additional voice and suggestions to leadership team discussions. Individuals who are employed in these positions will gain significant insight and experience in PSSAC operations, which will benefit both individual career-development and create a greater number of candidates for leadership.

#### **Article IV.** Term of Office.

Section 4.01. The term of office for the President-Elect is one year, followed by consecutive one year terms serving as President, and Past President, for a total of a three year term.

Section 4.02. The term of office for the Secretary-Treasurer and Directors at Large shall be three years with the term of office being staggered to provide continuity in the leadership of the Association.

Section 4.03. If any officer is unable to complete their term, the vacancy shall be filled by nomination by the Executive Council, with approval by the Board of Directors.

#### **Article V.** Election of Officers.

Section 5.01. Candidates for the Board shall be selected by a nominating committee that is appointed by the Executive Council. Candidates for all offices shall be chosen to provide a cross section of professional interests and industry types, including but not limited to: federal agencies, state agencies (including universities and colleges), and private employers. Additional candidates may be nominated by petition of not less than 10 members.

#### **Article VI.** Duties of Officers and Executive Secretary

Section 6.01. The President shall Chair the Executive Council and the Board of Directors. S/he shall be responsible for planning the annual meeting, shall promote cooperation with other groups with common aims, and perform such duties as usually pertain to the office.

Section 6.02. The President-Elect shall perform the duties of the President in the President's absence. The President-elect shall work with the Events committee to

organize the association's annual meetings. In the absence of the Secretary-Treasurer, the President-Elect may assume responsibility for payment of financial obligations.

Section 6.03. The Past President shall serve on the Executive Council.

Section 6.04. The Secretary -Treasurer shall keep notes and records of all meetings and transactions. S/he shall work with the Executive Secretary and provide oversight to the day-to-day activities of the Executive Secretary. S/he shall review and present an annual report to the Executive Council.

Section 6.05. The Executive Secretary shall maintain the day-to-day operations of the organization, as directed by the Executive Council and as set forth in Appendix A, which may be modified by the Executive Council.

Section 6.06. Regional Directors at Large may assist the Executive Council.

#### **Article VII. Committees**

Section 7.01. The Association shall have the following standing committees:

- (1) Consultants;
- (2) Events;
- (3) Membership;
- (4) Public Relations; and
- (5) Scholarship.

Members and Chairpersons of the standing committees shall be appointed by the President.

Section 7.02. The President may appoint special committees for tasks related to managing the affairs or furthering the aims of the Association.

Section 7.03. Committee appointments shall be on a year-to-year basis.

#### **Article VIII. Dues and Fees.**

Section 8.01. Changes in membership dues shall be on the recommendation of the Board and ratified by a majority vote of the responding Professional members.

Section 8.02. Membership shall be from January 1 to December 31. Members shall be considered delinquent and dropped from the membership if dues are not received by the Secretary by April 1 of the current year.

Section 8.03. Complimentary associate or student memberships may be offered by the Board or Executive Council to further the goals of the Association. Such complimentary memberships shall be limited to a single year for any one member.

#### **Article IX. Meetings.**

Section 9.01. The annual meeting of the Association shall be held at a time and place designated by the Executive Council. Special meetings of the Association may be called by the Executive Council.

Section 9.02. Members shall be notified of the date, place, and purpose of each annual or special association meeting at least 30 days in advance of such meeting.

Section 9.03. Special meetings of the Executive Council or Board of Directors may be called by the Executive Council as needed to conduct the business of the Association.

Section 9.04. Regular and Special meetings of the Executive Council or Board of Directors may be held by teleconference or other electronic means.

Section 9.05. Business meetings shall be run according to Robert's Rules of Order.

Section 9.06. A majority of the officers of the Board of Directors or the Executive Council shall constitute a quorum.

**Article X.** Compensation.

Section 10.01. Officers and other members of the Association shall serve without compensation for transportation, meals, or lodging unless prior authorization is obtained from the Board of Directors.

Section 10.02. Officers and members may be compensated for the cost of postage, reproduction, telephone, and other expenses related to official Association communications.

**Article XI.** Location of the Principal Office.

The location of the principal office shall be determined by the Board of Directors and shall be within the State of California.

**Article XII.** SSSA Affiliation.

The Association shall, within the constraints of its Constitution and other Articles of these By-Laws, strive to maintain an affiliation with the Soil Science Society of America (SSSA).

**Article XIII.** Consultants Directory

Working with the Consultants Committee, the Association may create and administer a Consultants Directory at the direction of the Executive Council.

**Article XIV.** Disposition of Property.

The property of this Association is irrevocably dedicated to scientific and educational purposes. Upon dissolution, none of the assets shall pass to any individual, but shall

be distributed to an organization chosen by the Board, whose property is dedicated to tax exempt purposes as specified in California Revenue and Taxation Code Section 33701(e) and Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended. If at dissolution, the Board shall not be able to select an appropriate recipient organization, then the assets of this Association shall be given to the Board of Regents, University of California, for the purpose of a scholarship in the field of Soil Science.

## **Article XV.** Standards of Professional Conduct

### Section 15.01. Commitment to Professional Integrity and Respectful Behavior

(a) All members, attendees of the organization's activities, and affiliates of PSSAC are required to uphold the highest standards of professional integrity and respectful behavior at all organizational activities, within all forms of communication, and in all interactions involving the organization and its members.

(b) PSSAC is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all its members, attendees, and associates. This commitment extends to our zero tolerance policy regarding any form of harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate conduct.

### Section 15.02. Prohibited Conduct

(a) Inappropriate language or actions, including but not limited to sexual innuendo, are strictly prohibited within the organization, by registered members and non-members alike. Such behavior undermines the professional atmosphere and integrity of PSSAC and can significantly impair the participation and contribution of members and attendees.

(b) Specifically, the following behaviors are prohibited:

- Any verbal comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, or any other characteristic that may be deemed offensive or inappropriate.
- The use of sexual innuendo, making sexual comments or jokes, and unwelcome sexual advances.
- Displaying sexually explicit or offensive images or behavior in public spaces or during organization activities.
- Intentionally using demeaning or derogatory language, gestures, or actions that could offend or intimidate another person.

### Section 15.03. Reporting and Enforcement

(a) Members or attendees who observe or experience any form of harassment or inappropriate conduct are encouraged and expected to report such behavior to the PSSAC President or other member of the Board of Directors.

(b) Reports can be made confidentially, and PSSAC ensures that all complaints are taken seriously, investigated promptly and impartially, and handled with the utmost sensitivity.

(c) Retaliation against members who raise concerns or file complaints about inappropriate behavior is also strictly prohibited and will be subject to disciplinary action.

(d) If the code of conduct framed in these by-laws are violated, repercussions may include revoking of membership and banning from any future (in-person or virtual) PSSAC meeting involvement, depending on the severity of the offense. These sanctions will apply regardless of current membership status.

#### Section 15.04. Implementation and Oversight

(a) This code of conduct is in effect across all platforms and activities associated with PSSAC, including digital communications, conferences, workshops, social events, and other professional gatherings.

(b) The Board of Directors is responsible for the implementation, periodic review, and updating of this policy to ensure its effectiveness and relevance in promoting a professional and respectful environment.

### **Appendix A.**

#### Executive Secretary: Responsibilities and Duties:

- 1) Receive and forward membership applications to the Executive Council members for review and approval.
  - a. Once the application is approved or denied, notify the applicant of the results. Prepare a certificate of membership (to be distributed at the annual meeting) for new Professional Members.
  - b. Add member names to a database, recording the date joined, areas of specialization, SSSA certification(s), dues paid, and personal contact information.
- 2) Be the custodian of PSSAC records.
- 3) Maintain the PSSAC membership database.
- 4) Send out notices for annual dues renewal, update "dues paid through date" in database, update any information as needed.
- 5) Prepare bank deposits, make copies of checks, deliver to the bank. Transfer funds collected via PayPal to checking account as needed.

- 6) Responsible for PSSAC correspondence (as requested by the PSSAC Executive Council), including annual dues renewal notices.
- 7) Facilitate PSSAC Elections by receiving biographies from proposed PSSAC election candidates, prepare and distribute election ballots. Collect completed ballots and document final election results.
- 8) Record meeting minutes for teleconferences, Internet-based meetings, and at annual meetings, if present. If absent from meetings, the PSSAC Secretary-Treasurer will record minutes.
- 9) Serve as custodian of funds, prepare annual financial statements; pay all bills (except for personal invoices, which will be signed by PSSAC Secretary-Treasurer).
- 10) Create and maintain a PayPal account to be used to receive annual dues, annual meeting registrations, and scholarship contribution payments. Transfer monies to checking account as needed.
- 11) Maintain records of scholarship contributions, expenditures, and scholarship investment accounts. Work with PSSAC annual meeting committees to determine the number of scholarships that will be offered, and send announcement to the academic contact list. Handle correspondence with applicants and notify scholarship awardees.
- 12) Assist with annual meeting planning and logistics, as requested by the Executive Council and Events committee. Assist with meeting announcement layout, arrange to have it photocopied, and mail out. Prepare meeting page on Web site, include PayPal opportunity to facilitate on-line payments. Process meeting registrations, deposit checks, prepare meeting networking roster, registration check-in list, name badges, send enrollment confirmation emails.
- 13) Develop and maintain PSSAC web site, including consultants' pages, as needed. Annual registration of web site domain name (pssac.org), security certificates, and routine maintenance of web hosting site. Update web site as requested by Executive Council.
- 14) Maintain posted association's telephone number and respond to telephone inquiries as needed.
- 15) Maintain PSSAC's P.O. Box, pay annual fees and check mailbox weekly, or more often if needed.
- 16) Respond to email inquiries ([info@pssac.org](mailto:info@pssac.org) or [pssac.california@gmail.com](mailto:pssac.california@gmail.com)) as necessary.
- 17) With approval of Executive Council, order and maintain supplies (letterhead, envelopes, postage, bank checks, coffee mugs, etc.).
- 18) As information is available, compile periodic "PSSAC Updates" and distribute via email.
- 19) At the direction of the Executive Council and the Newsletter Editor, design and layout newsletter, arrange for copying and mailing out of printed newsletters.

- 20) At the direction of the Executive Council, research and facilitate new projects and tools to facilitate the Association's goals as needed (e.g. recent activities included setting up a PayPal account, on-line banking, and a teleconference account).