

Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters

Functional Analysis & Records Disposition Authority

**Presented to the
State Records Commission
April 25, 2007**

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Functional and Organizational Analysis of the Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters

Sources of Information

Representatives of the Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters
Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 34-12-1 through 34-12-37
Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 41-20-1 through 41-20-6 (Sunset Law)
Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 41-22-1 through 41-22-27 (Administrative Procedures Act)
Alabama Administrative Rules, Chapter 380-X-6-.01 to 380-X-6-.07
Bylaws of the Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters
Alabama Government Manual (2002), page 481
Audit Reports
Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters Website

Historical Context

The first formal consideration of having a bill to provide for the licensing of foresters occurred at a meeting of the Alabama Chapter of the Society of American Foresters (SAF) in 1950. A draft bill was adopted by the SAF and introduced to the Legislature in 1955, but did not get on the calendar that year. It was not until 1957 that the Legislature passed the act (Act No. 533) providing for the registration and licensing of foresters. The board was organized and held its first meeting on January 27, 1958. Since 1957, the basic enabling law has been amended six times.

Agency Organization

The Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters (hereafter referred to as the board) is composed of five members appointed by the governor from a list of three nominees submitted by the Alabama Division, Society of American Foresters. Members must be citizens of the United States, residents of Alabama, registered foresters, members or fellows of the Society of American Foresters, and practicing foresters for at least ten years prior to their appointment. Board members serve five-year staggered terms and may be reappointed to successive terms. The board elects annually from its members a chairman, a vice-chairman, and a secretary. In order to carry out its business, the board has established three standing committees (Rules and Regulations, Public Information, and Examination) and four special committees (Finance & Administration, Violations, Continuing Education, and Forestry Stewardship). The board holds at least four quarterly meetings a year and three members constitute a quorum. The board may hire an executive assistant and other clerical assistants as needed to manage its daily operations. An organizational chart is attached.

Agency Function and Subfunctions

The mandated function of the Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters is to license and regulate the professional practice of forestry in Alabama. It is one of the agencies primarily involved in carrying out the Regulatory function of Alabama government. In performance of its mandated function, the board may engage in the following subfunctions.

- **Promulgating Rules and Regulations.** Code of Alabama, Section 34-12-35 authorizes the board to “make all bylaws and rules ... which may be reasonably necessary for the proper performance of its duties and the regulations of the proceedings before the board.” This subfunction encompasses the board’s efforts to promulgate all rules and regulations necessary for registration of applicants for licensure.
- **Registering.** As mandated by the Code of Alabama, Section 34-12-4, the board examines licenses, and supervises persons who plan to practice forestry in Alabama. In order to be registered and licensed, an individual must hold a bachelors or higher degree from a school approved by the board or accredited by the Society of American Foresters in a forestry curriculum accepted by the board; passed a written or oral examination, or both, designed to show forestry knowledge and skills; have two years or more experience in the practice of forestry; and have a good character and reputation. All licensees are required to meet the board’s continuing education requirements prior to their annual license renewal.

During a regular meeting of the board on January 28, 1971, a rule was adopted authorizing the board to issue a Forestry Intern identification card, without charge, to those graduates of accredited forestry schools while they are in the process of acquiring experience that would qualify them for registration and licensure. The board has stopped this practice.

- **Enforcing.** Any person may file charges of fraud, deceit, gross negligence, incompetency, or other misconduct in connection with any forestry practice against any licensee. The board has authority to investigate allegations of practices violating provisions of its rules/regulations and to effect any legal proceedings necessary for compliance. Upon conviction, the board may revoke the license or impose a fine.
- **Administering Internal Operations.** A significant portion of the agency’s work includes general administrative, financial, and personnel activities performed to support the programmatic areas of the agency.

Managing the Agency: Activities include internal office management work common to most government agencies such as corresponding and communicating; scheduling; meeting; documenting policy and procedures; reporting; litigating; drafting, promoting, or tracking legislation; publicizing and providing information; managing records; and managing information systems and technology.

Managing Finances: Activities include budgeting (preparing and reviewing a budget package, submitting the budget package to the state Finance Department; documenting amendments and performance of the budget); purchasing (requisitioning and purchasing supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products received); accounting for the expenditure, encumbrance, disbursement, and reconciliation of funds within the agency's budget through a uniform system of accounting and reporting; authorizing travel; contracting with companies or individuals; bidding for products and services; assisting in the audit process; investing; and issuing bonds.

Managing Human Resources: Activities involved in managing human resources may include the following: recruiting and hiring eligible individuals to fill vacant positions within the agency; providing compensation and benefits to employees; supervising employees (evaluating performance, disciplining, granting leave, and monitoring the accumulation of leave); and providing training and continuing education for employees.

Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources: Activities involved in managing properties, facilities, and resources may include the following: inventorying and accounting for non-consumable property and reporting property information to the appropriate authority; constructing buildings and facilities; leasing and/or renting offices or facilities; providing for security and/or insurance for property; and assigning, inspecting, and maintaining agency property, including vehicles.

Analysis of Record Keeping System and Records Appraisal of the Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters

Agency Record Keeping System

The board currently operates a hybrid record keeping system composed of paper and electronic records. Staff members of the board utilize Microsoft Access to create and manage the licensure database. The board contracted with a private vendor for its website maintenance.

Records Appraisal

The following is a discussion of the two major categories of records created and/or maintained by the Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters : Temporary Records and Permanent Records.

I. Temporary Records. Temporary Records should be held for what is considered to be their active life and disposed of once all their fiscal, legal, and administrative requirements have been met. Some of the temporary records created by the board are discussed below:

- **Registration Files.** The board is responsible for examining and registering applicants as licensed foresters. These files serve as evidence of the scope of a licensee's professional practice in this state. A typical registration file may contain a completed registration application form, examination records, renewal documents, professional references, and other related materials. To ensure the availability of this series for possible reference and legal use, the recommended retention for the file is four years after the end of the fiscal year in which the license becomes inactive.
- **Forestry Intern Files (ca. 1971 to 1999).** During a regular meeting of the board on January 28, 1971, a rule was adopted authorizing the board to issue a Forestry Intern identification card, without charge, to those graduates of accredited forestry schools while they are in the process of acquiring experience that would qualify them for registration and license. This series is composed of application forms and other supporting documents. These obsolete forestry intern files should be destroyed immediately as the board no longer operates this program and these records have fulfilled their purposes.

II. Permanent Records. The Government Records Division recommends the following records as permanent.

Promulgating Rules and Regulations

- **Meeting Agendas, Minutes, and Packets.** In accordance with Code of Alabama, Section 34-12-34, the board is obligated to meet at least quarterly and special meetings may be called. In addition to minutes, this series may include meeting agendas and other supporting

or reference documents. These records are the best source of information about the functions of the board and the creation of its policies. (RDA page 3-2) (**Bibliographic Title: Meeting Minutes**)

Registering

- **Rosters of Registered Foresters.** The board compiles and publishes a roster of registered foresters in even-numbered years. Information on the roster includes name, company, address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address, and license number. Also included in the roster are rules and policy statements, registered foresters listed by counties, and contact information on states that have registration laws for foresters. The roster resides online and hard copies are available for purchase by the public. (RDA pg. 2-3) (**Bibliographic Title: State Publications**)
- **Examination Bank Questions.** This series consists of examination questions prepared and used by the board to test applicants prior to their registration as licensed foresters. The examination bank questions should be preserved as documentation because they provide information on the knowledge required for registration as foresters in Alabama. (RDA pg. 2-3) (**Bibliographic Title: Examination Questions**)

Administering Internal Operations

- **Annual Reports.** This report includes all significant activities of the board as required and set forth in the Code of Alabama, Section 34-12-37. Information on the report may include names of board members since 1958, activities and publications of the board, registration and licensing, rules and policy statements, forestry interns, receipts and expenditures, and property list. (RDA pg. 2-3) (**Bibliographic Title: State Publications**)
- **Newsletters.** The board started to publish a quarterly newsletter in 1971. Known as “The Registered Forester,” this newsletter contains notes from the board, changes to board fees, calendar, new registered foresters, summary of board enforcement activities, and a questions and answers column. (RDA pg. 2-3) (**Bibliographic Title: State Publications**)
- **Web Site.** The board has a website at: www.asbrf.alabama.gov. Information on the website includes board history, board members, roster of licensees, laws and rules, newsletters, calendar, various forms, frequently asked questions, and other links. The disposition statement calls for retaining a “snap shot” of completed web site information annually or as often as significant changes are made to the site. (RDA pg. 2-3) (**Bibliographic Title: Website**)

Permanent Records List

Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters

Promulgating Rules and Regulations

1. Meeting Agendas, Minutes, and Packets
2. Register of Administrative Rules*

Registering

1. Rosters of Registered Foresters
2. Examination Bank Questions

Administering Internal Operations

1. Annual Reports
2. Newsletters
3. Website
4. Semiannual Inventory Lists*

*indicates records that ADAH anticipates will remain in the care and custody of the creating agency. ADAH staff members are available to work with agency staff in determining the best location and storage conditions for the long-term care and maintenance of permanent records.

Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters Records Disposition Authority

This Records Disposition Authority (RDA) is issued by the State Records Commission under the authority granted by the Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 41-13-5 and 41-13-20 through 21. It was compiled by the Government Records Division, Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH), which serves as the commission's staff, in cooperation with representatives of the Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters. The RDA lists records created and maintained by the Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters in carrying out its mandated functions and activities. It establishes retention periods and disposition instructions for those records and provides the legal authority for the agency to implement records destruction.

Alabama law requires public officials to create and maintain records that document the business of their offices. These records must be protected from "mutilation, loss, or destruction," so that they may be transferred to an official's successor in office and made available to members of the public. Records must also be kept in accordance with auditing standards approved by the Examiners of Public Accounts (Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 36-12-2, 36-12-4, and 41-5-23). For assistance in implementing this RDA or for advice on records disposition or other records management concerns, contact the ADAH Government Records Division at (334) 242-4452.

Explanation of Records Requirements

- This RDA supersedes any previous records disposition schedules governing the retention of the Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters. Copies of superseded schedules are no longer valid and may not be used for records disposition.
- This RDA establishes retention and disposition instructions for records listed below, regardless of the medium on which those records may be kept. Electronic mail, for example, is a communications tool that may record permanent or temporary information. As for records in any other format, the retention periods for e-mail records are governed by the requirements of the subfunctions to which the records belong.
- Certain other short-term records that do not materially document the work of an agency may be disposed of under this RDA. Such materials include: (1) duplicate record copies that do not require official action, so long as the creating office maintains the original record for the period required; and (2) transitory records, which are temporary records created for internal purposes that may include, but are not limited to, telephone call-back messages; drafts of ordinary documents not needed for their evidential value; copies of material sent for information purposes but not needed by the receiving office for future business; and internal

communications about social activities. They may be disposed of without documentation of destruction. Other items that may be disposed of without destruction documentation include: (1) catalogs, trade journals, and other publications received that require no action and do not document government activities; and (2) stocks of blank stationery, blank forms, or other surplus materials that are not subject to audit and have become obsolete.

Records Disposition Requirements

This section of the RDA is arranged by subfunctions of the Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters and lists the groups of records created and/or maintained by the board as a result of activities and transactions performed in carrying out these subfunctions. The board may submit requests to revise specific records disposition requirements to the State Records Commission for consideration at its regular quarterly meetings.

■ Promulgating Rules and Regulations

MEETING AGENDAS, MINUTES, AND PACKETS
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Recordings of Meetings
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until the official minutes are adopted and signed.

Register of Administrative Rules
Disposition: Retain in Office (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-22-6).

Administrative Rules Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Board Appointment Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the term expires.

Printouts of Acknowledgment from the Secretary of State Relating to Notices of Meetings Posted by State Agencies
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

■ Registering

ROSTERS OF REGISTERED FORESTERS
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

EXAMINATION BANK QUESTIONS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD

Registration Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the license becomes inactive.

Registration Ready Reference Index Cards

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Licensure Database

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded or obsolete.

Forestry Intern Files (ca. 1971 to 1999)

Disposition: Destroy.

■ **Enforcing**

Violation Files

(1) Files of Founded Complaints

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after licensee becomes inactive.

(2) Files of Unfounded Complaints

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

■ **Administering Internal Operations**

Managing the Agency:

ANNUAL REPORTS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

NEWSLETTERS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

WEBSITE

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. PRESERVE A COMPLETE COPY OF WEBSITE ANNUALLY OR AS OFTEN AS SIGNIFICANT CHANGES ARE MADE.

Sunset Committee Review Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until completion of subsequent sunset review.

Routine Correspondence

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Mailing Lists

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Administrative Reference Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Records documenting the implementation of the agency's approved RDA (copies of transmittals forms to Archives or State Records Center, evidence of obsolete records destroyed, and annual reports to State Records Commission)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Copies of Approved RDA

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the RDA is superseded.

System Documentation (hardware/software manuals and diskettes, warranties)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain documentation of former system 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the former hardware and software no longer exists anywhere in the agency and all permanent records have been migrated to a new system.

Managing Finances:

Records documenting the preparation of a budget request package and reporting of the status of funds, requesting amendments of allotments, and reporting program performance

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Records documenting the requisitioning and purchasing of supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Records of original entry or routine accounting transactions, such as journals, registers, and ledgers, and records of funds deposited outside the state treasury

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Records documenting requests for authorization from supervisors to travel on official business and other related materials, such as travel reimbursement forms and itineraries

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Records documenting contracts for services or personal property

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after expiration of the contract.

Records documenting the bid process, including requests for proposals and unsuccessful responses

- a. Original bid records maintained in the purchasing office of the agency for contracts over \$7500
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the bids were opened.
- b. Duplicate copies of bid (where originals are maintained by the Finance Department - Division of Purchasing)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the bids were opened.

Agency Audit Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Managing Human Resources:

Job Recruitment and Application Materials

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the term expires.

Records documenting payroll (e.g. pre-payroll reports, payroll check registers)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Records documenting payroll deduction authorizations

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

Records documenting payroll deductions for tax purposes (including Form 941)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Records documenting an employee's work history - generally maintained as a case file

(1) Merit System Employee(s)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of employee from the agency.

(2) Non-Merit System Employee(s)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 25 years after separation of employee from the agency.

Records documenting an employee's hours worked, leave earned, and leave taken (including time sheets)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources:

SEMIANNUAL INVENTORY LISTS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Retain in office. (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 36-16-8 [1]).

Agency Copies of Transfer of State Property Forms

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Property Inventory Cards and/or Computer Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the items were removed from inventory.

Receipts of Responsibility for Property

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until return of item to property manager.

Records documenting the lease or rental of office or warehouse space for the department

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after expiration of the lease.

Requirement and Recommendations for Implementing the Records Disposition Authority

Under the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-13-21, “no state officer or agency head shall cause any state record to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of without first obtaining approval of the State Records Commission.” This Records Disposition Authority constitutes authorization by the State Records Commission for the disposition of the records of the Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters (hereafter referred to as the agency) as stipulated in this document.

One condition of this authorization is that the agency submit an annual Records Disposition Authority (RDA) Implementation Report on agency records management activities, including documentation of records destruction, to the State Records Commission in April of each year. In addition, the agency should make every effort to establish and maintain a quality record-keeping program through the following activities:

- The agency should designate a records liaison, who is responsible for: ensuring the development of quality record keeping systems that meet the business and legal needs of the agency, coordinating the transfer and destruction of records, ensuring that permanent records held on alternative storage media (such as microforms and digital imaging systems) are maintained in compliance with national and state standards, and ensuring the regular implementation of the agency’s approved RDA.
- Permanent records in the agency’s custody should be maintained under proper intellectual control and in an environment that will ensure their physical order and preservation.
- Destruction of temporary records, as authorized in this RDA, should occur agency-wide on a regular basis—for example, after the successful completion of an audit, at the end of an administration, or at the end of a fiscal year. Despite the RDA’s provisions, no record should be destroyed that is necessary to comply with requirements of the state Sunset Act, audit requirements, or any legal notice or subpoena.
- The agency should maintain full documentation of any computerized record-keeping system it employs. It should develop procedures for: (1) backing up all permanent records held in electronic format; (2) storing a back-up copy off-site; and (3) migrating all permanent records when the system is upgraded or replaced. If the agency chooses to maintain permanent records solely in electronic format, it is committed to funding any system upgrades and migration strategies necessary to ensure the records’ permanent preservation and accessibility.

The staff of the State Records Commission or the Examiners of Public Accounts may examine the condition of the permanent records maintained in the custody of the agency and inspect records destruction documentation. Government Records Division archivists are available to instruct the agency staff in RDA implementation and otherwise assist the agency in implementing its records management program.

The State Records Commission adopted this records disposition authority on April 25, 2007.

Edwin C. Bridges, Chairman, by Tracey Berezansky
State Records Commission

Date

Receipt acknowledged:

Alexis London, Executive Assistant
Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters

Date