

Keeping ATFS Inspecting Forester Credentials Active

Introduction

With the implementation of the 2015-2020 Standards of Sustainability, a new [inspector training policy](#) was implemented in 2015. Drawing on adult learning research, this policy was developed to ensure that ATFS Inspecting Foresters retain a working knowledge of the ATFS program and the ATFS Standards by using their knowledge regularly. As a result, the [inspector training policy](#) specified that an ATFS Inspecting Forester must undergo training or complete one inspection, at a minimum, every two years to remain in “active” status and be able to conduct inspections.

We have found, however, that ATFS Inspecting Foresters are using and deploying their knowledge of the ATFS Standards and program in a variety of ways or “applications.” To acknowledge the wider array of activities in which ATFS Inspecting Foresters are utilizing their knowledge, additional “applications” have been identified that extend an ATFS Inspecting Forester’s active credentials, enabling them to conduct inspections without retraining.

Overall Guidelines

- Each application will extend an ATFS Inspecting Forester’s credentials for two years from the date that the application took place, similar to how inspections currently do, until the implementation of the revised ATFS Standards of Sustainability in 2020. Thus, an ATFS Inspecting Forester’s credentials will not extend beyond the beginning of 2020.
- To be counted, evidence of the application’s completion must be kept and be presentable upon request by staff or assessors. Evidence includes but is not limited to rosters, sign in sheets, emails, and supporting documents.
- An ATFS Inspecting Forester must have active credentials at the time of the application.
- Applications must be entered into the ATFS National Database within one calendar year of completion.
- State administrators are responsible for verifying and entering the application in the ATFS National Database.
- Applications not listed below need approval from the ATFS National Office before being entered into the ATFS National Database.

Eligible Applications of ATFS Standards Knowledge

- 1) Facilitating an inspector training for the state committee or region as a trained, active ATFS Facilitator. This activity is approved for 2 SAF Category 3 credits.
- 2) Participating in a third-party field assessment as a representative of the State Tree Farm Committee or a landowner or client, as an ATFS Inspecting Forester. These activities are approved for 2 SAF Category 3 credits. Activities that fulfill this application include, but are not limited to the following:
 - a) Logistical planning,
 - b) Landowner or volunteer outreach,
 - c) Field visits,
 - d) Attending opening meeting, or
 - e) Management plan gathering and updating.
- 3) Participating in an Inspector Mentoring program. Activities that fulfill this application include:

- a) Providing mentorship to a new ATFS Inspecting Forester either by taking them on their first inspection or through a committee mentorship program.
 - b) Providing mentorship to prospective ATFS Inspecting Foresters, such as students, either by taking them on their first inspection or through a committee mentorship program.
 - c) If the mentee is a qualified new ATFS Inspecting Forester, the mentee should submit the inspection. Prospective ATFS Inspecting Foresters, who have not yet taken the training or are not otherwise eligible to submit an inspection (i.e. students), cannot submit an inspection.
- 4) Conducting activities as an implementer of an ATFS IMG or Individual Certificate holder. Activities that would fulfill this application include:
- a) Conducting entry and exit assessments of properties,
 - b) Conducting ongoing internal monitoring of ATFS certified properties, or
 - c) Coordinating and implementing assessments with ANAB or SCC accredited third-party certification bodies/auditing firms.
- 5) Performing an Assessment as a qualified third-party auditor for an ANAB or SCC accredited certification body/auditing firm for an ATFS regional assessment, IMG or Individual Certificate holder.