



USDA Natural Resources  
Conservation Service

**ADDRESSING NON-  
INDUSTRIAL PRIVATE  
FOREST LANDOWNERS  
WITH THE 2008 FARM BILL**

# Forest Management in Maine

- Forest Management issues have been given a priority in the 2008 Farm Bill with the updated Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), including the addition of Conservation Activity Plans (CAPs), the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Initiatives such as the New England/NY WHIP Forestry Initiative.

# **Forest Management in Maine -**

## **(Continued)**

- In recent years there has been a commitment both technically and financially to coordinate the efforts between NRCS and the Maine State Forest Service (MFS) through a formal agreement.

# 2008 Farm Bill: A Cooperative Venture



**EQIP**

**CAP**

**CSP**

**WHIP**

**FI**



**Forest  
Stewardship**

## **Actions to Date:**

- High degree of coordination between NRCS and MFS, including MFS employees trained and certified in NRCS conservation planning, and joint agency training on programs.
- Active participation by MFS, consulting foresters and forest landowners on Local Work Groups to promote forestry issues and concerns.

## **Actions to Date: (Continued)**

- MFS, through their Stewardship Forester Program, help administer EQIP on forest sites through a contribution agreement with NRCS, or
- Private Consulting Foresters may act as Technical Service Providers (TSPs) to help write Conservation Activity Plans and implement practices through landowner contracts.

# Examples of Enhanced Assistance to Landowners

## Steps to NRCS Conservation Assistance with EQIP:

1. Landowners participate in Local Working Groups
2. Landowners sign up with USDA
3. Landowners provide to NRCS a current forest management plan if implementing conservation practices

Applications accepted through out the year

4. Participants enter into a contract to develop a CAP or implement one or more practices

## Landowners with contracts may receive technical services by three methods:

1. Directly from NRCS
2. Through an agreement between NRCS and a third party provider (MFS); or
3. Through a payment and approval to hire a third-party provider (Technical Service Provider [TSP\*]) with a modification to their contract

\*MFS is a TSP or Individual Consulting Foresters may be TSPs

NRCS and MFS emphasize the development of a forest management plan (CAP or WoodsWISE Stewardship Plan + Addendum) to guide the selection of conservation practices needed.





NRCS funds focus on writing Conservation Activity Plans and implementing practices or enhancement activities by using financial assistance programs:

- Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
- Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program  
(WHIP Forestry Initiative)



## EQIP – Conservation Activity Plans (CAPs)



### Available CAP:

- Forest Management Plan (FMP)

- A CAP has no acreage limits, and does not have to be all the contiguous acres.
- Applications are taken on a continuous basis.
- Funding for CAPs are approved on a continuous basis until annual allotment pool is depleted.
- Must be written by a third-party provider certified by NRCS. A list of certified plan writers (TSPs) is located on the TechReg website at:

<http://techreg.usda.gov>.

- CAPs provide an efficient means for obtaining an approved forest management plan, which is required to get financial assistance for implementing eligible practices recommended by the CAP.

## EQIP – Conservation Activity Plans (CAPs)

CAP type	<u>Unit Type</u>	<u>FY 2011</u> <u>Unit Cost</u>
Forest Management Plan 1-50 acres	no.	\$1,030
Forest Management Plan 1-50 acres HU	no.	\$1,236
Forest Management Plan 51-100 acres	no.	\$1,282
Forest Management Plan 51-100 acres HU	no.	\$1,538
Forest Management Plan 101-150 acres	no.	\$1,718
Forest Management Plan 151-200 acres	no.	\$2,200

# EQIP – Implementing Conservation Practices



**You may receive additional ranking points if you have not had a contract before, or if you have completed a contract successfully in the past or are on schedule now. You will also receive additional points for agreeing to complete your contract within 3 years.**

- **Applications are taken on a continuous basis.**
- **Screening, ranking and contracting is once per year. Next deadline is July 1, 2011.**
- **Applicants must have a current (< 10 yrs) forest management plan (FMP). This can be any plan, cost-shared or not, that meets the WoodsWISE Stewardship Plan standards.**
- **You may be asked to obtain more detailed information about practices that your forester recommended in your FMP in order to complete your plan of operations.**
- **If selected, a contract will be developed for you with practice payments. Contracts can contain 1 or more forestry practices and may be completed over a period of up to 10 yrs. At least 1 practice needs to be completed in the first 12 months.**
- **You may also ask for funds to hire a certified TSP to assist with implementation.**

# EQIP – Forest Practices

- **Forest Stand Improvement**
  - **Thinning for sapling stands**
  - **Crop Tree Release**
  - **Competition Control for Regeneration**
  - **Invasive Species Control**
- **Tree/Shrub Pruning**
- **Forest Trails and Landings**
- **Riparian Forest Buffer**
- **Firebreak**
- **Tree and Shrub Establishment**
- **Tree and Shrub Site Preparation**



# EQIP – Forest Wildlife Habitat Improvement



- **Upland Wildlife Habitat Management – nest boxes, brush piles, snag trees**
- **Early Successional Habitat Management – Woodcock, Ruffed grouse, Canada lynx – mechanical tree/ shrub management**

- **Forest Stand Improvement**
  - **Thinning for wildlife- deer yards**
  - **Mast Tree Release**
  - **Wild Apple Tree Release**
  - **Invasive Species Control**
- **Tree/Shrub Establishment**
- **Tree/Shrub Pruning – wild apple trees**
- **Fish Passage**
- **Stream Crossing**

## Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

**CSP encourages landowners to maintain existing forest stewardship and adopt additional conservation activities on their woodlots.**



- **Non-Industrial Private Forestland (NIPF) is ranked separately for funding approval against other NIPF land.**
- **NIPF = 10 Acres or more with openings no greater than 2 acres.**

- 1. Complete a Self-Screening Checklist**
  - a) Green-certified, or**
  - b) One or more improvements have been made in the past 10 yrs**
  - c) No erosion problems**
  - d) Native trees are appropriately stocked**
- 2. Complete an Interview with NRCS on your Forest Land Conservation Activities.**

# Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

## **3. Choose at least one - ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY:**

- **Hardwood Crop Tree Release (for increasing wildlife benefits)**
- **Forest Stand Improvement for Habitat and Soil Quality**
- **Riparian Forest Buffer, Terrestrial and Aquatic Wildlife Habitat**
- **Wildlife Corridors**
- **Locally Grown and marketed farm products**
- **Multi-story cropping, sustainable management of non-timber forest plants, including sugar bushes**





## SUMMARY

- **Forest landowners may now apply for forest management plans and forestry practices such as thinning, pruning, crop tree release, and invasive species control, and wildlife practices such as mast tree release.**
- **Funding is available for financial and technical assistance in completing the practices outlined in a current forest management plan.**

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