



WoodsWISE:

Woods Wise Incentives to Stewardship Enhancement

An incentives program for Maine's small family forests

*WoodsWISE utilizes funds from
the Forest Stewardship Program,
the Environmental Quality Improvement Program,
and other support provided by
the USDA Forest Service and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.*



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What is the WoodsWISE program?

The WoodsWISE program's aim is to help Maine's forest landowners make informed decisions based on stewardship principles about their forests, and thereby encourage the long-term sustainability of Maine's forests. If you own even a few acres of Maine's forests, your property is part of an important resource that can provide wildlife habitat, clean water, forest products, and other benefits to Maine communities – as well as be a source of enjoyment and value to you, the landowner.

WoodsWISE is a part of Maine Forest Service's "Be Woods Wise" program, a landowner education and outreach effort geared toward small landowners. The Be Woods Wise program offers brochures, fact sheets, a video, and an informative website, <http://www.state.me.us/doc/mfs/fpm/wwi/wwi.htm>. Even more, Maine Forest Service District Foresters can assist you in learning more about your woodlot, and if need be, helping you identify a private consulting forester that can work with you.

What does the WoodsWISE program have to offer?

The WoodsWISE program offers incentives to help landowners get started in managing their land according to their objectives, with the help of a Licensed Forester. Financial incentives are available for:

- Forest Management Plans
- Implementation of Practices recommended in the Plan.

Who is eligible?

Maine landowners who own 10 – 1,000 forested acres statewide may be eligible. Ownerships of up to 5,000 forested acres may be eligible under certain circumstances. Landowners may be individuals, families, organizations, or businesses.

Landowners who take part in WoodsWISE must sign a Stewardship Pledge committing to manage their land according to stewardship principles and abide by the requirements of the program, in return for receiving technical assistance and financial incentives. At a minimum, landowners must maintain activities under the program for 10 years.

How does the program work?

Landowners may call the Maine Forest Service District Forester nearest you for more information and an application, or contact any Stewardship Forester - a private, Licensed Forester who is trained by MFS to be eligible to provide forestry services under the WoodsWISE program.

Landowners enter the program by applying to the Maine Forest Service to have a Forest Management Plan prepared. Prior approval must be obtained before work on the Plan is started. The completed Plan must be reviewed and approved by Maine Forest Service. Landowners are reimbursed for a portion of the actual documented costs of having the Plan prepared.

What is a Forest Management Plan?

A Forest Management Plan is a written document, prepared by a Stewardship Forester hired by you to define your land ownership objectives, take an inventory of your forest and related resources, and make recommendations for future activities (10 years or more) to help you achieve your goals.

What are Practices?

Forest Management Plans make recommendations to the landowner about activities to improve their forest and better meet their objectives. Certain activities may also be eligible for cost-sharing, including additional services from a Stewardship Forester. Financial assistance for these activities is administered cooperatively by the Maine Forest Service and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Check with the Maine Forest Service, your Stewardship Forester or a USDA Service Center about eligibility and application procedures.

How much reimbursement do landowners receive under WoodsWISE?

Reimbursement amounts for WoodsWISE Forest Management Plans are based on the number of forested acres covered. Generally, payments are limited to 75% or less of the landowner's actual costs. Check with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service for current cost-share rates for Practices.