

# **New Hampshire Forest Management Plan Criteria Practice/Activity Code (106) (No.)**

## **1. Definition**

A forest management plan is a site specific plan developed for a client, which addresses one or more resource concerns on land where forestry-related conservation activities or practices will be planned and applied. These criteria were developed to implement Section 1240 (A) of the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008, which allows for the development of forest management plans as one of the purposes of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The forest management plan will:

- A. Meet Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) quality criteria for the identified resource concern(s).
- B. Comply with federal, state, tribal, and local laws, regulations, and permit requirements.
- C. Meet the client's objectives.

## **2. Forest Management Plan Criteria**

This section establishes the minimum criteria to be addressed in the development of Forest Management Plans.

### **A. General Criteria**

1. An Environmental Evaluation (EE) (CPA 52) is to be prepared for all activity plans to demonstrate NRCS compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Endangered Species Act, Environmental Justice, Air Quality, and other designated environmental concerns and environmental laws. The environmental effects from the activity plans on environmental resource concerns should be clearly documented on the EE (CPA-52 form). The following is abbreviated guidance for preparation of the EE:

- a. Planners and TSPs should follow the EE guidance delineated in the National Environmental Compliance Handbook.
- b. The EE describes the existing conditions for all applicable resource concerns.
- c. The EE will assess the resources potentially impacted by the no action, proposed action (typically alternative 1) and any reasonable alternatives. Completing the no action and alternative 1 columns for all resource concerns (including economic and social considerations and other agencies broad public concerns) & special environmental conditions are required.
- d. Guide sheets and other supporting documentation will accompany the EE, as needed, to provide information on how to assess and deal with special environmental concerns.

### **Required supporting documentation includes:**

- (1) Threatened and Endangered Plants and Animals report covering the entire property of the plan from NH Natural Heritage Bureau. This can be obtained by submitting a request using the data check tool at <https://www2.des.state.nh.us/nhb%5Fdatacheck>
- (2) Cultural Resources Report covering the entire property of the plan. To complete this requirement, obtain a Cultural Resources review form from NH eFOTG fill out the first 3 sections. The form must include the

Farm Service Agency (FSA) Tract Number for the property. Send this to the NH Cultural Resources Coordinator via email [donald.richard@nh.usda.gov](mailto:donald.richard@nh.usda.gov)

e. The findings section of the EE, completed by NRCS, is to identify whether NRCS has determined based on the analysis of the EE:

(1) that a site specific environmental assessment (EA) or an environmental impact statement (EIS) should be prepared based on the significance of potential impacts, or

(2) the EE can be tiered to a state, regional, or national programmatic EA or EIS because the proposed effects have been sufficiently analyzed in a State, regional, national programmatic EA or EIS.

f. TSP and planners are required to complete NRCS' Level I Environmental Compliance training prior to preparing any EE CPA 52

2. A Forest Management Plan shall be developed by certified Technical Service Providers. In accordance with Section 1240 (A), the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) program provides funding support through contracts with eligible producers to obtain services of certified Technical Service Providers (TSPs) for development a Forest Management Plan (FMP). The specific criteria required for each type of certification for TSP is located on the TSP registry (TechReg) web site at: <http://techreg.usda.gov/>

#### B. Background and Site Information

1. Landowner information – name, address, operation, size
2. Location and plan map of parcel
3. Documentation of existing practices
4. Past harvest history
5. Identification of resource concerns located on a map.

#### C. Client Objectives, *which may include these considerations and others*

1. Expected income
2. Forest stand improvement
3. Wildlife habitat/riparian areas
4. Access
5. Recreation
6. Controlling Invasive Plants
7. Pollinator Habitat and Protection

#### D. Existing Conditions

1. Identify resource concerns based on an inventory to assess these concerns and opportunity for treatment. The inventory will typically include forest management unit and stand boundaries, site index, basal area, species, size class, wood product potential, soil conditions, slopes, topography, aspect, natural and cultural features, roads, risk of insect and disease infestation, fish and wildlife species and habitat elements, noxious and invasive species, water quality and other important features as applicable.

2. Forest management plan map (stand map) – boundaries, fields, scale, north arrow, stand boundaries, appropriate map symbols. Map should show existing resource concerns.

3. Soils map – legend, interpretations (Important Soil Groups and Drainage Class)

#### E. Desired Future Conditions

Goals such as stocking, basal area, species composition, wildlife, pollinator habitat, invasive plant control, wetland restoration, recreation, roads, trails, landings etc. for stands where practices/ activities are recommended to meet future goals.

#### F. Forest Management Plan Documentation

Conservation plan with a map showing practices landowner wants to install and apply for EQIP and WHIP funding (use NRCS record of decisions form). (*Utilizing Customer Service Toolkit – Plug-In or MsWord Document*) the planned practice(s), the amounts to be applied, the schedule for implementation, and Best Management Practices or where needed the appropriate site specific specifications and/or job sheet for each practice. A Forest Management Plan may include, but is not limited to, the conservation practices listed below:

**Access Control** (472)

**Early Successional Habitat Development** (647)

**Forest Stand Improvement** (666)

**Critical Area Planting** (342)

**Forest Trails and Landings** (655)

**Pest Management** (595)

**Stream Crossing** (578)

**Riparian Forest Buffer** (391)

**Tree/Shrub Site Preparation** (490)

**Tree/Shrub Establishment** (612)

**Tree/Shrub Pruning** (660)

**Wetland Enhancement** (659)

**Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitats** (643)

**Field Border -Pollinator Plantings** (386)

### 3. Deliverables for the Client – a hardcopy of the Forest Management Plan that includes:

Cover page – name, address, phone of client and TSP; Total Acres of the Plan, signature blocks for the TSP, producer, and a signature block for the NRCS acceptance.

Soils map and appropriate soil descriptions (drainage classes, important soils groups)

Resource assessment results (condition of trails and landings, erosion, wetland/stream impacts, Threatened and Endangered species, cultural resources, stocking rates, wildlife areas, and others that may be needed) include all resource concerns noted on a map.

For management practices. Identify areas the landowner wants to address in the next 10 years on a plan map. The planned practices and the site specific specifications on how each practice will be applied; when the practice will be applied (month and year), and the extent (acres or number) that will be applied. (Use NRCS Plan of Operations Form)

For engineering/structural practices. The planned practice when it will be applied and extent, and located on the conservation plan map.

#### **4. Deliverables for NRCS Field Office:**

Complete Hardcopy and Electronic copy of the client's plan (MsWord copy).

Digital Conservation Plan Map with fields, features, and structural practices located.

Digital Soils Map.

Completed CPA 52 and appropriate worksheets.

**When possible supply ARC GIS Shapefiles for each practice in UTM NAD 1983 Zone 19N (All Counties except Cheshire and Sullivan which are in Zone 18N) to the local District Conservationist via e-mail or other electronic means.**

#### **Coordination with State Forestry Agencies and U.S. Forest Service**

In accordance with Section 2506 of the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008, NRCS will accept as a qualifying EQIP plan of operations: a) Forest Stewardship Plan, as described in Section 5 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978, 16 U.S.C. 2103a; or b) Another practice plan approved by the State Forester; or c) Another plan determined appropriate by the Secretary.