

Washington Specification Guide (106) Conservation Activity Plan Forest Management Plan

For 2011 sign-up: Cost-sharing on new plans only. Updates to existing plans will not be eligible.

This specification guide is to assist the Technical Service Provider (TSP) in the interpretation of the National Criteria and preparation of the Forest Management Plan (FMP). It will address critical elements that must be included and additional considerations acceptable for inclusion to meet participant's objectives. The National Criteria can be found on the Washington NRCS Website within the Electronic Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG), in Section III under the Conservation Activity Plans (CAPs) Technical Criteria.

For further guidance on NRCS's conservation planning procedures, go to: NRCS's National Forestry Handbook section 636; NRCS's National Planning Procedures Handbook: Title 180, Part 600 and/or Section VI of FOTG/ Non-Practice Statement of Work/ Conservation Planning Statement of Work.

For the list of NRCS *resource concerns*, the *quality criteria* for each resource concern, and acceptable *tools* for inventory and analysis of the resource concerns, go to the Washington NRCS Website within the Section III Electronic Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG), in the Resource Quality Criteria Folder.

Section headings below correspond to the section headings in the National Criteria.

B. Background and Site Information: Refer to required items in the National Criteria along with the following guidance for the State of Washington.

Landowner information-name, address, operation type and size is required information. Additional information such as total forested acres, as well as acreages for other land uses would be recommended and acceptable to include this section.

Farm and Tract number along with legal description is required information. ***“Plan map of parcel” or location map is required***, with parcel or project area outlined and high enough scale to show main roads, rivers, communities or other features that would help locate the property.

Documentation of existing practices is required information and should include all existing treatments and processes that reduce resource concerns and/or improve the state of natural resources as defined by quality criteria in Section III of the eFOTG.

Past harvest history is required information. Additional information such as date of land acquisition and silvicultural or forest management activities other than harvest are recommended and acceptable information for inclusion in this section. A forest history could also include information about sites, features or objects of cultural or historical interest.

Identification of resource concerns is required information. Document method & tools used to identify resource concerns and existing (benchmark) condition. See NRCS's National Forestry Handbook and FOTG\Section I and III for recommended methods and tools for inventorying resource concerns and benchmark conditions

If your client's objective include qualifying for the Designated Forest Land (Tax) Program, then it is acceptable to including additional information within this plan needed for that program, such as Parcel number.

Additional information such as: tree farm or sustainability certifications for the property, along with the certifying organization, certification type, certification date and its expiration date would be appropriate to include in this section.

Additional information on fire protection districts and assessments may also be included in this section.

C. Client Objectives (which may include these and others): Refer to required items in the National Criteria along with the following guidance for the State of Washington.

It is required to include the clients goals and objectives for the project area, such as, the improvement of: economic considerations, forest health, wildlife habitat, riparian areas, pollinator habitat, agroforestry opportunities, recreational opportunities or other human considerations and natural resource concerns. However, if the client's objectives include the conversion from forestland to conditions that make cropping a possible option, then the potential consequences associated with the conversion of a forested wetlands should be included in the plan.

4 Conversion from forested wetlands conditions to a state that is capable of being cropped is a violation of the Food Security Act of 1985 and would make the Participant ineligible for USDA programs. If the site has hydric soils then contact your local NRCS field office and request a determination (even if agricultural crops are not the objective of the converted forestland a determination will be required).

D. Existing Conditions: Refer to required items in the National Criteria along with the following guidance for the State of Washington. See National Forestry Handbook, part 636 and Section III of eFOTG in the Resource Quality Criteria for RMS folder for acceptable inventory methods and tools for establishing benchmark (existing) conditions during conservation forestland planning process.

A Resource Inventory Map is not required, however it is an excellent way to show *forest management units and stand boundaries, which are required* information. *Acres by forest management unit (field or forest stand) is required.* Adding additional information such as forest types and stocking for each forest management unit and location of other resource concerns to a resource inventory map is not only acceptable but an excellent way to document existing conditions.

Biological Technical Note 14 is a required inventory and analysis tool for all NRCS conservation planning in Washington State. Use the appropriate worksheets for the specific site and project. This will be included in all plans. Refer to USFWS or WDFW websites and client interviews for potential species found on site. Maps from the WA DNR's FPARS stream typing website are acceptable and recommended source of information for hydrology and potential fish habitat.

Water Quality Technical Note 1 (usually Table 6) is a recommended tool for inventory analysis of water quality resource concerns associated with Forest Roads. If available the Forest Roads Inventory and Analysis tool is also acceptable.

Forestry Technical Note 10 (Forest Stand Density Guide) is a good stocking guide for most commercial tree species in Washington State, except for Red Alder. In Western Washington, Red Alder will have the same stocking guidelines as Douglas-fir (Coastal). Stocking recommendations outside of or in contradiction of Forestry Technical Note 10 will need to be justified with references.

Basal area will not be required information in the State of Washington, however, and estimate of *Trees per acre, average DBH or DBH range, average height of crop trees, average crown ratio of crop trees, and description of forest health condition by forest management unit will be required* for all treated acres and this data will be documented in this section and/or on the Jobsheets/site specific specifications. For forest management units that are not receiving treatment, then the approximate size class, stocking information, and a description of forest health condition will be documented in this section.

E. Desired Future Conditions: Refer to required items in the National Criteria along with the following guidance for the State of Washington.

If fish, wildlife or pollinator habitat are included in the clients goals for desired conditions, then be sure to include Practices 645 Upland Wildlife Habitat Improvement, 644 Wetland Wildlife Habitat, or 395 Stream Habitat Improvement in your conservation plan. These practices are not on the list shown in the National Criteria but are

available for use. Other associated practices commonly used in forestland settings are 342 Critical Area Planting, 396 Fish Passage and 484 Mulch.

Practice 338 Prescribed Burning is not offered in Washington. If burning is a treatment chosen by the client to meet their desired forest condition then burning activities must meet local and state burning regulations. NRCS will not be responsible for reviewing the planning, design and/or implementation of 338 Prescribed Burning. Proper authorities, such as but not limited to, Washington Department of Natural Resources, will be contacted prior to any burning.

F. Forest Management Plan Documentation: Refer to required items in the National Criteria along with the following guidance for the State of Washington.

The plan narrative (sections B. through E) is required documentation.

Forest Management Plan Map is required and must have a Title using Client name (or project name), the legal location (and/or farm and tract #), total project acres, date created and TSP's name as map creator. Each forest management unit (field or forest stand) will need to be labeled with the land use and its acres. Plus the location of the proposed practices will be approximately indicated.

Soils Map for project area is required along with soils reports and interpretations on needed for individual Conservation Practices. (See "Practice Documentation Requirement" form found in Practice folder in section IV of eFOTG. The title will be Soils Map and may include client or project name and legend indicating the soil name or code found on current soil survey.

Wetland delineation map and associated wetland compliance documentation (if applicable) is required and may be included in an resource inventory map if one is created.

Conservation plan with the record of decision, practice list with extent and implementation schedule is required.
Site specific specifications for each non-engineering practices are required and will be developed using NRCS jobsheets or specification worksheets and specification guides. For engineering practices, site specific specifications are not required. However, the inventory information, approximate location, approximate extent of treatment and implementation schedule will be included in the conservation plan and map. Make sure required documentation for each practice found on the "Practice Documentation Requirement" form and deliverables for each practice found in the "Statement of Work" (SOW) are included in the overall plan or site specific specification package. Required adherence to these forms depend on their availability for each individual practice.

Deliverables to Client a hardcopy of the plan that includes: Refer to required items in the National Criteria along with the following guidance for the State of Washington.

All the Forest Management Plan Documentation is required.

Cover Page is required:

Only the TSP needs to sign and date the document unless the participant engages in further Farm Bill Programs based on the information and planning within this document.

Deliverables for NRCS Field Office: Refer to required items in the National Criteria along with the following guidance for the State of Washington.

In addition to the National Criteria requirements a ***Digital or hard copy of a Topographic map w/ project area and if possible practice locations outlined is required.*** This map will be titled "Area of Potential Effect", have a north arrow and a scale of the map will be 1:24000 and shown in legend.

If TSP would like to use the Conservation Plug-In software called "cplanner" offered GeoAgro remember to get a NRCS- CPA-70 signed by your client to provide you access to their file in our Customer Service Toolkit database.

References: This section is not in the National Criteria.

National Planning Procedures Handbook: Title 180, Part 600: <http://policy.nrcs.usda.gov/>

National Forestry Handbook section 636: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/forestry.html>

eFOTG and all its sections are found on the Washington NRCS website: <http://www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov/> . The electronic Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG) link is on the left side of the home page. Then select Washington State by clicking on it, then select your county by clicking on it, then on the left hand side select the appropriate section.

Section I : In the “Reference List” folder is the folder for “Technical Notes by Discipline” . This is where you find Biological Technical Note 14 and Water Quality Technical Note 1 and Forestry Technical Note 10 along with other technical notes that may interest you.

Section II: Has information on soils, climate and other natural resources information that maybe of use for inventory and analysis purposes.

Section III: Has the “Conservation Activity Plans (CAPs) Technical Criteria” folder and the “Resource Quality Criteria for RMS” folder.

Section IV: In the “Washington Conservation Practices” folder you find the folders for the individual conservation practices. In the “Non Practice Statement of Work” folder you will find the general deliverables for conservation planning.

NRCS-CPA-70 is found on the TechReg site: <http://techreg.usda.gov/static/documents/NRCS-CPA-70.pdf> .

Web Soil Survey: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm> .

Soil Data Mart: <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/>.