# 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) 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 of a Forest Management Plan (FMP). The specific criteria required for each type of certification for TSP is located on the following web site: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/technical/tsp

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

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

1) Expected income
2) Forest stand improvement
3) Wildlife habitat/riparian areas
4) Recreation
5) Agroforestry
6) Pollinator Habitat and Protection

D. Existing Conditions

1) Identify resource concerns based on an inventory to assess these concerns and opportunity for treatment. A forest inventory will be conducted using generally accepted forest inventory methods. Describe the inventory process in the plan. The inventory typically includes 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, wildfire risk (surface and crown fires), 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.

E. Desired Future Conditions

1) Goals such as stocking, basal area, species composition, wildlife, pollinator habitat and protection, recreation, etc. for stands where practices/activities are recommended to meet future goals.

F. Forest Management Plan Documentation

1) Forest management plan map – boundaries, fields (i.e., foresters may refer to them as different stands of trees), scale, north arrow, stand boundaries, appropriate map symbols
2) Soils map – legend, interpretations, suitability index for forest activities
3) A wetland delineation map and associated wetland compliance documentation (Food Security Act of 1985), **if applicable**.
4) Conservation plan (record of decisions) *(MsWord Document or the national common forest management plan template developed and accepted by U.S. Forest Service, NRCS, and the American Tree Farm System. It has also been endorsed by the National Association of State Foresters.)* to include the planned practice(s), the amounts to be applied, the schedule for implementation.

a) When any of the following practices are used in this plan, the site specific specifications shall be developed in the attached template, in a NRCS approved job sheet, or separate plan. A Forest Management Plan may include as appropriate, but is not limited to, the conservation practices listed below:

| Code | Practice Name |
|---|---|
| 311 | Alley Cropping |
| 379 | Multi-Story Cropping |
| 380 | Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment |
| 381 | Silvopasture Establishment |
| 383 | Fuel Break |
| 384 | Woody Residue Treatment |
| 391 | Riparian Forest Buffer |
| 394 | Firebreak |
| 472 | Access Control |
| 490 | Tree/Shrub Site Preparation |
| 612 | Tree/Shrub Establishment |
| 650 | Windbreak/Shelterbelt Renovation |
| 654 | Road/Trail/Landing Closure and Treatment |

| | |
|---|---|
| 655 | Forest Trails and Landings |
| 660 | Tree/Shrub Pruning |
| 666 | Forest Stand Improvement |

b) The practices listed under a) above are the primary NRCS forestry and agroforestry practices, but additional conservation practices may be needed to meet all the landowner's objectives. For all other practices the practice shall be documented for the planned amount, the fields where the practice is to be applied, and the planned year of application. Below are examples of additional conservation practices that may be planned on forestland:

| Code | Practice name |
|---|---|
| 314 | Brush Management |
| 315 | Herbaceous Weed Control |
| 327 | Conservation Cover |
| 338 | Prescribed Burning |
| 342 | Critical Area Planting |
| 382 | Fence |
| 395 | Stream Habitat Improvement and Management |
| 560 | Access Road |
| 578 | Stream Crossing |
| 580 | Streambank and Shoreline Protection |
| 595 | Integrated Pest Management |
| 643 | Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats |
| 644 | Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management |
| 645 | Upland Wildlife Habitat Management |
| 647 | Early Successional Habitat Development/Management |

Practices beyond the basic forestry/agroforestry practices may be included in a plan but the design and implementation of these will be conducted by an appropriately certified TSP for those practices

G. References

1) Refer to the USDA NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov//efotg_locator.aspx , Select State, Select Section 4 Conservation Practices) for a complete list of potential conservation practices.

**3. Deliverables for the Client – a hardcopy of the plan that includes:**

A. Completed template for **Forest Management Plan (106) [**Managing Your Woodlands Natl ATFS FS NRCS Mgt Plan Template_elec Sign_21Feb11.pdf or Managing Your Woodlands Natl ATFS FS NRCS Joint Mgt Plan Template_21Feb11.doc] that includes the Cover Page – name, address, phone of client and TSP and a signature page with the client, TSP and NRCS signatures.

B. Forest management plan map – boundaries, fields (i.e., foresters may refer to them as different stands of trees), scale, north arrow, stand boundaries, appropriate map symbols

C. Soils map and appropriate soil descriptions. The Web Soil Survey can provide the needed information: http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm

D. Resource assessment results (wind and water erosion, water availability, soil fertility, and others that may be needed)

E. For management practices. The planned practices and the site specific specifications on how each practice will be applied; when the practice will be applied; and the extent (acres or number) that will be applied.

F. 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:**

A. Complete Hardcopy and Electronic copy of the client's plan **[**Managing Your Woodlands Natl ATFS FS NRCS Mgt Plan Template_ _14Sept2014.pdf or Managing Your Woodlands Natl ATFS FS NRCS Joint Mgt Plan Template_14Sept2014.doc] with appropriate practice specifications (or job sheets) for the planned practices as appropriate.

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

C. Digital Soils Map.

**5. 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.

**To further enhance the coordination, a national common forest management plan template has been developed and accepted by U.S. Forest Service, NRCS, and the American Tree Farm System. It has also been endorsed by the National Association of State Foresters. The template is attached as an appendix to these criteria.**

**6. Definitions of Forest Stewardship Plan and Forest Management Plan (106)**

**A. Forest Stewardship Plans**

Through the U.S. Forest Service's Forest Stewardship Program, State forestry agencies annually receive financial and technical assistance that allows them to help landowners develop Forest Stewardship Plans (FSP) for their nonindustrial private forest land. FSP are prepared by foresters employed by State forestry agencies or by private consulting foresters under the direction of those State agencies. FSP are developed for the landowner's entire forested ownership and/or any land that will be planted to forest vegetation.

Forest Stewardship Plans will continue to be developed for private landowners by State forestry agencies, with financial and technical assistance provided by the U.S. Forest Service

through the Forest Stewardship Program. With the provisions in the new Farm Bill there is an opportunity for NRCS to provide financial assistance through EQIP that increases the planning and application of forestry-related conservation practices. NRCS will coordinate and cooperate with State forestry agencies in the delivery of forestry assistance to private landowners.

**B. Forest Management Plan (106)**

To complement the planning assistance provided by State forestry agencies (i.e., Forest Stewardship Plans), NRCS is using a different term to describe the planning assistance that will be provided to clients through EQIP. NRCS will use the term "Forest Management Plan (FMP)". The FMP criteria described above were developed in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service to assure alignment with the national standards for a Forest Stewardship Plan. A few criteria were added to assure compliance with NRCS requirements (e.g., NRCS conservation practice names). These criteria replace the Prescribed Forestry – 409 National Practice Standard, which was rescinded and removed from the National Handbook of Conservation Practices (NPCH).