

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

**FOREST TRAILS AND LANDINGS**

(Ac.)

CODE 655

**DEFINITION**

A temporary or infrequently used route, path or cleared area within a forest.

**PURPOSE**

- Provide infrequent access to forest stands for management activities including fire suppression.
- Provide periodic access for removal and collection of forest products.

**CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES**

Trails and landings are applicable on forested areas. Refer to the standard Access Roads, 560, for travel-ways that will be designed and used frequently or repeatedly for vehicular traffic.

**CRITERIA**

**General Criteria Applicable To All Purposes**

Trails and landings will be of a size, gradient, number and location to accomplish the intended purpose.

They shall be located to minimize adverse onsite and off-site impacts such as accelerated erosion, riparian area degradation, stream channel and streambank damage, hydrology modification, aesthetics or unacceptable damage to advance regeneration, residual growing stock or wildlife habitat.

Timing and use of equipment will be commensurate with site and soil conditions to maintain site productivity and minimize soil erosion, displacement and compaction.

Slash, debris and vegetative material left on the site after use will not present an unacceptable fire or pest hazard or interfere with the intended purpose.

Drainage and erosion control measures for trails shall be used and located to minimize water flows and erosion rates to acceptable levels.

If stream crossings are needed, refer to the Practice Standard Stream Crossing, 578.

Trails and landings shall be revegetated to control erosion as needed. Refer to the standard Critical Area Planting, 342. Locally invasive and noxious plants will not be used for revegetation.

Measures, including the use and treatment of equipment, will be used to control or protect against locally invasive species. If pesticides are used, refer to the Standard Pest Management, 595.

Comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations during the installation, operation and maintenance of this practice.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

Assure safe ingress and egress to site.

Locate landings and trails to preserve aesthetic qualities.

Police landings and trails to remove refuse and garbage.

Landings and trails may be closed for erosion control, safety, and liability concerns, and reduced maintenance costs.

Landings and trails may be used for wildlife food and cover plantings.

Favor native species for revegetating trails and landings.

Landings and trails may be utilized as firebreaks.

Consider cultural resources and environmental concerns such as threatened and endangered species of plants and animals, natural areas and wetlands.

Maine Forest Service's Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Forestry (2005) may be used to assist with minimizing potential adverse impacts associated with forestry operations on trails and landings.

### **PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

Specifications for applying this practice shall be prepared for each site and recorded using approved specification sheets, job sheets, technical notes and narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other acceptable documentation.

Specifications for revegetation of landings and trails should include species, timing and method of application.

Planned trails and landings, water bars, stream crossings, rock plunge pools, and other drainage and erosion control measures should be located on a conservation map, soils map or location sketch map.

### **OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

Periodic inspections of landings and trails will be conducted and where necessary repairs will be made.

Landings and trails utilized as firebreaks will be properly maintained to accomplish this purpose.

Landings and trails shall be closed when and where needed for erosion control, safety and liability issues, and reduced maintenance costs. Refer to the standard Use Exclusion, 472.

Watercourses and water quality shall be protected during and after removal and transport of trees.

Landings and trails no longer needed, and not used as a firebreak, can be retired. They shall be sufficiently revegetated as needed. Refer to Standard and Specification 342 – Critical Area Planting.

### **REFERENCES**

Maine Forest Service. 2005. Best Management Practices for Forestry: protecting Maine's Water Quality. Maine Department of Conservation. 93pp.