

Forest Management Plan

Vermont Conservation Activity Plan Checklist 106



Definition

A Forest Management CAP plan is developed for a client and will address resource concerns on land where forestry-related activities or practices will be planned and applied. This plan has similar required elements as Use Value Appraisal (UVA), Forest Stewardship and Tree Farm Plans. This plan will provide a schedule of activities over at least a 10 year period.

Digital Property and Stand Boundaries

Landowners must establish digital GIS property boundaries with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) at the USDA Service Center. This will typically be completed at time of application or soon after. Consulting foresters often determine and map property boundaries during plan development and are asked to provide maps or GIS shapefiles (where available) to the landowners or NRCS. This will help improve the quality and accuracy of NRCS GIS files which will be used for planning conservation practices in the future. Submitting digital stand boundaries to NRCS would also be helpful but are not required.

Cultural Resources

During development of the forest management plan the consulting forester will note features, including the location, of potential historic value. Examples of cultural resources of interest that may be found in woodlands include residential

and barn cellar holes or stone foundations, stone lined wells, sugar arches, old mill structures and dams, and animal enclosures. Animal enclosures may resemble stone walls but will be three or four sided structures and may be 400-1600 square feet (20x20 feet - 40x40 feet) in size. Stone walls do not need to be described in the plan. Recommendations will be made to conserve these features to the extent possible during road building and harvests.

Important Wildlife Habitats

NRCS will provide information regarding Vermont significant wetlands, deer wintering areas and uncommon, rare or threatened and endangered species and natural communities to assist in plan development. Also, State significant habitats including heron rookeries, vernal pools, and bear scarred beech stands encountered during inventory should be noted with recommendations for conservation.

Finally, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) will be followed. VT NRCS and the USFWS have a programmatic agreement in place which has evaluated the potential effects of all conservation practices. Foresters will follow the VT Fish and Wildlife Department Forest Management Guidelines for Indiana Bat Habitat when they are within potential Indiana bat range. The managements specified within will be recommended and provided as an alternative to the landowner. If the landowner does not want to follow the guidelines and selects practices to implement that could be detrimental to the bat, it is likely that those specific practices will not be funded by NRCS. Other federal species that may need to be protected through the forest management plan is the Northeastern Bulrush (*Scirpus ancistrochaetus*) in Southeastern Vermont.

See the VT NRCS Website for more information including towns where species are found -

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/vt/technical/ecoscience/threat/>

Forest Management Plan Conservation Activity Plan – Checklist

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<i>For:</i>	<i>SPAN # if known:</i>
<i>Tract# if known:</i>	<i>TSP Consulting Forester Signature:</i>
<i>Written By:</i>	
<i>Title:</i>	<i>Date:</i>

Checklist – The plan will include all items below under the major SHADED headings. The consulting TSP forester will certify, by signing the checklist, that the Forest Management Plan elements have been met. The checklist and plan will then be forwarded to the NRCS Field Office for payment. Items that do not apply (e.g. T+E species where none are found) will be labeled as ‘NA.’ Note that numerous GIS maps will be provided by NRCS to the consulting TSP forester **PRIOR TO PLAN DEVELOPMENT** to assure consistency of information. It is expected that this information be used to help develop this CAP forest plan. This plan is intended to include narrative descriptions for the landowner. We will not accept plans in the pre 2010 UVA Manual table format. Unless the items below are specified with ‘(NRCS)’ it is required to be completed or supplied by the **Consulting Forester (CF)**. The plan will be approved upon signing by the consulting TSP forester. **Note:** Quality assurance will involve review of the first two completed NRCS funded Forest Mgt. CAP Plans. Following successful review of these two plans, a 5% review of plans will be completed yearly for continued quality assurance. See Contacts below for review info.

Inventory Requirements – Follow UVA Guidelines for Stand Descriptions. Sampling data must be stand specific and accurately represent field conditions. For NRCS CAP Plans, minimum sampling intensity will be approximately 1 point per 3-4 acres for parcels less than 100 acres, 1 point per 5-6 acres for parcels 100-500 acres, and 1 point per 10 acres for parcels greater than 500 acres. Generally 3 or more points per stand is desirable.

Cover Page	
Landowner name, E911 address (and property address if different from mailing address), phone	
Plan Preparer- name, address, phone	
Management Plan acres (total acres of plan)	
Plan start (approval date) and end date	
Signature by Landowner and Consulting Forester If the property is in UVA it will still need to be reviewed and signed by the County Forester for UVA purposes. Should the County Forester require changes to this plan, re-submit to NRCS	

General Management Unit Information - Objectives	
Biophysical region (optional), landscape characteristic (e.g. large forest block, fragmented agricultural landscape), parcel location, town and county, surrounding properties, boundary line description/condition	
General property description, access system, brief history of property, landowner goals/objectives	

Resource Information Inventory	
Cultural Resources Description (NRCS and CF)	
Recreation and aesthetic values and opportunities – views, vistas, trails, etc.	
Uncommon, rare, threatened and endangered (RTE) species or significant natural communities – Review of NNHP database and NRCS ESA Review (NRCS with CF using information attained from NRCS in plan) – Note in plan if no RTE are found	
Fish and Wildlife Habitats existing and potential opportunities for management/enhancement	
Important Natural Features – waterfalls, cliffs, seeps, etc.	
Riparian areas, streams, significant wetlands, and water bodies and measures to protect or enhance	

Stand & Mgt. Information – Follow 2010 UVA Manual	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand Information/Descriptions • Desired Future Stand Condition – Long Range Silvicultural Objectives • Planned Treatments/Silvicultural Prescriptions/Treatment Schedule <p>Follow UVA Guidelines. See Manual pages 36-40, Appendix E – Sample Forest Mgt. Plan, Appendix G – UVA Mgt. Plan Checklist, etc.</p>	
In addition to meeting the UVA requirements, be sure to include the following items in the stand information section of the plan:	
Site Class – Productivity, Site Index, Soils info. Describe soils and their characteristics in relation to forest management potential (e.g. tree growth, harvest limitations, etc.)	
Stems/Acre	
Volume/Acre – Sawtimber, cordwood	

Resource Concerns on Management Unit	
Document existing soil erosion, water quality problems, poor or lacking wildlife habitat, invasive plants (categorize infestation), etc. and general location of problem in the stand if applicable. Note: Do not make herbicide recommendations within this Forest Plan unless you are Certified Pesticide Applicator through the Vermont Agency of Agriculture.	

Integrated Resource Management	
<p>Integrated Resource Management – How will planned silvicultural treatments effect resources such as wetlands, rare species or natural communities, cultural resources, wildlife habitat, recreation, aesthetics, etc.? Prescribe managements in ways that consider and improve these resources.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oak is noted within stand. Treatment includes crop tree release. Note that crop tree release on oak will improve/increase mast production for wildlife as well as growth rate for timber. Could also be highlighted with various treatments including thinning to benefit important mast source. • A significant wetland community or stream is noted in plan. Be specific with recommendations. Note that during harvest operations a X foot buffer will be maintained where X basal area or X canopy cover will be maintained. Or skidders may be excluded from very wet areas. • Poor regeneration and habitat is noted. Large group selection harvests are prescribed. Note that this should improve regeneration, browse and low woody cover for various species of wildlife. Providing this low woody cover and vertical diversity/structural complexity through uneven aged mgt. is usually beneficial to forest songbirds. • An old sugar arch is noted in the plan. Note that marking of timber and harvesting will be carefully implemented to maintain this cultural resource. • Landowner enjoys large trees and aesthetics of their woodlot. Note in prescription that X large trees an acre will be retained or a few will be retained near walking trails. Implementing group selection near top of ridge will also provide a view of the Adirondacks. 	

Recommended NRCS Practices	
<p>These practices are contingent upon NRCS review, programs funding, etc. Use a separate table in the forest plan to capture these recommended practices. Template is available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official Practice Name and Code # • The amounts (acres, feet, or number) to be applied and location – stand and area within stand if applicable • Implementation Schedule – month and year 	

Maps	
Forest Management Plan Map (features clearly labeled or symbolized)	
Aerial photo or Topographic Map - NRCS can provide base map with property boundary outline if needed. (jpg, pdf or hardcopy). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legend, north arrow, and scale • Property boundaries and Stand delineations • Roads, water resources 	
NRCS Practices – Location of Practices described in the ‘ Recommended NRCS Practices ’ section specified above Optional but highly recommended	

Resource Inventory Maps – NRCS will supply to consulting forester prior to plan development to inform plan development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSWI - Vermont State Significant Wetlands* (Watershed Protection Layer Group in Atlas) • Deer Wintering Areas – State of Vermont* (Fish and Wildlife Layer Group in Atlas) • Wildlife Diversity Program Layers – Rare Threatened Endangered Species, Uncommon Species and Other Features and Significant Natural Community* (Fish and Wildlife Layer Group in Atlas) • Soils Map with Map Unit Symbols* (Geology Layer Group in Atlas) <p>*combine on one map if possible. If it is too cluttered, make a separate soils map. All data layers, regardless of whether or not the resource is present on the property, will be displayed in the legend. This will signify that the presence of the resource has been evaluated through the GIS.</p>	

NRCS Practices - <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/vt/technical/?cid=stelprdb1080585>

UVA Web Page/Manual - http://www.vtfpr.org/resource/for_forres_useapp.cfm

ANR – Natural Resources Atlas - <http://anrmaps.vermont.gov/websites/anra/>

This is a very useful online GIS tool for T+E species, wetlands, soils, parcels, deer wintering areas, stream geomorphic data, streams, wellhead protection areas, transportation, etc. Shapefiles (e.g. woodlot boundaries) can be uploaded and basic Forest Management Plan Maps can be created.

Contacts/Info: Information about becoming a TSP can be found at <http://techreg.usda.gov/>. You can also contact Sandra Primard at sandra.primard@vt.usda.gov for further details about TSPs. The first two NRCS Forest Management CAP plans completed by the TSP consulting forester for landowners will be forwarded via email and reviewed for Quality Assurance by Toby Alexander at toby.alexander@vt.usda.gov prior to payment. Please forward plan before final UVA approval so that any changes required can be addressed prior to final approval by landowner and county forester.

Consulting TSP Forester Notes: