

**Steps for Using EQIP – FA incentive to fund Forest Management Plan (FMP) Conservation Activity Plan (CAP) development using client-hired Technical Service Providers (TSPs)**

**December 1, 2009**

1. **(Field Office)** - A producer is interested in EQIP-FA initiative to fund FNMP CAP development using producer-hired TSP, and completes application for program participation (CCC-1200).
  - a. NRCS field staff will notify the client that anyone receiving EQIP incentive payments for a FMP would not be able to receive WoodsWise payments for a Stewardship Plan on those same acres and vice versa. NRCS field staff will then determine that the acres to be planned are not already enrolled in the Maine Forest Service (MFS) Stewardship Assistance program by checking with the MFS District Forester or Landowner Outreach Forester.
  - b. Clients participating in the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) that are removing Biomass from non industrial private forest land, the eligible material collection and harvesting activities must be done according to a new or amended Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP), or other practice plan approved by the State forester. Forest Stewardship Plans need to be created or amended at no expense to CCC. These plans required by the BCAP program are not eligible for FPM-CAP on those acres covered by the BCAP.
  - c. NRCS field staff completes all program eligible determinations. If client is eligible for program participation, then proceed to the following steps:
    - 1) Determine payment rate for acres of forestland that will be covered by the FMP from the Program Payment Schedule.
    - 2) Review with producer the FMP initiative payment rate and the TSP hiring process that she/he must use to hire a TSP certified in "TechReg" for a CAP-FMP Plan Approval.
  - d. If the producer wishes to proceed, the Field Office (FO) will:
    - 1) Develop EQIP CAP-FMP Plan Approval contract for producer.
    - 2) Provide Landowner copy of the "Forest Management Plan Criteria/Activity Code (106) (No.)" document from Section III of eFOTG which lists required deliverables.
    - 3) Notify client to hire TSP certified in Maine for "CAP-Forest Management Plan (FMP) (106)" from TechReg at:  
<http://techreg.usda.gov/CustLocateTSP.aspx>

- 4) Client may grant property information to TSP directly, or may grant permission for release of information to TSP by NRCS. If client agrees to release information, assist client to fill out and sign Authorization and Release of Information ([see ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/ME/GMAmendments/GM120\\_ME-11\\_408\\_C.pdf](ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/ME/GMAmendments/GM120_ME-11_408_C.pdf)). On the form, print TSP name and their TechReg ID Number TSP-X-XX-XXX. Place original signed copy in file and provide two copies to client and one for TSP.
- 5) Provide client and/or TSP with signed permission copies of Common Land Units (CLU) and At-Risk Wildlife Maps covering CLUs.

**2. (Client, TSP and Field Office)** - Client contacts TSP and considers using the Assignment of Payment.

- a. Client and TSP agree on terms. It is suggested that client have a contract with the TSP that refers to the "FMP Criteria CAP, Plan Code 106" which details the deliverables.
- b. If client agrees to the Assignment of Payment:
  - 1) NRCS completes blocks 10, 11 and 12 on the "Assignment of Payment" CCC-36 Form. The sum of the payment due for contracted CAP is entered in block 12.
  - 2) The client completes items 1, 3, 4, 13A, and 13B.
  - 3) TSP completes items 5, 6, 14A, and 14B. TSP must also provide SF-1199 Form - Direct Deposit Information.
  - 4) NRCS files completed original CCC-36 in case file and loads into Protracts. Copies also are provided for the client's six part folder and to the assignee.

**3. (TSP)** – TSP will visit property.

- a. TSP will make landowner visit, and get contract signed, and a copy of the "Authorization and Release of Information" from step 1(b)(4).
- b. TSP completes necessary inventory of forestland and gathers other information to complete the CAP.

**4. (TSP)** – TSP completes the CAP.

**5. (TSP/Client)** – TSP certification statement on cover sheet of CAP

- a. TSP, per deliverables, produces two hard copies of CAP and reviews it with the client. TSP obtains client's signature on the cover page of both copies and leaves both copies with the client.
- b. TSP, per deliverables, also produces two digital copies of CAP and leaves both copies with producer.
- c. Provides invoice to client for CAP.

6. **(Client)** – Delivers to FO:

- a. One hard and one electronic copy of CAP,

7. **(Client and Field Office)** – Payment request.

- a. The client completes their portion of CPA-1245 Form, Request for Payment.
- b. NRCS employee reviews deliverables. If acceptable, signs acceptance line on cover of CAP.
- c. FO staff prepares NRCS-CPA-1245 and processes payment.

8. **(Field Office)** – CAP processing.

- a. One hard copy of the signed CAP is placed in NRCS/SWCD official files.
- b. The Toolkit customer folder is checked out from the NCP Database and the FMP digital file is placed into C:/Customer Files Toolkit/Customer File/CAP-FMP
- c. District Conservationist informs ASTC for Operations that CAP has been delivered and may need a Quality Assurance check.

9. **(State Office)** – Performs Quality Assurance on reported CAP per policy.