

GUIDE TO FORESTRY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A WORKING GUIDE FOR PROVIDING TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF NON-INDUSTRIAL PRIVATE FOREST LANDS IN PENNSYLVANIA

INTRODUCTION

The guide to Forestry Roles and Responsibilities serves as a workflow to assist NRCS Field Staff, DCNR Service Foresters, Technical Service Providers and Non-industrial Private Forest Landowners through the process of applying, and implementing forestry related Financial Assistance conservation contracts with USDA-NRCS.

INSTRUCTIONS

This workflow is designed with multiple bookmarks to allow for ease of understanding with 2 possible different scenarios. Select the bookmark that best represents the current scenario. These scenarios include 1. when a landowner applies for the development of a new Forest Management Plan (CAP 106), 2. When a landowner applies to implement practices outlined in a current Forest Management Plan (CAP 106) or other plan meeting NRCS Forest Management Plan Criteria. Roles are listed at the top of each page. Review your role to view your responsibilities. Applicable roles in this guide include 1. NRCS Field Staff, 2. DCNR-BOF Service Forester, 3. Technical Service Provider (TSP) Forester, and 4. Non-Industrial Private Forest Landowners. Note that roles of NRCS and DCNR-BOF service Forester are adjusted for practice certification when NRCS employees are available that have Job Approval Authority for forestry related conservation practices. Utilize the Required Checklist for documenting completed workflow steps.

FIELD LEVEL COORDINATION

This guide functions to encourage field level coordination amongst organizations and agencies in orders to meet the objectives as outlined in the 2018 Memorandum of Agreement between PA NRCS and PA DCNR BOF. Both organizations recognize that coordination at both the local/field level and the state level is essential to the conservation and sustainability of non-industrial private forest lands in Pennsylvania. Certain actions are encouraged in order to maintain and improve coordination. Recommended field/local level actions include:

1. Meet with local staff (NRCS and DCNR) to discuss roles, program changes, staff capacity, and to to outline communications strategies to encourage a strong and coordinated partnership.
2. Keep informed of on-going field and Central/State office communications including a working understanding of mutual time frames for inspections, reviews, and other cooperative activities.
3. Work with local staff (NRCS and DCNR) assist in the determination of county level priorities by attending annual Local Working Group (LWG) meetings and applicable woodland owners association meetings. Encourage Technical Service Providers (TSP's) to attend these important meetings.
4. Conduct coordinated outreach between agencies to local forest landowners and local woodland owners associations and other applicable local forestry related groups and organizations.

GUIDE TO FORESTRY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A WORKING GUIDE FOR PROVIDING TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF NON-INDUSTRIAL PRIVATE FOREST LANDS IN PENNSYLVANIA

CAP 106 FMP EQIP Application Workflow			
DCNR-BOF SERVICE FORESTER	NRCS FIELD STAFF (AFFILIATES AND EMPLOYEES)	TECHNICAL SERVICE PROVIDOR (TSP) FORESTER	NON-INDUSTRIAL PRIVATE FOREST LANDOWNER
Step 1: Landowner does not have a Forest Management Plan (FMP) and is interested in having a FMP developed:			
Meet the landowner at their property to discuss objectives, evaluate concerns, and discuss the management benefits of a FMP. Refer the landowner to NRCS to review the application process financial assistance to develop a CAP 106 FMP.	Discuss the management benefits of a FMP and the application process for financial assistance contracts for a CAP 106 FMP. Discuss EQIP eligibility requirements including the need to have a current forest management plan meeting NRCS criteria for EQIP implementation contracts.	Discuss plan options available and management benefits to having a FMP. Inform the landowner of offices to contact to inquire about Financial Assistance opportunities for getting a FMP written.	Gain an understanding of financial and technical assistance programs, eligibility requirements, and how a Forest Management Plan can assist on your property.
	Present the option for the landowner to sign an Authorization to Release Records form for NRCS to coordinate with the TSP and the Service Forester on the project.		Review the Authorization to Release Records form for NRCS to coordinate with the TSP and the Service Forester on the project.
Step 2: Landowner applies with NRCS for a contract to get a CAP 106 FMP developed:			
Maintain communication with NRCS and the Landowner if the landowner has signed an Authorization to Release Records form.	Meet with the landowner to complete a NRCS Conservation Program Application. Inform landowner of their responsibilities to meet with USDA-FSA to complete or update necessary eligibility information and paperwork.		Make an appointment to meet with the local NRCS office to complete a Conservation Program application. Gain an understanding of what necessary eligibility information and paperwork needs to be completed with USDA-FSA.

	Explain program eligibility, CAP criteria, application process, ranking, the contracting process, pertinent timeframes so that landowner clearly understands the program and process to make an educated decision.		Understand program eligibility, CAP 106 FMP criteria, application process, ranking, the contracting process, pertinent timeframes. Ask questions to gain clarity and to make an educated decision.
	Adhere to all process steps as outlined in the PA Financial Assistance Program Guidance.	Consult with landowner on your availability and willingness to write a CAP 106 FMP if their application is selected for funding. Understand that the landowner has 12 months to get the CAP 106 FMP completed once they have a signed contract.	Reach out and consult with a TSP to determine that you will have a qualified individual available to complete the CAP 106 FMP within the 12 month timeframe if your application is selected for financial assistance.
Step 3: Application is selected and approved for Financial Assistance funding for a CAP 106 FMP:			
	After delivering the approved contract to the landowner, inform them of all requirements of the contract.	Make sure that your TSP registration remains current.	Review your contract for a complete understanding of all requirements.
	Advise landowner that they should hire a TSP to write the CAP 106 FMP within 1 month of receiving the approved contract.	Within 1 month of the landowner receiving an approved contract from NRCS, the TSP should be hired by the landowner to write a CAP 106 FMP.	Within 1 month of receiving your approved contract, hire a TSP to write your CAP 106 FMP. Discuss hiring terms, terms and expectations, and criteria necessary for a CAP 106 FMP.
Coordinate with the Landowner, TSP, and NRCS to provide technical assistance as necessary to make sure that the plan will be written to meet all CAP 106 FMP criteria.	Coordinate with the Landowner, TSP, and the Service Forester to ensure that all criteria are understood and contracting timeframes are will known.	Coordinate with the Landowner, NRCS, and the Service forester as necessary to ensure that all criteria for a CAP 106 FMP will be met in the written plan.	Inform NRCS who your TSP is who will write your CAP 106 FMP.

	Advise the landowner that within 6 months of the landowner receiving the approved contract the TSP should have conducted a least 1 site visit with the Landowner.	Within 6 months of the landowner receiving the approved contract the TSP should have conducted a least 1 site visit with the Landowner.	Within 6 months of the landowner receiving the approved contract the TSP should have conducted a least 1 site visit with the Landowner.
	Advise the landowner that within 9 months of the landowner receiving the approved contract, the TSP should be nearing completion of the plan.	Within 9 months of the landowner receiving the approved contract, the TSP should be nearing completion of the plan.	Within 9 Months of the landowner receiving the contract, the Landowner should touch base with the TSP to confirm that the plan is nearing completion.
	Advise the landowner that within 11 months of the landowner receiving the approved contract, the TSP should deliver the CAP 106 FMP to Landowner	Within 11 months of the landowner receiving the approved contract, the TSP should deliver the CAP 106 FMP to Landowner	Within 11 months of the landowner receiving the approved contract, The TSP should deliver the CAP 106 FMP to Landowner
Step 4: CAP 106 FMP is completed by TSP			
Upon receipt of the CAP 106 FMP from NRCS, conduct a review to ensure the plan meets the CAP 106 FMP criteria. Provide NRCS written recommendations for edits or certification within 30 days.	Notify the Service Forester on the same day that the landowner advises NCRS that the CAP 106 FMP is ready for review. Forward a digital Copy of the CAP 106 to the DCNR BOF Service Forester.	Deliver a digital copy of the CAP 106 FMP to the landowner.	Review the plan submitted by the TSP and confirm that it meets the expectations laid out with the TSP. Advise NRCS you have received the plan so that NRCS and DCNR can conduct required reviews. Forward the digital copy of the CAP 106 FMP to NRCS.
If edits are required, conduct a follow-up review after edits have been incorporated.	Forward recommendations for edits to the Landowner, if necessary.	Incorporate edits as recommended by the Service Forester and/or NRCS.	Request edits be made by the TSP, if necessary.
If the CAP 106 FMP meets all criteria, sign in the appropriate location on the signature page.	With the recommendation of the Service Forester, sign the appropriate location on the signature page.	Acknowledge the plan meets all required criteria by signing in the appropriate location on the signature page.	Acknowledge the plan meets all required criteria by signing in the appropriate location on the signature page.

	Process payments, print documents for signatures, and document progress.		Sign applicable documents provided by NRCS. Confirm receipt of payment.
	Remind landowner of Financial Assistance programs available to help with implementing the plan.		Begin implementing your Plan. Consider applying for Financial Assistance Programs with NRCS to assist with implementing your plan.

GUIDE TO FORESTRY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A WORKING GUIDE FOR PROVIDING TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF NON-INDUSTRIAL PRIVATE FOREST LANDS IN PENNSYLVANIA

EQIP Forestry Application Workflow			
DCNR-BOF SERVICE FORESTER	NRCS FIELD STAFF (AFFILIATES AND EMPLOYEES)	TECHNICAL SERVICE PROVIDOR (TSP) FORESTER	NON-INDUSTRIAL PRIVATE FOREST LANDOWNER
Step 1: Landowner has a Forest Management Plan and is interested in implementing conservation practices			
Meet the landowner at their property to discuss objectives, evaluate concerns, and discuss financial and technical assistance options available to help implement practices included in a Forest Management Plan. Refer the landowner to NRCS to review the application process for Forestry financial assistance.	Discuss financial and technical assistance options available to help implement practices included in a Forest Management Plan. Discuss application process for financial assistance contracts to help with the implementation of practices included in a forest management plan.	Discuss financial and technical assistance options available to help implement practices included in a Forest Management Plan. Refer the landowner to NRCS to review the application process for Forestry financial assistance.	Gain an understanding of financial and technical assistance programs, eligibility requirements.
Step 2: Existing Forest Management Plan is reviewed			
Encourage landowner to sign a Authorization to Release Record form the TSP and the Service Forester on the project.	Present the option for the landowner to sign an Authorization to Release Records form for NRCS to coordinate with the TSP and the Service Forester on the project.		Review the Authorization to Release Records form for NRCS to coordinate with the TSP and the Service Forester on the project.
Inform the landowner that a current Forest Management Plan meeting NRCS FMP Criteria is required to be eligible for NRCS EQIP Financial Assistance Forestry applications.	Inform the landowner that a current Forest Management Plan meeting NRCS FMP Criteria is required to be eligible for NRCS EQIP Financial Assistance Forestry applications.	Inform the landowner that a current Forest Management Plan meeting NRCS FMP Criteria is required to be eligible for NRCS EQIP Financial Assistance Forestry applications.	Re-familiarize yourself with your Forest Management Plan. Know if your plan is current and meets NRCS FMP Criteria by discussing your plan with NRCS, TSP and Service Forester.

Review existing Forest Management Plan to determine technical adequacy of the Forest Management Plan and determine if the plan meets NRCS FMP Criteria.	Coordinate with Service Forester in the review of the existing Forest Management Plan to ensure that the plan meets NRCS FMP Criteria.		Provide a digital copy of your current forest management plan to the Service Forester and to NRCS.
Assist landowner to identify any need to update existing plan to include any changes in management, goals, practices installed, or resource concerns, and include any language supporting possible NRCS practice implementation.	Assist landowner to identify any need to update existing plan to include any changes in management, goals, practices installed, or resource concerns, and include any language supporting possible NRCS practice implementation.	Assist landowner to identify any need to update existing plan to include any changes in management, goals, practices installed, or resource concerns, and include any language supporting possible NRCS practice implementation.	Review your plan with NRCS, Service Forester, and TSP who wrote the plan to identify any need to update the existing plan to include any changes in management, goals, practices to be installed or resource concerns.
Provide written recommendations on the technical adequacy of the FMP to the Landowner and NRCS. If the plan does not meet NRCS FMP criteria, provide NRCS and the Landowner of what updates would be required in a plan addendum.	Review written recommendations of plan technical adequacy from the Service Forester. If the plan does not meet NRCS FMP Criteria a plan addendum will need to be developed by the TSP.	Review written recommendations of plan technical adequacy from the Service Forester. If the plan does not meet NRCS FMP Criteria, work with the landowner, NRCS, and DCNR BOR Service Forester to develop an addendum to the original FMP.	Review written recommendations of plan technical adequacy from the Service Forester. If the plan does not meet NRCS FMP Criteria, work with your plan writer (TSP) to develop an addendum to the original FMP.
Step 2: Landowner applies with NRCS for a EQIP contract to implement Forestry conservation practices			
Maintain communication with NRCS and the Landowner if the landowner has signed an authorization to release records form.	Meet with the landowner to complete a NRCS Conservation Program Application. Inform landowner of their responsibilities to meet with USDA-FSA to complete or update necessary eligibility information and paperwork.		Make an appointment to meet with the local NRCS office to complete a Conservation Program application. Gain an understanding of what necessary eligibility information and paperwork needs to be completed with USDA-FSA.

	Explain program eligibility, conservation planning, application process, ranking, the contracting process, pertinent timeframes so that landowner clearly understands the program and process to make an educated decision.		Understand program eligibility, CAP 106 FMP criteria, application process, ranking, the contracting process, pertinent timeframes. Ask questions to gain clarity and to make an educated decision.
	Adhere to all process steps as outlined in the PA Financial Assistance Program Guidance.	Consult with landowners on your availability and willingness to assist with the implementation of practices included in their forest management plan if the application is selected for funding.	Consider consulting with a TSP forester to help you implement practices identified in your forest management plan if your application is selected for funding.
If original plan writer or Consulting Forester/TSP is unable to provide services to aid in implementing practices, assist landowner by communicating that a list of certified TSPs is available on the NRCS Technical Service Provider Registry (TechReg) and a list of Consulting Foresters is available from DCNR.	If original plan writer or Consulting Forester/TSP is unable to provide services to implement practices, assist landowner by communicating that a list of certified TSPs is available on the NRCS Technical Service Provider Registry (TechReg) and a list of Consulting Foresters is available from DCNR.	If you are unable to provide services to aid in implementing practices assist landowner by communicating that a list of certified TSPs is available on the NRCS Technical Service Provider Registry (TechReg) and a list of Consulting Foresters is available from DCNR.	Know that it is recommended that a you enlist the services of a consulting forester to aid in implementing practices. Do not engage the services of the consulting forester until your application is selected and approved for funding.
Coordinate with NRCS as needed to assist with the development of the conservation plan. Determine technical adequacy of practices included in the Conservation Plan.	Develop conservation plan reflecting FMP recommendations in coordination with Landowner, TSP, and Service Forester.	Coordinate with NRCS as needed to assist with the development of the conservation plan	Coordinate with NRCS to develop the conservation plan. Review and approve of plan.
			Consider getting bids from implementation contractors.

Step 3: Application is selected and approved for Financial Assistance funding for an EQIP Forestry contract

	After delivering the approved contract to the landowner, inform them of all requirements of the contract.		Review your contract for a complete understanding of all requirements and practice prescriptions
Coordinate with the Landowner, Consultant/TSP, and NRCS to verify project layout/markings prior to scheduled implementation activities.	Coordinate with the Landowner, Consultant/TSP, and Service Forester to verify project layout/markings prior to scheduled implementation activities.	If hired by the by the landowner to assist with implementing practices, review contract with the landowner begin project coordination which can include tree marking, contractor coordination, project layout, and other consulting services. Contact NRCS to make sure you understand contract requirements.	Select/hire contractor(s) and consulting forester/TSP to implement practices scheduled in your contract. Notify NRCS when the project is laid out and marked, if applicable.
Explain State Erosion and Sedimentation Control requirements (Plans and Permits) to the Landowner.	Explain State Erosion and Sedimentation Control requirements (Plans and Permits) to the Landowner.	Assist the Landowner in complying with State Erosion and Sediment Control Requirements.	Comply with State Erosion and Sediment Control requirements.
Step 4: Scheduled conservation practices are implemented			
If no NRCS employees with JAA are available to inspect and certify practices, inspect completed practices and provide a written recommendation regarding practice certification to NRCS within 14 Business days of NRCS notification.	Utilize NRCS employee(s) with appropriate Job Approval Authority (JAA) to complete check out documentation for certification of completed practices. If no NRCS employees with JAA are available, request Service Forester to inspect completed practices within 14 Business days and provide a written recommendation regarding practice certification.	Assist the landowner to oversee the implementation of scheduled conservation practices.	Oversee contractor implementation of scheduled practices. Notify NRCS when each scheduled practice is completed.

	Process payments, print documents for signatures, and document progress.		Sign applicable documents provided by NRCS. Confirm receipt of payment.
--	--	--	---

2019 Farm Bill Program Forestry Related Application Checklist

This checklist will be used to track PA NRCS 2019 Farm Bill Program Forestry related applications for which coordination with DCNR Service Forester is necessary at certain stages.

Filing Instructions: NRCS will file this checklist in the program participant's 6 part folder in the same tab as the Conservation Assistance Notes

1. Application Information

Applicant's Name: _____ DCNR Service Forester: _____
Application Number: _____ TSP/Consultant: _____
County: _____ Farm/Tract Number: _____

2. Landowner Communicates Interest in NRCS Financial Assistance Programs

Y N **2.1 NRCS** - Refer Landowner to DCNR Service Forester for site inspection/plan review

NRCS Signature _____ Date: _____

Y N **2.2 DCNR** - Conduct site inspection/plan review.

DCNR Signature _____ Date: _____

Y N **2.3 DCNR** - Determine if landowner has a current CAP 106 Forest Management Plan, of other plan meeting the NRCS Forest Management Plan Criteria.

CAP 106 Forest Management Plan Forest Stewardship Plan
Other (specify) _____

3. Landowner Applies for Financial Assistance for CAP 106 or Practice Implementation

Y N **3.1 NRCS** -Landowner makes an appointment with the NRCS office the complete a NRCS Conservation Program Application.

NRCS Signature _____ Date: _____

Y N **3.2 DCNR** - Determine technical adequacy of practices included in the Conservation Plan.

DCNR Signature _____ Date: _____

4. Application is selected and approved for Financial Assistance

Y N **4.1 NRCS and DCNR** - Coordinate with the Landowner, Consultant/TSP to verify project layout/markings prior to scheduled implementation activities or to ensure that the CAP 106 FMP will be written to meet all NRCS FMP criteria.

NRCS Signature _____ Date: _____

DCNR Signature _____ Date: _____

5. Scheduled conservation practices are implemented or CAP 106 FMP is implemented.

Y N **5.1 NRCS** - Contact DCNR Service Forester to request CAP 106 FMP review or to conduct inspection(s) for implemented practices (if NRCS Employee with Job Approval Authority unavailable).

Note: This form serves as documentation of DCNR recommendation for practice certification, there is no space for DCNR to sign on Implementation Requirements Sheets.

NRCS Signature _____ Date(s): _____

Y N **5.2 DCNR** - For CAP 106 FMP contracts, Conduct CAP 106 FMP review

DCNR Signature _____ Date: _____

5.2 DCNR - For Practice Implementation Contracts, conduct on site inspection of all completed practices, and recommended NRCS certification (If NRCS employee with Job Approval Authority is unavailable) Note: Write-in more lines if necessary.

CIN #1	DCNR Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #2	DCNR Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #3	DCNR Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #4	DCNR Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #5	DCNR Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #6	DCNR Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #7	DCNR Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #8	DCNR Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #9	DCNR Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #10	DCNR Signature	_____	Date:	_____

5.3 NRCS - Certify Practices and document certification on Implementation Requirements Sheets. Process payments and document contract progress. Note: Write-in more lines if necessary.

CIN #1	NRCS Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #2	NRCS Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #3	NRCS Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #4	NRCS Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #5	NRCS Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #6	NRCS Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #7	NRCS Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #8	NRCS Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #9	NRCS Signature	_____	Date:	_____
CIN #10	NRCS Signature	_____	Date:	_____

Notes:
