

North Carolina Tree Farm Program

- Landowner Eligibility
- Use of Management Plans
- Management Plan Requirements

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Must Have FMP for Certification

Demonstrates Commitment to Practicing Sustainable Forestry

Standard 1:

Landowner **shall** have and implement a written forest management plan consistent with the size of the forest and the scale and intensity of the forest activities.



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Landowner Eligibility: Ownership

- ▶ Private or public ownership (except State-owned)
- ▶ No publicly traded companies
- ▶ Nonindustrial

Small business exception:

Properties may be associated with a small local business (<\$7 million in tract-related receipts and <500 employees)



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Landowner Eligibility: Acreage

- ▶ 10 - 10,000 contiguous acres
- ▶ Single legal ownership
- ▶ May include non-forested features if they are small enough to be integrated part of the forest system
 - ▶ Food plots
 - ▶ Small water features
 - ▶ Orchards
 - ▶ Openings, meadows, etc.

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Definition of Contiguous

Discrete parcels that:

- Share a boundary line or corner point
- Are held under the same legal ownership
- Are separated by a significant right of way (road, powerline, etc.) under a different ownership and no more than 84 feet wide

Exception: a non-contiguous parcel under the same ownership & management unit that is separated by a significant right of way but does not meet the 10-acre requirement to be a stand-alone Tree Farm may be considered part of the larger parcel

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Non-Contiguous Properties

- ▶ May share a management plan
- ▶ Must have a unique location for each parcel
- ▶ Landowners may certify a portion of their entire property portfolio but may not exempt a portion of a contiguous forest management unit
(Management plan must cover all contiguous acres)



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How Are Tree Farm Management Plans Used?

By Landowners

- ▶ Define the landowner's goals for the land
- ▶ Guide management activities toward achieving those goals
- ▶ Ensure that the landowner implements Standards of Sustainability on the land

By Inspectors

- ▶ Review FMP as written evidence of compliance with certification Standards
- ▶ Evaluate landowners' management to the Standards during initial inspection and re-inspections
- ▶ Use FMP as part of decision on whether to certify (or recertify) a property

By Third-Party Assessors

- ▶ Evaluate a sample of plans to determine how well the Tree Farm Program is ensuring landowner conformance to the certification Standards

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New Certification Standards

- ▶ Released January 1, 2021
- ▶ Required by March 15
- ▶ Only minor revisions

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General Management Plan Requirements

- ▶ Current forest conditions
- ▶ Landowner objectives
- ▶ Management activities & schedule
- ▶ Map
- ▶ Narrative about other required elements

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Current Forest Conditions

Include:

- ▶ Age
- ▶ Species
- ▶ Composition
- ▶ Density
- ▶ Health



May provide information on maps or inventories

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Landowner Objectives

What the landowner hopes to accomplish through management

- ▶ Desired forest conditions (fast-growing loblolly)
- ▶ General goals (good habitat for animals, a healthy forest)
- ▶ Financial goals (money for college tuition)



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Management Activities and Schedule

Include:

- ▶ Strategies for achieving objectives
Example: If the landowner wants to increase wildlife, the plan should prescribe management activities to enhance or maintain suitable habitat.
- ▶ Timeline for activities

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Map

Include all significant forest-related resources:

- ▶ Boundaries
- ▶ Roads
- ▶ Water features
- ▶ Timber stands
- ▶ Special sites (now optional)
- ▶ Forest of Recognized Importance

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Core Management Plan Requirements

- ▶ Forest health
- ▶ Soil
- ▶ Water
- ▶ Wood & fiber production
- ▶ Threatened and endangered species
- ▶ Special sites
- ▶ Invasive species
- ▶ Forests of Recognized Importance (FORI)
 - ▶ Must state whether element is present or not
 - ▶ Must describe related management activities if present

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Core Requirements: Forest Health

Landowner should make practical efforts to promote forest health, including regular monitoring

Note disturbances and steps to prevent, control or respond

- ▶ Wildfire
- ▶ Invasive species
- ▶ Pests
- ▶ Pathogens
- ▶ Unwanted vegetation
- ▶ Storm damage



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Core Requirements: Soil and Water

- ▶ Show water resources on property map
- ▶ Provide information on protecting resources
 - ▶ BMPs
 - ▶ Other guidelines
 - ▶ Rules
- ▶ Include soils map



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Core Requirements: Wood & Fiber Production

Harvest, utilization, removal and other management activities shall be conducted in compliance with the **landowner's objectives** and **maintain the potential** of the property to produce forest products and other benefits sustainably.



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Wood & Fiber Production

Include information on:

- ▶ Product harvests
- ▶ Thinnings
- ▶ Schedules/dates
- ▶ Use of qualified contractors & their responsibilities
- ▶ Contracts
- ▶ BMPs
- ▶ Laws, FPGs
- ▶ Reforestation/afforestation methods



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Core Requirements: T&E Species

- ▶ Must address in plan even if absent from property
- ▶ Research to determine occurrences
(USFW, Natural Heritage Program, natural resource professionals)
- ▶ Document findings
- ▶ Protect known occurrences



FORI)

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Core Requirements: Special Sites

What is a Special Site?

- ▶ Historical
- ▶ Archeological
- ▶ Cultural
- ▶ Geological
- ▶ Biological
- ▶ Ecological
- ▶ Or designated by the landowner



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Core Requirements: Special Sites

- ▶ Address in plan even if absent from property
- ▶ Document research
- ▶ Identify
- ▶ Locate
- ▶ Map (optional)
- ▶ Protect



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Core Requirement: Invasive Species

- ▶ Part of Forest Health requirement
- ▶ Invasives must be specifically addressed even if not present
- ▶ Must identify and note location/pervasiveness
- ▶ Specify steps to monitor, manage or eradicate



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Core Requirements: Forests of Recognized Importance (FORI)

Globally, regionally and nationally significant large landscape areas of exceptional ecological, social, cultural or biological value

- ▶ Most in U.S. are protected by federal/state governments or conservation easement by an environmental nonprofit
- ▶ Usually recognized at the landscape level
- ▶ Recognized for multiple unique values
 - ▶ Multiple T&E plant/animal species
 - ▶ Large-scale cultural or archeological sites, ex. cities, burial grounds
 - ▶ Protected, rare, sensitive forest ecosystems
 - ▶ Unique geological features (waterfalls, caves, geysers, lava beds)
- ▶ No central clearinghouse of information



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FORI Guidance

Tree Farmers:

- ▶ More likely to be adjacent to FORI (state/federally-protected area)
- ▶ Consider the impact to neighboring FORI
- ▶ Consider opportunities to support specific values or attributes

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FORI Examples

- ▶ Recognized by the Natural Heritage Program as significant
- ▶ Qualifies for present-use valuation for Wildlife Conservation
- ▶ Provide buffers to significant sites
 - ▶ military training
 - ▶ unique wildlife habitats
 - ▶ others

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Additional Plan Considerations *(when present and aligned with objectives)*

- ▶ Prescribed fire
- ▶ Wetlands
- ▶ Desired species
- ▶ Recreation
- ▶ Forest aesthetics
- ▶ Conversion
- ▶ Biomass
- ▶ Carbon



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Questions?



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