



Forest Stewardship Program

South Dakota Department of Agriculture
Division of Resource Conservation & Forestry
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Established through the 1990 Farm Bill, the Forest Stewardship Program (FSP) encourages private forest landowners to manage their lands using professionally prepared forest stewardship plans. In addition to forest stewardship plan preparation, FSP is the primary source of funding for forest management technical assistance provided by the division.

Forest Stewardship Program and Forest Resources

The Forest Stewardship Program supports the South Dakota Forest Action Plan by utilizing 37 strategies to address all three national themes (Conserve Rural Forests; Protect Forests from Harm; Enhance Public Benefits from Trees and Forests) outlined by the State & Private Forestry (S&PF) National Priorities and Objectives.

The program utilizes strategies to address all 14 threats identified in the Forest Action Plan. Examples of the strategies outlined in this document include, but are not limited to:

- Maintain forest land in agricultural classification

- Provide forest management technical assistance
- Educate landowners
- Prepare and implement Forest Stewardship Plans
- Promote use of woody biomass
- Work with other agencies to discourage fragmentation
- Provide financial incentives to implement management
- Promote species diversity
- Riparian forest management and enhancement
- Develop and monitor BMP's
- Coordinate with NRCS
- Promote windbreak renovation

2010—2014 Forest Stewardship Assistance

Rural forestry technical assistance consists of forest stewardship plan development, non-commercial thinning assistance, design and approval of tree planting plans for various agroforestry objectives, agroforestry education and technical assistance, forest health assistance, Tree Farm certification, forest landowner education, and wood utilization. Funding for technical assistance comes from a variety of federal and state sources.

Landowner forestry assists for the five year period consisted of:

- 1,465 Forestry Assists
- 1,416 Forest Stewardship Assists
- 1,114 Timber Management Assists
- 351 Prairie Forestry Assists

Foresters also contributed to the mountain pine beetle program that accounted for 3,848 assists over the five years.



The Division is offering cost-share assistance to landowners to hire consulting foresters to write Forest Stewardship Plans. The cost share rate is \$6.00 per acre not to exceed 50% of plan preparation cost with a cap of \$1,500 per plan. Landowners need to have a minimum of 20 acres of forest land.

Current Forest Stewardship Plans are monitored each year to determine if the recommended management activities are being implemented. The monitoring sample is determined using USFS protocols.

Forest Stewardship Plans and Acres				
FY	New and Updated FSP	New FSP Acres	Total Active Plan Acres	Percent New Acres
2010	9	4962	30889	16%
2011	3	340	25166	1%
2012	17	4435	25259	18%
2013	22	11150	32188	35%
2014	20	4876	24505	20%

FSP Monitoring					
FY	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Plans Being Implemented	74%	89%	94%	95%	92%
Acres Under Active Implementation	75%	97%	76%	83%	99%

2010—2014 Management Accomplishments

Forestry Assistance

Division service foresters provide technical assistance for two programs that help private forest landowners thin their non-commercial forest lands. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the SD Conservation Commission Coordinated Natural Resources Conservation Fund Grant Program provided funds to private forest landowners for timber stand improvement projects. The NRCS provided funds to the division to administer the EQIP forestry practices. Technical assistance for the Conservation Commission thinning grants and projects that receive no cost share is funded by the FSP.

- 75 EQIP Practices (Thinning, Brush Management, Meadow Enhancement) covering 2,036 acres
- 78 assists on Conservation Commission Grant forestry projects covering 552 acres
- 46 Projects completed without cost share covering 885 acres
- 3,091 Total completed practice acres

Agroforestry Assistance

Assistance and planning by division service foresters resulted in the planting of 28,668 new trees and shrubs covering 76.6 acres of land. Foresters reviewed 382 Conservation Commission tree planting plans for approval from 2010-2014. Tree plantings support the State Forest Action Plan strategies of expanding species diversity and providing a younger age class of trees to offset over mature and dying trees that are rendering windbreaks ineffective.



2010—2014 Tree Farm Program



The American Tree Farm System promotes good forest management through the certification of sustainably managed woodland Tree Farms, and recognition of well-managed windbreaks. Over the 5 year period the total number of tree farms has declined from 197 to 185 but the amount of acres these tree farms cover has increased from 29,167 acres to 30,140 acres.

The SD Tree Farm Committee (SDTFC) established a program to help landowners hire consultant foresters to prepare forest stewardship plans for their property. Funds were provided through private sources and by Neiman Timber Co. Also, \$13,000 in Forest Stewardship Program funds were provided to this program. The program contributed \$15,570 in cost share and helped 15 landowners obtain Forest Stewardship Plans for their properties covering 2,580 Acres.

Year	Total Active Tree Farms	Total Tree Farm Acres	Woodland Tree Farms	Woodland Tree Farm Acres	Windbreak Tree Farms	Windbreak Tree Farm
2010	195	29167	105	25707	90	3460
2011	188	28544	103	25194	85	3350
2012	188	28450	107	25149	81	3301
2013	187	29167	109	25736	78	3431
2014	187	30140	113	26947	74	3193



Commercial Thinning



2014 Tree Farmer of the Year

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