

Information Sheet for Forest Landowners choosing Maine Forest Service as Technical Service Provider for NRCS Conservation programs

Landowners who participate in USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) are required to choose a Technical Service Provider (TSP) to assist them with completion of contract items. In cases where the landowner has a contract for a Conservation Activity Plan-Forest Management Plan (CAP-FMP), an eligible TSP from the CAP-FMP list must write the plan. To find a list of eligible TSPs, go to <http://techreg.usda.gov/CustLocateTSP.aspx>, click on Maine in the locator map, then click again in the appropriate county. Then use the “category” drop-down list to find “CAP-Forest management plan”. Maine Forest Service as an agency is an eligible TSP, and should be listed as “State of Maine” on the Technical Registry. MFS maintains a network of private consulting foresters who are informed and trained to work within the rules and procedures of various programs, including EQIP. The list of these private consultants, known as Stewardship Foresters, can be found online at http://www.maine.gov/doc/mfs/fpm/wwi/DOCS/Stew_Foresters_web.pdf. Hard copies can be obtained by calling 1-800-367-0223 or 207 287-8430. A star next to the foresters name indicates he or she is eligible to write CAP-FMPs under the Maine Forest Service umbrella.

Landowners who choose an eligible Stewardship Forester to write their CAP-FMP must contact Maine Forest Service. The landowner(s) must fill out and sign a Technical Service Provider Agreement between themselves and MFS, listing the name of the eligible Stewardship Forester. An assignment of payment form (CCC-36) must also be filled out and signed by both the landowner and a Maine Forest Service representative.

The Maine Forest Service (MFS) provides training and support to Stewardship foresters. MFS also reviews each CAP-FMP prepared under its TSP umbrella to make sure it is complete and meets applicable standards and specifications. In order to partially recover costs associated with administration and plan review, MFS requires landowners to assign a portion of their NRCS program payment to MFS. There is a \$100.00 administrative fee for each CAP-FMP prepared under the MFS umbrella. MFS and the landowner will enter into a signed agreement stipulating this and other terms. When a landowner selects Maine Forest Service as their TSP for CAP-FMP, the landowner should contact MFS at the numbers listed above to receive the landowner agreement form. MFS will issue a cover letter to document receipt of the signed agreement. Without the agreement and a copy of a signed CCC-36, MFS will not certify to NRCS that the CAP-FMP is complete, which could delay payment to the landowner.

For questions pertaining to the Maine Forest Service, contact Andy Shultz, MFS Landowner Outreach Forester. For questions pertaining to NRCS programs, contact <http://www.me.nrcs.usda.gov/contact/directory/fieldoffices.html>.