

# FOREST MANAGEMENT COST-SHARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Sound woodland management should be an integral part of any farm management plan. The United States Department of Agriculture traditionally has offered cost-share assistance to help landowners apply forest management practices to their woodland acreage. These practices are designed to increase yields and conserve and improve the environment. This paper describes the current incentive programs.

## STEWARDSHIP INCENTIVE PROGRAMS (SIP)

**PURPOSE:** Provide private landowners with written guidance and financial assistance to protect and improve timber, wildlife, soils, water, recreation, and aesthetic values of their forests according to the landowner's objectives.

**ASSISTANCE:** The West Virginia Division of Forestry (WVDOF) and private consulting foresters provide technical assistance. The Farm Services Agency (FSA) provides administrative assistance.

**SIP PRACTICES:** SIP1 - Plan Development (not presently available)  
SIP2 - Reforestation  
SIP3 - Forest Improvement  
SIP5 - Soil and Water Protection/Improvement  
SIP6 - Riparian and Wetland Protection  
SIP7 - Fisheries Habitat Enhancement  
SIP8 - Wildlife Habitat Improvement  
SIP9 - Forest Recreation Enhancement

**COST-SHARE RATES:** Landowners can be reimbursed for up to 75 percent of the total cost of completing the practice.

**SIP LIMITATIONS:** Landowners must have a comprehensive Forest Stewardship Resource Conservation Plan in order to qualify for SIP2 through SIP9 practices. Non-industrial private woodland owners who own between 10 and 1,000 acres of woodland or potential woodland are eligible to participate. Exceptions may be granted for up to 5,000 acres.

**MORE INFORMATION:** Contact your local WVDOF or FSA office.

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## FORESTRY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (FIP)

**PURPOSE:** Provide financial assistance for the application of forest management practices that will increase the future supply of quality timber and other associated forest resources.

**ASSISTANCE:** The WVDOF provides technical assistance and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides administrative assistance.

**FIP PRACTICES:**

- FP1 - Tree Planting
- FP2 - Improving a Stand of Forest Trees
  - Pre-commercial Thinning
  - Pruning
  - Cull Tree Removal
  - Crop Tree Release
  - Grapevine Removal
- FP3 - Site Preparation for Natural Regeneration

**COST-SHARE RATES:** Landowners can be reimbursed for up to 65 percent of the total cost of completing the practice.

**FIP LIMITATIONS:** Landowners must own between 10 and 1,000 acres of qualifying or potential woodland. Exceptions may be granted for larger acreages. Treated area must be 10 acres in size. Practices must be maintained for 10 years. Treated area must be protected from destructive grazing and fire. A brief management plan must be developed for the practice area. Payments are limited to \$10,000 per landowner per year. Cost-share assistance is not authorized for the following:

- Woodland fencing
- Timber stand improvement in commercially salable stands
- The establishment of orchards, Christmas trees, or ornamentals.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Contact your local NRCS Field Office, Soil Conservation District Office, or West Virginia Division of Forestry Office.

## OTHER PROGRAMS

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) are other programs that may provide cost-share assistance to landowners who are interested in applying certain forest management and tree planting practices. Interested landowners should contact their local FSA, NRCS, or WVDOF offices for more information regarding these programs.