

# Virginia Department of Forestry - Management Plans

## PRACTICE PLANS

Practice plans are management plans for a single stand or area of a tract, particular management concern, or landowner area of interest. These plans are valuable in addressing more immediate landowner needs and can lead to more comprehensive planning in the future. The plan can include small incidental areas (example Special Management Zones) that may be associated with the stand or area of interest. A practice plan is not generally developed for an entire tract unless the tract is small and/or supports one timber type that will be managed as a single parcel. Practice plans are often used to document existing conditions and make management recommendations for Federal or State cost share programs.

### Plan Criteria

Each practice plan should be prepared by a professional forest resource manager and include the:

- Landowner's and plan writer's contact information
- Property identification and location information
- Landowner's objectives
- Description of existing site conditions
- Listing of any recent management activities
- Detailed management recommendations
- Detailed map of the property

## FOREST MANAGEMENT PLANS

Forest management plans create opportunities for landowners to meet their forestry objectives. These plans generally cover an entire ownership, but are less comprehensive than Forest Stewardship Management Plans. The primary focus of the plan is to provide forest management information and recommendations.

### Plan Criteria

A management plan will include several key elements that will help the landowner make good decisions about forest management. Management plans should be prepared by a professional forest resource manager and should include:

- The landowner's and plan writer's contact information
- The property identification and location information
- A listing of the landowner's stated goals and objectives
- Detailed forest stand conditions
- Detailed recommended practices
- A detailed map of the property

## FOREST STEWARDSHIP MANAGEMENT PLANS

A Forest Stewardship Management Plan serves as the foundation for engaging forest landowners in a plan that addresses individual landowner objectives while adhering to National and State Forest Stewardship Management Plan guidelines. State guidelines must consider the NASF Principles and Guides for a Well-Managed Forest. A general outline for plans, actions and progress, as relating to these principles, can be found in NASF's A Stewardship Handbook.

## Criteria

All Forest Stewardship Management Plans must:

- Be prepared or verified by a professional resource manager, and be approved by the State Forester or a representative of the State Forester.
- Document authorship.
- Include landowner information.
- Include location and plan maps.
- Clearly state landowner objectives.
- Describe current forest condition or condition class.
- Describe desired forest condition or condition class.
- Include practices and activities aimed at reaching the desired forest condition or condition class.
- Document a feasible strategy and timeline for practice and activity implementation.
- Describe any suggested monitoring activities to be done by the forester or landowner.
- Be developed for a specified management period that adequately allows for progress with the landowner's long term stewardship objectives.
- Be reviewed and renewed, revised or rewritten at the end of the specified management period or sooner as needed, to be considered current.

## Plan Elements

The plan preparer will consider, describe, and evaluate plan elements and their importance to the ownership when they are present. Plan elements to be considered include:

- Soil and water
- Biological diversity
- Range
- Agroforestry
- Aesthetic quality and desired species
- Recreation
- Wood and fiber production
- Fish and wildlife
- Threatened and endangered species
- Forest health and invasive species
- Conservation-based estate planning / legacy planning information
- Archeological, cultural, and historic sites
- Wetlands
- Fire
- Carbon sequestration
- Forests of Recognized Importance (FORI)

## Additional Information

The landowner's understanding may be improved by including additional information appendices. Appendices might include:

- Descriptions of assistance available and financial incentive programs
- Description of Conservation-based estate planning and a list of available resources
- Educational materials
- A glossary of terms
- An explanation of applicable Federal, State, and/or county regulatory programs, especially as they apply to:
  - Archeological, cultural, and historical sites
  - Wetlands
  - Threatened and Endangered Species