

Creating regeneration with complexity practice manual

DRAFT 4/26/2020

I. ELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS

- a. The property is within the eligible geography (see map below)
- b. Eligible land tenure and ownership type: Forest stands on private ownerships of greater than or equal to 30 acres and less than or equal to 2,400 acres
- c. Forests originating from natural regeneration (e.g. plantations are ineligible).
- d. Eligible condition status at the time of contract signing:
 - i. land not subject to any existing legal encumbrance (e.g. conservation easement or state/local restrictions) that excludes forest harvest activity (e.g. riparian buffers, designated reserves or no harvest areas) or the actions described in this practice
 - ii. Operable forest harvest conditions, specifically minimum stocking of **X board feet / acre** if project area is between 30 and 125 acres, and **2,000 board feet/acre** if the project area is over 125 acres; **and at least 30% acceptable growing stock within the project area.**
 - iii. Landowner must be planning to do a regeneration harvest within the next 20 years.

II. PRACTICE DESCRIPTION AND SPECIFICATIONS

- a. General description -- This practice produces carbon benefits in forests undergoing regeneration harvests. Carbon benefits come from reducing the total harvestable area and retaining carbon in snags, downed wood, and large-diameter trees in harvested gaps.
- b. Specifications
 - i. The participating family forest owner will develop and adhere to two property-wide consecutive 10-year forest management plans (i.e. an initial plan with a 10-year update) over the 20-year contract period. Forest management plans will be prepared in consultation with a licensed forester approved by the Family Forest Carbon Program. Existing management plans may be submitted for approval, in which case, the landowner will maintain a series of forest management plans for the property for the duration of the 20-year contract.
 - ii. Tree removals such as timber harvests and non-commercial tree cutting are allowed during the Agreement Term if desired under the following specifications. These specifications may be waived in salvage situations if a waiver is received from FFIF.
 1. If one harvest occurs during the Agreement Term, harvested areas are limited to gaps or patches that total no more than **20%** of the harvestable area within the project area.
 2. If multiple harvests occur during the Agreement Term, the cumulative harvested area will not exceed more than **20%**.

Comment [LM1]: Baseline here should be a typical-for-the-area regeneration harvest (get more details from MassWildlife). Minimum stocking above should be based on the minimum stocking we see in FIA plots that are harvested. Stakeholders suggest that we'll need two different parcel size classes, because it is not economically feasible to harvest smaller parcels at this level of stocking.

3. Within harvested areas:
 - a. retention of at least 4 live trees per acre of greater than 14 inches in diameter. Retained trees must maintain or increase tree species diversity in the project area.
 - b. all snags must be retained unless a safety hazard to harvesters, foresters, or land owners;
 - c. slash and treetops should be retained in the forest (not left on the landing);
 - d. No commercial removal of downed or dead wood from the project area except for where dead wood creates a threat to human safety and health. Landowners may remove downed or dead wood for personal use.

Comment [LM2]: AFF: Todd and I spoke about this and we removed the "if desired" language. We'd like to have slash retained but are open to pulling this if it causes an extra cost for the operator (if not a cut-to-length operation, potentially). There is a carbon benefit here but a small one.

III. CONTRACT PERIOD AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

- a. Timeline to implement practice and commitment period to maintain practice: 20 years, renewable.
- b. Total per acre payment rates based on timber volumes (International ¼" inch) at time of contract based on the most recent forest inventory:

Board Feet per Acre (cubic feet?)	FFCP Per-Acre Payment Rate
2000 – 3500	\$TBD
3501 – 5000	\$TBD
5001 – 7500	\$TBD
7501 +	\$TBD

- c. Incentive/cost-sharing payment amount and schedule:

Project Year	Payment
1	\$TBD for completion of (or future completion of) management plan, and 20% of implementation agreement value
2	3% of implementation agreement value
3	3% of implementation agreement value
4	3% of implementation agreement value
5	3% of implementation agreement value
6	3% of implementation agreement value
7	3% of implementation agreement value
8	3% of implementation agreement value
9	4% of implementation agreement value
10	\$TBD for completion of (or future completion of) management plan and 4% of implementation agreement value
11	4% of implementation agreement value

12	4% of implementation agreement value
13	4% of implementation agreement value
14	4% of implementation agreement value
15	5% of implementation agreement value
16	5% of implementation agreement value
17	5% of implementation agreement value
18	5% of implementation agreement value
19	5% of implementation agreement value
20	10% of implementation agreement value

IV. MONITORING AND VERIFICATION

- a. Landowner will ensure specific monitoring actions:
 - i. Initial (prior to contract signing) attestation that all eligibility criteria are met
 - ii. Year 1 and year 10: 10-year management plan, and update to management plan, respectively, developed and submitted to FFCP for approval
 - iii. Attestations that all timber harvests and forest management activities are in compliance with approved management plan in effect. In a year in which a commercial timber harvest has taken place, attestations will include for all harvested stands the results of pre- and post-harvest field assessments of basal area stocking and quadratic mean diameter.
- b. Monitoring actions that shall be undertaken by program staff or representatives:
 - i. Initial (prior to contract signing) verification that all eligibility criteria are met.
 - ii. Year 1 and year 10: Review and approval of management plans
 - iii. Review of landowner attestations and cutting plans
 - iv. Potential periodic remote sensing and site-level verification of compliance with approved management plan in effect
- c. Commitment to ongoing program level validation: The landowner will reserve to FFCP staff and representatives the right to access the property to carry out the site level monitoring actions specified above, and to establish long-term monitoring plots on enrolled stands to directly measure and monitor the impacts of the practice to improve FFCP program-level reporting.

V. Eligible Project Areas

