



Montmorency Conservation District
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The USDA Farm Bill: What Is In It For Woodland Owners?

Condensed from the brochure by the same name

As the owner of forested property or woodlands, you may qualify for landowner assistance under the 2008 Farm Bill program. If the future plans or goals for your property include:

- Conserving soil and water resources
- Establishing wildlife habitat
- Sustaining your woodlands
- Implementing your forest management plan
- Restoring wetlands

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) offers a variety of financial incentives to woodland owners who are engaged in conservation activities. Some programs offer annual payments for a conservation use, others offer one-time up-front payments for long-term conservation easements, and most include government funds to share the cost of developing your forest management plan.

A forest management plan is a document that you develop and write with a professional forester. The plan outlines the values and goals you have for your property and how you will manage the woodlands for long-term sustainability.

To be eligible for Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) cost-share programs, you will need to ensure that your current plan includes specific information on forest management, conservation practices, and an updated map that clearly indicates locations of proposed cost-share practices. Work with your forester and local NRCS office to ensure your plan has all necessary information.

Some of the programs available in Montmorency County are Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

If you are interested in one of these programs, contact our local NRCS Conservationist, Ron Spiering at 989-356-3596 ext. 112.

The USDA Farm Bill: What is in it for Woodland Owners? – the complete booklet

http://www.nacdnet.org/news/publications/forestrynotes/reports/farm_bill_for_woodland_owners.pdf

Forest Management Professionals for Montmorency and Alpena Counties

[http://www.montmorencycd.org/resources/Resource%20Specialist%20List09%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.montmorencycd.org/resources/Resource%20Specialist%20List09%20(2).pdf)

List of **Professional Consulting Foresters** from Michigan Forest Association

<http://www.michiganforests.com/forester.htm>

Additional information on NRCS/USDA Farm Bill programs:

EQIP. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program provides financial assistance to landowners for improving their conservation methods on agricultural lands. The program offers assistance for a wide variety

of conservation measures on all types of agricultural land including row crops, orchards, pastures, forage crops and managed forest land. Program payments may be provided for up to three years to encourage producers to carry out management practices they may not otherwise use without the financial assistance.
<http://www.mi.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip.html>

WRP The Wetlands Reserve Program is a voluntary program that allows landowners to restore former wetlands that were converted to farmland. Through WRP, NRCS will provide financial assistance to a landowner to restore wetlands on their property. Landowners also have the option of enrolling their restored wetlands into a 10-year, 30-year, or permanent-easement.
<http://www.mi.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/wrp.html>

WHIP The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program assists landowners in improving wildlife habitat on their property. WHIP provides financial assistance to landowners to establish or improve wildlife and aquatic habitat through practices such as native grass and tree plantings and wildlife management practices.
<http://www.mi.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/whip.html>

CSP The Conservation Stewardship Program is a voluntary conservation program that encourages producers to address resource concerns in a comprehensive manner by undertaking additional conservation activities and improving, maintaining, and managing existing conservation activities. CSP payments compensate producers for adopting new conservation measures and improving and maintaining their existing ones.
<http://www.mi.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp.html>

CRP The Conservation Reserve Program is administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) providing technical assistance through conservation planning. Program information about CRP can be found on the FSA website.
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=copr&topic=crp>