

# Non-Industrial Private Forest Owners Financial and Technical Assistance

## Natural Resources Conservation Service



### Background

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offers a variety of programs to technically and financially assist private forest owners with management objectives and resource concerns on their forests. The first step in this process is reaching out to your local NRCS office to speak with a conservationist about your goals and the specific needs of your forest. All programs require an application and other related documents to verify participant eligibility and participants' relationship to the forested tracts involved in the application. Details about each of the NRCS Programs are outlined below.

### EQIP

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is one cost-share program that private forest owners have at their disposal. EQIP may be used for numerous practices related to forest stand improvement, brush management, invasive species control, or to address a specific resource concern occurring on the forested tract. The objective of EQIP is to enhance our natural resources while simultaneously improving the production value of our natural resources. EQIP contracts are a minimum of one year and expire the December following the implementation of the final practice. The next application deadline for EQIP is set for May 21, 2021 to be eligible for FY21 funding but NRCS accepts applications at any time. See [‘How to apply for EQIP factsheet’](#) on NRCS Wisconsin’s [webpage](#) for more information.

### CSP

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) offers an opportunity for landowners to build on existing conservation efforts by enhancing wildlife habitat and adopting conservation activities that can reduce energy use, improve soil health, improve water quality, and improve quality of forest stands. This 5-year contract provides an annual payment for the number of acres enrolled and the baseline quality of the land. Additionally, landowners will receive cost-share funds for the practices implemented through the contract. CSP is an excellent way to maintain existing conservation practices already on your property as well as implement new practices you may be less familiar with. Either click links or search for [‘CSP for Wildlife’](#) or [‘CSP for Forestland Managers’](#) on NRCS Wisconsin’s [webpage](#) for more information.



Credit: UW Extension

### Additional Details

Ideal EQIP and CSP participants are forestland owners or managers who have a current forest management plan and are following forestry best management practices. A forest management plan (FMP) is a site-specific plan developed based on landowner objectives and the professional expertise of a skilled forester to achieve long-term goals (more information [here](#)). Acceptable FMPs are developed by professional foresters through programs such as NRCS developed FMPs, Forest Stewardship Plans, Tree Farm Plans, WI DNR MFL Plans, and others. If you do not have a plan and are interested, NRCS can provide technical and financial support through EQIP for the development of a Wisconsin FMP.

EQIP and CSP can be used to complement each other. EQIP is a great choice to establish a Forest Management Plan or to make large improvements such as forest stand improvements, invasive species control, access roads, forest trails, and harvest operation landings. CSP can be used to complement on-going work and provide an annual payment to participants that are already good stewards of the land.

### Other Programs

NRCS’s sister agency, the Farm Service Agency (FSA), administers the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) which also provides support to private forest owners through long-term agreements relating to wildlife conservation and habitat improvement. For more details follow the links on the next page.

**Wisconsin  
Natural  
Resources  
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Service**

# NRCS Forestry Assistance Programs

How the NRCS can assist private forest owners.



Logging Operation, Photo Credit: UW Stevens Point

## Contact Info

[NRCS Wisconsin Directory](#)

[FSA Wisconsin Directory](#)

## Links

Below are some helpful links to NRCS resources about programs and working with NRCS to implement conservation practices:

- [Wisconsin NRCS Publications and Factsheets](#)
- [Environmental Quality Incentive Program](#)
- [Conservation Stewardship Program](#)
- [Conservation Reserve Program](#)
- [Maple Syrup Production Factsheet](#)
- [How to find a NRCS Technical Service Provider](#)
- [How to become a NRCS Technical Service Provider](#)

More information can be found at the Wisconsin NRCS Homepage: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/wi/home/>

## Wisconsin Private Forest Facts

- 57% or 10.4 million acres of Wisconsin’s forested land is owned and operated by private, non-industrial, landowners.
- Wisconsin produces approximately \$20 billion in forest products annually.
- 64% of forest product materials are harvested from private lands.
- Wisconsin’s forest industry contributes approximately 60,000 jobs across the state.
- Wisconsin ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in maple syrup production with over 200,000 gallons produced annually. Most of which is harvested on private forests.
- Over 3 million acres enrolled in the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program.
- Wisconsin forests provided a home to dozens of threatened and endangered plant and animal species, find out about the species around your local area by exploring the WI DNR Webpage (<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/EndangeredResources/ETList>).