

FORESTS IN THE FARM BILL:

A 2017 PROGRESS REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS



American Forest Foundation

ABOUT THIS REPORT

To prepare this update, the American Forest Foundation (AFF) studied how the Farm Bill's forest conservation programs performed from 2014 to 2016 and compared those results with prior years. AFF analyzed U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program data from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Farm Service Agency (FSA), and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the three agencies responsible for administering the most important of those conservation programs for family forest owners. We are especially grateful to staff at these three agencies for their assistance in providing data and program information that has been incorporated into this Report.

AFF is a non-profit forest conservation organization working to ensure the sustainability of America's family forests for present and future generations, in conjunction with our strategic partners.

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LETTER FROM TOM MARTIN



Families and individuals, some 21 million Americans in total, own more than one-third of America's forests.

In fact, they own more forests than either the federal government or corporations. Many of these family woodland owners are farmers, too: nearly half of all family forest acreage in the U.S. is associated with a farm operation.

That's why AFF has been a leader in the Forests in the Farm Bill

Coalition, alongside partners at the National Association of State Foresters, the National Wild Turkey Federation, The Nature Conservancy, and others. Together, we are working to ensure that family forest owners have the information, tools, and resources they need to manage their land in a way that reduces the risks of wildfire, protects water supplies, improves wildlife habitat, and produces a sustainable supply of wood products.

This *Forests in the Farm Bill* report is the latest in a series of AFF publications that describe how a variety of Farm Bill and related programs help accomplish those goals. Since the last Farm Bill was passed, we've seen more than \$1.8 billion in funding for forestry, and more than 10 million acres of forests, an area one and a half times the size of Maryland, impacted by these programs.

The fact is, rural Americans and their lands supply a majority of the wood used in U.S. forest products manufacturing that supports some 2.4 million good-paying jobs. AFF's recent surveys and analyses of family forest owners in the South, Northeast, and Western U.S. show that the more family forest owners are actively, sustainably managing their land, the more they are providing benefits that reach beyond their property lines and into the surrounding community. They also show that these landowners want to do the right thing

on their land but that high costs and uncertainty about what to do often get in the way.

That's where Farm Bill programs like the Conservation Stewardship Program, Conservation Reserve Program, and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program come into play. These voluntary programs provide cost-share assistance, along with planning and technical expertise to help both farmers and woodland owners tackle the most pressing challenges on their land and in their communities: wildfires and drought, fragmentation and development, wildlife and recreation and wood supplies.

Moreover, the Farm Bill's voluntary programs can also reduce the need for regulatory approaches that are often costlier for both landowners and taxpayers.

The landowner profiles in this report illustrate the effectiveness of these programs. But the story doesn't end there. As Congress prepares to renew Farm Bill programs over the next two years, it is important to evaluate the programs to examine the many ways they are working and identify the areas where they can be further strengthened.

This report is our latest contribution to that process, and it includes several 2018 Farm Bill recommendations at the end. While this report shows the Farm Bill programs are working for forest owners, there is room for improvement. From further streamlining forest planning requirements, to increasing support for landscape-scale actions, to strengthening markets for wood products, the Farm Bill can help woodland owners overcome the barriers to sound management and continue providing America with clean water, healthy wildlife, and sustainable wood supplies.

I hope you'll check out our 2018 Farm Bill recommendations at www.forestfoundation.org/farmbill to learn what else can be done to support America's rural woodland owners.

FORESTS IN THE FARM BILL – A PROGRAM OVERVIEW

For more than 30 years, the Farm Bill has provided family forest owners¹ with technical, planning, and financial assistance that helps them protect water quality, control erosion, enhance wildlife habitat, and improve productivity. Over time, and continuing through the 2014 Farm Bill, these programs have evolved to allow greater participation by forest owners, encourage voluntary conservation, help more landowners protect their land from threats, and increase the amount of active stewardship of America’s family woodlands.

Figure 1 summarizes the USDA conservation programs that provide technical, planning, and financial assistance to family woodland owners.

FIGURE 1

Program	Agency	Funding	Authorized Levels for FY 2016	Actual Funding/Acreage Levels FY 2016*
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	NRCS	Mandatory	\$1.65 billion	\$1.0 billion**
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	NRCS	Mandatory	10 million acres/year enrolled	10 million acres
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	FSA	Mandatory	Limit to 24 million acres total enrollment	23.9 million acres
Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)	NRCS	Mandatory	\$100 million**	\$93 million***
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)	NRCS	Mandatory	\$450 million	\$419 million
Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP)	FSA	Discretionary	Funding necessary to implement	\$5 million
Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP)	NRCS	Discretionary	\$12 million	\$0****
Conservation Innovation Grants and Payments	NRCS	Mandatory	Funded through EQIP	\$26.6 million
Conservation Technical Assistance	NRCS	Discretionary	N.A.	\$741.6 million
Forest Stewardship Program	USFS	Discretionary	Such sums as necessary	\$23 million
Landscape Scale Restoration Program	USFS	Discretionary	5% of available State and Private funding	\$14 million
Forestry Cooperative Extension (RREA)	NIFA	Discretionary	\$30 million	\$4 million

* Amounts reflect impacts of sequestration.

** Financial assistance; does not include EQIP Technical Assistance funds

*** Does not include 7% of funds and acres in ACEP, EQIP, and CSP that are reserved for RCPP. Total actual amount with the additional funds is \$212 million for 2016.

**** HFRP was not provided any discretionary funds in 2016, but was provided \$13.9 million from RCPP projects.

KEY FINDINGS

The 2014 Farm Bill made significant changes to the USDA conservation programs, most of which were designed to make the programs more efficient, promote sound conservation practices, and leverage federal funding through public-private partnerships. For example, the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) was consolidated into the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), several easement programs were consolidated into the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), and a new Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) was created. Additionally, the forest acreage cap in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) was removed, enabling less constrained forest enrollment in the program.

These changes, combined with better funding and technical assistance, have resulted in measurable increases in conservation practices and benefits on family forest lands that extend beyond the owners' property lines. In fact, the three primary conservation programs in the Farm Bill – EQIP, CSP, and the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) – have provided increasing help for family forest owners by leveraging funding and resources that otherwise would not be available to these owners.

- From 2014-2016, EQIP funding helped family forest owners plant trees, thin existing stands, reduce wildfire risks, improve forest health, or implement other conservation forest practices on **MORE THAN 1.7 MILLION ACRES**. The program also helped landowners create more than 8,300 miles of firebreaks to help prevent the spread of wildfires and provided assistance to landowners, through forest professionals, to write more than **5,000 MANAGEMENT PLANS COVERING 560,000 ACRES**.
- In 2016, **8.2%** of EQIP financial assistance funds went to forest practices, a significant jump over the 6.5% average annual funding for forestry financial assistance during 2012-2015.
- As of September 2016, more than **3.2 MILLION FOREST ACRES** were enrolled in CSP – five times more than were enrolled in September 2011. Seven southern states – Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, Missouri, Mississippi, Virginia, and Arkansas – account for nearly half of the enrolled forest acreage.
- The 2014 Farm Bill gradually lowered the cap on CRP acreage from 32 million to 24 million acres. Land enrolled in forest practices in CRP fell similarly from 2.8 million to 2.4 million since 2013, but still represents **MORE THAN 10% OF TOTAL ACREAGE IN THE PROGRAM**.
- The new RCPP **INVESTED \$212 MILLION IN 84 REGIONAL CONSERVATION PROJECTS** in 2016, including many that had a forest-related focus, and leveraged an additional \$500 million in funding from non-federal partners. By the end of 2017, RCPP will have invested more than \$800 million in 287 projects around the country, while its project partners, including Indian tribes, private industry, water districts, state and local governments, universities, and non-profit organizations, will have contributed more than \$1.4 billion in additional funding.
- There are **539 FOREST PROFESSIONALS CERTIFIED** by NRCS as Technical Service Providers (TSP) that can write management plans and provide forestry technical assistance for family forest owners. While this is a 15% increase since 2012, there is a wide disparity among the states in the number of TSPs who are available to assist those landowners. In fact, 15 states have five or fewer such certified TSPs.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is a widely used and highly effective voluntary conservation and enhancement program that helps farmers, ranchers, and family forest owners promote agricultural production, forest management, and environmental quality as compatible goals; optimizes conservation benefits; and helps agricultural producers meet Federal, State, and local environmental requirements.²

Under EQIP, family woodland owners can receive payments for conservation practices that address priority resource concerns, like removing hazardous fuels or restoring forests. NRCS seeks input from local working groups and state technical advisory committees to help identify important natural resource issues and collaborative efforts to address them.

Applications are evaluated on that basis and those that score the highest are awarded contracts for up to 10 years. Participants receive payments after the conservation practices have been completed and certified. Historically underserved participants – beginning farmers or ranchers, veterans, Indian tribes, and socially disadvantaged producers – are eligible for advance payments

and higher payment rates.

Eligible producers can also apply for NRCS assistance to develop a forest management plan as a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP-106) for their property. Forest management plans and other technical assistance can be provided by NRCS staff or by a certified Technical Service Provider (TSP), a specially trained forester or natural resource professional that is certified as a TSP by NRCS, who is selected by the EQIP participating landowner.

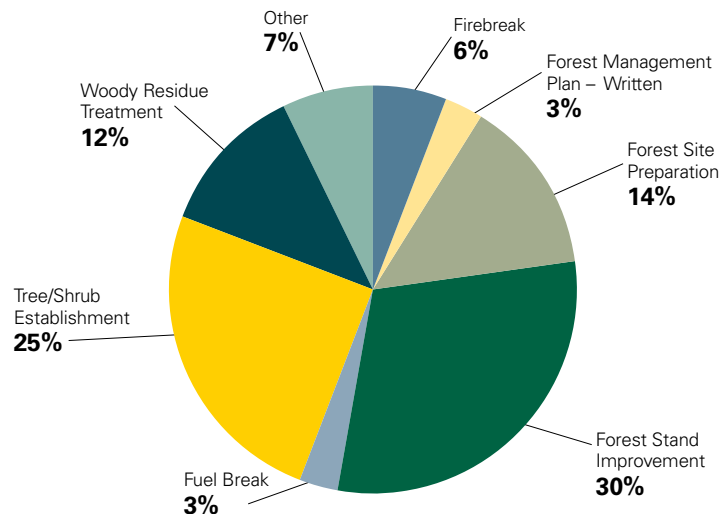
Family forest owners and forest managers use EQIP funds for a variety of management practices,

including tree planting, forest site improvement, and forest site preparation.³ (Figure 2)

In 2016, EQIP funding for forest practices totaled more than \$84 million, an increase of nearly 40% over average annual spending from 2012-15 for EQIP and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program combined.⁴ (Figure 3) That represents 8.2% of total EQIP financial assistance spending nationwide, which is also a significant jump over the average 6.45% allocated by the states to forest practices during the same 2012-15 time period.

2016 EQIP FOREST FUNDING ALLOCATION: BY FOREST PRACTICE (%)

FIGURE 2



EQIP LANDSCAPE INITIATIVES:

EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE

NRCS uses EQIP funding to leverage local and state efforts across regional landscapes. These Landscape Conservation Initiatives have been highly successful in building partnerships among landowners, state and local natural resource agencies, and private and non-profit organizations to generate additional funding and boost the program's effectiveness. The result: cleaner air and water, healthier soil, and improved wildlife habitat.

National Landscape Initiatives such as Longleaf Pine, Working Lands for Wildlife, and projects like AFF's Blue Mountains Partnership and its My Alabama Woods collaboration have also helped focus assistance on priority forested lands and leverage funds from non-federal partners.

For example, on the Cumberland Plateau, which stretches from northern Alabama and Georgia into Kentucky and Tennessee, AFF has partnered with 13 state and private entities to help restore shortleaf pine. In the early 1970s, there were 1.7 million acres of this iconic species in Alabama alone. By 2013, however, only 200,000 acres remained in the state.

That's when AFF's Chris Erwin, the Alabama Farmers Federation's Rick Oates, and NRCS's Alabama State Conservationist Dr. Ben Puckett hatched a plan to work with landowners on shortleaf pine restoration.

From 2000-13, only one application had been received by NRCS for shortleaf pine cost-share assistance. Just two years after launching the My Alabama Woods collaborative in 2014, however, more than 12,000 landowners had been contacted, 18 contracts had been signed, and nearly 1,000 acres of shortleaf had been restored.

And that's just the beginning. The My Alabama Woods team has expanded its efforts and is now working with landowners on Longleaf Pine restoration, water quality, and wildlife issues across the state, too.

A good idea, a good program, and a relatively small investment led to a statewide collaboration that is making a real difference for the woods and woodland owners in Alabama.

**EQIP SUPPORTED NEARLY
8,300 MILES OF FIREBREAK
AND OVER 1.7 MILLION
ACRES OF TREE PLANTING,
STAND IMPROVEMENT, AND
OTHER CONSERVATION
MANAGEMENT PRACTICES
ON FAMILY FOREST LAND
FROM 2014-16.**



The data illustrates the growing recognition among family forest owners that implementing these conservation practices is good both for their own land and the surrounding community, as well as the growing support within NRCS and State Technical Committees for forestry activities.

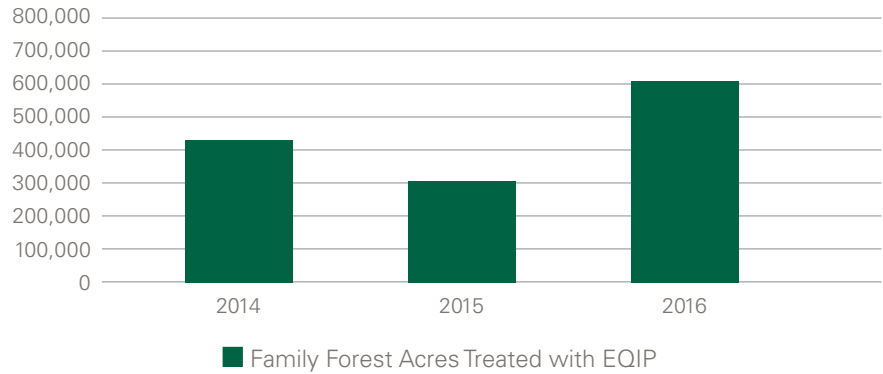
EQIP funding supported the implementation of forest practices on more than 1.7 million acres of family forest lands from 2014-16⁵ (Figure 3) – at a cost of just over \$100 per acre. During that time period, EQIP was also responsible for nearly 8,300 miles of firebreak that have been created by family forest owners to help prevent the spread of wildfires. In addition, more than 5,000 forest management plans, covering more than 560,000 acres, were able to be written because of EQIP funds. Together, these investments ensure that more family forests, which represent 36% of all forests nationwide, are being managed in a way that helps protect water

supplies, improve wildlife habitat, reduce the need to list threatened and endangered species, and prevent wildfires.

While forest owners are increasingly helped through EQIP, there is still a wide disparity in the allocation of EQIP funding for forest practices among US states and territories. Of course, some states have more private forest land than others. Moreover, some states, through their locally driven

EQIP FOREST PRACTICES 2014-2016 (ACRES)

FIGURE 3



FUNDING FOR EQIP/WHIP FOREST PRACTICES 2009-2016

FIGURE 4

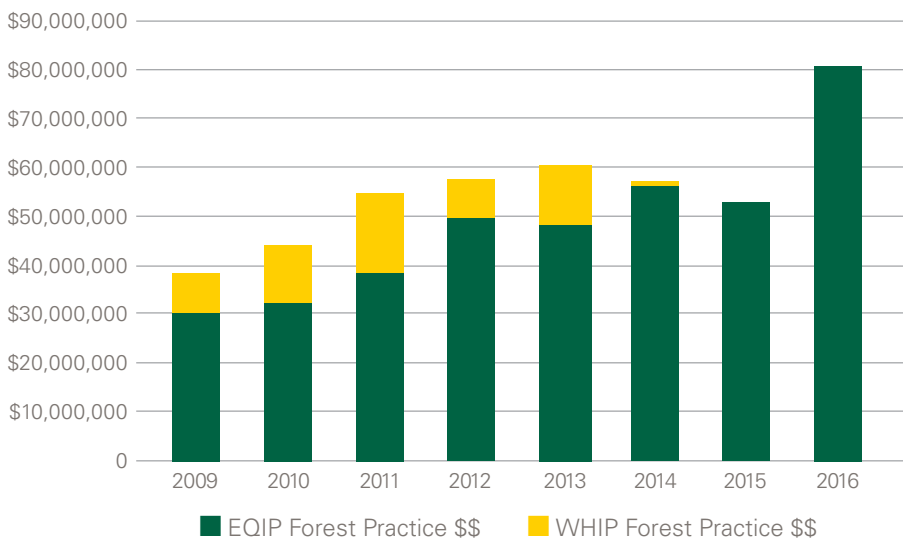


FIGURE 5

Top 5 States Allocating the Highest Percentage of EQIP Funds for Forest Practices

Alaska ⁶	63.2%
Alabama	36.0%
Oregon	28.0%
Washington	24.8%
Georgia	22.8%

process for identifying conservation priorities, have focused more on forested lands and practices. Only five states allocated more than 20% of their EQIP funds to forest practices (Figure 5), while another 11 states were above the 8.2% national average. Those top five states have consistently allocated a higher percentage than most of their EQIP funding to forest practices. In most of those states, the bulk of the funding went to tree planting and stand improvement activities. Oregon and Washington each allocated a significant amount to woody residue treatment, which can reduce wildfire risks, and Alabama did the same for firebreaks.

TOP FARM BILL FOREST PRACTICES

The top five forest practices funded through the EQIP program account for 87% of the total EQIP spending nationally on forest practices. These practices deliver a number of benefits, from cleaner water and reduced wildfire risk, to wildlife habitat improvement and healthier timber stands.

FOREST STAND IMPROVEMENT

can include thinning dense forest stands to allow desired trees to grow stronger, conducting a controlled burn to eliminate competing vegetation and control disease, or removing invasive species.

TREE/SHRUB ESTABLISHMENT

or tree planting, involves either direct seeding or enabling natural regeneration.

TREE/SHRUB SITE PREPARATION

helps new trees grow after a harvest or clearing, including restoring marginal forest land and removing undesired vegetation.

WOODY RESIDUE TREATMENT

removes hazardous fuels to reduce risk of wildfire and harmful insects and disease, and improve a site for recovery after wildfire, storm damage, or a harvest.

FIREBREAKS

are permanent or temporary strips of land that are not forested, that create breaks in continuously forested land, created to reduce the spread of wildfire and contain prescribed burns.

Several other states have substantially increased their forest practices allocation in recent years, compared to the 2009-13 time period. (Figure 6) The increases appear to be a function of those states making forest practices a higher priority for funding allocations.

Conversely, 26 states allocated less than 4% to forest practices, including some states with significant forest acreage like Wisconsin, Minnesota, Vermont, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia.

A state-by-state breakdown of 2016 EQIP forest practices spending and acreages treated is in Appendices A and B.

FIGURE 6

States with Greatest Increase in EQIP Allocation for Forest Practices from 2009-13 to 2014-16 (%)

State	2009-13	2014-16	% Increase
Utah	1.4%	5.6%	291%
Florida	3.7%	12.8%	244%
Connecticut	4.8%	9.0%	88%
Louisiana	5.3%	9.4%	78%
New Mexico	4.3%	7.4%	74%
Idaho	3.5%	6.0%	74%

A GREAT GRIZZLY EFFORT TO PROTECT THE FORESTED HABITAT



In the 1950s, Allen Chrisman's parents bought a property in northwest Montana and started building a cabin on a hillside among the tall and stately lodgepole pine. It was the perfect family retreat from their home in central Illinois.

The wildlife was exotic compared to Illinois. In the early years, not only were there deer, but also elk, moose, black bears, and coyotes. The neighbors even mentioned that on rare occasions a grizzly bear could be spotted. Allen and his siblings would spend days running and playing in the woods, looking for signs that wildlife might be near, but also respecting that a safe distance was the best place to be.

These visits to Montana had a great effect on Allen, prompting him to pursue forestry as a career, and even join a hotshot fire crew in the intermountain region. When Allen wasn't fighting wildfires, he would quickly retreat to his family's cabin and the views of Glacier National Park mountain peaks glowing in the setting sun.

Through his early career in the field, he saw firsthand the destruction wildfires could cause – both to the forest and to the habitat and homes scattered among the trees. He didn't want one of these catastrophic wildfires to destroy the memories of his childhood or the habitat for the bears, deer and others.

Yet, in the 1970s, they did. The mountain pine beetle, an insect that attacks old or mature pines, hit North Fork hard, devastating acres upon acres of lodgepole pine. Hundreds of landowners were affected, including the Chrismans. Allen and his father were lucky and were able to harvest early, cleaning up the affected trees. They decided they wanted to fill the land back with lodgepole pine and prepped the land for natural regeneration.

For 15 years, the saplings grew. While the growth was good, the saplings came in too thick. The stands became choked with small trees, creating a fire hazard that threatened the Chrismans, and the wildlife that lived in the area. What was worse, many of the forests across the landscape were experiencing similar conditions, increasing the fire risk and making it even more difficult for wildlife to move and thrive.

The tree stands needed to be thinned to open them up to allow the trees to grow, and for forbs, grasses and shrubs on the forest floor to flourish, providing excellent forage and habitat for a variety of animals. But the work was a lot of money – money the Chrismans did not have.

The Chrismans were able to secure some stewardship funds from the Montana DNR to get them started thinning. But given Allen's work schedule, he couldn't get to their Tree Farm enough to complete all the needed work. He didn't have the funds and knew some of the work required more than one set of hands and equipment he didn't have.

Allen's ears perked up during a meeting with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) where he learned that his American Tree Farm System forest management plan met the criteria and eligibility for a new program known as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

He applied for the program right away. He would be able to use the funds for a thinning and would be able to leave unthinned patches for wildlife cover and built brush piles for small mammals to use. He was granted funding for 20 acres over a 7-year contract.

The funding from EQIP, as well as funding from other helpful federal programs such as the Hazardous Fuels Program, has been key to helping him clean up his land, both for safety and wildlife.

This past summer, as Allen was walking through the woods, he spotted in the distance with great delight, a grizzly bear wandering down the driveway. Allen retreated to his vehicle and watched the bear happily foraging through logs and grubbing in the soil. This was a wildlife viewing opportunity unheard of back in the 1950s.

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM



The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), which is also administered by NRCS, is the largest working lands conservation program in the U.S, from an acreage perspective, with 70 million acres enrolled. It is aimed at helping farmers and family forest owners who are already practicing good stewardship do more on their land. The CSP is a voluntary, highly competitive program that provides financial and technical assistance to help landowners meet their agricultural or forest management goals – from timber yields to wildlife habitat – by improving management across their entire operation.

As with EQIP, CSP applications are ranked according to their ability to meet specific natural resource goals, such as soil erosion or water quality, identified through a locally led process and by each State Technical Committee.

Unlike EQIP, CSP provides ongoing annual payments to landowners for the life of the five-year contract, averaging \$8 to \$10 per acre, with a minimum payment of \$1,500, based on a combination of existing and planned conservation activities. Eligible landowners can also receive payments to maintain existing conservation practices, as well as to implement additional activities.

Since many family forest owners earn revenue from their land just

once or twice in a generation when they harvest timber, CSP enrollment provides annual payments that help offset some of their land ownership costs and can help encourage stewardship activities for which they otherwise would not be able to cover the costs.

The 2014 Farm Bill removed a 10% cap that had been placed on the number of forested acres that could be enrolled in the CSP program nationally. As of September 2016, there were more than 3.2 million forest acres under contract nationwide, nearly five times the acreage enrolled in 2011, and 2.9% of all current CSP contract acres. In 2016, more than 700,000 forest acres were enrolled in CSP either through new contracts or contract renewals.

Twelve states had more than 100,000 forested acres under contract as of September 2016, all but one of which are above the 2.9% national average. (Figure 7)

As in prior years, southern states are enrolling more forest acreage in CSP than other regions. In fact, the seven southern states in Figure 7 – Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, Missouri, Mississippi, Virginia, and Arkansas – account for nearly 1.5 million of the 3.2 million forest acres under contract.

This attention to forestry in these states could reflect more representation by family forest

owners on the local and state working groups and committees, a higher priority given to forest-related issues by the state technical committee, better outreach programs to forest owners, or other factors.

While there has been considerable growth in forest acres enrolled under CSP over the past five years, the observation that some very heavily forested states have low enrollments underscores the importance of identifying barriers that forest owners may be facing in enrolling in these states.

FIGURE 7

States with More Than 100,000 Acres of Forest Land Enrolled in CSP		
State	Total Forest Acres in CSP	% CSP Forest Acres
Georgia	420,908	27.03%
Alabama	334,560	52.51%
Oregon	274,770	6.14%
Alaska	206,203	93.56%
South Carolina	201,014	36.68%
Missouri	146,772	6.38%
Mississippi	127,411	8.16%
Minnesota	126,378	3.26%
Virginia	107,758	28.31%
Arkansas	104,794	3.78%
Wisconsin	104,404	8.18%
New Mexico	100,944	1.61%

CONTINUING A FAMILY'S LEGACY FOR WILDLIFE



Nearly all of Susan's favorite childhood memories took place on the 2,087 acre forest her father owned near State College, Pennsylvania.

Her father, Lewis Shoemaker purchased it from his father in the late 1970s with a determination to keep the land in trees and keep it healthy and productive. This meant for Susan, as a child, frequent visits to 'Bear Town' to help with cutting firewood, fixing roads, and other chores, along with learning to fish, hunt, and forming a strong love of wildlife.

Before her father passed in 2006, he sat Susan down to give her instructions on carrying on his legacy. 'Susan,' he said sternly. 'Don't let the land go to waste. It's important to our family. And it's important to the critters you love.' Susan, knowing she could not let him down, agreed.

Several months later, she set up a meeting with their forester, Bob Harvis.

She wanted to get a feel for how they were

managing the land and what was planned for the future. They started talking tree types and soils, state guidelines, upcoming projects and more.

With her head spinning, she realized she didn't have the funds for some of the work they described. She was just an accountant, and her husband a carpenter – they were not wealthy landowners.

But, like her father, she was a firm believer that if you love the land and you find the right support, you care for it.

She called her forester Bob about options. Bob shared that using her American Tree Farm System Stewardship Plan, she could apply for cost-share assistance through Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). She jumped on this immediately, enrolling in the Conservation Stewardship Program to a assistance in creating the wildlife habitat she too wanted. She agreed to conduct three enhancements over a five-year time frame – downed woody debris for amphibians and reptiles, standing snags for birds of prey and tree nesting species and maintaining habitat for pollinators. They documented their work and in a few short years, she saw noticeable results.

Today, Susan can walk through her woods and see deer, fishers, bobcats, and even bears. Just last year, her sons brought home two 11-point bucks during archery season. But there are still property taxes to pay and year-round maintenance to keep up the wildlife habitat she has created.

She keeps making the land work for her family and for herself. And she knows her father would be proud.



CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a voluntary program that was established in the 1985 Food Security Act and is administered by the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA). Its goal is to control soil erosion on marginal and environmentally sensitive farmlands and, in turn, protect area groundwater, rivers, and streams while improving wildlife habitat.

The 2014 Farm Bill imposed a gradual reduction that lowered the CRP's overall 32 million-acre acreage enrollment cap to 24 million acres by fiscal year 2017 (which began on October 1, 2016). Historically, planting trees and creating windbreaks or riparian buffers on marginal and highly erodible crop lands through CRP has accounted for approximately 10 percent of the overall CRP acreage, and that trend has continued in recent years with more than 2.4 million forested acres enrolled in the program as of September 2016. Over the past 30 years, FSA estimates that CRP is responsible for establishing tree cover on nearly 5 million acres of erodible farm lands.

A total of 38 separate conservation practices have been offered in CRP, 11 of which include trees. Three of those 11 tree-related categories (New Softwood Trees, New Hardwood Trees, and New

Longleaf Pine) are only available during a General CRP Signup period. Landowners can sign up for the other eight categories on a continuous basis, subject to available funding. (Figure 8)

FIGURE 8

CRP Forestry Practice	Estimated Acres as of September each year			
	2013	2014	2015	2016
New softwood trees (CP3)	515,944	537,271	516,750	499,439
New longleaf pines (CP3A)	209,074	228,407	70,609	69,628
New hardwood trees (CP3A)	425,336	399,220	369,789	254,625
Field windbreaks (CP5)	93,964	92,742	92,332	88,882
Existing trees (discontinued) (CP11) ⁷	472,590	390,285	375,689	354,199
Shelterbelts (CP16)	36,190	35,105	34,439	31,773
Riparian buffers (CP22)	852,378	833,707	811,055	771,883
Bottomland hardwoods (CP31)	100,460	112,863	130,457	143,671
Hardwood trees (expired) (CP32) ⁸	8,358	8,329	9,107	7,008
Longleaf pine initiative (CP36)	117,122	119,909	139,613	159,481
SAFE initiative (Trees) (CP38C) ⁹	17,408	17,993	22,172	24,868
SAFE initiative (Longleaf) (CP38D)	292	292	298	321
Total Forested	2,851,129	2,778,137	2,574,325	2,407,794
Total CRP	26,838,152	25,448,835	24,180,455	23,880,554

Under CRP, landowners enroll in 10-15 year contracts and receive annual rental payments to plant trees or other resource-conserving cover crops on land that had been planted in commodity crops in at least four of the prior six years.

Participants are eligible to receive up to 50 percent of their costs for implementing approved conservation practices, including planting hardwood or softwood trees. Some practices are also eligible for other types of incentive payments. Lands that are eligible for general CRP enrollment are evaluated according to an Environmental Benefit Index (EBI) that measures benefits associated

with reducing erosion, improving wildlife habitat, and improving air and water quality. Those that rank highest are enrolled in the program. The FSA partners with local NRCS offices, state forestry agencies, local soil and water conservation districts, and private-sector specialists to provide technical assistance to CRP enrollees.

Landowners who enrolled acreage in CRP in 2003 or later are required to perform mid-contract management activities. They are typically performed by year 6 in a 10-year contract and by year 10 in a 15-year contract. FSA provides a 50% cost-share for mid-contract management activities, which, for land planted in trees under

CRP, typically involves thinning as directed by the appropriate forest official. The 2014 Farm Bill provided \$10 million for a unique “incentive payment” that does not require a match from the landowner for mid-contract thinning and prescribed burning of pine stands to help address the pine management backlog on CRP contracts. Without thinning in many of the CRP pine stands through mid-contract management, the wildlife value of these stands is significantly diminished. To date, only a small portion of these funds have been used.



CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CREP)

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program is a part of CRP that relies on state-federal-private partnerships to identify high-priority conservation issues and develop community-oriented programs that will address them.

Like CRP, CREP is a voluntary program, in which participants sign

10- to 15-year contracts to remove environmentally sensitive land from production and implement specified conservation practices in exchange for rental payments and cost-share assistance. Enrollment is open throughout the year, subject to overall CRP caps, but participation

is only available to landowners in states that have signed a CREP agreement with the FSA, and the land and conservation practices must meet the criteria established in those agreements.

There are currently 42 CREP projects in partnership with 31 states across the nation.



AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) consolidates the purposes of three easement programs that were repealed by the 2014 Farm Bill: the Wetlands Reserve Program, the Grassland Reserve Program, and the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program. Only the wetland reserve easement component has significant forest acreage.

ACEP has two components: (1) an Agricultural Land Easement (ACEP-ALE) component under which NRCS helps keep agricultural land intact through the purchase of agricultural land easements; and (2) a Wetland Reserve Easement (ACEP-WRE) component under which NRCS provides financial and technical assistance directly to landowners to restore, protect and enhance wetlands through the purchase of wetlands reserve easements.

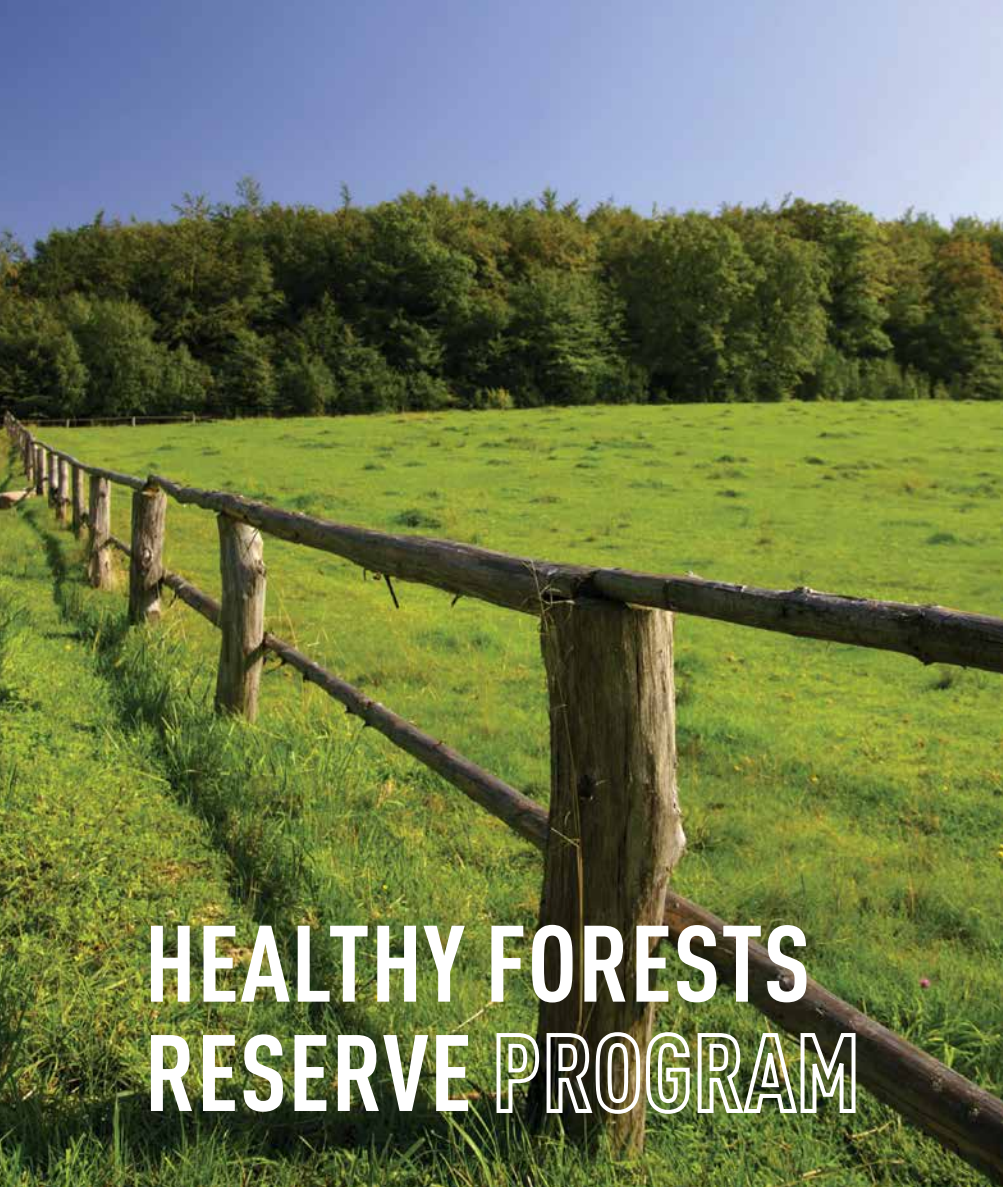
Forest owners who are interested in receiving financial or technical assistance through ACEP-WRE

to restore, protect, or enhance forested wetlands on their property can apply for either a permanent easement, a 30-year easement, or a shorter-term easement if a shorter maximum term is required by state law. Participants are paid 100% of the easement value for a permanent easement, as well as for the costs of restoring the wetlands. For 30-year easements, participants receive 75% of the easement value and up

to 75% of the costs of wetlands restoration.

Family forest land is also eligible for the Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) component of ACEP, but no more than two-thirds of a landowner's acreage offered for ALE can be forested. Landowners who are interested in ACEP-ALE must participate through an eligible Cooperating Entity, such as a land trust or local government agency.

IN JUST 3 YEARS, THE FARM BILL'S CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY PROGRAMS HELPED FAMILY WOODLAND OWNERS CONDUCT CONSERVATION EFFORTS ACROSS MORE THAN 10 MILLION ACRES IN TOTAL. TO PUT IT IN PERSPECTIVE, THAT IS IMPROVEMENTS TO MORE THAN 9,000 ACRES OF FAMILY-OWNED FORESTLAND PER DAY.



HEALTHY FORESTS RESERVE PROGRAM

The Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP) helps NRCS work with family forest owners and Indian tribes who want to protect, restore, or enhance their woods through easements, contracts, or cost-share agreements. The 2014 Farm Bill allowed the use of HFRP authorities in the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).

Like other voluntary Farm Bill conservation programs, the HFRP provides eligible landowners with financial assistance or cost-share payments for specific conservation activities that improve biodiversity, enhance carbon storage, and promote the recovery of fish, plants, and wildlife that are at risk of

extinction. Participating landowners who implement practices that restore or improve their forests for threatened or endangered species habitat over the term of their agreement can be given Safe Harbor protections under the Endangered Species Act. With the growing number of forest-dependent at-risk wildlife (As noted in AFF’s report *Southern Wildlife At-Risk: Family Forest Owners Offer a Solution*), programs like this help family forest owners conduct voluntary management practices to restore species habitat. This in turn can help reduce the regulatory burden on family forest owners and other landowners.

Landowners who want to enroll in HFRP can choose from three options:

- 10-year restoration contract: NRCS reimburses 50% of the average cost of the approved conservation practices.
- 30-year easement: landowners can receive 75% of both the easement value of the enrolled land and of the average cost of the approved conservation practices. Indian tribes sign a 30-year contract under the same payment terms.
- Permanent easement: landowners can receive 100% of both the easement value of the enrolled land and of the average cost of the approved conservation practices.

Although there have been no discretionary appropriations for HFRP in recent years, approximately five percent of RCPP’s awards – nearly \$14 million – has been allocated to the program. At the end of 2015, forest landowners or tribes in 13 states were receiving HFRP funding.

State	Number of Easements	Acres Enrolled
Arkansas	2	313
California	11	22,715.30
Georgia	5	1,818.20
Indiana	10	1,222.70
Kentucky	17	5,074.00
Maine	4	630,326.00
Michigan	6	213.9
Mississippi	11	4,179.40
Ohio	2	100.4
Oklahoma	25	7,448.50
Oregon	11	2,228.10
Pennsylvania	5	1,049.00
South Carolina	1	648.3
Total	110	677,336.80

CIG HELPS BRING PRIVATE INVESTMENT TO REDUCE WILDFIRE RISK

Wildfires are on the increase across the west. Nearly 7 million acres burned in 2015-16 in just the 11 western states in the continental US. Another 5.6 million acres burned in Alaska.

It is much less expensive to take steps to reduce wildfire threats before they start, but neither state and federal agencies nor private landowners have the resources to implement broad forest restoration practices that will help do so. The problem is particularly acute on private, family-owned forests.

In 2016, the Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) program funded a unique public-private partnership focused specifically on helping family landowners reduce wildfire risks on their land and in their communities.

The American Forest Foundation, Blue Forest Conservation, and World Resources Institute are working together, with the help of this CIG award, to develop a Forest Resilience Bond that will fund wildfire mitigation work on family lands where landowners don't have the capital necessary to do the work. The Bonds will leverage private capital investments to help cover the costs of activities to reduce the threat of wildfires. The three groups are currently working to identify areas where the FRBs can have the most impact, and the first bond-funded projects are expected to be implemented in 2018.



CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS

The Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) program uses EQIP funds to provide matching grants to state and local governments, non-governmental organizations, Indian tribes, and individual farmers, ranchers, and family forest owners to stimulate the development and implementation of promising technologies for addressing the nation's most critical natural resource problems. Participants must cover at least 50% of a CIG project's costs with non-federal matching funds.

In 2016, NRCS awarded \$26.6 million for CIG projects around the country.





REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The 2014 Farm Bill created the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, administered by NRCS, to allow NRCS to use conservation program funding to leverage private sector funding and support in key geographies. The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) receives \$100 million in mandatory funding, plus 7% of the funding from EQIP, CSP, and ACEP. As noted above, it also includes the authorities provided under the Healthy Forest Reserve Program (HFRP), and NRCS has used those authorities to continue enrolling forest acres under the HFRP's easement options.

Partners leverage the NRCS RCPP funding, typically by providing outreach, education, and technical assistance to landowners in targeted geographic areas. The landowners are then connected with NRCS officials to receive the NRCS

program funding allocated to their RCPP. Eligible landowners who want to participate in one of those projects enter into contracts or easement agreements, under the terms of that project agreement, in much the same way and for the same types of practices that they would for the underlying program (e.g. EQIP, CSP, ACEP, or HFRP).

For 2016, 84 high-impact projects, including many with a forest-related focus, were funded with \$212 million from NRCS and more than \$500 million in additional funding from project partners – more than tripling what would have been possible with the initial federal investment alone.

Three separate funding pools have been created under RCPP:

- Critical Conservation Areas Pool: Projects in eight existing high-priority areas receive 35% of the annual funding.
- National Pool: nationwide and

multistate projects receive 40% of the funds.

- State Pool: projects that are implemented in a single state receive 25% of the funds.

By the end of 2017, NRCS will have invested more than \$800 million in 287 projects around the country, while its project partners, including Indian tribes, private industry, water districts, state and local governments, universities, and non-profit organizations, will have contributed more than \$1.4 billion in additional funding.

While it is not possible to identify and segregate the forest practice components for most of the RCPP projects, it can be done for the portion of the funding that comes from EQIP. In 2016, nearly \$28 million of RCPP's funding came from EQIP, of which more than \$3.1 million went to projects implementing forest practices in 23 different states.

COLLABORATING FOR A MAINE WILDLIFE CORRIDOR



Western Maine contains a 2.7-million acre forested wildlife corridor that provides a home to a wide variety of beloved species such as the scarlet tanager, northern flying squirrel, and broad-winged hawk. Unfortunately, these forests are facing increased development pressures that threaten their ability to provide quality habitat for wildlife in the future. Many species that thrive in this area have been listed as threatened or endangered, such as the Canada Lynx and Northern long-eared bat. Without conservation efforts to protect these sensitive species' habitat, they may be unable to recover.

Of the forests in Maine, one third of them are owned by families and individuals, making them significant caretakers of this valuable wildlife corridor. What's more, based on a recent survey, Maine landowners, like others in the northeast, consider enhancing wildlife habitat and providing food for birds and wildlife important to their family. However, these same individuals also noted they are unsure about the activities they should do to help, and that the costs associated with forest management are a major barrier.

In 2016, AFF began a partnership with Maine Audubon, the Trust for Public Land, and the New England Forestry Foundation to collaborate on connecting with more landowners who can help. Pooling resources, the partnership is working to help landowners begin to take the necessary steps towards supporting wildlife on their land by providing them with informational resources and home visits from forestry experts.

In addition, to help landowners directly with the costs, financial assistance is available through a grant from the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). The funds are key to helping landowners create long-term management plans that incorporate wildlife, and assisting them with implementing activities that support habitat enhancement.

RCPP is making projects like this possible by aiming to clean and conserve water, improve soil and air quality, enhance wildlife habitat, increase productivity on agricultural lands, and strengthen rural economies. RCPP plays a critical role in helping conservation partners help private landowners overcome financial barriers so that conservation solutions can be implemented.



FEDERAL FUNDS USED THROUGH THE LANDSCAPE-SCALE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS ARE STIMULATING INVESTMENTS BY THE PRIVATE SIDE – WITH PRIVATE INDUSTRY, NON-PROFIT GROUPS, LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, UNIVERSITIES AND MORE INVESTING \$2 FOR EVERY \$1 FEDERAL DOLLAR INTO THESE PARTNERSHIPS.



LANDSCAPE SCALE RESTORATION PROGRAM

Landscape-scale conservation is important in today's world where our forests face threats and challenges that affect large numbers of properties and ownership types. For example, because wildfires know no property lines, landscape-scale solutions are needed to truly reduce wildfire risks.

In addition to the NRCS and FSA programs that enable landscape-scale conservation on private lands, the U.S. Forest Service also has authority to work on public and

private lands in key landscapes, in partnership with states and the private sector: the Landscape Scale Restoration Program (LSR).

For example, with funding from LSR, a group of over 15 public and private organizations came together to begin restoring oak across Wisconsin's iconic "Driftless Area" because oak decline was causing both wildlife habitat and economic concerns. These partners realized that to address such a massive landscape issue,

they must target their resources across that landscape and work together to increase efficiency. To date, this partnership has restored more than 2,500 acres of oak woodlands and is working with over 2,000 landowners to do even more.

In 2016, Congress provided \$14 million for the Program, and the U.S. Forest Service also has authority to allocate up to 5% of State and Private Forestry Program funding to this program.



EMERGENCY FOREST RESTORATION PROGRAM

When natural disasters strike, the Emergency Forest Restoration Program is there to help family forest landowners by providing financial assistance to restore forest lands damaged by a tornado, flood, wildfire, or other disaster.

The program is administered by state and local Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices, who, in partnership with state forestry agencies and in response to landowner requests, determine forest damage following disasters and request EFRP disaster assistance from USDA and Congress. Once EFRP funding is approved, the landowner could receive payments for up to 75% of the cost of activities to repair the damage and restore forest health.

According to the FSA, the following criteria must be met in order for land affected by a natural disaster to be eligible:

- Have existing tree cover (or had tree cover immediately before the natural disaster occurred and is suitable for growing trees); and
- Be owned by any nonindustrial private individual, group, association, corporation, or other private legal entity that has definitive decision-making authority over the land.

In addition, the natural disaster must have resulted in damage that if untreated would:

- Impair or endanger the natural resources on the land; and
- Materially affect future use of the land.

Funding for EFRP depends on congressional appropriations following disasters, and there is a \$500,000 limit on payments to any

person or legal entity per natural disaster.

In 2016, more than \$5 million in EFRP funds supported post-disaster restoration projects in Alabama, Mississippi, Oregon, Tennessee, and Virginia, with more than 75% of the funding allocated to Oregon landowners whose woods were damaged by wildfires. That's a 40% increase over 2015 EFRP funding but less than half of 2014's \$13.6 million allocation. The biggest portion of the 2014 funding went to Georgia and South Carolina owners whose forest lands were harmed by severe ice storms.

Family forest owners whose land has been damaged by a storm or other natural disaster should check with their county FSA office or state forestry agency to seek EFRP assistance.



PROVIDING TECHNICAL AND PLANNING ASSISTANCE TO FAMILY FOREST OWNERS

Surveys of family forest landowners conducted by AFF and others often find that a lack of information and technical assistance are among the biggest barriers to reducing wildfire risk, improving wildlife habitat implementing, or taking other steps to improve their woods. However, when these landowners receive technical assistance from a natural resource professional, they report that it helps make sure the management activities are done right, and that they learn more about their land and what additional steps they could take to improve it.¹⁰

Landowners can receive such assistance from one of several USDA-supported programs that help family forest owners, or from professionals in the private or non-profit sectors. The USDA-supported efforts play a critical role by providing

assistance that a landowner might not otherwise be able to afford from a private sector consultant.

Whether information and technical assistance about forest management practices comes from public or private sector professionals, it can be the helping hand that landowners need. Although it can be harder to measure, providing that information or assistance can be a cost-effective way to achieve significant results on the land. AFF, in partnership with states and others, is testing new approaches to use modern database technology to better track and measure the effectiveness of technical assistance for forest owners.

Nonetheless, it is extremely challenging to reach and engage the 21 million families and individuals that own woodlands in America.

In fact, the combined efforts of public, private, and non-profit professionals still reach only about 20% of family woodland owners.

In addition to the USDA conservation programs described above, three USDA programs offer technical assistance to forest owners: NRCS's Conservation Technical Assistance, the USFS Forest Stewardship Program, and NIFA's forestry cooperative extension program.

NRCS CONSERVATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Conservation Technical Assistance Program (CTA) is administered by NRCS and provides landowners with information and advice about conservation practices through a national network of locally

based natural resource professionals. CTA is voluntary, and it plays a vitally important role in helping landowners learn more about ways to improve management of their land, protect water quality, or enhance wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities. In 2016, CTA was funded at nearly \$600,000, though that continued a decline in funding for the program that began in 2012. Since that time, CTA funding has fallen nearly 18%.

NRCS TECHNICAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

NRCS Technical Service Providers (TSPs) are qualified natural resource professionals that are available to help forest landowners overcome those barriers. With financial support from conservation programs like EQIP and CSP, a landowner is able to hire a TSP to write a management plan for their land that implements conservation practices to address specific resource concerns.

Nationwide, there are only 539 forestry professionals who are certified to prepare a forest management plan, though that is up 15% since early 2012. Not surprisingly, there are more TSPs approved to help with forest stand improvement, tree planting, and site preparation – the same activities most implemented by landowners under EQIP – than with some of the lesser utilized forest practices. Maine, New Hampshire, and Pennsylvania have the largest numbers of certified TSPs, while 21 states have fewer than 10 each. In some states, like Montana and Maryland, NRCS has formed strong partnerships with state forestry agencies, Cooperative Extension, or

third parties like the American Forest Foundation to help with outreach and technical assistance to forest landowners.

FOREST STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

The U.S. Forest Service’s Forest Stewardship Program (FSP) plays a vital role in engaging family landowners in active, long-term stewardship of their land. The FSP is voluntary, and participating landowners can receive professional planning, education, and technical assistance that will help keep their land productive and healthy. State forestry agencies implement the Forest Stewardship Program in each state, where every \$1 of federal funding for FSP is matched with at least \$1 in state funding.

FSP helps family forest owners develop comprehensive plans through which they can accomplish their own management goals while also meeting the objectives of state priorities identified in State Forest Action Plans. Since 2014, the FSP has been responsible for nearly 275,000 management plans covering more than 7 million acres, and those plans are recognized by NRCS for cost-share programs like EQIP and CSP. They can also be used by landowners to obtain certification through private sector programs like the American Tree Farm System.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION THROUGH LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITIES

Land-grant universities across the country also provide educational assistance to family woodland owners through cooperative

extension programs, funded in part by the National Institute for Food and Agriculture’s Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA). As with agriculture extension programs, forestry extension often hosts workshops and hands-on trainings for family forest owners, and it can also provide one-on-one assistance.

RREA is authorized at \$30 million; however funding for the program has remained relatively flat at roughly \$4 million annually.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE THROUGH EQIP, CSP, AND CRP

The Farm Bill’s EQIP, CSP, and CRP programs provide much needed cost-share assistance to landowners who are ready to implement conservation practices. The Farm Bill also authorizes the agencies to provide technical assistance to the landowners in support of the practices they are implementing under the respective programs. The technical assistance is provided either by NRCS field staff or a Technical Service Provider, and it plays an important role in providing landowners with the information they need to do the job right.

However, the requirement that technical assistance programs under EQIP, CSP, and CRP must be tied to a practice contract means that it isn’t available to landowners who are not yet ready to implement a conservation practice, or for whom additional information and advice might help them make that decision. For those landowners, the assistance provided under NRCS’s Conservation Technical Assistance program or the USFS Forest Stewardship Program is critically important.

2018 FARM BILL RECOMMENDATIONS

Clearly, significant progress has been made to address forest management and conservation issues through the Farm Bill. However, as noted in Tom Martin's introduction to this report, family-owned forests still face significant challenges as their owners work to provide the many benefits all Americans enjoy from these lands.

What more can Congress do to support family-owned forests in the upcoming 2018 Farm Bill Reauthorization?

MAINTAIN FUNDING AND SUPPORT

FOR WOODLAND OWNERS IN FORESTRY AND CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

IMPROVE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION FOR WOODLAND OWNERS

SUPPORT CROSS-BOUNDARY,

LANDSCAPE-SCALE EFFORTS TO TACKLE FORESTRY ISSUES, ESPECIALLY WILDFIRE

PROVIDE SUPPORT

AND REGULATORY ASSURANCE FOR AT-RISK WILDLIFE

SUPPORT A STRONG, DIVERSE

FOREST PRODUCTS INDUSTRY TO HELP GROW MARKETS FOR OUR TIMBER

SUPPORT A COMPREHENSIVE

WILDFIRE FUNDING FIX

Note: more detailed recommendations are available in AFF's Farm Bill Recommendations, which can be found at <https://www.forestfoundation.org/farmbill>

APPENDIX A

EQIP, CSP and CRP Funding/Acreage, by State (2016)

State	Programs Measured in \$\$ Spent		Programs Measured in Acres			
	EQIP Forest Practices	% of Total EQIP Funds	CSP Forest Acres	% of Total CSP Acres	CRP Forest Acres	% of Total CRP Acres
Alabama	\$6,039,244	36.0%	94,852	56.35%	204,248	80.0%
Alaska	\$4,129,204	63.2%	29,142	82.91%	50	0.3%
Arizona	\$416,879	3.7%	-	0.00%	0	0.0%
Arkansas	\$2,934,853	6.9%	31,896	4.29%	136,175	58.8%
California	\$14,185,812	16.1%	-	0.00%	1,174	1.5%
Caribbean Region	\$170,050	3.3%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Colorado	\$2,356,572	7.2%	2,617	0.18%	5,844	0.3%
Connecticut	\$617,022	13.6%	413	21.26%	1	1.9%
Delaware	\$78,771	0.9%	80	0.39%	2,621	57.4%
Florida	\$2,812,885	19.0%	11,739	9.69%	29,931	94.7%
Georgia	\$5,948,199	22.8%	113,084	24.49%	232,104	97.3%
Hawaii	\$759,445	10.6%	-	0.00%	995	99.9%
Idaho	\$1,473,990	6.8%	3,558	1.21%	11,685	2.1%
Illinois	\$61,022	0.5%	2,265	0.48%	165,634	18.5%
Indiana	\$784,650	3.3%	95	0.10%	40,707	17.2%
Iowa	\$59,951	0.3%	572	0.11%	86,264	5.1%
Kansas	\$220,837	1.0%	-	0.00%	6,078	0.3%
Kentucky	\$1,033,531	6.6%	10,873	9.26%	27,353	10.9%
Louisiana	\$2,171,834	10.4%	31,900	6.57%	129,619	44.8%
Maine	\$717,309	6.5%	4,260	73.89%	449	5.6%
Maryland	\$152,674	1.3%	-	0.00%	14,578	23.0%
Massachusetts	\$153,975	3.4%	597	59.74%	0	0.0%
Michigan	\$1,103,712	6.2%	4,992	5.77%	13,627	8.6%
Minnesota	\$673,572	3.2%	24,880	2.46%	85,173	7.4%
Mississippi	\$3,438,551	8.7%	47,904	9.44%	622,103	85.9%
Missouri	\$905,256	3.4%	36,405	6.18%	49,732	5.0%
Montana	\$1,598,249	7.8%	10,606	0.39%	3,585	0.3%
Nebraska	\$329,901	1.5%	845	0.03%	37,218	4.8%
Nevada	\$0	0.0%	-	0.00%	0	0.0%
New Hampshire	\$709,082	16.5%	2,442	96.96%	13	102.4%
New Jersey	\$196,702	3.7%	-	0.00%	429	20.8%
New Mexico	\$1,768,574	6.4%	28,377	2.13%	5,102	1.2%
New York	\$803,631	6.0%	5,854	7.56%	12,192	31.5%
North Carolina	\$1,371,269	6.9%	7,116	20.00%	61,246	80.9%
North Dakota	\$1,526,300	8.7%	538	0.05%	9,919	0.6%
Ohio	\$569,236	2.3%	2,519	3.13%	21,077	8.0%
Oklahoma	\$384,254	1.8%	4,212	0.16%	2,679	0.4%
Oregon	\$5,707,530	28.0%	25,084	2.22%	39,159	7.5%
Pacific Island Area	\$65,315	10.1%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pennsylvania	\$707,443	3.2%	4,912	5.82%	25,374	16.3%
Rhode Island	\$442,292	15.1%	4,059	93.11%	0	0.0%
South Carolina	\$3,485,029	18.2%	50,005	31.56%	69,873	87.4%
South Dakota	\$474,915	3.3%	-	0.00%	43,941	4.5%
Tennessee	\$566,650	2.1%	1,361	1.61%	41,464	29.8%
Texas	\$3,040,188	3.7%	5,835	0.50%	34,092	1.1%
Utah	\$694,199	3.3%	-	0.00%	72	0.0%
Vermont	\$322,295	3.1%	2,942	67.08%	2,919	101.3%
Virginia	\$504,369	2.3%	17,941	26.51%	37,123	72.2%
Washington	\$4,461,748	24.8%	9,594	1.69%	26,100	2.1%
West Virginia	\$309,373	3.2%	18,794	41.10%	5,630	85.8%
Wisconsin	\$510,569	2.2%	50,514	12.77%	55,684	23.4%
Wyoming	\$224,359	2.1%	-	0.00%	4,383	2.3%
Grand Total	\$84,173,270	8.2%	705,673	2.54%	2,405,419	10.1%

APPENDIX B

**EQIP Forest Practice Acres
By State (2016)**

State	Acres
Alabama	79,150
Alaska	9,705
Arizona	1,069
Arkansas	17,029
California	62,194
Caribbean Region	420
Colorado	2,888
Connecticut	42,224
Delaware	441
Florida	22,089
Georgia	58,772
Hawaii	588
Idaho	8,930
Illinois	220
Indiana	10,924
Iowa	365
Kansas	350
Kentucky	3,893
Louisiana	13,334
Maine	6,266
Maryland	113
Massachusetts	244
Michigan	2,404
Minnesota	11,274
Mississippi	31,512
Missouri	40,881
Montana	4,196
Nebraska	376
New Hampshire	48,291
New Jersey	11,039
New Mexico	2,443
New York	9,406
North Carolina	14,600
North Dakota	290
Ohio	2,301
Oklahoma	2,842
Oregon	23,197
Pacific Island Area	17
Pennsylvania	3,924
Rhode Island	43,528
South Carolina	50,276
South Dakota	416
Tennessee	2,725
Texas	26,028
Utah	4,667
Vermont	14,117
Virginia	1,106
Washington	12,406
West Virginia	1,169
Wisconsin	27,470
Wyoming	1,099
2016 Total	734,765

APPENDIX C

**List of Forest Practices Used in EQIP
Funding Analysis**

Code	Practice Name
311	Alley Cropping
394	Firebreak
655	Forest Harvest Trails & Landings
106	Forest Management Plan - Written
490	Forest Site Preparation
666	Forest Stand Improvement
383	Fuel Break
379	Multi-Story Cropping
391	Riparian Forest Buffer
654	Road/Trail/Landing Closure and Treatment
381	Silvopasture Establishment
612	Tree/Shrub Establishment
660	Tree/Shrub Pruning
380	Windbreak/Shelterbreak Establishment
650	Windbreak/Shelterbreak Renovation
384	Woody Residue Treatment

ENDNOTES



¹ In this report, the term family forest land or owner is used to describe non-industrial private forests owned by families, individuals, trusts, estates, and family partnerships that are eligible for participation in the various Farm Bill conservation programs.

² Coppess, J., A Brief History of Farm Conservation Policy, <http://policymatters.illinois.edu/a-brief-history-of-farm-conservation-policy> (2014)

³ For a complete list of forest practices used in this analysis, see Appendix C.

⁴ As noted, EQIP and WHIP were consolidated in the 2014 Farm Bill. As a result, we have combined EQIP and WHIP funding data for earlier years in order to provide valid comparisons with current-year data.

⁵ The data reflects an adjustment to account for what is believed to be a data entry error for Alabama's site preparation accomplishments in 2014.

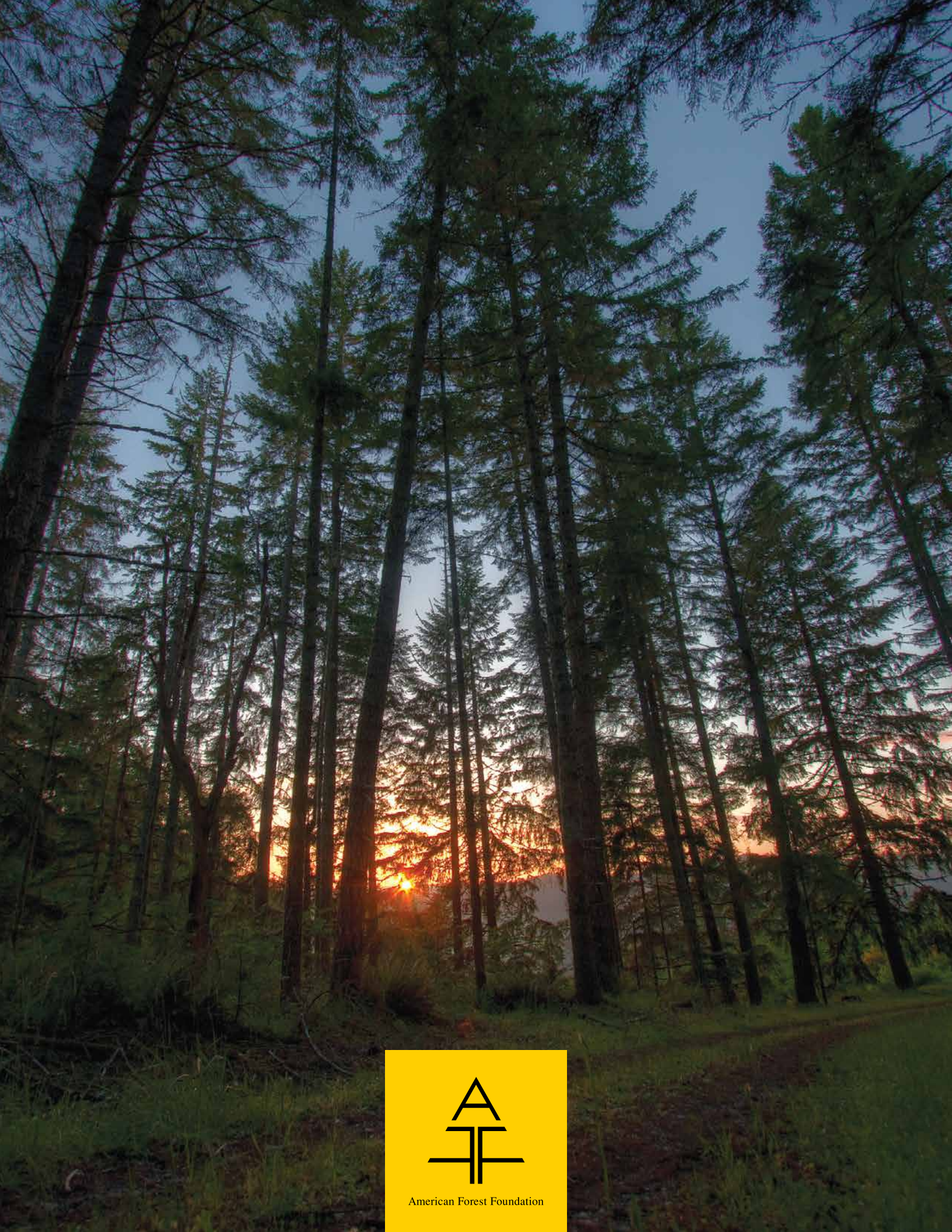
⁶ Alaska's high allocation of EQIP to forests is largely on tribal lands.

⁷ The Existing Trees category was discontinued after 2012. As contracts expire, landowners have the option to re-enroll in their original practice category (e.g. "New Hardwood Trees") or, if eligible, under the continuous signup program.

⁸ No new contracts are being accepted for the Hardwood Trees category under continuous signup. Existing contracts are not affected.

⁹ The State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) Initiative is a CRP program through which landowners voluntarily re-establish grasses, wetlands, and trees on their land to meet high-priority state wildlife conservation goals.

¹⁰ Andrejczyk, K., Butler, B.J., et.al, "Family Forest Owners' Perceptions of Landowner Assistance Programs in the USA: A Qualitative Assessment of Program Impacts on Behaviour" (2015) https://www.fs.fed.us/nrs/pubs/jrnl/2016/nrs_2016_andrejczyk_002.pdf



American Forest Foundation