



Here For You



NC Forest Service Offers Financial Assistance Opportunities to Woodland Owners

By Philip Jackson, Public Information Officer for the NC Forest Service

In North Carolina, 83% of forestland is privately owned, making individual landowners critical to the health and longevity of forests across the state. One way the NC Forest Service fulfills its mission to protect, promote, and manage forest resources for North Carolina citizens is by providing financial assistance programs designed to assist private woodland owners with active and sustainable forest management.

There are five financial assistance programs offered to help landowners achieve a wide range of management objectives. These include the Forest Development Program (FDP) and the NC Prescribed Burning Cost-Share Program, both of which received recurring legislative funding in 2022. The FDP, North Carolina's flagship tree-planting program, has helped plant 820 million trees on more than 1.5 million acres since 1977. With support from state appropriations and forest industry taxes, this program is an example of immense collaboration that successfully bolsters our state's vibrant forest sector.

Cost-share programs available to North Carolina landowners include:

1] Forest Development Program (FDP)

The FDP is a reforestation, afforestation, and forest stand improvement cost-sharing program with objectives that include timber production and the creation of benefits associated with active forest management. Private landowners are eligible to receive up to 100 acres of FDP cost share annually and may be partially reimbursed for the cost of site preparation, seedling purchases,

tree planting, release of desirable seedlings from competing vegetation, or any other work needed to establish a new forest.

2] NC Prescribed Burning Cost-Share Program

Applicants may apply for funding to conduct silvicultural burning, hazard reduction burning, or wildlife habitat burning. The burn must comply with the NC Prescribed Burning Act.

3] Southern Pine Beetle Prevention Program

Smaller than a grain of rice, southern pine beetles have caused great destruction to southern pine forests. This program focuses on preventing outbreaks of the insect by reimbursing nonindustrial private forest landowners for portions of the practice cost to manage young pine stands for the prevention of infestations.



 Philip Jackson

4] Foresters for Healthy Waters Program – Preharvest Plan Cost Share

This time-limited cost-share program supports the preparation of detailed preharvest plans that go beyond existing baseline requirements for protecting water quality. This program is offered in Edgecombe, Franklin, Granville, Halifax, Nash, Vance, and Warren counties.

5] American Forests (AF)

The AF program is reserved for “plant only” tree planting cost-share practices for afforestation and reforestation projects. Higher landowner reimbursement rates will apply for projects with specific tree species such as longleaf, shortleaf, white pine, wetlands, and hardwoods.

To qualify for any of these financial assistance programs, a landowner must have a management plan approved by the NC Forest Service. The plan may be written by an NC Forest Service forester or ranger, private consulting forester, natural resource professional, or the landowner themselves. Each of these valuable programs goes a long way to ensure adequate and quality forest resources for the state to meet its present and future needs. **Landowners can view a table summary of these cost-share programs at <http://bit.ly/3Y6M8Fm>.**



To get started with a management plan and any of these cost-share programs, contact your NCFS county ranger’s office. **Contact information is available at www.ncforestservice.gov/contacts.**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Philip Jackson has served as the Public Information Officer for the North Carolina Forest Service since November 2021. His first day on the job was highlighted by the Grindstone Fire at Pilot Mountain and a statewide burn ban — a literal baptism by fire. He began his state service in 2020 when he joined the North Carolina Public Health Preparedness and Response Branch as an information and communications specialist. Jackson received his bachelor’s degree in communication with a double concentration in broadcasting and journalism from Western Carolina University, an institution frequently deemed the “Top Adventure College” in North Carolina. His lifelong love for the outdoors and desire for a career in the field of communications has made the NC Forest Service a perfect fit. ■



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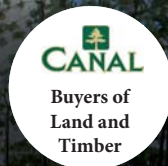
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