

# Spatial Analysis Project– Forest Stewardship Program

USDA Forest Service  
Northeastern Area  
State and Private Forestry



*Capturing impact, establishing baseline, and focusing future efforts through spatial analysis, & facilitating program data entry*

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**Description:** The Spatial Analysis Project (SAP) supports the Forest Stewardship Program, giving participant state forestry agencies a strategic management tool that spatially displays important forest lands (rich in natural resources, vulnerable to threat, or both); existing stewardship tracts (properties under Forest Stewardship Plans); and areas of opportunity to focus future Forest Stewardship efforts (stewardship potential). This is achieved using consistent methodology, while States customize the tool to address State-specific conditions.

## **Key Issues:**

- Initially, there was a need to change Forest Stewardship Program implementation from first-come, first-served, to achieving greatest resource benefit, leading to greater program accountability.
- There is a need to define substantive performance measures for program accomplishment, leading to improved and demonstrable program accountability.
- There is an ongoing need to maintain records pertaining to the Forest Stewardship Program.

The SAP addresses the issues identified above. It was piloted by the Northeastern Area State & Private Forestry (NA) with the state forestry agencies of Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, and Missouri. SAP responds directly to the NA mission and vision, and is being implemented according to all of NA's guiding principles. It touches every goal of the NA Strategic Plan in innovation, focus on sustainable forest management, and providing effective public service. As a result, our SAP state partners are changing the way they do business by choice; SAP provides them the analytical capability not previously available. They update SAP as new Stewardship Plans or revisions are developed. Through SAP, NA is redeeming its federal role in program administration and technical assistance.

## **Accomplishments:**

- The pilot phase of SAP began in FY 2001. Together with NA specialists, pilot state developers received the FY 2005 Chief's Natural Resource Stewardship Award.
- The pilot was successful, with pilot state foresters actively using the results to strategically deliver the Forest Stewardship Program, direct state-wide forest resource policy, assess and adjust workload distribution and priority, determine forest connectivity opportunities, address forest resource issues, and assess activity needs in outyears.
- FY 2004 project development of SAP occurred from coast to coast, including five additional NA states (DE, IA, IN, RI, WV) and Alaska, Colorado and Oregon in the west. They are nearly complete.
- Components of the SAP analysis and its methodology are contributing to development of the Upper Mississippi Watershed regional assessment, incorporating consistent datalayers and data sources and adding additional datalayers to address watershed-specific concerns and resource opportunities.
- FY 2005: The state forestry agencies of ME, NY, OH, WI, and IL began their statewide assessment; MN and NH began full SAP development; and IN entered phase 2 of SAP development, with the intent to complete their SAP with phase 2.
- By the end of FY 2005, 80 percent of NA's state forestry agencies had voluntarily begun SAP development, either fully or phasing it in with initial completion of a statewide assessment of important forest resource areas, and then as funds and capacity exist, undertaking development of their historic Forest Stewardship Plan spatial and attribute database.

- In FY 2005, the national Forest Stewardship Program standards and guidelines were revised including language that reflects the need for states to identify important forest resource areas through SAP or similar, and the Credibility through Accountability performance measure reflect SAP results.
- During FY 2005, the Washington Office-Cooperative Forestry, provided funding to each subregion (NA, South, West) to fund state partners in their Spatial Analysis Project development. This is the first year NA received such funding, totaling \$250,000, in addition to NA's funding of \$15,000 from NA Forest Stewardship Program fund allocation.

Products of the full SAP include a digital datalayer of existing Stewardship Plans and an electronic Stewardship database containing tract characteristics and planned and implemented activities and practices, a statewide spatial display of NIPF lands that would most benefit from the Forest Stewardship Program, developed from data common among participating states; and an analysis of Forest Stewardship Program impact since its beginning.

**Budget History:** The pilot project was initially funded in fiscal year 2001. It received funding from four program areas: Forest Stewardship, Forest Legacy, Economic Action, and Title II Fire. Since FY 2001, subsequent funding has been entirely borne by the Forest Stewardship Program. It is anticipated that funding would continue to be provided through the Forest Stewardship Program, although the indirect benefits touch all program areas through integrated program delivery and statewide assessment.

<b>Forest Stewardship Program – Spatial Analysis Project</b>				
<i>(\$ Thousands)</i>				
	<b>FY 2003</b>	<b>FY 2004</b>	<b>FY 2005</b>	<b>FY 2006</b>
Stewardship	\$10	\$250	\$265 (partial WO directed)	\$200
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$10</b>	<b>\$250</b>	<b>\$265</b>	<b>\$200</b>

**Future Direction:**

- During FY 2006 the remaining state forestry agencies not currently involved in SAP will begin project development, either in full or phased in.
- All state forestry agencies served by NA will have an opportunity to fully complete their Spatial Analysis Project, as they are interested and able, and as funds are available in outyears.
- The products of this project and their ongoing maintenance have changed the way participating states implement the Forest Stewardship Program, track and report program progress. The maps and tabular data provide a tool to strategically determine forest resource needs on a statewide basis, allow foresters to monitor Stewardship Plan implementation, and help professional foresters determine within a regional locale, local priority of needs for future Stewardship Program delivery within their jurisdiction. States are increasingly integrating SAP results with other programs.
- As more state forestry agencies adopt this process, S&PF's ability to administer the Forest Stewardship Program, track and report accomplishments will be significantly improved through streamlined, more accurate state reporting, and ability to display the results, therefore increasing federal ability to demonstrate accountability for funds expended through the Forest Stewardship Program on a broad geographic scale. SAP helps quantify activity and practice needs identified in Forest Stewardship Plans for out-year planning and monitoring purposes.
- The statewide assessments of resource richness and threats have elements of most State and Private Forestry programs. Integration of multiple programs' objectives are possible using SAP results.

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