

# Landscape Stewardship Approach to Forest Management

## *Implementing State Forest Action Plans in Priority Landscapes*

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service  
Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry



**Description:** The Forest Stewardship Program encourages States to address natural resource issues outlined in their State Forest Action Plans by strategically targeting technical assistance and by focusing on priority landscapes. The program has traditionally focused on assisting individual landowners. By contrast, the new “landscape stewardship” approach targets large expanses of land and reaches out to multiple partners, such as forest landowners, public agencies, and communities. By working together, partners can more effectively focus on important issues, conserve critical resources, and address natural resource management priorities while meeting individual and group goals.

The landscape stewardship concept was developed by the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry (NA S&PF) with the State Foresters in the Northeast and Midwest, and was published in the 2011 [Landscape Stewardship Guide](#). In 2012 the concept was incorporated into the Forest Service’s national strategic plan for the Forest Stewardship Program, [FSP 20twenty](#). States and Territories nationwide are now looking to this concept as they refine their own approaches to landscape stewardship.

### **Key Issues:**

- State Forest Action Plans call for targeted outreach and technical assistance in priority landscapes.
- States take advantage of competitive grants, but without them many lack the capacity to expand their efforts in priority landscapes.
- Nationwide, the measures needed to capture the outcomes of landscape stewardship are not fully developed.

**Accomplishments:** Landscape stewardship projects and competitive grant proposals involving landscapes have increased dramatically in the Northeast and Midwest during the past 2 years. Some States are using innovative communications and marketing techniques to reach landowners, with an eye towards expanding the delivery of technical assistance on private forest lands. Some projects are building bridges to other programs, such as Forest Health to address forest pests, and hazardous fuels mitigation to address wildfire related issues. Three projects were featured during NA S&PF’s spring 2012 Landscape Stewardship Webinar series: marketing to landowners in the Driftless Area of Wisconsin, a watershed-scale landscape project in Maine, and a description of Minnesota’s approach to landscape stewardship.

### **Future Direction:**

- The Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry will continue to promote landscape stewardship to address priorities identified in its strategic plan, State Forest Action Plans, and FSP 20twenty.
- SMART, the Stewardship Mapping and Reporting Tool, will be enhanced so that States can develop and report landscape stewardship plans.
- The Northeastern Area’s Forest Stewardship optional metrics will continue to provide an opportunity for States to report nontraditional Forest Stewardship accomplishments, success stories, and examples of landscape stewardship approaches.

**Tony L. Ferguson**, Director  
11 Campus Blvd., Suite 200  
Newtown Square, PA 19073  
610-557-4103 (-4177 FAX)  
[tferguson@fs.fed.us](mailto:tferguson@fs.fed.us)

**Mike Huneke**, Program Manager  
11 Campus Blvd., Suite 200  
Newtown Square, PA 19073  
610-557-4110 (-4136 FAX)  
[mhuneke@fs.fed.us](mailto:mhuneke@fs.fed.us)

[www.na.fs.fed.us](http://www.na.fs.fed.us)



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