

# Watershed Agricultural Council Conservation Easement Program

## Guidelines for Forest Harvest Plans



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The Easement Committee establishes the following guidelines for forest harvests on easement properties and properties in contract:

**1. Where required in a conservation easement and the purchase and sales contract, forest harvests shall only be conducted on properties that:**

- a. Have a Forest Management Plan (FMP) that has been approved by WAC within the past ten (10 ) years consistent with the Forest Management Plans Guidelines (dated April 16, 2009)
- b. Have a WAC Forest Harvest Plan (FHP) that has been approved by the Easement Committee.

**2. The FHP is a plan that is intended to: 1) summarize the information and activities regarding specific forest harvests, 2)ensure harvest activities, including optional silvicultural practices and required best management practices implementation are consistent with water quality protection, 3) provide a basis for reviewing and approving the plan, and 4) outline the requirements to which the landowner must adhere.**

**3. All FHPs shall contain the following Required information:**

**a. Landowner information:**

1. Date of plan and landowner name, mailing address and other contact information and WAC property ID.

**b. Property information:**

1. Verification and date of FMP completion. If the landowner does not have a WAC approved FMP, the landowner must first obtain a FMP as per the Easement Committee FMP Guidelines (April 16, 2009)
2. Name and contact information of forester or person completing FHP.
3. Name and contact information of logger or person(s) conducting the harvest activities.
4. Term of the contract if applicable, proposed beginning and end dates of project.

**c. Objectives for the harvest.**

**d. Job size and scheduling:**

1. Estimated removal volume in Board Feet and/or cords, and/or number of trees.
2. Harvest area in acres,
3. Estimated time when project will be marked,
4. Estimated time period when roads, skid trails and landings will be built.

**e. Water Resources:**

1. Describe any special watercourse/wetland precautions to be taken.
2. Include copies of all required permits (Federal, State, Local) such as DEC stream crossing or USACOE wetland permits.
3. Describe and identify Best Management Practices that will be employed for the protection of water resources and maintained in good working order as described in the NYCDEC BMP Guidelines.
4. For each stream/wetland crossing, indicate:
  - i. Drainage type (stream, spring, seep)
  - ii. Duration of flow (perennial, intermittent)
  - iii. existing or proposed crossing, size and type (temporary for permanent bridge, culvert or other)
  - iv. Drainage bottom (rock, gravel, mud, soil mixture, other)
  - v. stream bank type (rock, gravel, mud, soil mixture, other)
  - vi. bank height (feet)
5. For each riparian buffer area, indicate:
  - i. Buffer type (watercourse, stream side, wetland, spring, seep, lake, pond, other) for each area
  - ii. Slope
  - iii. Width of buffer
  - iv. Initial/residual basal area

**f. Access System:**

1. List the estimated length, in feet, of all existing and proposed primary skid trails.
  - i. Estimate the total surface area in roads and landings in square feet and calculate the percentage of road/landing area compared to the harvest area.
2. Describe how all existing and proposed primary skid trails must be flagged in the field before the FHP is considered complete. The flagging color will be identified in the FHP.

3. Proposed Best Management Practices for stabilizing the access system during the active timber harvest. These BMP's can include but are not limited to corduroy for crossing unstable soils, gravel, geo-textile fabric, water bars and culverts.
4. Proposed Best Management Practices for the post-harvest stabilization of the access system. These can include but are not limited to trail grading, water bar and broad based dip installation.
5. Proposed Best Management Practices for the post-harvest stabilization of the stream crossing approaches. These BMP's can include but are not limited to water bar installation, gravel, geo- textile fabric and corduroy.

**g. FHP Map requirements:**

1. Property boundaries and harvest area
2. Forest stands in harvest area
3. Logging units within or across stands
4. Water courses (perennial/intermittent streams, lakes/ponds, rivers, springs and seeps
5. Wetlands
6. Stream and wetlands crossings,
7. Riparian buffers areas,
8. Topography (at least 20 foot contours),
9. Existing and proposed truck roads, skid trails and landings
10. Map scale should not be smaller than 1 inch = 330 feet for properties smaller than 300 acres and 1 inch = 660 feet for properties more than 300 acres.
11. USGS quadrangle (7.5 minute series) used with name

**h. The Following is Optional for all FHP's:**

All FHPs may include some or all of the following silvicultural information if provided by the Forester and/or logger:

1. Prescriptions for individual stands, each stand shall be indicated on the FHP map:
  - i. Goals/Objectives
  - ii. Methods used to promote regeneration
  - iii. Riparian buffer area management used

- iv. Other factors to consider
- 2. Stand treatment for each stand
  - i. Type of cut
  - ii. How cut trees are designated
  - iii. Residual AGS basal Area/acre
  - iv. If stand is adjacent to property boundary, how boundary is marked.
  - v. Other information such as proposed chemicals treatments, etc.
- 3. Stand diagnosis for each stand:
  - i. Forest type/description
  - ii. Acres
  - iii. Timber size
  - iv. Initial basal area/acres
  - v. Soil survey soil type(s)
  - vi. Source of regeneration, factors limiting regeneration, quality of existing regeneration
  - vii. Endangered or threatened species
  - viii. Other factors to note

**i. All FHPs submitted to WAC shall be submitted on a Forest Harvest Plan Form (attached).**

**j. The WAC Easement Committee delegates approval authority to Easement Program Staff for the review and approval of all FHP requests. Review and pending approval of FHP requests shall be consistent with the requirements of these guidelines.**

**k. Easement Program staff will notify the Easement Committee of any approved FHPs.**

**l. Amending a FHP: All changes to the FHP after approval by WAC Easement Committee must be approved by the WAC Watershed Forester and Easement Stewardship Specialist prior to the landowner undertaking any action inconsistent with the approved FHP.**