

# Resources for Private Forest Landowners in New Mexico



*Staff from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, New Mexico State Forestry and the South Central Mountain Resource Conservation & Development Council assist a landowner with a forestry project on a ranch in southern New Mexico.*

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**Are you a private forestland owner in New Mexico?** You may be interested in learning more about your forest, improving the health of your land, creating better wildlife habitat, addressing wildfire hazard or improving the health of your riparian forest (or bosque), or learning more about forest industry. If so, you may be unsure of where to begin. The following pages contain resources for technical and financial assistance for forest landowners, including resources for **forest health, forest thinning** and more.

# New Mexico State Forestry (NMSF)



## Technical Assistance

New Mexico State Forestry (NMSF) has technical experts in its District Offices statewide. For more information, visit [www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD](http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD) or call 505-476-3325.

## A Note on Assistance: Work with Your Local District

For most of New Mexico State Forestry's assistance programs, it is recommended that you contact your local NMSF District. Some of these resources require pre-application preparation with your District before an application is submitted. For the NMSF office near you, visit [www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD/contact.html](http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD/contact.html) or call 505-476-3325.

## Hazardous Fuels Treatments on Non-Federal Lands

**Purpose:** Projects must reduce fire threat to communities that are surrounded by hazardous forest fuels which pose a threat in the event of a wildfire. Outcomes include improving wildfire prevention and suppression, reducing hazardous fuels, and restoring fire-adapted ecosystems.

**Who Can Apply:** Local governments, tribal governments and political subdivisions of the state (i.e. Soil and Water Conservation Districts). Projects must be located in communities adjacent to federal lands where surrounding forest fuels pose a hazard in the event of a wildfire.

**Amount:** Grant amounts vary up to \$300,000.

**Deadline:** March of each year.

**Match Requirement:** Match not required but non-federal match is encouraged.

**Contact:** NM State Forestry, Andrew Frederick, 505-476-3343, [andrewg.frederick@state.nm.us](mailto:andrewg.frederick@state.nm.us)

## Wildland Urban Interface Grants

**Purpose:** The planning and implementation of hazardous fuels mitigation projects that will reduce the fire threat in Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas in New Mexico. The emphasis is on hazardous fuel reduction, information and education, and community and homeowner action. Outcomes include improving wildfire prevention and suppression, reducing hazardous fuels, and restoring fire-adapted ecosystems.

**Who Can Apply:** Local governments, tribal governments and political subdivisions of the state (i.e. Soil and Water Conservation Districts). Projects must be within the boundaries of an approved Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

**Amount:** Grant amounts vary up to \$300,000.

**Match Requirement:** 50% non-federal.

**Deadline:** August of each year.

**Contact:** NM State Forestry, Donald Griego, 505-476-3349, donald.griego@state.nm.us

### **Invasive Plants**

**Purpose:** Invasive plant management activities where noxious weed invasions threaten forest health, address species on the NM Department of Agriculture’s “Noxious Weed List” and are encouraged to be within a Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) on non-federal lands or demonstrate partnership with a CWMA. Components of the projects may include: integrated weed management, mapping and inventory, monitoring, early detection and prevention, planning and coordination, and awareness and education.

**Who Can Apply:** Non-federal government entities.

**Amount:** Varies, no set minimum or maximum.

**Match Requirement:** 50% non-federal.

**Deadline:** October (the Request for Proposals typically comes out in August or September).

**Contact:** NM State Forestry, Shannon Atencio, 505-425-7472, shannon.atencio@state.nm.us

### **Forest Health Initiative**

**Purpose:** Provides cost share funds for the reduction of insect and pathogen (disease) risk through forest improvement. The objective is to improve degraded (e.g. overcrowded, infested, and/or infected) forested land to a healthier, more resilient state.

**Who Can Apply:** Landowners must have a minimum of 10 acres of forested land with a stewardship plan in place (up to 10% of program funds are available to write plans). Eligible applicants include private landowners or state and local government owners of forest or woodlands.

**Amount:** Grant amounts vary up to \$100,000.

**Match Requirement:** 30% non-federal.

**Deadline:** Varies depending on funding.

**Contact:** NM State Forestry, Tom Zegler, 505-476-3351, tomj.zegler@state.nm.us.

### **Forest Legacy Program**

**Purpose:** Seek perpetual conservation easements on private forestland in order to conserve working forests (forests that provide water quality, habitat, recreation, etc.) that are threatened by development or conversion to nonforest use. This program seeks partners for nationally significant project sites that rank well in the categories of being important, strategic, threatened and ready (i.e. “shovel ready”).

**Who Can Apply:** Private land is eligible with a minimum of 40 acres with at least 75% forested.

**Amount:** Varies year-to-year based on an approved budget by the U.S. Congress.

**Match Requirement:** 25% non-federal. The non-federal match can be the donation of 25% of the conservation easement value.

**Deadline:** September 1<sup>st</sup> of each year for review and a vote to proceed from the State Forest Stewardship Committee.

**Contact:** NM State Forestry, Rhonda Fitzgerald, 505-476-3272, rhonda.fitzgerald@state.nm.us.

### **Urban & Community Forestry**

For information on urban forestry technical assistance, or grants such as **Re-Leaf** and **Community Forestry Assistance** for publicly accessible places, technical assistance or volunteer coordination and youth education, contact NM State Forestry, Jennifer Dann, 505-476-3332, jenniferl.dann@state.nm.us.

**Assistance with trees in your yard:** NMSF can assist with your questions and help put you in touch with an arborist. Visit [www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD](http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD) or call 505-476-3332.

### **Seedling Program**

NMSF offers tree and shrub seedlings for sale to landowners who own at least one acre of land in New Mexico and who agree to use the seedlings for conservation purposes. Approximately 45 species of tree and shrubs are available. Visit [www.nmforestry.com](http://www.nmforestry.com) for more information or call 505-476-3334.

## Wildfire

- New Mexico State Forestry (NMSF) has many **resources related to wildfire**, such as wildfire planning. For more information, visit [www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD](http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD) or call the main office in Santa Fe at 505-476-3325.
- Many programs exist for community **wildfire preparedness**, including Firewise, Ready, Set Go! and Fire Adapted Communities. For links to these, visit [www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD/FireMgt/FirePreventionandOutreachProgram.html](http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD/FireMgt/FirePreventionandOutreachProgram.html).
- To sign up for **wildfire alerts**, visit <http://nmfireinfo.com>.
- **After a Wildfire**: Visit [www.afterwildfirenm.org](http://www.afterwildfirenm.org) or call 505-345-2200 for information on who can help and more.

## Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

### Environmental Quality Incentives Program



**Purpose:** The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary program authorized under the Agricultural Act of 2014 that helps landowners install measures to protect soil, water, plant, wildlife, and other natural resources while ensuring sustainable production on their farms, ranches and forest lands. Funding toward conservation work is competitive, with priorities decided by local NRCS field offices. Forest work through NRCS can include items such as forest thinning projects and riparian restoration.

**Who Can Apply:** Landowners of “non-industrial” forestlands and/or agricultural producers; Tribes and Pueblos.

**Amount:** Varies. Reimbursements are made after the practice is complete and approved.

**Match Amount:** Match is not a requirement; however, often in-kind match is needed, and/or additional funds are sometimes needed based on practice, location and market rates.

**Deadline:** Applications accepted throughout the year with decisions generally made early in the year.

**Contact:** Your local NRCS office. Every county in New Mexico has a field office (except for Los Alamos). Visit the NRCS New Mexico website for contact information or call 505-761-4400.

**For More Information:** [www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/nm/programs/financial/eqip/](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/nm/programs/financial/eqip/)

## Conservation Stewardship Program

**Purpose:** The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is a voluntary conservation program that encourages producers to address resource concerns in a comprehensive manner by (1) undertaking additional conservation activities, and (2) improving, maintaining, and managing existing conservation activities.

**Who Can Apply:** CSP is available on Tribal/Pueblo and private agricultural lands and “non-industrial” private forestland.

**Amount:** Varies. Payments are made on a per acre basis on qualifying land.

**Match Amount:** Not required.

**Deadline:** Applications accepted throughout the year with decisions generally made early in the year (around February).

**Contact:** Your local NRCS office. Every county in New Mexico has a field office (except for Los Alamos). Visit the NRCS New Mexico website for contact information or call 505-761-4400.

**For More Information:** [www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/nm/programs/financial/csp/](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/nm/programs/financial/csp/)

## Soil and Water Conservation Districts



Soil and Water Conservation Districts often have programs and grants for landowners. Since programs are dependent on funding and vary, contact your local SWCD. To find your local SWCD, call the New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts at (575) 981-2400 or the New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts at 505-832-1111. For a list of districts and phone numbers, visit <http://www.nmacd.org/swcds>.

## Forest Stewardship & the American Tree Farm System

You do not need to be a “tree farmer” (i.e. producing trees for production or sale) to benefit from the American Tree Farm System. In New Mexico, the program focuses on forest stewardship by private landowners, working to give people the tools they need to be effective stewards of America's forests. If you are interested in a stewardship plan or additional resources (and recognition) for actively managing your forest, this system has a lot to offer!



Find out more at [www.treefarmssystem.org](http://www.treefarmssystem.org) or contact the current Chair, Joe Stehling, at 575-377-0546 or [joestehling@earthlink.net](mailto:joestehling@earthlink.net).

Some Soil and Water Conservation Districts (such as the Ciudad) sometimes offer a ‘**Backyard Tree Farmer**’ program for people with 10 acres or less of forestland or anyone interested in forest health.

## Other Resources

- **Local Contractors** can also assist you with managing your forestland, from writing plans and conducting inventory to helping you understand the local forest industry.
- **Community Groups** such as watershed associations or land alliances may provide resources to landowners.
- **Non-Profit Groups** such as the Forest Guild provide information for private landowners.