

**At a Glance:**  
**Non-Industrial Private  
Forest Land**

October 2008

**Overview**

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical and financial assistance to owners and managers of private non-industrial forest lands through the Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP), Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), and the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), as authorized by the Food Security Act of 1985 (as amended), and through the Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP) which was authorized by the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003.

NRCS conservationists and foresters provide technical and financial assistance to plan and apply forestry practices on cropland, pastureland, rangeland, and non-industrial private forest land. Practices may include riparian forest buffers, windbreaks, shelterbelts, tree and shrub establishment, forest stand improvement, and firebreaks. This assistance is often provided in conjunction with forestry partners including State forestry agencies, consultants, and other technical service providers.

**Legislative Highlights**

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) reauthorized EQIP, FRPP, WHIP, WRP, HFRP, and authorized the new Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP).

The 2008 Farm Bill provides greater emphasis on forested lands and forest management.

The 2008 Farm Bill:

- Incorporates forestry in the common definitions including the definition for “farm” and “technical assistance” and adds a definition for “non-industrial private forest land.”
- Expands the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program eligible land criteria to include forest land, provided such land contributes to the economic viability of an agricultural operation or serves as a buffer to protect an agricultural operation from development. Previously forest land was eligible when it was considered “incidental land.”
- Requires a forest management plan when non-industrial private forest lands are addressed in an EQIP contract. Forest management plans may be a Forest Stewardship Plan or another plan.
- Revises the program purpose for WHIP to include developing wildlife habitat on non-industrial private forest land.
- Requires that USDA have complete and relevant standards for providing forestry-related technical assistance.
- Includes non-industrial private forest land as an eligible land use in the new CStP. Up to 10 percent of the acres annually enrolled nationwide may be nonindustrial private forest lands.

**More Information**

For more information about forestry related provisions and other 2008 Farm Bill topics, refer to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Web site <http://www.usda.gov/farmbill> or the Natural Resources Conservation Service Web site <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farmbill/2008>.

