

**Wildlife & Forestry Sub-Committee Minutes**  
**April 10, 2013**  
**NRCS State Office Conference Room**  
**4407 Bland Road, Ste. 117, Raleigh, NC**

**10:00 am - Introduction & Purpose of Meeting**

Don Riley summarized the purpose of the Sub-Committee and defined its role as an entity that is focused on the wildlife and forestry related resources in the state. Today's meeting was specifically targeting FY 2013 Program updates and Invasive Species Policy updates.

Don Riley then asked for a role call from the attendees calling in. They included: Mark Jones, Patrick Farrell, Kendall Smith, Kim Shumate, Phil Wallace, John Isenhour, Barry New, Dwight Batts and Pat Harris. (apologies to those missed)

Don Riley then introduced Melvin Womack, Acting State Conservationist in NC. Mr. Womack gave a brief description of his background and commended the folks in attendance for their commitment to assisting NRCS.

**FY 2013 NRCS Programs Update/Forecast**

Greg Walker provided an EQIP & WHIP FY 2013 summary report.

**EQIP**

- 2 batching periods; the second ending March 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Additional funds may become available due to Animal Agriculture Pool de-commitments. This is based on Regional Payment schedule changes. Some higher cost items were decreased from 2012 to 2013 causing some applicants to back out. Potential opportunity to shift money to forestry and wildlife projects.
- Longleaf Pine (LLP) realized approx. 50% of funds obligated in batch one (22 applications), close to 100% in batch 2 (29 applications). Julie added that the applications were overall high ranking (good!). She is unable to provide practice summary until applications move to contracts (reporting limitation). Overall, there were approx. \$910K worth of applications and there is roughly \$50K remaining – good for slippage.
- Forestry Pool initial allocation was \$900K. Applications far exceeded allocation leaving approx. \$650K unfunded. This is an improvement from FY 2012. Area 1 (mountains) applications down; Area 2 (piedmont) and Area 3 (coast) were up.

**WHIP**

- Working Lands for Wildlife/Golden-Wing Warbler still the only WHIP money available in NC. Allocation for FY 2013 equaled \$40K. Received \$32K in applications in batch #1. Patrick Farrell added that we should get the remaining funds obligated with batch #2.

### Water Quality Initiative

- Greg stated that there are 2 watersheds in Surry County that are the target. NHQ is currently not allowing states to change HUCs. Julie added that she is waiting to hear confirmation on this, but stated that any request would have to be routed through OMB and the Regional Conservationists office; not a state decision. The current watersheds targeted include the Upper and Lower Fisher. Julie provided background on the initiative and defined the focus.
- Mark Fowlkes asked if the funds could be used elsewhere in the future. The response was that we are not certain. Matt Flint stated that the way to be prepared for that prospect is to have good projects with willing and eligible landowners. Shovel ready rather than conceptual projects.
- Anne Coan asked what would happen if the money was not obligated in the target watersheds. Greg responded, the funds go back to DC.
- Greg stated that if there were good projects, another EQIP pool could be created outside of the initiative specifically for stream/water quality proposals. Don Riley added that an approach similar to Habitat Priority Area Proposals might work.
- Julie added that it would be good to compile all of the watershed plans across the state to ensure we are using the latest science to focus our efforts. This will require assistance from partners to have effective outreach. Anne Coan stated that there is a great need in the High Rock Lake effort which is similar to the Falls Lake Efforts. Need base line data.

### EQIP Forestry Payment Limitation

- Greg stated that the \$25K limitation was a good compromise and appeared to be successful. More applications (percentage wise) were funded without limiting success of projects. Matt Flint asked if any complaints had been raised – NO. Follow up question, any barriers perceived? – NO

### Stevens Amendment ([see handout](#))

- Greg Walker – USFS money available to complete prescribed burning within 10 miles of National Forest. It is NOT appropriate to use Stevens and EQIP on the same acreage for the same burn. John Isenhour stated that key partners need to be educated so that we can avoid providing wrong information to clients. JohnAnn Shearer stated that we do not want to discourage burning, so make sure the message is clear. Greg stated that NC could issue policy with assistance from NCFS. Natalie Woolard asked if a “Fact Sheet” existed. Bill Powell stated he would check. John Isenhour stated that James Rogers with NCFS has emailed some guidance to county offices.

### Longleaf Pine – Moving Forward

- Dwight Batts raised issue of windthrow with LLP plantings. Robert Horton gave background on LLP policy related to stocking density. No policy restricts more trees per

acre; however, it might hinder an application from being considered HIGH in the screening tool.

- Dwight Batts gave background from his experience: re-planting required following hurricane, had burned 3 times, suspected problems with tap-root, development, was concerned over lack of information, claimed that the issue was a range wide issue.
- Bill Pickens (NCFS) provided extensive background on current research ([see handouts](#)). Main points: not wise to jump to root deformity as sole cause, windthrow inevitability with hurricane events, Ag Field Planting issues (soil compaction, texture manipulation, fertility issues, etc), and Seedling container issues. He cited multiple studies being conducted at Auburn University as well as studies he has conducted. Don Riley asked if the issue was a range wide problem that would cause NRCS to alter policy. NO. JohnAnn Shearer stated that this was more of a range wide problem made up of isolated incidents. Site conditions, hurricanes, etc the cause, not a species problem. Mark Jones stated that management, or lack of management, may be a primary cause in the state.

#### CRP Update

- Tim Jones provided CRP update. Currently FSA is unable to accept new offers for Continuous CRP. National policy in place for general sign up 45 which will run from May 20-June 14. CRP Teleconference scheduled for agency personnel on April 24. Sign up 45 will contain the same guidance as Sign up 43, because we are unable to make changes to zones and management recommendations were not approved by national office. Primary reason recommendations were rejected was an interpretation over EBI.
- Mark Jones asked what was actually submitted to national office for review. Tim Jones stated that the entire Management Recommendation document developed by the “team” was sent for review and approval. Mark Expressed concern that the answers appeared to not address all of the recommendations made. Tim reassured the group that the document in its entirety was sent and said that all concerns could be sent to him and he would forward them up.
- **\*\*\*UPDATE\*\*\***: Since the teleconference, Tim Jones has asked for additional clarity from national office. Many recommendations are going to be allowed with minor edits to timing of implementation. The updates are reflected in the CRP Sign Up 45 Job Sheets.

#### CREP Update

- Natalie Woolard gave brief CREP update. 10 easements left ready to close. Momentum has been good, but has slowed a little in past few months. New focus has been on monitoring and maintenance rather than new enrollment.

#### **Break for Lunch**

### Invasive Plant Species

Update provided by Don Riley, Josh Spencer and Matt Flint. [See Power Point](#) which was handed out to participants in the room.

Partner Updates

Adjourn

**North Carolina Forest Service**

**Community Protection Plans (CPP) Program**

**Administrative Instructions**

**for**

**Hazardous Fuel Reduction – Prescribed Burning  
And Mechanical Fuel Reduction**

**Revised 3-25-13**

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# Community Protection Plans (CPP) Program

## Administrative Instructions

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### Administrative Instructions

#### Purpose

The intent of Stevens Amendment is to reduce the risk of wildland fires originating on private property from crossing onto National Forests and vice versa. Professional judgment considering past and future potential fire behavior should be used when determining this.

#### Eligibility Requirements and Program Limitations

Areas in question must be within 10 miles of National Forest boundary (National Park Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of Interior, and Department of Defense lands **do not** qualify for CPP).

If an approved tract is divided by the 10 mile buffer line of the National Forest boundary, the entire tract may be treated. There is no reason to split the tract at the 10 mile limit.

Fuel treatments may be performed on private and public lands. Treatments may be approved for Federal ownerships on a case by case basis. Private ownership examples include: individual, land trust, partnerships, and corporate. Public ownership includes: local government (city/town or county) and state government (State Parks, Wildlife Resources Commission, university, etc).

The CPP program is not a cost share program. There is no cost to qualified landowners. However, interactions between CPP and Farm Bill programs (EQIP, WHIP, CSP, and CRP) must be determined before performing any work on a tract. The cost share program contract must **not** state that any amount is being paid to the landowner for the practice of prescribed burning. If the landowner has a contract that lists and pays for prescribed burning as a practice, CPP cannot be performed on the tract under contract without first cancelling the contract.

An initial and one follow-up burn may be carried out on a single tract. A 3 to 5 year delay between burns is recommended, with 3 years being the minimum delay allowed without a written justification submitted.

#### Prioritization of Projects

CPP projects that are adjacent to or in close proximity of US Forest Service (USFS) lands that are burned regularly or planned to be burned should receive the highest priority.

CPP projects that are within ½ mile of an Area of Concern (AOC) should receive the next highest priority. To be considered an AOC, the area in question must be:

- a verified Community at Risk on a Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment (SWRA) map or,
- an area indicated as an AOC in a North Carolina Forest Service (NCFS) written mitigation plan, or
- an area having limited access (one way in/out or access that may be cut off in the event of a wildfire), difficult terrain consisting of slope greater than 40 percent or muck type soils, forest fuel build-up greater than 6 tons per acre, or inadequate survivable space as recommended by Firewise principles. NCFS county personnel should determine whether the tract meets these latter requirements.

Projects that are not included in the previous two categories will receive a lower priority.

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GIS data such including Wildfire susceptibility index (WFSI) from the SWRA and electronic aerial photos can be used to prioritize projects. There are limitations to this method since the SWRA is based on data from 2005. Projects should not be questioned at the regional or central office level even if they do not appear to be at the appropriate priority based on WFSI and aerial photos as long as the risks section of the project is completed with a description that meets eligibility requirements of the program. These descriptions should be verified by district representative before submission.

US Forest Service Fire Management Officers (FMO) from each National Forest District should be consulted early in this process to evaluate whether any CPP burns can be done in conjunction with USFS burns. The FMOs should know well in advance of any possible USFS burns due to the National Environment Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. Since the CPP grant is a USFS National Fire Plan grant, we should coordinate with the USFS as much as possible. In some cases, by working together on joint burns the USFS may be able to use a much easier NEPA process if the line construction can be performed on private lands with no soil disturbance on federal lands.

CPP projects do not have to be treated in priority order. Prescribed burning is weather dependent. Due to the variability of weather, projects with a lower priority may be within allowable weather parameters, while higher priority projects are not. The priority is established to rank projects if multiple projects are within weather parameters for a given day.

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#### CPP Project Approval Process

- Each district will submit, through their region, an annual CPP update to the central office by September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The projects should originate in the counties and be prioritized at the district level. The district should evaluate each project submitted to ensure it is a valid project.
  - If a national forest covers more than one NCFS district, the CPPs should be prioritized at the regional level.
- Regional coordinator shall review and approve CPP projects prior to submitting to the central office
- The Region will submit the annual CPP update to the Fire Prevention and Mitigation Staff Forester at the central office for final review and approval by September 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - The Fire Prevention and Mitigation Staff Forester will send the annual CPP update back through the region with individual projects approved or not approved as indicated in the notes section in red text for individual projects by October 1<sup>st</sup>. If the plan is not approved, a description of the problems will be emailed to the regional coordinator.
- Approved CPPs will be emailed to USFS district fire management officers (FMOs).
- The annual CPP signature sheet (final page of the CPP) will be signed by the appropriate NCFS district, NCFS regional and USFS representative(s).

Approval process for plans needing approval after the plan is signed and before the annual plan re-write is described below. This should be the exception not the rule.

- Individual CPP project form (page 4) should be submitted to NCFS district for evaluation from county personnel. Template is available on NCFS intranet.
- Valid CPP projects should be submitted to NCFS region from NCFS district.
- Regional review and approval is required prior to submitting to the central office. Region should indicate the priority of the project being submitted.
- Fire Prevention and Mitigation Staff Forester will evaluate
  - Fire Prevention and Mitigation Staff Forester will send the CPP project back through the region with approved or not approved indicated in the notes section in red text for the individual project. If the project is not approved, an email with a description of the problem will be sent to the region. The region or district should incorporate the project into the next annual update of the CPP.
- Approved CPP projects will be sent to USFS district FMOs



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An example of an approved CPP project is below. It must be fully completed for each project.

<b>1</b>	<b>Project Name:</b> Thomas Smith Tract	<b>County:</b> Montgomery	<b>Acres: 56</b>		
<b>Lat: 35 23.324</b>	<b>Lon: -78 50.916</b>	<b>Fire District/Community:</b> Averysboro/Troy	<b>Structures at Risk: 55</b>		
<b>Fuel Type(s):</b> 4, 6, 10		<b>Planning Office:</b> NCFS D3/Montgomery & Uwharrie Ranger District			
<b>Total Estimated Cost</b> \$ 3020		<b>Mechanical Treatment Cost:</b> 2 ac @ \$700/ac masticating = \$1400		<b>Prescribed Burning Cost:</b> 54 ac @ \$30/ac = \$ 1620	
<b>Risks:</b>	Remote location. Inaccessible for VFD truck. SPB killed pines throughout area. Southern exposures with slopes up to 70 Percent. Past history of wildfires. Borders USFS tract that was burned 3-5 years ago and has abundance of 1 hr fuels and grasses. Borders Eagle Nest Development which has 34 structures.				
<b>Mitigation:</b>	<b>Method Used:</b>	<b>Planned Date:</b>	<b>Completed Date:</b>	<b>Funding Source(s):</b>	<b>Activity to be Completed by:</b>
	HRB 54 acres	Winter 10-11		CPP	NCFS
	Mechanical*	Summer 11		CPP	NCFS/private contractor
<b>Planned Follow up:</b>	Ongoing, Evaluate Yearly. Update information with annual plan revision.				
<b>Notes:</b>	*Mechanical mitigation to be done on approximately 2-acres (approximately 3,000 ft x 30ft fire break to be installed on north side) near Pine Ridge Acres. Smoke Sensitive Area <b>Approved James Rogers, Co, 1-5-11</b>				

**Acres** – list approximate acres to be treated.

**Lat / Long** - Record lat and long information in degrees decimal minutes with at least 3 decimal places, DD MM.MMM.

**Estimated Total Cost** – \$30/acre HRB cost.

**Risks** - Give a description of fuels, topography, number structures, and any other factors that may contribute to fire spread/behavior or risks to the community in the risks section. Be as descriptive as possible to communicate the dangers to the person approving the plans.

**Mitigation** – specify treatment needed. If both mechanical and burning, list both.

**Notes** – list any notes or descriptors about project.

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### Approved Practices

***Hazardous fuel reduction is the only practice approved under the CPP program.***

This may be accomplished by burning or mechanical means.

- The prescribed fire treatments may be applied any time of the year as long as they are for fuel reduction. If NCFS is conducting the burn all internal policy and procedures will be followed.
  - *Site preparation and wildlife habitat improvement burns **are not** approved for reimbursement under the CPP program. These should not be checked on the burn plan.*
- NCFS, State Parks, NC Department of Agriculture, and NC Wildlife Resources Commission are allowed to perform hazard reduction burns and submit invoices under the CPP program with prior approval. Private contractors **are not** allowed to perform hazard reduction burns and submit invoices under the CPP program due to liability concerns.
- Mechanical treatments may include: mastication (grinding/mulching) or hand clearing of areas surrounding homes, mastication of fire breaks within or around communities, mastication or hand clearing of vegetation along roads to improve road access or improve the availability of roads for use as fire breaks.
  - If areas around homes are treated using a masticator or hand clearing, standard Firewise principles will be used to calculate the distance needing treatment. These are on page six of the 2010 edition of “Is Your Home Safe From A Wildfire? A Guide for Protecting Homes from Wildfire” publication from NC DFR. Any variance from this will require a justification included in the documentation.
  - Mechanical treatments will be covered in a supplemental document.

### Prescribed Burning

A rate of \$30 per acre will be used to determine district compensation for all CPP prescribed burning.

- Only acres burned will be invoiced.
- Meals for BRIDGE crews assisting with burns will be charged to the receiving district.
- Wages for emergency firefighters assisting with burns may be charged to CPP, but will be subtracted from the district reimbursement.
- Aviation fuel and aerial ignition devices used on CPP burns will be subtracted from district reimbursement. Aviation will charge this amount back against the CPP funds as their reimbursement. The district will charge the remaining amount as their reimbursement.
- Standard per diem rates for out of district personnel that are part of a burn team will be charged to the receiving district.

There is no cost to the landowner under this program. However, a completed landowner contract showing \$0 cost is required before any work can be done on a landowner’s property. This includes having the witness sections signed. In the event that a burn is on community property or other where a home owners association (HOA) exists and the HOA has the authority to sign for the residents of a community, one landowner contract may be completed by the HOA for the entire tract. A copy of the HOA power of attorney authority must be in the file if only one contract for a community. Otherwise, a completed landowner contract must be obtained from each landowner of the treatment area.

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#### Before performing the burn:

- A completed and approved CPP must be on file with Fire Prevention and Mitigation Staff Forester at the Central Office.
- Prepare project packet for area.
  - Obtain a \$0 cost signed NCFS landowner contract; 4225-1A (must include witness signatures).
  - Burn map with aerial photo background of estimated treatment area, nearby homes, and smoke sensitive areas displayed.
  - Approved NCFS burn plan 4210-1 (parts 1 – 3)
  - Burning permit

#### After performing the burn:

- Acquire GIS polygon of treatment area (method must meet current NCFS policy and procedure). Parcels are not acceptable unless entire parcel was treated.
- Complete CPP project packet for area.
  - Fully complete NCFS landowner contract, 4425-1A (complete performance check, acres, and miles of line).
  - Add GIS map with aerial photo background of actual treatment area.
  - Fully complete NCFS burn plan, 4210-1 (parts 4 - 6)
  - Fully complete NCFS Prescribed Burning Report, 4225-4B with all equipment and necessary personnel (certified and temporary)
  - CTRs and emergency shift tickets are not required. They may be required by the Regional Forester to track personnel and equipment time and kept at the district.

#### To be reimbursed for CPP activities submit to Fire Prevention and Mitigation Staff Forester at the CO (electronically preferred, email or G: drive):

- GIS map of treatment area
- Fully completed NCFS landowner contract, 4225-1A
- Fully completed NCFS prescribed burning plan, 4210-1 (parts 1– 6)
- Fully completed NCFS Prescribed Burning Report, 4225-4B
- Separate Invoice for each CPP project (projects cannot be combined on invoices) with project name, date, and acres burned.
- GIS polygon of area burned. Electronic data files with the following file extensions: .shp, .shx, .dbf, and .prj files. If there is no .prj file included, indicate which projection was used when data was exported. Data should be projected in the NCFS standard of NAD 1983 Stateplane North Carolina FIPS 3200 (meters).

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#### **Mechanical Fuel Reduction**

Mechanical treatments may include: masticating or hand clearing of areas surrounding homes, masticating of fire breaks within or around communities, masticating or hand clearing of vegetation along roads to improve road access or improve the availability of roads for use as fire breaks.

Due to the high cost of mechanical treatments, a common sense approach should be used. Mechanical treatments should only be performed if hazard reduction burning is not possible or in conjunction with hazard reduction burning. There is not presently a maximum area limit that may be treated, however, the treatment area should not exceed the minimum size that will accomplish the goals of the project, i.e. if a 20 foot wide fuel break will suffice, a 30 or 40 foot wide fuel break should not be installed. Fuel breaks should also include any natural fuel breaks available, i.e. roads, streams, fields, etc. Treating contiguous areas, excluding linear fuel breaks, over two acres in size should be avoided, unless homes are immediately adjacent to the treatment area. Mechanical treatments should focus on fuel breaks instead of whole area treatments. If areas around homes are treated using a masticator or hand clearing, standard Firewise principles will be used to calculate the distance needing treatment. These are on page six of the 2010 edition of "Is Your Home Safe From A Wildfire? A Guide for Protecting Homes from Wildfire" publication from NCFCS. Any variance from this will required a justification included in the documentation, which must be approved by the Fire Prevention and Mitigation Staff Forester at the central office. Individual home ignition zone treatment should be kept to a minimum. If multiple adjacent homeowners are willing to participate in the program, a fuel break should be created, instead of treating each individual home ignition zone separately.

There is \$0 cost to the landowner under this program. However, a completed landowner contract showing \$0 cost is required before any work can be done on a landowner's property. In the event that a fuel treatment is on community property or other where a home owners association (HOA) exists and the HOA has the authority to sign for the residents of a community, one landowner contract may be completed by the HOA for the entire tract. A copy of the HOA power of attorney authority must be in the file if only one contract for a community. Otherwise, a completed landowner contract must be obtained from each landowner of the treatment area.

A pre and post treatment photograph must be taken of the area treated. Before taking pre and post photographs, establish a camera point (use the same location and direction for the camera). This will allow the pictures of the same area to be compared to each other.

Each project must be invoiced separately. If two contractors are utilized to complete one project, two invoices must be submitted, one for each contractor.

There are three options for completing mechanical treatments: utilizing BRIDGE crews for hand work, utilizing the NCFCS Bobcat T-320 with forestry mulching head, or utilizing contractors.

#### **BRIDGE Crews**

BRIDGE crews may be utilized for hand clearing of areas. It will be the responsibility of the district to contact BRIDGE to make arrangements for the work. Meals and mileage for BRIDGE crews may be charged back to the CPP program as outlined in the CPP reimbursement procedures on page 12. BRIDGE must submit a 4225-4B along with copies of receipts for meals.

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#### **Bobcat T-320**

The NCFS owned Bobcat T-320 may be used for masticating areas. It is part of a package that includes the bobcat T-320 with forestry mulching head, F-550 mechanics truck with tools, welder, crane, and compressor, and trailer. There is an operator supplied by Forestation West. The district in which the work is occurring must supply or make arrangements for a second person to be on site while the Bobcat is operating. The district must contact Forestation West to make arrangements to receive the bobcat package.

If the NCFS Bobcat T-320 forestry masticator is used for CPP, Forestation may charge \$80/tach hour to the nearest 1 tach hour along with mileage from the F-550 mechanic truck at \$1.00/mile back to the CPP funds. Fuel, filters, small parts, etc. for the bobcat and F-550 will be paid for from Forestation.

#### **Contractors**

Forestation East and Forestation West may utilize sub-contractors to perform mechanical fuel treatments. All NCFS Forestation purchasing and contracting guidelines must be followed when utilizing contractors. A written contractor quote sheet must be utilized to record all the bids that were received for the project work. If projects require different types of work, i.e. handwork on part and machine work on part and some contractors offering bids can only perform one part of the project, each part should be bid separately to accurately compare bids for the total project cost. All invoices for work performed by sub-contractors will be submitted through the appropriate Forestation unit. Once complete, Forestation may charge a service fee of up to 5% of total contract cost of project to reimburse for mileage, supplies, and receipted positions.

For all three options above, the district organizing the work may charge \$200 per completed CPP project to recoup mileage, supplies, etc. This is per completed project, not for each individual home treated or each individual fuel break installed in the project area. This will be charged back against the accounts listed under the CPP reimbursement procedures on page 12.

Emergency Shift Tickets and crew time reports may be utilized at the District or Region's discretion to assist in record keeping.

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#### Utilizing BRIDGE crews for hand work

##### Before performing the treatment:

- A completed and approved CPP must be on file with the Fire Prevention and Mitigation Staff Forester at the Central Office.
- Prepare project plan for area.
  - Obtain a \$0 cost, signed, landowner contract, 4225-1A (must include witnesses).
  - Create map of area with estimated treatment area and nearby homes displayed over aerial photography.
  - Complete a Firewise home assessment score sheet for homes impacted by treatment.
  - Begin CPP homeowner assessment sheet for each home impacted by treatment
  - A concise scope of work will be created including: timing, type, method, and estimated cost of treatment.
  - Pre-treatment photograph(s) of area(s) to be treated

##### After performing the treatment:

- Complete project plan for area.
  - Fully complete landowner contract, 4225-1A (complete performance check, acres, and miles of line)
  - Complete CPP homeowner assessment sheet for each home impacted by treatment
  - Add GPS (Trimble Pathfinder) map of area with actual treatment area displayed
  - Add post-treatment photograph(s) of area(s) treated

#### To be reimbursed for CPP activities submit to Fire Prevention and Mitigation Staff Forester at CO (electronically preferred):

##### From District

- Fully completed project plan
- Invoice with project name, date, and acres treated in the amount of \$200.
- GIS polygon of area treated. GIS lines are acceptable for fire breaks (width should be specified in plan). Electronic data files with the following file extensions: .shp, .shx, .dbf, and .prj files. If there is no .prj file included, indicate which projection was used when data was exported. Data should be projected in the state standard of NAD 1983 Stateplane North Carolina FIPS 3200 meters.

##### From BRIDGE

- Fully completed 4225-4B
- Copies of receipts from meals

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#### Utilizing NCFS Bobcat 320T

##### Before performing the treatment:

- A completed and approved CPP must be on file with the Fire Prevention and Mitigation Staff Forester at the Central Office.
- Prepare project plan for area.
  - Obtain a \$0 cost, signed, landowner contract, 4225-1A (must include witnesses).
  - Create map of area with estimated treatment area and nearby homes displayed over aerial photography.
  - Complete a Firewise home assessment score sheet for homes impacted by treatment
  - Begin CPP homeowner assessment sheet for each home impacted by treatment
  - A concise scope of work will be created including: timing, type, method, and estimated cost of treatment.
  - Pre-treatment photograph(s) of area(s) to be treated

##### After performing the treatment:

- Complete project plan for area.
  - Fully complete landowner contract 4225-1A (complete performance check, acres, and miles of line)
  - Complete CPP homeowner assessment sheet for each home impacted by treatment
  - Add GPS (Trimble Pathfinder) map of area with actual treatment area displayed
  - Add post-treatment photograph(s) of area(s) treated

#### To be reimbursed for CPP activities submit to Fire Prevention and Mitigation Staff Forester at CO (electronically preferred):

##### From District

- Fully completed project plan
- Invoice with project name, date, and acres treated in the amount of \$200.
- GIS polygon of area burned or mulched. GIS lines are acceptable for fire breaks (width should be specified in plan). Electronic data files with the following file extensions: .shp, .shx, .dbf, and .prj files. If there is no .prj file included, indicate which projection was used when data was exported. Data should be projected in the state standard of NAD 1983 Stateplane North Carolina FIPS 3200 meters.

##### From Forestation

- Invoice with project name, date, fund, RCC, acreage, mileage of mechanic truck, tach hours from the bobcat, and total amount.

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#### Utilizing Contractors

##### Before performing the treatment:

- A completed and approved CPP must be on file with the Fire Prevention and Mitigation Staff Forester at the Central Office.
- Prepare project plan for area.
  - Obtain a \$0 cost, signed, landowner contract 4225-1A (must include witness).
  - Obtain and record on a bid sheet, at least three bids for treatment.
  - Obtain a fully completed sub-contractor agreement.
  - Create map of area with estimated treatment area and nearby homes displayed over aerial photography.
  - Complete a Firewise home assessment score sheet for all home(s) impacted by treatment.
  - Begin CPP homeowner assessment sheet for all home(s) impacted by treatment
  - A concise scope of work will be created including: timing, type, method, and estimated cost of treatment.
  - Pre-treatment photograph(s) of area(s) to be treated.

##### After performing the treatment:

- Complete project plan for area.
  - Fully complete landowner contract (complete performance check, acres, and miles of line)
  - Complete CPP homeowner assessment sheet for each home impacted by treatment
  - Add GPS (Trimble Pathfinder) map of area with actual treatment area displayed
  - Post-treatment photograph(s) of area(s) treated.

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##### From District

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- Invoice with project name, date, and acres treated in the amount of \$200.
- GIS polygon of area burned or mulched. GIS lines are acceptable for fire breaks (width should be specified in plan). Electronic data files with the following file extensions: .shp, .shx, .dbf, and .prj files. If there is no .prj file included, indicate which projection was used when data was exported. Data should be projected in the state standard of NAD 1983 Stateplane North Carolina FIPS 3200 meters.

##### From Forestation\*

- Forestation invoice with project name, date, fund, RCC, acres and amount.

\*Forestation invoice may be sent through District if the district has a Forestation employee. In this case, invoices may not be combined; a District invoice and a Forestation invoice must be submitted separately.



## Community Protection Plans (CPP) Program

### Administrative Instructions

Revised 3-25-13

#### CPP Reimbursement Procedures

District compensation will be accomplished by charging against the CPP grant for approved items. Transfer of funds from the CPP grant to another budget is not approved.

Once burn has been completed and all documentation, including electronic GIS shape files have been turned in, Fire Prevention and Mitigation Staff Forester will inform districts via regions of amounts that can be charged.

The documentation required for reimbursement of other state agencies will be identical to NCFS. Invoices will be paid to other state agencies instead of charging back to the grant.

Districts may charge up to the approved amount against the 1610-4185-XXXX budget. Only approved accounts may be charged against without prior approval. Fire Prevention and Mitigation Staff Forester will inform districts of valid budget years that can be charged to.

Invoices submitted by districts, that have been approved by June 30<sup>th</sup> each year must be spent by September 30<sup>th</sup> (full amount charged against fund with receipts dated prior to September 30). Invoices submitted and approved between June 30<sup>th</sup> and September 30<sup>th</sup> may be carried until September of the following calendar year.

Examples: Funds approved 7/1/10 - 6/30/11 must be spent by 9/30/11. Funds approved 7/1/11 - 6/30/12 must be spent by 9/30/12.

Each district must electronically submit an expenditure summary of CPP spending with items, amounts, accounts, and centers by the 5<sup>th</sup> of every month.

District project expenses and 1610-4185-XXXX balances can be seen at G:\CO\Forest Protection\FIRE CONTROL\Community Protection Program

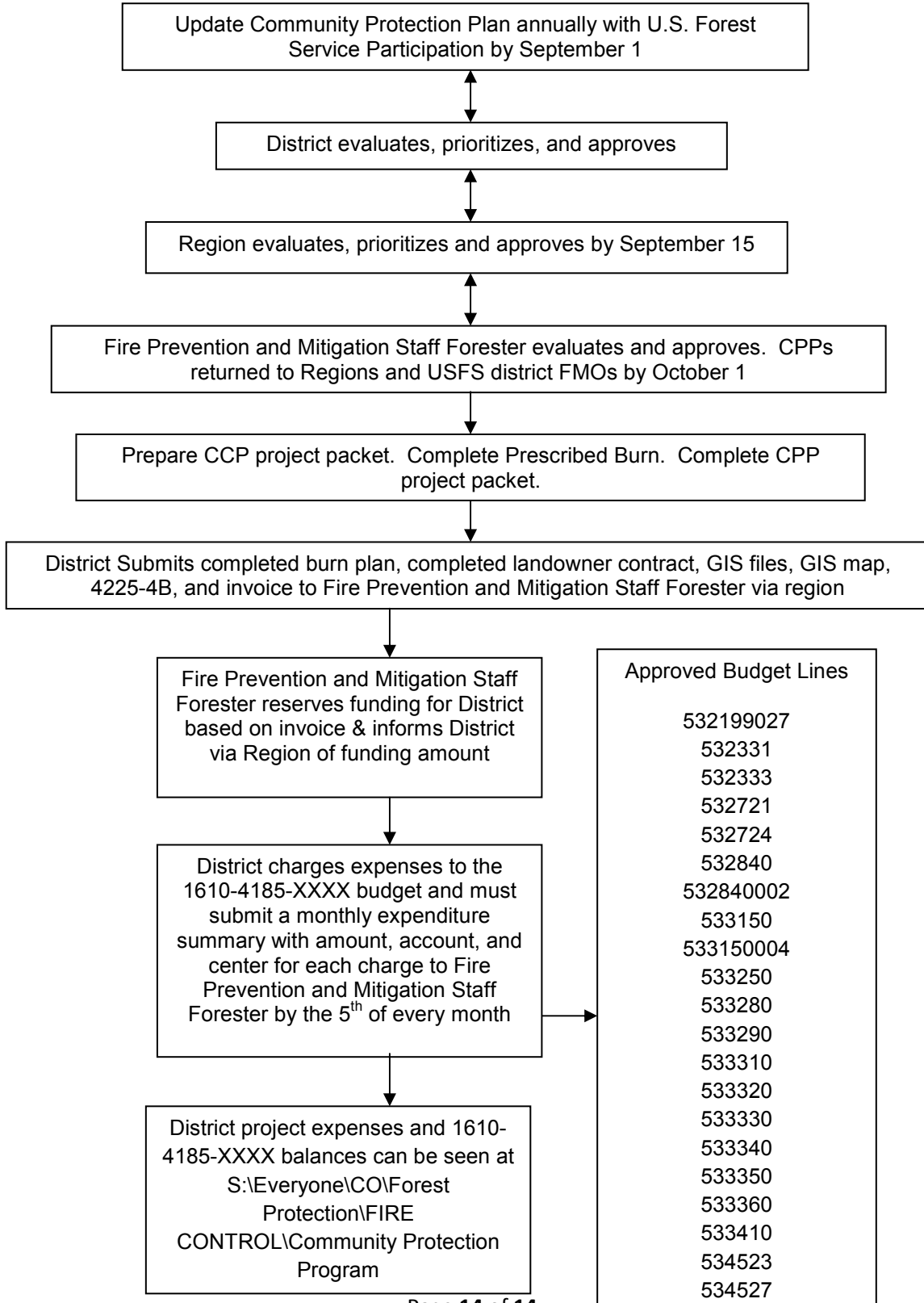
#### Approved accounts list

532199027	Emergency Personnel	533290	Other facility and hardware
532331	Repairs - motor vehicle	533310	Gasoline
532333	Repairs - other equipment	533320	Diesel
532721	Lodging – in state	533330	Oil, lubricants, and fluids
532724	Meals – in state	533340	Tires and tubes
532840	Postage, freight, and delivery	533350	Motor vehicle replacement parts
532840002	Postage, freight, and delivery - freight	533360	Aviation fuel/other fuels
533150	Security and safety supplies	533410	Food supplies
533150004	Fire suppressants (foam)	534523	Equipment – Scientific/medical
533250	Agriculture/animal supplies	534527	Equipment – Agricultural
533280	Road signs and signals		

**Community Protection Plans (CPP) Program  
Administrative Instructions**

Revised 3-25-13

**NC CPP Grant Administrative Paper Work Flow Chart**



## **Addendum addressing Community Protection Plans and Farm Bill program interactions**

Interactions between CPP and Farm Bill programs (EQIP, WHIP, CSP, and CRP) must be examined prior to performing CPP work on a tract. There are multiple references in farm bill program contracts (Appendix 1.E(3), 3(11), 5(H)) that address 'double dipping'- receiving payments or benefits from multiple federal (and possibly other) sources. Where a CPP prescribed burn is scheduled on a tract and prescribed burning is also scheduled in a Farm Bill program contract on the same acres, the CCP/Farm Bill Program participant must decide which program they wish to use to apply the scheduled prescribed burn. The participant **CANNOT** receive a benefit from both programs. The CCP/Farm Bill Program participant must decide which program they wish to use to apply the scheduled prescribed burn after consultation with local NRCS staff.

## Factors Influencing Longleaf Toppling

Trees develop root systems with deep taproots and extensive, well distributed laterals to anchor and support them. Longleaf pines are known for their ability to develop large, deep taproots and numerous, far reaching lateral roots that provide a firm anchorage against windthrow. Secondary sinker roots formed off the primary laterals provide further stability. This paper provides a summary of the many factors that reduce longleafs ability to grow roots and thus increase its susceptibility to toppling.

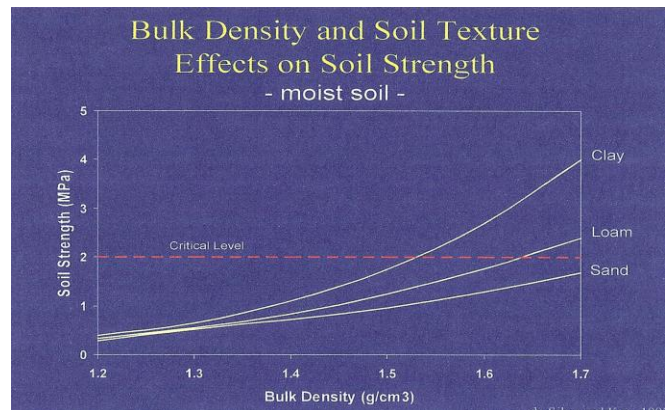
Historical records show that a larger percentage of longleaf tree blown over are container grown. Agricultural fields make up a large proportion of the acres planted with longleaf seedlings. Many of these trees had deformed root system, poor lateral distribution, and lacked a taproot. Many of the following factors are prevalent in agricultural planted with container grown-grown seedlings.

### Soil – Soil texture and soil compaction.

- ✓ Soil texture is determined by the relative proportion of sand, silt, or clay found. Texture influences soil structure, porosity, permeability, and water holding capacity.
- ✓ Root growth is less restricted in soils with smaller aggregates (better structure and consistency), high porosity (low soil density), rapid permeability, high water holding capacity. Clay soils tend to impede root growth, while sandy soils allow for easier growth.
- ✓ Root growth is strongly influenced by soil condition. Soil compaction restricts root growth by reducing soil porosity, permeability, and drainage. Wet soils have lower soil strength and allow better root penetration.



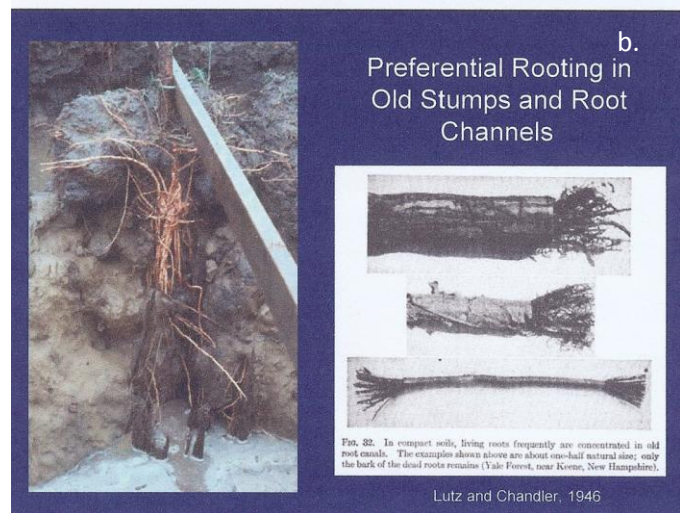
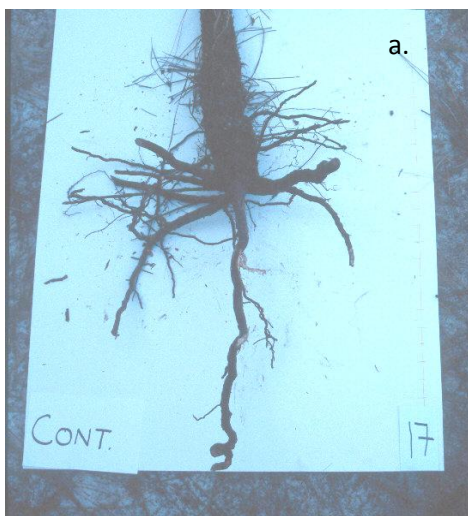
a. asymmetrical laterals and spiraling growth. b. deformed growth pattern and no taproot growth of a container-grown longleaf seedling.



A texture change in the soil profile restricts root growth. Roots seek path of least resistance. Compaction from agriculture use can increase bulk density and reduce root penetration. Root penetration is restricted below the critical level line

**Site – fertility, soil moisture, previous land-use, presence of a hardpan.**

- ✓ Reports of toppling in agricultural occur more frequently. High water tables, fragipans, and plow pans weaken, stop, or redirect taproot and secondary sinker root vertical growth. Plow pans are common on in agricultural fields .Cultivation of the A horizon allows easier growth path and encourages horizontal or oblique root growth.
- ✓ Longleaf trees grown on high quality sites or fertile agriculture field don't grow as big a root system. The tree produces a root system to supply enough water and nutrients to support the above ground biomass. Once that point is reached it allocates growth energy to other parts of the tree. Droughty, infertile sites produce deep taproots and long laterals.
- ✓ It is likely that toppling is higher in agricultural fields because there are no adjacent woods to buffer winds.
- ✓ Trees roots grow in decayed root channels from previous tree stands. These are not present in agricultural sites.



a. Shows the pig-tail growth of taproot that has run into a fragipans. b. roots growing in decayed channels

**Tree Morphology – amount of foliage, taproot growth, and lateral root distribution**

- ✓ Height of the tree and amount of foliage affect toppling. High quality sites produce dense foliage with long needles. There is a lot of foliage to catch the wind on the sapling and small pole-size trees that commonly topple.
- ✓ Healthy deep root systems are less likely to topple than those with deformed or poorly formed laterals and lack a stout taproot.



Dense crowns with long needles of sapling and small pole-sized longleaf trees increase the risk of wind-throw.



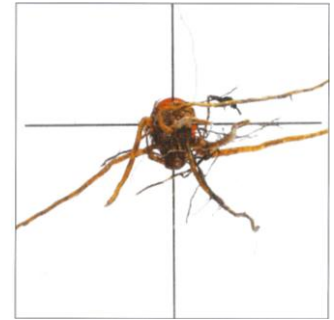
Multiple sinker roots developed at the callus formed from air-pruning

- ✓ Container grown seedlings do not always produce vertical sinker or taproots. Research showed about 4% -17% of longleaf seedlings did not produce a taproot after outplanting. The true taproot is air-pruned at the containers drain hole and forms a callus. The new root growth (from adventitious bud) after out planting doesn't always grow downward.
- ✓ Container grown seedlings that germinate on the side wall of the container develop laterals only on one face. The lack of asymmetrical lateral root distribution compromises root system stability.

- ✓ Lateral root development in both bareroot and container longleaf seedlings is not always well distributed around the taproot. They often form on only one side of the taproot. This creates stability problems as often there are lateral roots growing in only two of the four quadrants.



Lateral are found on an even plane from opposite sides of the taproot.



Poor lateral root growth distribution around the taproot reduces stem stability. One study found laterals had emerged into only two of the four quadrants.

- ✓ Container grown LL seem to have a problem with root architect where the roots criss-cross in the container or after out planting. Cooper lined containers reduce but have not eliminated this problem. Cooper lined plugs distribute the roots better more evenly from top to bottom along the tap root. In other types of containers the roots tend to accumulate in the bottom of the container.

### Wind and Rain.—intensity , duration and amount.

- ✓ All strong winds have the potential to topple trees. The larger more significant wind events such as hurricanes or tornados cause the most numerous and widespread damage. It takes less wind to blow over trees when the soil is saturated. Toppling is more likely when heavy rains precede the high winds. In the case of hurricanes winds are sustained for a long time, blow different directions, and combine with heavy rains to create ideal conditions for toppling.
- ✓ Less wind is needed to blow over trees with poor vertical and horizontal root development, whether the cause of the poorly developed root system is from root stock or soil/site conditions.



Longleaf pine stands after slow moving Hurricane Irene brought high winds and heavy rain to NE North Carolina. Note trees blown over in different directions in photo on the right.

#### What Can We Do to Mitigate

- ✓ Plant high quality seedlings that are less than one year old and have been grown in containers with ribs in the container wall that prevent laterals from spiraling. The plug should have a volume of at least 6 cubic inches, be 5 inches in length and potting soil does not fall after extraction.
- ✓ Subsoil heavy textured and compacted soils to loosen compaction and fracture plow pans for better root growth. Sub-soiling is most effective when applied during dry soil that better fracturing of the pan layer.
- ✓ Prop up small tree to a vertical position. This may be more successful on saplings than large trees. Whether the trees will recover from the significant damage the high winds likely caused to the tree root system is unknown. However , many landowners may be willing to make an effort to save what they can.

Invasive Plant Species for NRCS

# **CURRENT POLICY & PROPOSED UPDATES**



# HOW BROAD IS NRCS INVASIVE SPECIES MISSION?

- ✘ Presently, NRCS does not assist **financially** with the control of invasive insects or other animals
- ✘ That is being debated.... Stay tuned!
- ✘ Today, NRCS focus is strictly on invasive plants



# EXECUTIVE ORDER #13112

*Each Federal agency whose actions may affect the status of invasive species shall, to the extent practicable and permitted by law,*

- (1) identify such actions;
- (2) subject to the availability of appropriations:
  - (i) prevent the introduction;
  - (ii) detect and respond rapidly to and control populations;
  - (iii) monitor invasive species populations accurately and reliably;
  - (iv) provide for restoration of native species and habitat conditions in ecosystems that have been invaded;
  - (v) conduct research on invasive species and develop technologies; and
  - (vi) promote public; and
- (3) not authorize, fund, or carry out actions that it believes are likely to cause or promote the introduction or spread of invasive species.

# **NRCS UNIQUE DEFINITION OF “INVASIVE SPECIES”**

Those species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm, or harm to human health.

[NRCS General Manual Title 190 Part 414.3]

## FURTHER EXPLANATION OF NRCS POLICY....

For the purpose of this policy only, a plant species is considered “invasive” only when it occurs on the Federal or State-specific noxious weed list or a list developed by the State-specific Department of Agriculture with their partners and approved by the State Technical Committee which prohibits or cautions its use due to invasive qualities.

[NRCS General Manual Title 190 Part 414.3]

## **OUR PROPOSED REVISION TO THAT POLICY IS...**

For the purpose of this policy only, a plant species is considered "invasive" only when it appears on either of the following: (1) the Federal or State-specific noxious weed list; or (2) a list approved by the State Conservationist that is based upon scientifically credible sources of expertise, developed with input from partners and recommended by the State Technical Committee. Species identified on state developed lists shall be selected as a result of being identified as having invasive qualities and the potential to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health based on the best science available.

## EXPECTATIONS FOR ASSISTANCE ESTABLISHING PLANTS

- ✘ “Natives First” approach: preferred alternatives involve use of native plants when feasible to meet client objectives.
- ✘ “Natives Only” approach: when planning all natural community restoration and most habitat conservation practices

## EXPECTATIONS FOR ASSISTANCE WITH INVASIVE PLANTS

- ✘ Evaluate environmental hazards
- ✘ Provide TA to mitigate hazard
- ✘ Assist with the adoption of IPM strategies
- ✘ Assist with invasive weed suppression in order to address a resource concern, including financial assistance

# IS NRCS TAKING ANY PLANTS “OFF THE TABLE”?

Some introduced plants are essential to viability of agriculture. For example, plants commonly used as forage, cover crop, or other agronomic purposes in North Carolina

- + Tall fescue,
- + Bermudagrass,
- + Annual ryegrass,
- + Clovers,
- + Small Grains
- + Others???



# OUTCOMES & EXPECTATIONS

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During this meeting:

- ✘ Develop a state invasive plant list framework NRCS can follow.

Following this meeting:

- ✘ NRCS populates list framework with species and circulates for partners' review and comment.
- ✘ NRCS drafts state guidance for implementation of policy and circulates for partners' review and comment.
- ✘ Following review and comment, NRCS will report back to this team and to the full committee for recommendation.
- ✘ State Conservationist approval is the final step.

# WHAT SHOULD NRCS LIST LOOK LIKE?

NRCS prefers a simple, tiered approach for its state Invasive Species List

Tier 1: Financial Assistance (FA) Available for:

Group A: Establishment with required risk evaluation and/or mitigation

Group B: Control only

Group C: Management only

Tier 2: No assistance offered