

# Helping Arkansas' Forest Landowners

## Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) 2009 Quick Guide


### Overview

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program is a voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to agricultural producers who face threats to water quality and health of their forest land. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service administers EQIP with advice from local work groups.

### Which practices on forestland are eligible?

Forest practices used to treat the resource concerns include:

- 106 – Forest Management Plan -- A site specific comprehensive forest management plan that addresses landowner objectives and resource concerns by prescribing forestry-related activities or practices on forest land or land to be converted to forest land as defined by established minimum criteria.
- 338 – Prescribed Burning – Applying controlled fire to a predetermined area to control undesirable vegetation, prepare the area either for planting, to reduce wildfire hazard, improve wildlife habitat, or restore and maintain ecological sites.
- 342 – Critical Area Planting – Establishing permanent vegetation on roads or banks that have or are expected to have high erosion rates.
- 380 – Windbreak Establishment – Single or multiple rows of trees or shrubs in linear configurations to control erosion or odor.
- 381 – Silvopasture Establishment – An agro-forestry application establishing a combination of trees or shrubs and compatible forages on the same acreage.
- 382 – Fence – A constructed barrier to control movement of livestock to facilitate the application of conservation practices.
- 384 – Forest Slash Treatment – Pile, lop and scatter, remove, or chip debris in forest areas with severe damage caused by catastrophic events such as ice storms or tornados to allow the forest land to be utilized as it is intended and reduce the risk of catastrophic wild fire.
- 391 – Riparian Forest Buffer – Trees or shrubs planted to create or improve riparian or stream habitat; control erosion; or restore riparian plant communities.
- 394 – Fire Break – A strip of bare land 15 feet wide or a strip of vegetation 30 feet wide to reduce or stop the spread of fire.
- 410 – Grade Stabilization – Concrete or rock to control the grade and head cutting in a natural or artificial channel.



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- 484 – Mulching -- Applying plant residues (such as straw) or other suitable materials not produced on the site to the soil surface for erosion control on critical areas with steep slopes.
- 490 – Tree & Shrub Site Prep – Mechanically or chemically treating areas to improve site conditions for establishing a forest.
- 560 – Access Road – Building a roadside diversion, water bar, broad based dip or rolling dip on an existing road to prevent road erosion.
- 578 – Stream Crossing – A stabilized area of rock or concrete across a stream and the approaches on the channel sides to provide a travel-way for livestock, equipment, or vehicles 14 feet wide and 75 long. For concrete the typical installation is 1.5 feet thickness of riprap or gravel with a 6 inch concrete surface.
- 612 – Tree & Shrub Establishment – Establishing at least 4 native species of woody plants by planting seedlings or cuttings.
- 655 – Forest Trails and Landings – Use water bars to stabilize an infrequently used travel-ways for equipment (skid trail) and log landings constructed as part of a harvest operation for forest products.
- 666 – Forest Stand Improvement – The manipulation of species composition, stand structure, and stocking by cutting (non commercial thinning) or killing selected trees and understory vegetation.

### **What is the application/implementation process?**

Following are the five simple steps to apply for and implement an EQIP contract.

- A landowner submits an application to a local USDA Service Center, NRCS office, or conservation district office.
- The NRCS works with the applicant to develop a list of potential conservation practices.
- NRCS ranks each application using the locally developed natural resources ranking process.
- NRCS sets aside funds for the highest ranking applications, after which the NRCS works with the applicant to finalize a conservation plan and contract.
- Participants may then begin to implement the EQIP conservation plan following NRCS guidelines and practice standards.

### **For more information:**

To learn more about EQIP, visit <http://www.ar.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip.html>, or contact your local USDA-NRCS field service center.