

Healthy Forests Reserve Program

HFRP



Overview

The Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP) is a voluntary program established for the purpose of restoring and enhancing forest ecosystems to:

- ◆ Promote the recovery of endangered or threatened species
- ◆ Improve biodiversity
- ◆ Enhance carbon sequestration

The HFRP was signed into law as part of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003. The program was reauthorized to be carried out in the 2008 Farm Bill.

Benefits

- ◆ Restoring and protecting forests contributes positively to the economy of our nation, provides biodiversity of plants and animal populations, and improves environmental quality.
- ◆ Landowner protections will be made available to landowners enrolled in HFRP who agree, for a specified period, to restore or improve their land for threatened or endangered species habitat. In exchange, they avoid future regulatory restrictions on the use of that land protected under the Endangered Species Act.

Enrollment Options

The program offers four enrollment options:

- ◆ A 10-year restoration cost-share agreement, for which the landowner may receive 50 percent of the average cost of approved conservation practices

- ◆ A 30-year easement, for which the landowner may receive 75 percent of the easement value of the enrolled land plus 75 percent of the average cost of approved conservation practices
- ◆ A 30-year contract on acreage owned by Indian tribes, for which the landowner may receive 75 percent of the contract value of the enrolled land plus 75 percent of the average cost of approved conservation practices
- ◆ A permanent easement, for which landowners may receive 100 percent of the easement value of the enrolled land plus 100 percent of the average cost of approved conservation practices



How to Apply

Apply at your local USDA Service Center, which you can find at farmers.gov/service-locator.



More Information

For more information, visit nrcs.usda.gov or farmers.gov.



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Land Eligibility

To be eligible for enrollment, land must be private land or tribal lands which will restore, enhance, or measurably increase the likelihood of recovery of a threatened or endangered species, must improve biological diversity, or increase carbon sequestration.

Landowner Eligibility

- ◆ Both landowners and tenants can participate in different components of HFRP.
- ◆ Applicants must provide proof of land ownership for easement enrollments or 30-year contracts with tribes.
- ◆ An operator (tenant) must provide written concurrence from the landowner of tenancy for the period of an HFRP restoration agreement.

HFRP Restoration Plan

For all HFRP easements, contracts, and 10-year restoration agreements, NRCS will develop an HFRP restoration plan.

- ◆ The plan must specify how the enrolled land will be restored, protected, enhanced, maintained, and managed to accomplish the goals of the program.
- ◆ NRCS must confer with the program participant and with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service, as appropriate.

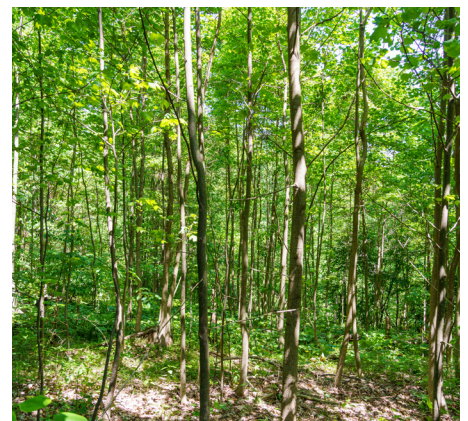
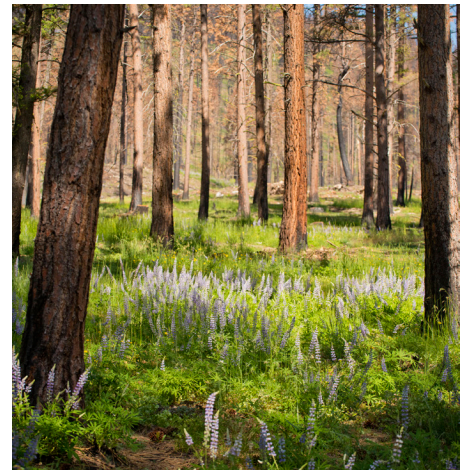
- ◆ Restoration practices and measures may include land management, vegetative, and structural practices and measures that will restore and enhance habitat conditions for listed species, candidate, state-listed, and other species identified by the NRCS Chief for special funding consideration.

All management activities and measures implemented by the fee title landowner or an agent acting on behalf of the landowner must be implemented pursuant to a management plan issued to the fee title landowner. A management plan may only be issued to the current fee title landowner of record.

Landowner Protections

An HFRP participant whose conservation treatment results in a net conservation benefit for listed, candidate, or other species may request the following landowner protections:

- ◆ Incidental Take Authorization
- ◆ Safe Harbor Agreement
- ◆ Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances



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