

Writing a Forest Management Plan



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Why write a forest management plan?

- A forest management plan
- Puts your thoughts – goals and objectives on paper (and saved as an electronic file)
- Time and effort is put into the forest management plan – a document that can be periodically re-visited and modified if land goals and objectives change
- The forest management plan can (should) be shared with family members (1) to get them involved with the land and (2) should the family leader pass, there is a forest management plan for the beneficiaries to refer to for future land management

What is in a forest management plan

- It becomes a “how to” manual –to derive as many of the benefits of one’s property
- It includes all near (0-5 or 10 yrs) and long-term (> 5-10 yrs out to 20-50 yrs) goals and objectives
- It describes the management activities (burning, planting, thinning, final harvest) and their timing (in year or years of each activity in each “stand” = a management unit)
- It should include stand type maps (including pine or hardwood species, establishment mo-yr, # of acres) and soils maps of the property

Components of a Forest Management Plan

- A Forest Management Plan consists of four major sections

Section 1: Objectives & Goals

Section 2: Site Description

Section 3: Prescribed Mgmt Activities

Section 4: Protection & Maintenance



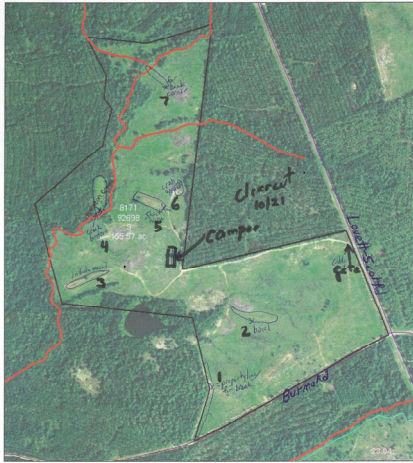
Section 1 - Goals and Objectives

- **Goals** – general statements that express the landowners' near and long-term (broad) desired outcomes for the property – the vision for your property
- **Objectives** - are more specific statements and are measurable. They describe the actions required that lead to attaining one's goals.
- **Example:**
 - Goal 1. Protect the health of the forest
 - Objective 1. Create a prescribe burn plan for the entire property
 - Objective 2. Inspect property for presence of invasive plants
 - Objective 3. Inspect property for harmful insect and disease outbreaks

Section 2 – Site Description

- This section contains a detailed physical description of your property and available resources.
- It includes the legal description, tax parcel number, and US Dept of Ag. (USDA) Service Center farm number (one can be made if no farm # at the Farm Service Agency County office).
- Maps of the property (survey plat and a recent aerial photo), with clearly delineated property boundaries, access points, waterways
- A physical address or a latitude-longitude to entry point(s) into the/each property
- A soils map, stand map and topography map

Aerial Photo of Property with USDA farm



Physical address (to main gate):

742 Lovett-Scott Rd. East Dublin GA

Gate lat-lon: 32.62457 -82.74989

United States Department of Agriculture
 Farm Service Agency *Dukes 152 ac*
Laurens
 1 inch = 598 feet
 May 20, 2014
 This average is for FSA program purposes only. No warranty is made for any other use.
 Farm: 8171
 Tract: 92698
 Standard Determination Identifiers:
 * Wetlands
 * Floodplains
 * Boreal/Alpine/High-Corridors/Peatlands
 D. Scudder: Wetland Identifiers do not represent the size, shape or location of wetlands. Refer to your original certification (CPA-428) and related reports for exact wetland boundaries and delineation. U.S. D. Scudder: 10/11

Aerial Photo with stand map



Physical address (to main gate):

742 Lovett-Scott Rd. East Dublin GA

Main gate lat-lon: 32.62457 -82.74989

Key: SL=slash pine, LB=loblolly pine

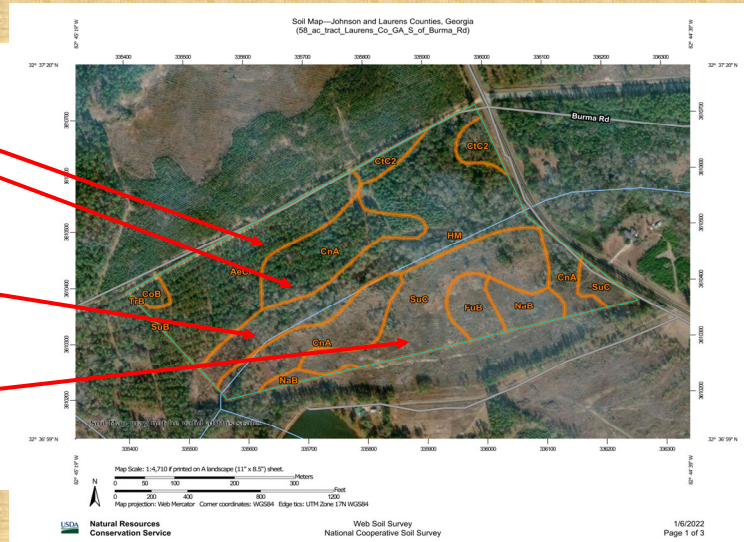
11, 14, 21 = yr stand planted (2011, 2014, Or 2021)

(# acres) = LB21 (14ac), LB14(20ac), Hard-Wood drain (24ac), SL11(42ac), SL14(20ac) SL14(40ac), LB14(30ac)

Having a soils map of your land

Map Unit Legend

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
AeC	Atley loamy sand, 5 to 8 percent slopes	10.0	18.6%
CnA	Clarendon loamy sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes	12.2	22.8%
CoB	Cowarts loamy sand, 2 to 5 percent slopes	0.6	1.1%
CiC2	Cowarts sandy loam, 5 to 8 percent slopes, moderately eroded	1.9	3.5%
FuB	Fuquay loamy sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes	1.9	3.6%
HM	Henri and Muckalee sandy loams, frequently flooded	14.9	27.6%
NaB	Nankin loamy sand, 2 to 5 percent slopes	2.4	4.4%
SuB	Susquehanna sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
SuC	Susquehanna sandy loam, 5 to 17 percent slopes	9.9	18.4%
TbB	Troup sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
Totals for Area of Interest		53.8	100.0%



Section 3 – Prescribed Management Activities

- The majority of a plan will be comprised of detailed descriptions of prescribed management activities (Silviculture) and their timing
- Based on your goals and objectives these activities may include
 - timber harvests (thinning, clearcuts or other cutting types),
 - reforestation,
 - herbicide treatment(s),
 - burning,
 - Fertilization
 - Pond maintenance
 - Road/trail construction and/or maintenance

Section 3 – Prescribed Management Activities

- All management activities should be correlated to one or more objectives
- For most a healthy forest is a high priority, therefore proactive forest mgmt. is required – so there is always something to do
- Reviewing your forest management plan annually is recommended to ensure your objectives are being or will be met.

Section 4 – Protection & Maintenance

- Protection against wildfire should be a priority for all forest landowners
- Installing new fire breaks and maintaining existing fire breaks should be a high priority
- All property lines should be periodically marked (and re-marked) and clearly indicated on your property map
- “No Trespassing” signs should be posted and periodically re-posted as signs deteriorate

Advantages of having a Forest Mgmt Plan

- **Environmental Regulations:**
- Forest management activities must comply with local, state and federal regulations
- As the landowner, you are liable for all activities occurring on your land – so you need to be aware of how environmental laws impact your selection of mgmt. activities
- Best to obtain professional advice prior to conducting any forest operation (timber sale or pond building for examples)

Advantages of having a Forest Mgmt Plan

- **Financial Considerations:**
- Timber and real estate taxation are the leading management concerns for forest landowners (based on surveys)
- Planning to minimize your county (2.5%), state (6% in GA), and federal tax (15% capital gains for most) burden can help you keep as much timber sale profits as possible – establish a land and timber basis is very important when land (and timber) are first purchased
- An accountant that has strong timber taxation knowledge can help you pay the proper amt. of taxes on timber sales
- Expensing reforestation (site preparation, seedlings and planting costs) can reduce the tax burden (\$10,000/yr per landowner) – a total of \$10,000 of site prep and ½ of seedling costs can be expensed in 2021 and the other ½ of seedling cost and planting costs up to \$10,000 can be expensed in 2022.

Advantages of having a Forest Mgmt Plan

- **Cost-Share:**
- Most cost-share forestland-related programs are offered by the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Programs like the longleaf Conservation Reserve Program (CRP CP36) where ag fields can be planted to longleaf with USDA covering most of the site prep, seedlings and planting costs + offer an annual “rental” payment for 10, 12 or 15-yrs are financially attractive
- Other programs include WHIP (wildlife habitat incentives program), EQIP (environmental quality incentives program) and CSP (conservation stewardship program) will cover some to most of your reforestation costs if your name is drawn from those that apply in the county of your forestland, as well as fire-breaks, Rx burning, and other forestland enhancement activities

Advantages of having a Forest Mgmt Plan

- **Certification:**
- With your forest management plan and implemented forestry practices – your forestland can become SFI (sustainable forestry initiative) or a Tree Farm certified
- By having your land be SFI or Tree Farm certified – these certifications recognize sustainably-managed forests
- Your forestland may be managed in way that is considered sustainable but not recognized as such but there is potential with certification that you have access to markets that seek wood from certified forests

Creating your Forest Management Plan

- **Three main options:**
- Hire a professional forester – if you have a registered forester helping you with timber sales, reforestation, Rx burning and other forestry activities he/she can prepare a plan to you
- Write the plan yourself – but you will need a level of forestry knowledge that will able you to write a good plan – most landowners need assistance
- Gather (1) all property maps, parcel #s, (2) write down your objectives and goals, then ask a local, reputable, registered forester to help you complete the plan

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Goals and Objectives Checklist

Describe and Inventory Woodlands

- GIS mapping
- Soils type mapping
- Topography maps
- Recreation and tourism
 - Trails
 - Points of interest
 - Special sites
- Natural features
 - Wetlands
 - Streams
 - Waterfalls
 - Water bodies
 - Unique areas
- Historic/cultural features
 - Wells
 - Homesteads
 - Cemeteries
- Forest types and stands
- Protection and maintenance
- Stand descriptions and inventory data

Goals and Objectives Checklist

Assure The Woodland's Future

- Conservation easements
- Intergenerational transfer
- Estate planning
- Sharing with family
- Taxes (county, state, federal and property)

Goals and Objectives Checklist

Enhance Woodland Aesthetics and Recreation

- Wildlife habitat improvement
- Trail layout/maintenance
- Plant/wildlife survey
- Wildlife habitat assessment
- Wildlife habitat cost share programs
- Aesthetic enhancements
- Wildlife watching
- Hunting
- Hiking
- Birding
- Fishing
- Trails and trail design
- Establish family connection to the land
- Linking the forest and wildlife
- Management practices impacts on wildlife
- Even-aged forests
- Uneven-aged forests
- Den trees and mast trees
- Road construction and maintenance
- Establishing ground cover or wildlife food plots

Goals and Objectives Checklist

Promote Healthy Woodlands

- Timber stand improvement
- Water quality protection/BMPs
- Pest and weed assessment/prevention
- Pest and weed monitoring
- Managing pest/weed outbreaks
- Tree planting
- Forest health survey and appraisal
- Prescribed burns
- Create home for wildlife
- Create healthier woods
- Pests and weeds
- Pest and weed monitoring
- Managing pest/weed outbreaks
- Ecosystem services
- Air quality
- Healthy soils

Goals and Objectives Checklist

Provide Woodland Protection

- Marking boundaries
- Security and protection monitoring
- Water quality protection/BMPs
- Natural disaster damage assessment
- Timber theft appraisal
- Special site protection plans
- Rare, threatened/endangered species protection plans
- Pest and weed assessment/prevention
- Wildfires
- Natural disasters
- Invasive species
- Pests and weeds
- Trespassers
- Bio Security
- Eco-terrorism

Goals and Objectives Checklist

Conduct Woodland Enterprises

- Forest certification
- Cost share programs
- Financial assistance
- Timber sale administration
- Manage a timber harvest
- Forest inventory and assessment
- Appraisal and valuation
- Tax law programs
 - Property taxes
 - Income and capital gains tax planning
 - Federal taxes
 - Recordkeeping
 - Setting up accounts
- Hunting leases
- Pine straw production
- Natural disaster salvage and recovery
- Eco-tourism

Goals and Objectives Checklist

- Young Stand (age 1- to 13-yrs)
 - Afforestation
 - Regeneration
 - Site preparation
 - Natural regeneration
 - Tree planting
 - Weed control
 - Fertilization
- Middle Aged Stand (13- to 25-yrs)
 - Weeding
 - Release
 - Thinning
 - Improvement cutting
 - Timber stand improvement
 - Pruning
 - Prescribed burning
 - Fertilization
- Mature Stand and Harvesting (25+ yrs)
 - Clearcutting
 - Seed tree
 - Shelterwood
 - Selection
 - Patch clearcut

Goals and Objectives Checklist

- Agroforestry
 - Silvopasture
 - Alley cropping
 - Forest farming
 - Riparian forest buffers
 - Windbreaks/Shelterbelts
 - Carbon
 - Wildlife management
 - Waste management
 - Biomass/Energy
- Non-Timber Forest Products
 - Fruits and nuts
 - Vegetables
 - Fish and game
 - Medicinal plants
 - Resins
 - Essences
 - Barks and fibers
 - Palms and grasses

Questions ???

