



## Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters and Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry

# Guide for Statewide Forest Resource Strategies

**July 21, 2009**

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# Executive Summary

The 2008 Farm Bill<sup>1</sup> requires each State to complete a Statewide Forest Resource Assessment (State Assessment) and Long-term Statewide Forest Resource Strategy (State Strategy) by June 2010 to receive funds under the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act.<sup>2</sup> This draft guidance for State Strategies was developed by the NAASF and NA State Strategy Team (see Appendix II) to provide regional clarification and tips for developing the State Strategy (this accompanies the *NAASF Guide for State Assessments*). This guidance is primarily geared toward the forest planning contacts in each State.

**Overview—State Strategies are one step in S&PF Redesign.** First, State forestry agencies develop a State Assessment to identify key forest-related issues and priority landscape areas. Second, States outline strategies for addressing these issues and areas in the long-term (5+ year) State Strategy. The State Strategy is an overarching document; more specific activities and detailed budget information for a given fiscal year are not in the State Strategy. For Cooperative Forestry funding, the next main step is to outline activities in the Annual Grant Narrative/Proposal(s) for a given year (including actions that are part of the core funding and projects awarded through the competitive allocation initiative). Finally, accomplishments are reported using the S&PF performance measures currently being developed (for the near term to include many existing S&PF measures and reporting systems) and the State Annual Report (format yet to be determined).

**Minimum requirements**—the National Guidance<sup>3</sup> provides the minimum requirements for State Strategies. Section C of this document provides regional clarification and tips for meeting these requirements. The national minimum requirements for State Strategies are as follows:

1. Outline long-term strategies for addressing priority landscapes identified in the State Assessment and the national themes and associated management objectives (Table 3).
2. Describe how the state proposes to invest federal funding, along with other resources, to address state, regional, and national forest management priorities.
3. Include a long-term timeline for project and program implementation.
4. Identify partner and stakeholder involvement.
5. Identify strategies for monitoring outcomes within priority forest landscape areas and how action will be revised when needed.
6. Describe how the state's proposed activities will accomplish national S&PF program objectives and respond to specified performance measures and indicators.
7. Describe how State and Private Forestry programs will be used to address priority landscape and management objectives.
8. Incorporate existing statewide plans including Wildlife Action Plans, community wildfire protection plans, and address existing S&PF program planning requirements.

While States are asked to identify landscape areas where national, regional, and State resource issues and priorities converge, there is flexibility for the content and structure of both the State Assessment and Strategy. The State Strategy can serve as an important strategic planning document to guide State forestry activities (beyond obtaining Cooperative Forestry funding).

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<sup>1</sup> The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, commonly referred to as the Farm Bill, was enacted June 19, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> The Cooperative Forest Assistance Act provides authority for the S&PF Programs.

<sup>3</sup> The National Guidance for State Assessments and Strategies, Oct. 2008: <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/redesign/resourcecenter>

**Components**—Suggested components and an example outline for the State Strategy are presented in section B of this guide. The suggested components include:

1. Description of the priority landscape areas and issues
2. Strategies to address the priority landscape areas and issues
3. Investing resources
4. Protocol for translating strategies into actions
5. Monitoring and reporting
6. Listing and description of stakeholder involvement
7. List of other plans consulted
8. Glossary of terms and acronyms

**S&PF Program integration**—As directed by the Farm Bill, these State Assessments and Strategies are “deemed to be sufficient to satisfy all relevant State planning and assessment requirements under [the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act].” Throughout this guide there are tips for referencing how the S&PF Programs contribute to the strategies outlined in the State Strategy. Section E provides further information on considering and integrating the S&PF programs, including specific requirements for the Forest Legacy Program.

# A. Introduction and Purpose for State Strategies

The 2008 Farm Bill<sup>4</sup> requires each State to complete a Statewide Forest Resource Assessment (State Assessment) and Statewide Forest Resource Strategy (State Strategy) by June 2010 to receive funds under the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act.<sup>5</sup> State Assessments are intended to identify key forest-related issues and priorities to support development of the long-term State Strategy. As directed in the Farm Bill, these State Assessments and Strategies are “deemed to be sufficient to satisfy all relevant State planning and assessment requirements under [the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act].”

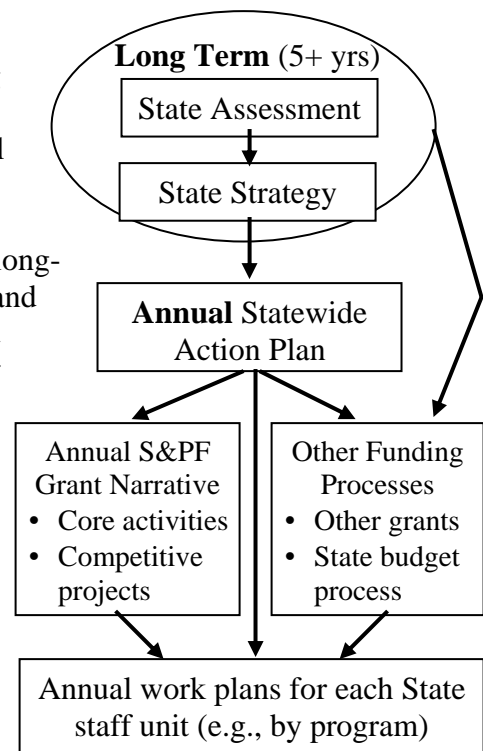
This draft *NAASF and NA Guide for Statewide Forest Resource Strategies*, developed by the NAASF and NA State Strategy Team, provides an overview of the Farm Bill requirements, S&PF national guidance, and additional regional guidance and tips for the 20 NAASF States and the District of Columbia. This complements the *NAASF Guide for Statewide Forest Resource Assessments*, which was focused primarily on the components and data needed for the State Assessments.

## Flexibility for State Assessments and Strategies and Annual Implementation

The State Assessment and Strategy should address forest-related issues of importance to the State and should also be linked to the three national S&PF themes: (1) conserve working forest landscapes; (2) protect forests from harm; and (3) enhance public benefits from trees and forests. While States are asked to identify landscape areas where national, regional, and State resource issues and priorities converge, there is flexibility for the content and structure of both the State Assessment and Strategy. This flexibility allows each State to use the best data available, work with stakeholders, and adequately consider other State assessments, plans, and priorities as relevant. For example, a State may organize their State Strategy based on specific State issues rather than by the three national S&PF themes.

The State Strategy does serve as a planning document for the S&PF programs, but can also serve as a broader strategic planning document to guide all State forestry activities. The strategies to be outlined in the State Strategy document are long term and will likely be broad and flexible, perhaps function as guidelines, but not be operational or prescriptive. For successful implementation, and to aid in crafting the Cooperative Forestry annual grant proposal(s)/narrative(s), it will be important to tier annual actions from the State Strategy. Work to implement the long-term strategies outlined in the State Strategy can be prioritized and specified in more detail in an annual Statewide action plan for a given fiscal year. Under this approach, individual staff units (by program area or other unit of organization within the State forestry agency) obtain overall long-term direction from the State Strategy, but can develop operational annual work plans tiered from the annual Statewide action plan. An annual Statewide action plan is not a Farm Bill requirement, but would aid in the development of funding requests (the Annual Grant Proposal and Narrative, State budget process, etc.) and in bringing the strategies down to an operational level for individual State staff units. See Figure 1 for a flow chart of

**Figure 1. Suggested Process for Implementing the State Strategy**



<sup>4</sup> The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, commonly referred to as the Farm Bill, was enacted June 19, 2008.

<sup>5</sup> The Cooperative Forest Assistance Act provides authority for the S&PF program areas

this suggested process for implementing the State Strategy.

### **S&PF Redesign: the Pieces and Processes Related to State Assessments and Strategies**

The flow chart in Figure 2 depicts the overall pieces and processes related to State Assessments and Strategies. Following the Farm Bill requirements and national and regional guidance, State forestry agencies develop a (1) State Assessment to identify priority issues and landscape areas and then address these in the (2) State Strategy. The State Assessment and Strategy are approved by the State Forester and then submitted to the Forest Service.<sup>6</sup> Federal review/approval of the State Assessments and Strategies will focus on making sure the State Assessment and Strategy include the minimum requirements (see draft checklist on [FRPC website](#)). Even if not required, State Foresters might consider seeking approval/endorsement of the State Assessment and Strategy by higher levels of State government (e.g., DNR Commission, DNR Director, Governor). Activities and detailed budget information for a given fiscal year tier from the long-term State Strategy and are outlined in the (3) Annual Grant Proposal/Narrative. These annual actions are completed as part of the core funding efforts and projects awarded through the competitive allocation initiative. Accomplishments are reported using the S&PF performance measures currently being developed (in the near term to include existing S&PF reporting systems) and the State Annual Report (USFS needs to develop a template for the report). This information is rolled up and reported nationally using the S&PF Annual Report Card.

There are some key unknowns (as of June 2009) noted in the flow chart by the questions marks:

- Annual Grant Narrative/Proposal—according to the national guidance, “States are encouraged to use a single annual grant narrative, which outlines actions to address the state assessment and resource strategy, for all S&PF programs that are authorized to receive funding under a consolidated grant option.” (However, Forest Legacy requires separate grants; congressional direction stipulates that Forest Legacy grants must be for specific projects or for specific tasks). Federal Fiscal Year 2011 is the first year states will utilize their State Strategy to identify actions in their grant narrative(s). Additional guidance from the U.S. Forest Service is required for the grant narratives and proposals.
- Performance Measures—S&PF Performance Measures that will be used starting in FY 2011, including how those performance measures will be reported, are being developed by a S&PF Redesign Performance Measure Working Group. The S&PF Performance Measures will be posted on the [S&PF Redesign website](#) when available.
- State Annual Report—The U.S. Forest Service still needs to develop the format, content, and process for submitting the State Annual Report (required by the Farm Bill). The first State Annual Report required will report on accomplishments for FY 2011.
- National Assessment and Tool—an on-line geospatial tool to aid in the identification of priority areas for State Assessments is currently being developed. A S&PF national assessment and this tool may provide information useful for State Assessments. Eventually, this or other on-line tools may be used for tracking accomplishments spatially, but that is yet to be determined.

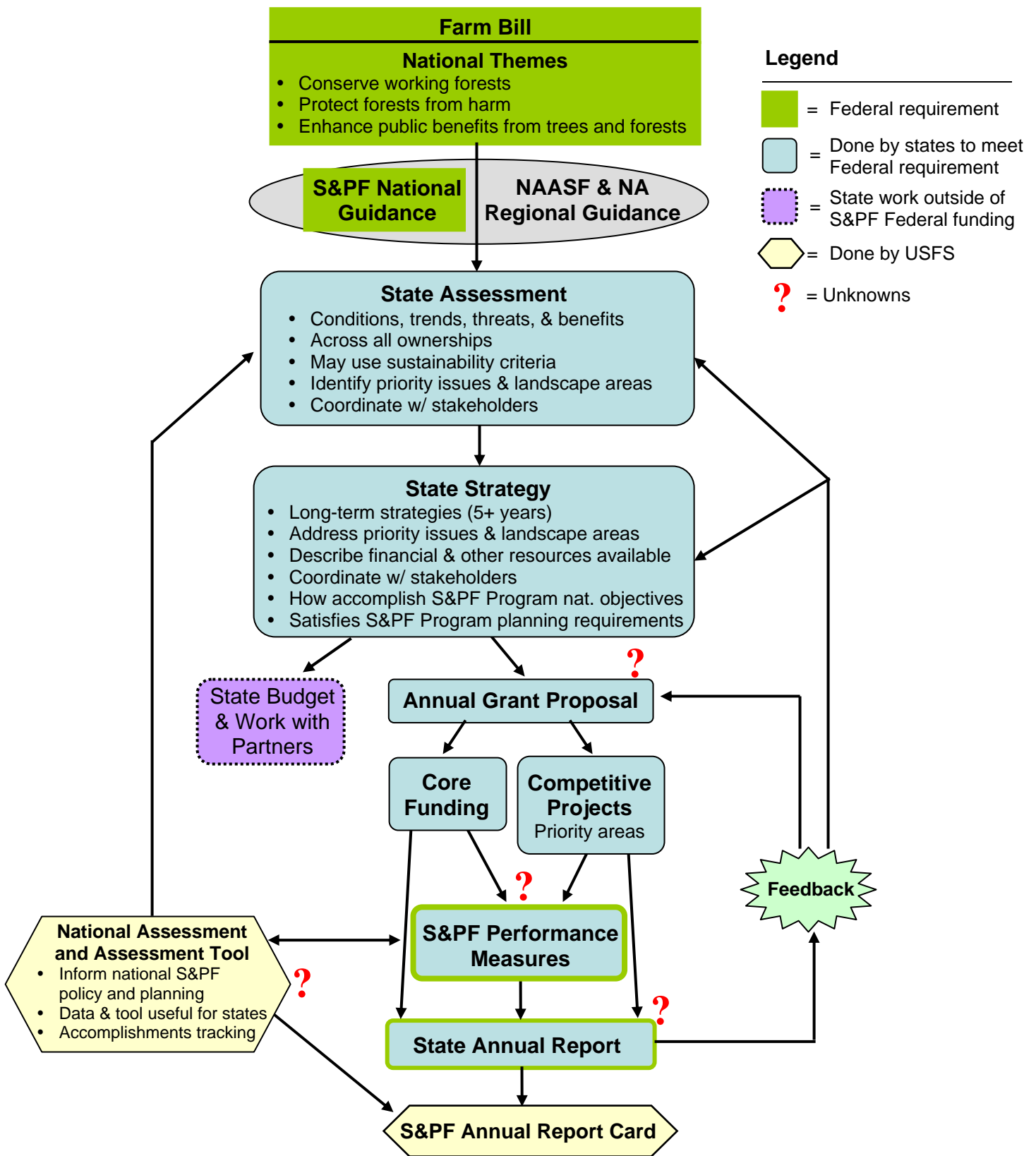
More information about S&PF Redesign is available at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/redesign>

After the State Assessments and Strategies are completed, the Northeastern Area S&PF plans to do a content analysis of them to compile some regional information about the priority issues and landscape areas that are presented in the State Assessments and how those will be addressed by States as outlined in the State Strategies. Other than that, the purpose of the State Assessments and Strategies are for the State to identify priority issues and landscape areas to tier annual actions from, as described above.

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<sup>6</sup> The approval process was under development by the Forest Service (Washington Office) when this guidance was drafted. When the process is finalized, it will be linked to from the FRPC website (<http://www.northeasternforests.org/FRPC>).

**Figure 2. Flow Chart to Summarize the Pieces and Process for State Assessments and Strategies**



## B. Suggested State Strategy Components and Outline

This section provides suggested components and an example outline States can use for their State Strategy. The components include both the minimum requirements (Section C) as well as components the NAASF and NA State Strategy Team felt were important in a well-developed State Strategy. Table 1 provides an example outline for the State Strategy document. States have ample flexibility for how they format the State Strategy document and are not required to follow this example.

### 1. Description of Priority Landscape Areas and Issues

The State Strategy should have a description of the priority issues and landscape areas brought forward from the State Assessment. Priority landscape areas within the State as well as multi-state priority areas are required in the State Assessment. If following the *NAASF Suggested Framework for State Assessments*, this would involve an overview of State Assessment sections “4. Issues, threats, and opportunities” and “5. Priority landscape areas.”

**Geospatial considerations**—a range of spatial resolution and methods will likely be used in presenting how each priority landscape area will be addressed. For example, invasives or forest health issues may be very spatially explicit, while utilization and other issues may be very broad. Maps and the results of further geospatial analysis should be incorporated into the State Strategy document where relevant to illustrate and better define and describe the areas addressed.

**Desired future trends/conditions**—setting desired future conditions is not required, but is often a part of statewide forest planning. Identifying the desired future conditions, and even desired outputs or roles of the forest within a selected landscape, sets the basis for identifying the issues, threats, and opportunities in the path of achieving those desired conditions and outcomes. Following this process, the State can then identify the strategies to achieve the desired trends/conditions. The desired future trends or conditions may provide a longer term strategic direction, (e.g., highlight the desired conditions in 10 years and then outline the strategies to work towards those desired conditions over the next 5 years). Setting desired future conditions can be time consuming, so may not be feasible for this first State Strategy, but States may want to consider identifying desired trends for each identified priority landscape area.

**Table 1. Example Outline for Statewide Forest Resource Strategy**

#### Introduction

- 1. Priority Landscape Areas and Issues**—overview of priority landscape areas and issues brought forward from the State Assessment (if identified, include desired future trends/conditions here) (see left).
- 2. A Call to Action: Strategies**
  - a. **Description of strategies** for priority issues and landscape areas (see below)
  - b. **Matrix of Strategies** (see pg. 8)
- 3. Investing Resources** (see pg. 10)
- 4. Translating Strategies to Annual Actions**—protocol for establishing annual action plans tiered from the long-term State Strategy (see pg. 10)
- 5. Monitoring and Reporting**—overview of how the State will monitor and report out on accomplishments (see pg. 10).

#### Appendices

- A. Stakeholders involved (see pg. 10)
- B. Plans consulted (see pg. 11)
- C. Glossary of terms and acronyms

### 2. Description and Summary of Strategies

States will develop strategies to address priority landscape areas and State issues outlined above. Considering that the State Assessment and Strategy will be updated every 5 years, it is suggested that the “long-term” strategies be developed for a 5+ year timeframe. In addition, if using the seven criteria of forest sustainability in the State Assessment<sup>7</sup>, the State may want to carry that framework into the

<sup>7</sup> See *NAASF Guide for State Assessments*, Appendix B for a listing of the criteria and indicators of forest sustainability.

State Strategy (presenting strategies for each of the seven criteria). There are different ways the strategies can be presented in the State Strategy document. The State may want to provide a description of the strategies as well as present them in a summary matrix.

### **a. Description of Strategies**

The State will likely want to provide an overview of the strategies to address the priority landscape areas and issues brought forward from the State Assessment. This may be done under Section 1, as each priority landscape area and issue is presented, or as a separate section.

**Across ownerships**—priority landscape areas will undoubtedly include a mosaic of State, Federal, private land, and other ownerships (e.g., tribal, municipal, etc...). Collaboration with these owners to coordinate activities is an important component of State Strategies. For example, priority landscape stakeholder groups could be developed to coordinate activities using a “green infrastructure” approach, and to collectively apply for grants. This also includes the results of any coordination with relevant Federal land management agencies such as the National Forests and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

**Ongoing activities**—There are important ongoing activities related to specific S&PF Programs that a State will likely want to continue, such as annual forest health inventories, annual monitoring of Forest Legacy Program conservation easements, and wildfire preparedness. While developing the State Strategy, States should consider which of these ongoing activities are important to continue and make sure to reference them in the State Strategy document—either in a general statement that covers such ongoing activities or by making sure each specific activity ties back to one of the strategies.

**Research needs**—States are asked to outline data gaps in the State Assessment to help focus future State, regional, and national data generation efforts (to fill the most needed gaps). Future critical research needs that are identified as part of the State Assessment and Strategy process may be identified as a strategy in the State Strategy document (does not need to be in a separate section).

### **b. Matrix of Strategies**

Although a matrix of strategies is not required, as shown in Table 2, the State Strategy can include such a matrix or a couple of tables to concisely show the following information for each strategy:

- State goal/issue(s) the strategy addresses
- Priority landscape area(s) the strategy addresses (if relevant)
- S&PF and other programs that contribute to the strategy (can show lead program in bold)✓
- Key stakeholders important for implementing the strategy✓
- Overview of resources available/required to implement the strategy✓
- List of which S&PF national objective(s) the strategy contributes to (Table 3)✓
- Measure of success (relevant S&PF performance measures as well as other measures the State plans to use to monitor accomplishments for the strategy)✓

As shown in the example (Table 2), a matrix of strategies (or a couple of different tables) can include all the pieces described above, but be formatted according to how the State is approaching the State Assessment and Strategy process. For example, a State can organize and present the strategies (1) by the seven criteria of forest sustainability, (2) by State goals/issues, (3) by priority landscape area, or (4) by some other structure. The State may show how the strategies contribute to the S&PF national objectives in a separate table placed either in the body of the document or in an appendix (e.g., a crosswalk of the strategies by S&PF national objectives).

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✓ These are required components that can be presented in one or more strategy summary tables.

**Table 2. Example State Strategy Matrices.** These are just examples, States are not required to present strategies this way.

**A. Example matrix of strategies organized by priority State issues**

**State Issue #1: Private Forest Landowner Demographic Trends, and Corresponding Land Use Changes**

Long-term Strategy	Priority Landscape Area(s)	Secondary Issues Addressed	Program Areas that Contribute	Key Stakeholders	Resources Available/ Required to Implement	Measure of Success	Supports National Objective
1. Protect land by promoting establishment of conservation easements.	- Middle Meramec - Current River  All above are also within designated Forest Legacy Areas.	2, 12 & 14	Forest Legacy; Competitive Grants;	The Nature Conservancy; Regional Land Trust; National Wild Turkey Federation; Ruffed Grouse Society; US Forest Service; Dept of Conservation	- Land Trusts - State Dept. of Conserv. (ID & refer landowners) - Private/stakeholder donations to fund stewardship fees - Forest Legacy - Conservation Tax	- Protection of 25,000 acres of priority area in the next 5 years - S&PF measure XY	1.1, 3.5
2. Second strategy for State issue #1							

**B. Two example matrices of strategies organized by priority landscape areas**

**Example 1: Priority Landscape Area 1: Middle Meramec**

Long-term Strategy	State Issues Addressed	Program Areas that Contribute	Key Stakeholders	Resources Available/Required to Implement	Measure of Success	Supports National Objective
A. Protect land by promoting establishment of conservation easements.	1, 12, & 14	Forest Legacy; Competitive Grants;	The Nature Conservancy; Regional Land Trust; National Wild Turkey Federation; Ruffed Grouse Society; US Forest Service; Dept of Conservation	-Land Trusts -State Dept. of Conserv. (ID & refer landowners) -Private/stakeholder donations -Forest Legacy (this is a Forest Legacy Area) -Conservation Tax Incentive	- Protection of 10,000 acres of priority forest in the next 5 years. - S&PF measure XY	1.1, 3.5
B. Second strategy for priority landscape area #1						

**Example 2: Priority Landscape Area 1: Lamoille River Corridor**

State Issues Addressed	Long-term Strategy	Program Areas that Contribute	Key Stakeholders	Resources Available/Required to Implement	Measure of Success	Supports National Objective(s)
A. Pressure to develop remaining forest lands in "transition" area.	1. Conserve existing lands with forests and trees via easements and forest management practices.	<b>Urban &amp; Community Forestry;</b> Forest Stewardship	Town and regional planners; State lands staff; Land trusts	Use UCF and Forest Stewardship to increase awareness of landowners of the importance of these lands for connected open spaces; land trusts determine this a priority; LIP	- Degree of connectivity of trees across the landscape - S&PF measure YZ	1.1, 1.2, 3.5, 3.6
C. Village mixed use and suburban residential zoning	2. Maintain existing and expand forested buffers along river to protect wildlife and water quality; Institute low-impact development (LID) methods for new construction.	<b>Forest Stewardship;</b> Urban and Community Forestry; Forest Health	Basin planner; League of Cities and Towns; Sea Grant Program; FREMO; developers; town planners and zoning boards	Distribution of information re: LID; County open space plans; County landscape analyses by University (underway); review of town ordinances	- Adoption of LID practices - Water quality not diminished by adjacent construction - Existing and newly planted trees remain healthy - S&PF measure ZZ	3.1, 3.5

### **3. Investing Resources: Financial and Other Resources**

As issues and strategies are formulated, States should consider the resources needed and/or available to effectively implement strategies to address them. Specific budgetary information (dollar amounts) is not required in the State Strategy document—that belongs in the annual grant proposals/narrative. States are required to provide an overview of how they propose to invest Federal funding along with other resources. States should consider briefly describing the capabilities and limitations within the State to address the threats and opportunities, including capacity (legal, financial, staffing, partners, etc.). There could also be a description of anticipated unfunded needs to outline what could be done if additional resources were available. See section C.2.a. for additional thoughts on this component.

### **4. Protocol for Translating Strategies into Actions**

Since the State Strategy is broad and strategic in nature, it is anticipated that the State will want to develop an annual action plan that tiers from the State Strategy (see Section A). An annual action plan would have more detailed actions and budgetary information and be utilized to develop the annual grant proposal(s) and eventually the narrative for Forest Service funds (as well as for funds from other sources). In addition, specific State staff units and/or program managers may want to develop annual work plans that tier from the statewide annual action plan. The State should outline the protocol for how they plan to implement the State Strategy from year to year, regardless of how the State decides to translate the long-term State Strategy into the annual grant proposal (addressing funding needs for core funding and competitive projects).

### **5. Monitoring and Reporting**

Addressing monitoring and revision of the State Strategy is necessary to take into account changes in conditions, values, technologies, and implementation resources and to provide a complete description of the planning process. It is suggested above, that “measure of success” be included as a column in a matrix listing the strategies. That can include which S&PF performance measure(s) will be used for the strategy as well as other measures the State may wish to use. In addition, States should have an overview of how the Strategy's actions are to be evaluated and verified—the process for setting measurable targets, monitoring, and revising the Strategy.

### **6. Stakeholder Involvement—List of “Who” and Overview of “How”**

The Farm Bill requires coordination with the State Forest Stewardship Committee, State wildlife agency, State Technical Committee, applicable Federal land management agencies, and the lead State agency for the Forest Legacy Program (where the lead agency is not the State forestry agency). The National Guidance also requires coordination with the State Urban and Community Forestry council. The *NAASF Guide for State Assessments* provides additional examples of stakeholders States may want to engage. The State Strategy document should include a list of the stakeholders (agencies and organizations) that were consulted during development of the State Strategy and a brief description of how stakeholders were involved.

There are different ways that stakeholders can be consulted in the State Assessment and Strategy process. For example, a State may choose to draw primarily on internal expertise to draft the State Assessment document following the forest sustainability criteria framework and then share the draft Assessment with stakeholders to get input and discuss the priority issues and areas (and eventually the strategies). Another approach would be to conduct stakeholder scoping sessions early in the Assessment process to identify and agree on key issues and then conduct and frame the Assessment

according to those issues. Then stakeholders could be engaged again when the assessment is completed to develop lists of potential strategies to address each priority issue and area.

The Forest Resource Planning Committee website has resources and tips for stakeholder involvement (<http://www.northeasternforests.org/FRPC/>).

## **7. List Other Plans Consulted**

Provide a list and brief description of the plans consulted during development of the State Strategy. As required by the Farm Bill, this should include at a minimum the State Wildlife Action Plan and Community Wildfire Protection Plans, and will also include other plans such as forest plans for State lands, Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, forest plans for Federal lands, and the most recent State Forest Stewardship and Urban and Community Forestry Program plans.

## **8. Glossary of Terms and Acronyms**

A glossary including definitions for key terms and acronyms may be provided as an appendix to the State Strategy. A glossary of key terms and acronyms pertinent to the State Strategy and used by the State forestry agency and key stakeholders is helpful, especially for key stakeholders that will read the document.

## C. Minimum Requirements for the State Strategy

The bold text bullets below (numbered from 1-8) are the minimum requirements for State Strategies, as specified by the national guidance. The text beneath each minimum requirement (lettered bullets) contains the NAASF and NA State Strategy Team's understanding of and tips for meeting the minimum requirements.

### 1. Outline long-term strategies for addressing priority issues, threats, and landscape areas identified in the State Assessment and the national themes and associated objectives.

- a. The terms underlined, "issues, threats," were added to the national guidance because it is important for the State Strategy to address the priority issues and threats (as drivers of priority areas) in addition to specific priority landscape areas.
- b. Suggest that the "long-term" strategies be developed for 5+ years, considering that the State Assessment and Strategy will be updated at least every 5 years.
- c. To address the national themes and objectives, outlined in Table 3, it is suggested that there be a column for "relevant national objective(s)" in a strategies matrix (see Table 2) or a separate table which cross-walks the strategies to the national objectives.

### 2. Describe how the state proposes to invest Federal funding, along with other resources, to address state, regional, and national forest management priorities.

- a. Provide a general overview of how the State will use Federal funding along with other resources. Describe what funding sources are likely to be available and/or sought during the 5-year period of the Strategy (as explained in section B.3. on page 10). States may present the proportion of S&PF and other funds that will be used for different purposes, such as to support staff, provide grants to landowners, contract work, etc. This may be presented to show how funds will be utilized given the level of funding; (1) current funding levels, (2) decreased funding, (3) increased funding. Itemized budget information for how the State proposes to invest Federal funding to implement the strategies should be included in the annual grant proposal(s)/narrative—not the State Strategy.<sup>8</sup>
- b. In a matrix listing the strategies (e.g., Table 2), States can include columns identifying resources that will be used to implement the strategy and which national objectives the strategy supports. States may choose to have a separate table that cross-walks the State strategies to the national objectives (see Table 3 for the list of national objectives).
- c. Regarding regional priorities, in the State Strategy, States should reference multi-state landscape areas or priorities that are highlighted in the State Assessment.

### 3. Include a long-term timeline for project and program implementation.

- a. The timeframe for project and program implementation will match the "long-term" strategies outlined above. States may prioritize the strategies and identify which ones they will begin each year or identify which strategies can be accomplished in a short time frame (such as 1-5 years) and which will take longer (5+ years). More detailed project implementation information for a particular fiscal year should be outlined in the annual grant proposal(s)/narrative (see page 4).

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<sup>8</sup> At this time we do not know the format and content required for the S&PF Annual Grant Narrative starting in FY 2011.

**4. Identify partner and stakeholder involvement.**

- a. The Farm Bill requires coordination with the State Forest Stewardship Committee, State wildlife agency, State Technical Committee, applicable Federal land management agencies, and the lead State agency for the Forest Legacy Program (where the lead agency is not the State forestry agency). In addition, the national guidance requires coordination with the State Urban and Community Forestry Council. Beyond these requirements, each State has flexibility to decide which stakeholders to work with, and to what extent, in development of the State Assessments and Strategies. The intent is for State Assessments and Strategies to (1) integrate, build upon, and complement other State natural resource assessments and plans and (2) identify opportunities for program coordination and integration. If available, States may do this by working with an established forest advisory council representing a range of forestry stakeholders in the State.
- b. States should provide a list of stakeholders (or stakeholder organizations/agencies) that were consulted in the development of the State Assessment and Strategy and identify key partners and stakeholders that will help (or will be consulted with) for addressing each priority issue and landscape area, and specifically for implementing each strategy (this can be done in a strategies matrix—see Table 2).

**5. Identify strategies for monitoring outcomes within priority forest landscape areas and how action will be revised when needed.**

- a. As mentioned above, it is recommended that States identify which S&PF performance measures and other measures will be used to measure accomplishments for each strategy (can be identified as a column in a strategies matrix). In addition, States will likely want to include a section to briefly describe monitoring needs, requirements (such as monitoring Forest Stewardship Plan implementation), and evaluation of the monitoring results. States can explain that adaptive management will be used; revising actions based upon the outcomes achieved from the actions taken.

**6. Describe how the state’s proposed activities will accomplish national S&PF program objectives and respond to specified performance measures and indicators.**

- a. In a matrix listing the strategies, States can include a column identifying which S&PF national objective(s) each strategy supports. See Table 3 for the list of the S&PF national objectives. Appendix A to the national guidance for State Assessments and Strategies provides a description of each S&PF national objective. It is suggested that a strategies matrix can also include a column indicating what performance measures will be used to measure accomplishments for each strategy. The performance measures should include those that are

<b>1. Conserve Working Forest Landscapes</b>
1.1. Identify and conserve high priority forest ecosystems and landscapes
1.2. Actively and sustainably manage forests
<b>2. Protect Forests from Harm</b>
2.1. Restore fire-adapted lands and reduce risk of wildfire impacts
2.2. Identify, manage, and reduce threats to forest and ecosystem health
<b>3. Enhance Public Benefits from Trees and Forests</b>
3.1. Protect and enhance water quality and quantity
3.2. Improve air quality and conserve energy
3.3. Assist communities in planning for and reducing wildfire risks
3.4. Maintain and enhance the economic benefits and values of trees and forests
3.5. Protect, conserve, and enhance wildlife and fish habitat
3.6. Connect people to trees and forests, and engage them in environmental stewardship activities
3.7. Manage and restore trees and forests to mitigate and adapt to global climate change
<small>* These national objectives were approved by the S&amp;PF Redesign Implementation Council and by NASF, Sept. 2008</small>

required as part of S&PF program reporting<sup>9</sup> and may include additional measures the State would like to use to measure progress towards each strategy.

**7. Describe how S&PF programs will be used to address priority landscape and management objectives.**

- a. As specified in the Farm Bill, the State Assessments and Strategies “shall be deemed to be sufficient to satisfy all relevant State planning and assessment requirements under [the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act].” Separate 5-year State Forest Stewardship and Urban and Community Forestry Program plans are no longer required; instead, planning for specific S&PF Programs, including Fire Management, Forest Health, Forest Legacy, Forest Stewardship, and Urban and Community Forestry should now be incorporated into the State Strategy process and document. States do not need to draft a chapter on each S&PF Program in the State strategy—instead the intent is to integrate the Programs for maximum benefit, coordination, and results.
- b. States should address all S&PF Programs for which they will seek Federal funding. In a matrix listing the strategies, States can include a column to identify which S&PF program(s) will be used to implement each strategy (see example, Table 2). In the description of how the State will address the priority issues and landscape areas, the State will also likely want to reference which S&PF Program(s) will be used. See Section E of this guide for more about program integration and a description of elements to consider for each S&PF Program.
- c. Due to the nature of the Forest Legacy Program, there are certain assessment and planning elements of the Forest Legacy Program that must be incorporated into the State Assessment and Strategy if participation in the Forest Legacy Program is desired. See Section E (page 18) for more details about recommendations for the Forest Legacy Program pieces and process.
- d. The State Strategy should include broad strategies to address key priority issues and landscape areas. More detailed annual action plans for specific program areas can then be tiered from the State Strategy.

**8. Incorporate existing statewide plans including Wildlife Action Plans, community wildfire protection plans, and address existing S&PF program planning requirements.**

In the process of developing the State Strategy, States are encouraged to consider existing statewide plans. The Farm Bill specifically requires States to “incorporate” the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) and Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) (see below). In addition, there are likely other plans (statewide or covering regions within the State) that States will want to consider, such as past State strategic and forest resource plans, State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans (SCORP), plans for the forest lands owned/managed by State and Federal agencies, most recent State Forest Stewardship and Urban and Community Forestry Program plans, and plans for Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMA).

The extent and way in which the SWAP, CWPPs, and other plans are “incorporated” in the State Assessment and Strategy will vary widely by the specific plan being considered (the format, relevance, date of the plan, etc.). It is not expected that States will fully incorporate these plans, but rather consider them—the intent is to build upon and complement other State natural resource plans, identify opportunities for coordination, and avoid planning contradictions or omission of key items due to oversight and lack of consultation with stakeholders and other plans. See bullet 7.a.

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<sup>9</sup> The S&PF Performance Measures were not finalized at the time this guidance was drafted. When the final measures are available, they will be linked to from the FRPC website (<http://www.northeasternforests.org/FRPC>).

above for an overview of addressing prior planning requirements for S&PF programs. Section E of this guide also provides tips for program integration and, as a reference, elements to consider for each program.

- a. **State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP)**—A SWAP is required for each State wildlife agency to be eligible for US FWS funding (<http://wildlifeactionplans.org/>). The extent to which a State can incorporate the SWAP in the State Strategy is dependent upon the scope and output of the SWAP. For example, some SWAPs include the delineation of specific landscape areas to focus habitat conservation efforts—plans of this nature are easier and more relevant to consider in the State Assessment and Strategy. Other SWAPs only provide a lengthy description of all the wildlife species in the State with information about which species are of concern/importance—plans of this type will be much more difficult to “incorporate” in the State Strategy. States are not expected to fully incorporate the entire SWAP into the State Strategy, but rather, thoughtfully consider the SWAP and consult with the State agency(ies) responsible for implementation of the SWAP, during development of the State Assessment and Strategy.
- b. **Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP)**—CWPPs are developed to address issues such as wildfire response, hazard mitigation, community preparedness, structure protection in communities, or all of the above. The CWPPs help communities to develop local solutions to local problems. Communities identified as “at risk” from the threat of wildland fire may have a current CWPP or may need to develop one. The State Strategy may include the prioritized actions identified in current plans and/or may identify those priority areas where CWPPs may need to be developed. In priority areas where wildfire risk planning is needed, States should determine if the appropriate planning tool is the CWPP or equivalent plan or if the CWPP planning elements would be more appropriate in another natural resource planning instrument.

Due to the local scale of these plans and the fact that there may be CWPPs for a large number of communities in a given State, it may be difficult or cumbersome to incorporate all the CWPPs outright. Therefore, there is no need for outright incorporation of CWPPs. States are encouraged to analyze the CWPPs that have been developed for communities in their State and in the State Strategy provide a summary of the number of communities with CWPPs and key information about the plans. In addition, in the State Assessment, States should identify any communities in each priority landscape areas that have CWPPs. There will be a web page with CWPP resources, several examples, and relevant CWPP guidance documents available soon (<http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fire/index.shtm>).

## D. Tips for Statewide Forest Planning

In the 1980s, as part of the Planning Assistance Program, comprehensive Statewide forest plans were required and developed by each State forestry agency. Since that time, a number of States have continued to update or develop new Statewide forest plans, learning from this process along the way.<sup>10</sup> As a result of that experience and considerations related to the new requirements for State Strategies, the following are some tips and considerations for the State Strategy:

- Organizational relevance is critical. Commitment to implement the State Strategy is important, and therefore the Strategy must address the needs of the State and work within the structure and capacity of the State forestry agency. That is one of main reasons why there is so much flexibility for the content and layout of the State Strategy.
- Provide clear and concise management direction that addresses desired future conditions, strategic goals and objectives/strategies. Specific operational objectives and actions can be outlined in a Statewide annual action plan.
- Write the strategies to be broad and flexible, but specific enough to understand what will be done. States can draft the strategies as guidelines which allow local variability to be addressed. The strategies should be grounded—States can use the “SMART” approach; Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timeframe. The strategies and associated deadlines should realistically represent the State’s capacity for implementation.
- Create long term strategies that can facilitate the development of the annual actions, e.g., have long term (5+ year) strategies in the State Strategy with annual actions that tier from the State Strategy specified in an annual action plan and/or the annual grant proposal(s).
- Developing stronger stakeholder relationships and networks can facilitate collaboration, leading to a more integrated process of reviewing forestry conditions and strategies over time. “Participation by various ‘publics’ in the planning process can improve the quality of decisions and gain support for proposed programs. Public involvement can become a key factor in acceptance and implementation of the plan.”<sup>11</sup>
- Consider any planning units, natural area zoning, etc. to be used as a framework for analysis and management, either on an operational or strategic basis. This may be administrative, ecological, or use-based, and includes specially-designated areas for biodiversity conservation, recreation, etc.
- “Implementation consists of carrying out the decisions made in the plan. It transforms conceived strategies and policies into operational programs and turns prescriptions into results.”<sup>11</sup>
- Addressing monitoring and revision of the State Strategy is necessary to take into account changes in conditions, values, technologies, and implementation resources and to provide a complete description of the planning process.
- Adaptive Resource Management—was developed by Canadian ecologists in the 1970's. This is a process of decision-making that can be used when there is not enough information to properly answer a resource management question. Adaptive management is a “learning by doing” process; as new information is learned, the models and management strategies change. A commitment and plan for gathering new and better information is key. The data that feeds State Assessments will continually be improved; therefore, States will want to adjust the strategies to reflect the response of the natural resources to management. See the [FRPC website](#) for additional information.

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<sup>10</sup> See the NAASF FRPC web site for links to past State forest plans: <http://www.northeasternforests.org/FRPC/>

<sup>11</sup> USDA Forest Service. 1987. Statewide Forest Resource Planning Guidebook.

## **E. Program Area Integration: *Tell the Whole Story***

In keeping with the intent of the Farm Bill and the spirit of S&PF Redesign, the State Strategy should integrate work by different S&PF Program Areas to address identified priority landscape areas and issues through a collaborative approach. Some S&PF Programs, such as Forest Stewardship, Forest Legacy, and Urban & Community Forestry, previously had individual Program planning requirements. Prior Program-specific plans do not meet the intended purpose of S&PF Redesign and are no longer required. Although a State may still choose to develop program-specific plans, such plans need to be complementary to the State Strategy (overarching strategies from the program plan included in the State Strategy). Other S&PF Programs, such as Fire Management and Forest Health, did not previously have planning requirements.

Each S&PF Program has core functions and purpose, but there are additional or overlapping functions that each Program can best address through integration. States will likely have strategies that are implemented by a single S&PF or other program as well as strategies that are implemented by multiple programs. States are encouraged to creatively employ the S&PF Programs to address the priority issues and landscape areas in the State Strategy. For example, to address climate change, a State may use (1) the Forest Stewardship program to encourage forest management techniques for adapting to climate change in Forest Stewardship Plans, (2) the Fire Management Program for hazard mitigation in communities thought to have an increased risk to wildfire due to climate change, and (3) the Urban and Community Forestry Program for tree plantings to cool urban “heat islands” and help mitigate climate change. The sample strategies matrices in Table 2 provide additional examples of how the different S&PF Programs can be integrated to address priority issues and landscape areas.

The focus is on integrating the S&PF Programs to address the priority issues and landscape areas. In order to integrate, it is important to understand the key expertise, concerns, and focus of each S&PF Program. The following section provides a list of elements to consider related to S&PF Program and other areas for the State planner to reference as the long-term strategies are being drafted.

### **Fire Management Program**

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The S&PF Fire Management Program did not previously have Federally-mandated planning requirements.

The Fire Management Program is more than suppression; fire management practices are part of the forest management strategy to be employed, while also addressing wildfire risk areas. The Fire Management Program includes preparedness, suppression/support, equipment, training, community mitigation, prescribed burns, and hazardous fuels reduction.

Fire Management Program elements to consider for the State Strategy:

- Critical preparedness needs—including firefighter safety, fire planning, firefighter training, increased initial attack capability, and mobilization readiness for the efficient suppression and prevention of wildfires on non-Federal forest lands and other non-Federal lands. Included in critical preparedness is the support and partnership with the structural fire community utilizing the Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) and the DOD Fire Fighter Property (FFP) programs. State Strategies should also identify the existence of any cooperating agreements for suppression activities on Federal lands.
- Hazard mitigation—activities should focus on hazard fuels reduction, development and implementation of Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs), prevention and mitigation education, Firewise programming, and community hazard mitigation.

- Prescribed burning—hazard mitigation; ecosystem maintenance/restoration; control of invasives and wildlife habitat improvement; silvicultural practices including site preparation and oak regeneration; management activities for rare, threatened, and endangered species; watershed management and forest health practices all can be achieved with prescribed burns.

## **Forest Health Program**

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The Forest Health Program did not previously have Federally-mandated planning requirements.

Forest Health Program elements to consider for the State Strategy:

- Address exotic invasive pest species and the impact they have on forest resources.
- Detect, monitor, and evaluate forest pests and forest health conditions.
- Conduct activities to maintain and improve forest health conditions and sustainability.
- Reduce damage through effective pest management, including suppression and/or eradication.
- Represent forest entomology and pathology expertise within the State.
- Include education efforts where needed, such as the “do not move firewood” campaign to limit the spread of invasive insects.
- Involve State Departments of Agriculture as partners where they are the lead agency for Cooperative Forest Health. Elsewhere, they should be a key stakeholder, as most States share pest management responsibilities between agriculture and forestry agencies.
- Collaborate regionally and nationally, as pest impacts extend beyond state boundaries. Collect forest health data that is compatible with other states.
- Include flexibility to respond to emerging situations that threaten forest health, such as new insect/disease outbreaks or introductions.

## **Forest Legacy Program**

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The Forest Legacy Program had prior assessment and planning requirements and specific processes which need to be considered as part of the State Assessment and Strategy. In the past, the Forest Legacy Assessment of Need was completed to seek approval for Eligibility Criteria, which are used to identify Environmentally Important Forest Areas. These are the Forest Legacy Area(s); that is, the area(s) within a State from which potential Forest Legacy properties can be chosen. Properties must be within a Forest Legacy Area to be eligible for protection under the Forest Legacy Program. These Forest Legacy requirements are now to be incorporated in the State Assessment and Strategy:

- The State Assessment should assess specified resources required by the Forest Legacy Program. The assessment should provide background/rational for the Eligibility Criteria.
- **Eligibility Criteria**—Identify either the approved or proposed State Eligibility Criteria, preferably in the State Assessment, but could also be placed in the State Strategy.
- **Forest Legacy Areas**—Delineate the approved or proposed Forest Legacy Area(s) that meet the Eligibility Criteria in the State Assessment and Strategy (any proposed Forest Legacy tracts/projects must be within the Forest Legacy Area). See specific requirements for Forest Legacy Area description in the accompanying document “Integrating Prior Forest Legacy Program Requirements into the State Assessment and Strategies” for more detail.
- If the State does not change their Eligibility Criteria and Forest Legacy Areas, they can incorporate the approved Eligibility Criteria and Forest Legacy Areas in the State Assessment/Strategy and attach the Secretary’s approval letter as an appendix. If changes are made to the Eligibility Criteria or Forest Legacy Areas, then they should be presented as “proposed” rather than approved.

- **Project/tract prioritization process**—Include the proposed Forest Legacy Program project/tract prioritization process in the State Strategy.
- Invite land trusts to participate on the State Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee or the Forest Legacy Committee, which is consulted in the State Assessment and Strategy process.
- Tribes may request to be included in the FLP, therefore, consult with such tribes during development of the State Assessment and Strategy.

See the accompanying document, “Integrating Prior Forest Legacy Program Requirements into the State Assessment and Strategies” on the [FRPC website](#) for more details about recommendations for the Forest Legacy Program pieces and process. In addition, it is envisioned that integration with other programs could expand the influence of the Forest Legacy Program, increasing the potential from what is currently being achieved.

## **Forest Stewardship Program**

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The State Strategy replaces the prior 5-year State Forest Stewardship Plan; however, the Forest Stewardship Spatial Analysis Project (SAP) and State Forest Stewardship Plan should be consulted during development of the State Assessment and Strategy.

In considering strategies, States should favor those that will dramatically increase the stewardship of private forests (as shown by more public support, more acres under management, more forest landowners, more technical information on the ground, more private sector financial support, less fragmentation, etc.).

Strategies should consider all forest lands within the priority forest landscape by integrating the stewardship of traditional private family forest ownerships with management of rural/urban transition lands, industrial forest lands, public forest lands, etc.

Forest Stewardship Program elements to consider for the State Strategy:

- The role and strategic importance of private forest lands in achieving the desired outcomes and future conditions for the identified priority forest landscape areas.
- Include strategies for reaching and motivating landowners to apply principles of sustainable forest management.
- The role of individual and/or landscape Forest Stewardship Plans to help landowners achieve their resource conservation objectives.
- The role of voluntary incentive programs, regulatory, and cooperative programs; and the role of government, business, NGOs, and partners in the implementation of on-the-ground conservation projects and the sustainable management of forest land.
- Opportunities to demonstrate to the larger public, the importance of forest stewardship and the sustainable management of our nation’s private forest land.

## **Urban and Community Forestry Program**

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The State Strategy replaces the prior 5-year State Urban and Community Forestry Plan; however, the existing plan should be consulted.

The purpose of the Urban and Community Forestry Program is to encourage cooperative efforts to plan urban forestry programs and to plant, protect, maintain, and utilize wood from trees in open spaces, greenbelts, roadside screens, parks, woodlands, curb areas, and residential developments in urban areas. Core activities include public education and targeted assistance for protecting, conserving, and enhancing urban tree canopy cover. Approaches often include tree plantings, tree inventories, tree cover assessments, and active management and planning of the urban forest resource for a suite of services such as energy conservation, carbon sequestration, biomass utilization, storm water management, and other environmental, social, and economic benefits.

The State should identify priority issues and landscape areas, and then specify which strategies the Urban and Community Forestry Program will contribute to.

Urban and Community Forestry Program elements to consider for the State Strategy:

- Increase the number of communities and affected populations achieving 'developing' and 'managing' status. Review data in the Community Accomplishment Reporting System (CARS).
- Protect and enhance urban tree canopy cover.
- Manage and protect forests in urban growth areas and during development activities.
- Mitigate climate change through targeted tree planting and maintenance efforts.
- Support and create green jobs.
- Address exotic invasive pest species that typically affect urban forests.
- Protect and enhance watersheds in urban and developing areas.
- Promote the importance of trees, forests, and forestry to urban residents.

## **Community Forest and Open Space Program (CFP)**

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Through the new Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program, authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill, the U.S. Forest Service is authorized to provide financial assistance grants to local government, Tribal Governments, and nonprofit entities to establish community forests to provide continuing and accessible community benefits. This program provides grants to local government, Tribal governments, and nonprofit entities to protect forest land through full fee title acquisition (requires a 50% non-Federal match). It focuses on community benefits such as economic benefits from sustainable forest management, natural resource conservation, forest-based educational programs, model forest stewardship activities, and recreational opportunities. There will be a public comment period on the rules for this program by summer, 2009.

## **Forest Utilization and Marketing**

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There were no prior Federal planning requirements for forest utilization and marketing, yet strengthening and developing new market opportunities for forest products and benefits provide for forest stewardship and conservation. Thus, the NAASF Forest Utilization and Marketing Committee encourages States to continue to recognize the forest products industry as vital to the sustainability of the nation's forests.

Forest utilization should be defined in the broadest terms to include traditional forest products (pulpwood, sawlogs, etc.), non-traditional and special forest products, biomass production for renewable energy, forest-based recreation, as well as emerging markets (such as ecosystem services). Utilization includes commercial and non-commercial activities in both the public, as well as the private sectors. In addition to the public, key stakeholders include forest-based industry, landowners, foresters, and economic development professionals.

Assessments should identify forest landscape areas where there is a real, near-term potential to access and supply traditional, non-timber, and/or emerging markets (such as those for biomass energy or ecosystem services).

Forest utilization and marketing elements to consider for the State Strategy:

- Economic importance of the forest industry (in addition to standard timber-based economic sectors, perhaps also include forest-based recreation, watershed protection, open space retention, and other ecosystem services where quantified).
- Develop and sustain markets in the State for forest products.
- Identify existing and future opportunities for third party green certification.
- Monitor and assess utilization activities within the state, including:
  - Engaging and interacting with industry
  - Maintaining an awareness of the issues affecting industry
  - Gathering data pertaining to harvesting and industry, then reporting and sharing important information
  - Recognizing new and innovative market opportunities
  - Promoting business opportunities for forest industries in the State
  - Participating in NAASF Forest Utilization Committee activities

## **State Lands Management**

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There were no prior Federal planning requirements for State land management. The NAASF State Lands Management committee suggests that States assess the role that State-owned forests play and their benefit to the environment, economy, and society.

State lands management elements to consider for the State Strategy:

- Green infrastructure—can provide significant blocks of protected land and contiguous forest for carbon storage, wildlife habitat, back-country dispersed recreation, etc.
- Economic significance—in tough economic times, the industry may have a difficult time finding reliable sources of wood, while the State forests can potentially provide a steady stream of wood to the marketplace.
- Identify certified forest lands—certified lands are becoming increasingly more important as both the social license to manage public lands and to the marketplace.
- Characteristics of State lands—may want to identify landscape characteristics of State ownership compared with other ownerships (in the State Assessment and/or Strategy).

## Conservation Education

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There were no prior Federal planning requirements for conservation education. Conservation education plays a role across all program areas.

Conservation education elements to consider for the State Strategy:

- Consider Conservation Education in every program area, e.g., education of fire mitigation and prevention, forest health issues, benefits of stewardship activities, economic impact of forest products in communities.
- Consider sharing information about the State Assessments and Strategies with the State departments of education.
- Consider use of North American Association of Environmental Educators (NAAEE) Guidelines for Excellence in Education when developing educational materials, planning educational programs and/or searching for high quality curriculum to use in programs. <http://www.naaee.org/programs-and-initiatives/guidelines-for-excellence/>
- Consider collaboration with NAAEE State affiliate for assistance in education goals. <http://www.naaee.org/about-naaee/affiliates/affiliates-contacts-by-region>
- If passed, in order to receive environmental education funds through the No Child Left Inside Act, State departments of education would be required to have an environmental literacy plan in place which includes input from State environmental agencies. States could build some education components about the priority issues and landscape areas to suggest for inclusion in the State's environmental literacy plan.
- Consider demonstration areas on State (or land trust) lands to educate landowners and the public.

## Watershed Forestry

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Previously, there were no Federally-mandated planning requirements for Watershed Forestry. Watershed forestry plays a key role in all program areas to help protect and enhance water quality and quantity. Priority watersheds can be identified in the State Assessment and strategies to resolve issues related to these watersheds presented in the State Strategy. Priority watersheds could be watersheds that are impaired or deforested but can be measurably improved through planning and active management or forested watersheds that are not yet impaired but could be protected from impairment.

Watershed Forestry elements to consider for the State Strategy:

- Watershed forestry concerns include: water quality; health of existing watershed forests; forest fragmentation and parcelization; increased sedimentation and nutrient pollution.
- Minimize conversion of forest land by supporting local conservation efforts; support small private forest management and conservation with technical assistance; increase funding for working forest conservation in Farm Bill programs; facilitate the development of ecosystem services markets.
- Emphasize efforts in watersheds that provide domestic water supplies (headwaters protection).
- Protection, enhancement, and restoration of forest and riparian corridors and buffers (green infrastructure). Tie watershed priorities for wildlife habitat to the State Wildlife Action Plans if possible. Set goals for restoring/conserving valuable forests.
- Identify opportunities to coordinate State forestry program actions on a watershed basis and in coordination with other conservation practices.
- Develop a program to provide support for State and local watershed groups including technical assistance, informational materials, and program presentations.

- Establish a watershed forestry position or assign watershed programming responsibilities within an existing position on the State Forester's staff.
- Facilitate watershed-based partnerships that foster an understanding of the value of water, citizen stewardship, and shared learning (especially the importance of forests to water quality and healthy aquatic systems).
- Use the NA Best Management Practices (BMP) Monitoring Protocol (<http://www.na.fs.fed.us/watershed/bmp.shtm>) to assess compliance with the Clean Water Act and inform the public of the protection of water resources in forest management operations.
- Minimize impacts on pre-development hydrology (especially in urban areas). These include: support for tree canopy expansion, local codes or ordinances that support healthy tree cover, reduction of stormwater runoff, strengthening State regulatory programs, and providing community level nutrient and sediment allocations.
- Utilize the Watershed Forest Management Information System (WFMISS) developed by the Watershed and Exchange Technology (now Forest to Faucet) Partnership to focus Stewardship Planning and EQUIP benefits on lands with a high priority for watershed protection ([http://wetpartnership.org/projects\\_tools2.html](http://wetpartnership.org/projects_tools2.html)).
- Adoption of a legal requirement to include water resource protection plans for forest access systems associated with timber sales when submitting cutting plans for tax purposes. Inclusion of water resource protection components and BMPs in cutting plans as legal requirements when the State Forester approves the plan.
- In the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions of Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the District of Columbia, the State Implementation Plan for the Chesapeake Forest Conservation Directive should be consulted during development of the State Strategy.

## **F. Additional Resources**

The following two websites provide regional and national resources for development of State Assessments and Strategies.

### **NAASF Forest Resource Planning Committee (FRPC) Website**

The FRPC website, <http://www.northeasternforests.org/FRPC/>, serves as resource for state assessment and planning information and examples. This guidance, companion documents, and other information are provided on the FRPC website:

- State planning and GIS contacts for the 20 Northeast and Midwest States and the District of Columbia
- NAASF guidance and links to data for State Assessments
- Additional guidance for incorporating the Forest Legacy Program requirements
- Resources and tips for stakeholder involvement
- Regional briefing papers and PowerPoint presentations on State Assessments and Strategies.
- Checklist for Federal Approval of State Assessments and Strategies ([draft posted 5-4-09](#))

### **S&PF State Assessment and Strategy Resource Center Website**

The S&PF State Assessment and Strategy Resource Center, <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/redesign/resourcecenter.shtml>, serves as a national resource for state assessment and strategy requirements. Information provided:

- National guidance for State Assessments and Strategies
- U.S. Forest Service contacts for State Assessments and Strategies
- Link to the national data geospatial resource page for State Assessments
- Communication tools for State Assessments and Strategies
- Links to regional guidance and examples for State Assessments and Strategies
- Link to additional information about S&PF Redesign and related components.

# Appendices

## I. Example Timeline for State Strategy Process

The timeline followed by each State to develop the State Strategy will depend upon a number of factors including when the State Assessment is completed, how the process is led (e.g., led by a state planning specialist versus led by a task force), what type of stakeholder involvement processes are pursued, and any State requirements for approval of this type of document.

The following timeline is just an example for consideration as States plan the State Strategy process. Stakeholders will be involved throughout the State Assessment and Strategy process. This timeline starts during the transition from work on the State Assessment to work on the State Strategy.

<b>.Task</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Who</b>
Transition from developing State Assessment to focus on developing the State Strategy	Aug./Sept. 2009	Lead State planning specialist/team
Draft potential list of strategies to address each priority issue and landscape area identified in the State Assessment.	Oct. 30 2009	State forestry staff (across all program areas)
Stakeholder scoping sessions to review and prioritize potential list of strategies.	Nov.-Dec. 2009	Lead State planning specialist/team and stakeholders
Draft State Strategy document (share internally)	Feb. 5 2010	Led by State planning specialist/team with input from other staff
Internal review and input due on draft State Strategy document	March 5 2010	State forestry staff
Share revised draft of State Strategy document with stakeholders	March 26 2010	Lead State planning specialist/team
Stakeholder input on revised State Strategy draft due	April 26 2010	All stakeholders
Compile and incorporate input from stakeholders to develop final draft of State Strategy document	May 17 2010	Lead State planning specialist/team
State Forester approve State Assessment and Strategy and submit as required/desired for internal State approval	May 24 2010	State Forester
Final edits to State Assessment and Strategy based on State approval reply	June 11 2010	Lead State planning specialist/team
Submit electronic copy of State Assessment & Strategy to the US Forest Service <sup>14</sup>	June 18 2010 <sup>12</sup>	State Forester
Reply due from Feds. to State Forester on approval of State Assessment & Strategy <sup>14</sup>	July 18, 2010?	??
Submit annual grant proposal to NA for FY 2011	??	State Forester/grants staff

<sup>12</sup> This is pending an approval process, which is being developed by the Forest Service in consultation with the Redesign Implementation Council (RIC).

## **II. NAASF & NA State Strategy Team**

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To accompany prior work by the State Assessment Core Team, the Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters (NAASF) charged their Forest Resource Planning Committee (FRPC) to draft regional document(s) with more details on the components for State Strategies. The FRPC convened a team of State forest planning and GIS contacts and State representatives from each NAASF Committee as well as NA S&PF program specialists. This effort was led and facilitated with support from the Northeastern Area. The NAASF & NA State Strategy Team held several conference calls and web meetings from December 2008 through June 2009 to draft this regional guidance and accompanying documents. A draft of this guidance was shared with all members of NAASF committees, additional NA staff, and the U.S. Forest Service national contacts for input and comment. The NAASF approved the *NAASF & NA Guide for Statewide Forest Resource Strategies* July 14, 2009.

### **NAASF & NA State Strategy Team Members**

NA Lead—Sherri Wormstead, Sustainability and Planning Coordinator  
NA GIS Lead—Tom Luther, GIS Services and Support  
NAASF Liaison to FRPC—Dan Devlin, State Forester of Pennsylvania  
NAASF—Ian MacFarlane, NAASF Executive Director

#### **NAASF FRPC Representatives**

Mark Ervin (OH)  
Susan Francher (NH)  
Rebecca Gass (WI)  
Linda Henzel (VT)  
Matt Keefer (PA)  
Brett Martin (IN)  
Bill Moulton (VT)  
Bruce Payton (RI)  
Larry Pedersen (MI)  
Gus Raeker (MO)  
Paul Roth (PA)

#### **NAASF Committee Representatives**

Cooperative Forest Management—Dan Ernst (IN)  
Forest Health—Barbara Burns (VT)  
Forest Fire Supervisors—Mike Bowden (OH)  
State Land Management—Jack Perdue (MD)  
Urban & Community Forestry—Danielle Fitzko (VT)  
Utilization—Sarah Smith (NH)

#### **NA S&PF Program Representatives**

Forest Stewardship—Mark Buccowich and Mike Huneke  
Forest Health—Jim Steinman  
Forest Legacy—Deirdre Raimo  
Fire Management—Maureen Brooks  
Urban & Community Forestry— Phillip Rodbell

#### **Other Contributors**

Conservation Education—Susan Cox, NA S&PF Conservation Education Coordinator  
Watershed Forestry—Steven Davis, NA S&PF Watershed Staff Specialist