

Forest Trails and Landings

(Acres) Code: 655

Definition

A temporary or infrequently used route, path or cleared area in a forest.

Massachusetts Practice Intent

- Provide temporary stream crossings for landowners for management activities including forest stand improvement and wildlife habitat.
- To treat erosion on existing forest harvest trails and landings at site-specific locations.

Condition Where Practice Applies

Private non-industrial and tribal forest lands where sections of existing harvest roads, trails, or landings are actively eroding and are in need of repair to facilitate forest management. To provide temporary access across a stream to facilitate forest management for improved timber and wildlife habitat management.

Massachusetts NRCS Program Rules

- A forest management plan is required on all forest land applications per EQIP policy (515.80(C))
- Stream crossings are temporary and shall be removed prior to payment.
- Erosion control does not need to be prescribed in the forest management plan.
- If the proposed project is located in NHESP Priority Habitat, submit a data request form to the NRCS-NHESP Review Biologist prior to conducting a site visit and include the NRCS-DFW Habitat Biologist and NRCS-NHESP Review Biologist in the site visit.

Program Payments are authorized:

- To reduce active soil erosion via, water bars, shaping and grading, and seeding (where needed), on existing forest trails used for forest management activities.
- For moving sections of roads that are in a very poor location (e.g. on stream bank, through a wetland).
- For temporary stream/wetland crossings needed for forest management activities with an approved DCR Cutting plan.

Program Payments are not authorized for:

- Recreational Trails
- Upgrading seasonal trails to “all season trails”
- Improving non-eroding skid trails.

Further Explanation of Scenarios:

Grading and shaping with vegetative establishment

- For shaping and grading and installation of water bars and other similar measures to reduce erosion on actively eroding portions of existing forest trails. Includes seeding.

Trail Erosion Control without vegetation, Slopes <35%

- For shaping and grading and installation of water bars and other similar measures to reduce erosion on actively eroding portions of existing forest trails. Does not include seeding.

Re-Route Sections

- For re-routing existing skid trail sections that are located at low topographic areas running through wetlands, riparian areas or vernal pools damaging habitat for species of concern. Or, trail sections that are located such that slopes are excessive and erosion is difficult to address with minor earthwork.

Temporary Stream Crossing

- For culverts, stone fords and temporary pre-fab bridges that provide temporary access across a stream or wetland in order to reduce erosion and water quality impacts while facilitating forest management activities. Payment is made upon removal of the crossing.