

**571—74.5(461A) Forest land enhancement program areas.** This rule delineates eligibility and procedures for cost-share assistance for forestry practices.

**74.5(1) Eligibility.** FLEP funds are available statewide except that funds from a specific funding entity may be earmarked for cost-share assistance in a specific geographic region of the state. To be eligible for cost-share assistance, individual landowners must have a forest stewardship plan approved by the department and enter into a written agreement with the department specifying the obligations of each party.

**74.5(2) Applications.** Applications will be accepted only from those eligible as noted above.

*a.* Applications must be on forms furnished by the department.

*b.* Applications must be signed by the landowner and by the department.

**74.5(3) Project review and selection.** Project applications will be reviewed separately for each department forestry district. Department district foresters in each district will recommend what projects are approved and the total amount of cost-share funds to be allocated to the landowner. The department will have final approval over projects.

**74.5(4) Contract agreements.** The department is authorized to enter into agreements with landowners to carry out the purposes of this program.

*a.* Agreement forms will be provided by the department. They shall state the terms of the agreement including, but not limited to, conservation practices to be implemented, total project cost, and cost-share dollars allocated for the specified practices.

*b.* The approved forest stewardship plan shall be considered a part of the contract.

*c.* Cost-share assistance will not be provided unless both parties have signed an agreement.

*d.* Contract periods will not be approved for any period less than ten years in duration.

*e.* Contracts may be amended by mutual agreement of both parties.

**74.5(5) Specifications and guidelines.** Forestry practices must conform with the department's Forestry Practices Manual: Technical Guide.

**74.5(6) Cost-share rates.** The department, with input from the state forest stewardship committee and in accordance with USDA Forest Service policies, shall set cost-share rates and payment maximums for each authorized forest conservation practice.

**74.5(7) Reimbursements.** Cooperators shall submit billings for reimbursements on forms provided by the department.

*a.* Billings shall be submitted immediately after project completion and within 18 months of project approval.

*b.* Billings shall include documentation on all costs incurred for the project.

*c.* Reimbursements shall not be made unless the landowner has fulfilled obligations as specified in the contract.

*d.* Billings shall be approved or disapproved by the department's district forester or assistant district forester after inspection of the project.