

State Forestry Programs For Land Grants

Presentation to the Land Grant Interim Committee
October 7, 2025

Laura McCarthy, State Forester

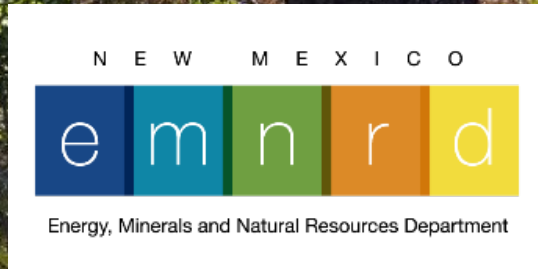
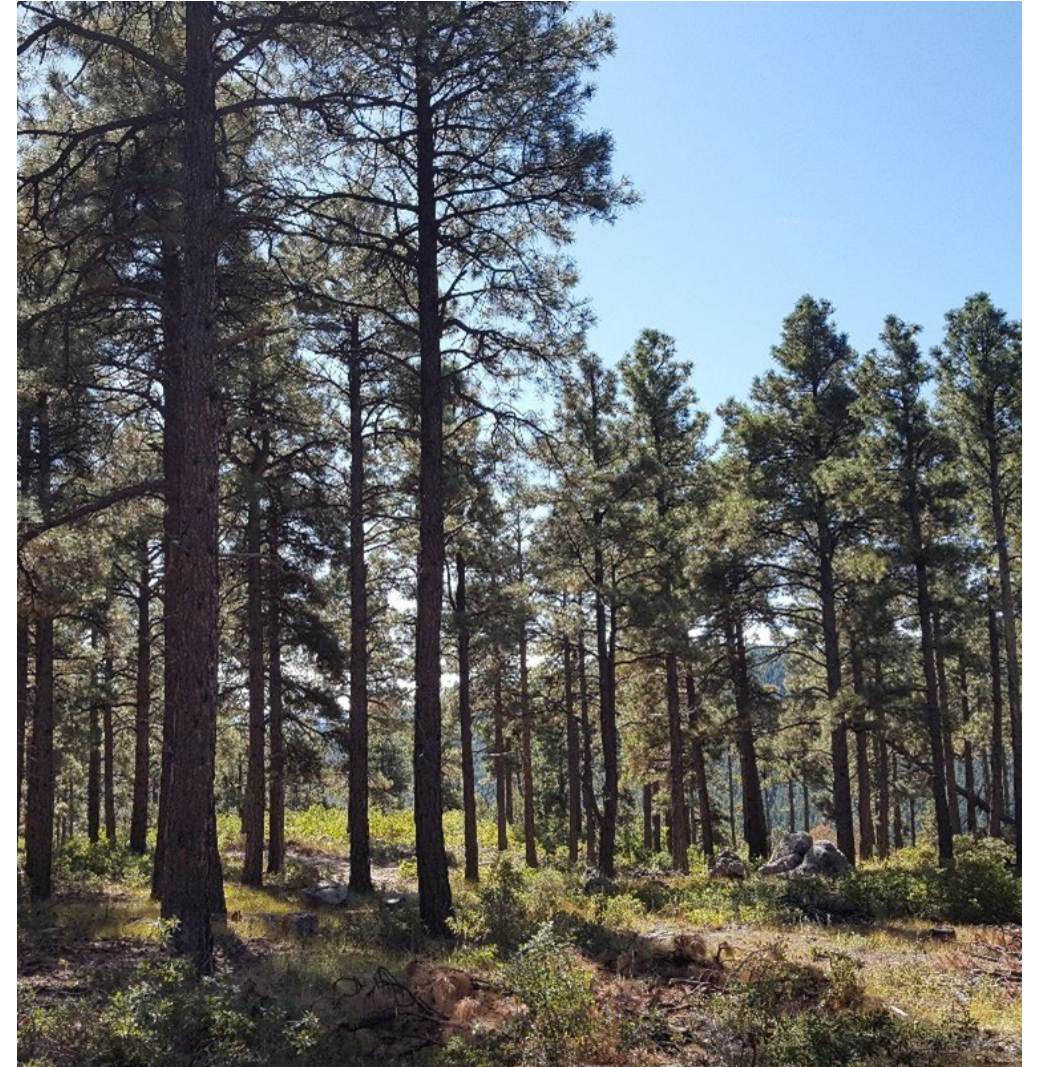


Table of Contents

- Technical Assistant
- Current Projects with Land Grants
- Landowner Payments for Carbon Stewardship Practices

Technical Assistance Goals

- The Forestry Division provides technical assistance to New Mexico landowners in all 33 counties, as well as local and tribal governments, soil and water conservation districts, and land grants.
- The goal is to help landowners and land grants improve forest and watershed health by developing resource management plans, offering insect and disease identification, facilitating forest health and fuels reduction project funding, and planning for reforestation.
- Interested landowners and land grants are invited to reach out to their local Forestry Division district office for more information about the services provided.



State Forestry Division - 6 District Offices

Bernalillo District
Rio Rancho, NM
505-867-2334

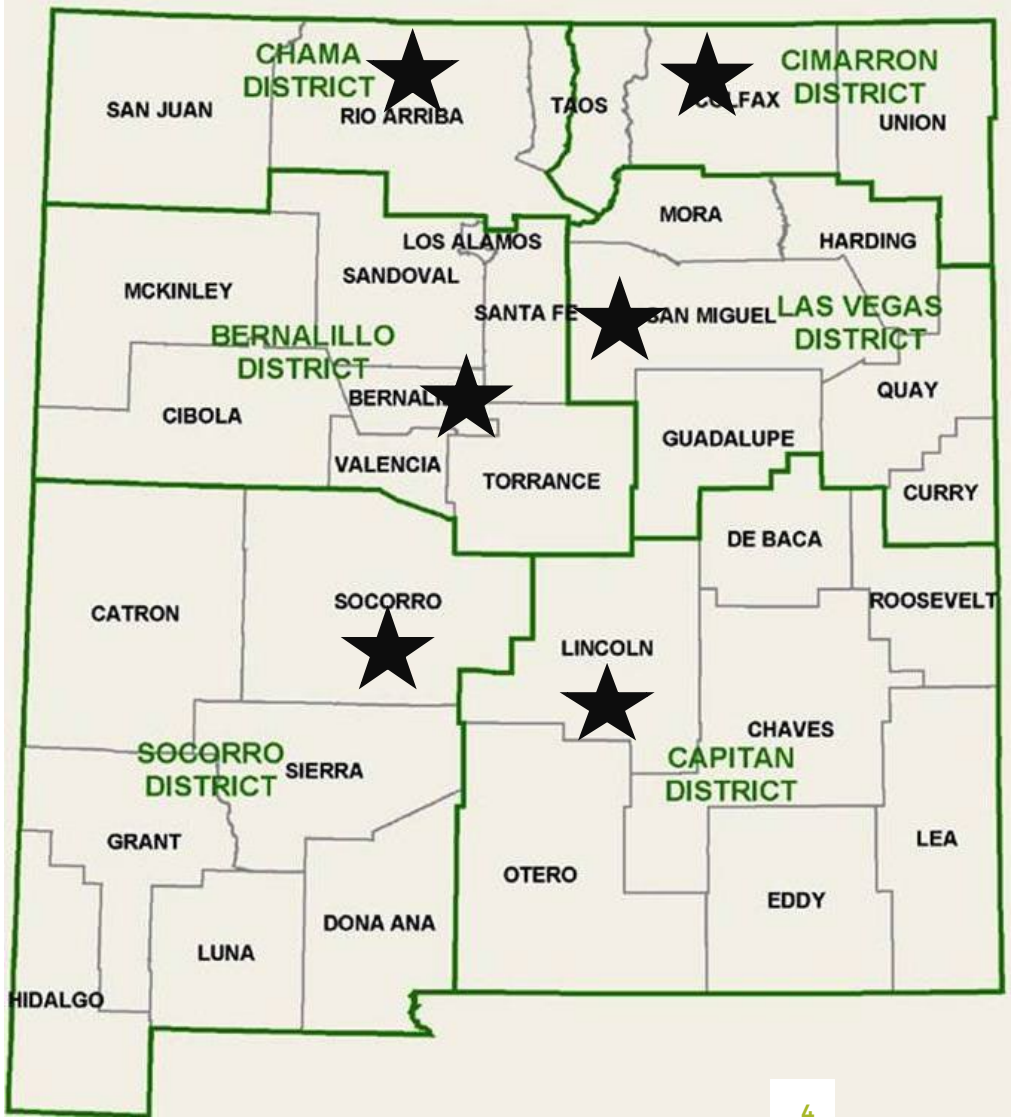
Cimarron District
Ute Park, NM
575-376-2204

Chama District
Tierra Amarilla, NM
575-588-7831

Capitan District
Capitan, NM
575-354-2231

Las Vegas District
Storrie Lake State Park
575-425-7472

Socorro District
Socorro, NM
575-649-8861



Current Projects with Land Grants

- Nuestra Señora del Rosario, San Fernando y Santiago del Rio de las Truchas Grant
 - 70 acres thinned
 - 1,200 – 1,500 community buffer planned
- Juan Bautista Valdez Land Grant
 - Thinning planned after community outreach
- Los Vigiles Land Grant
 - 700 acres tree thinning
 - Post-fire (HPCC) hazard tree mitigation
 - Reforestation planning underway



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Technical Assistance for Landowners and Communities

STANDARD PROGRAMS:

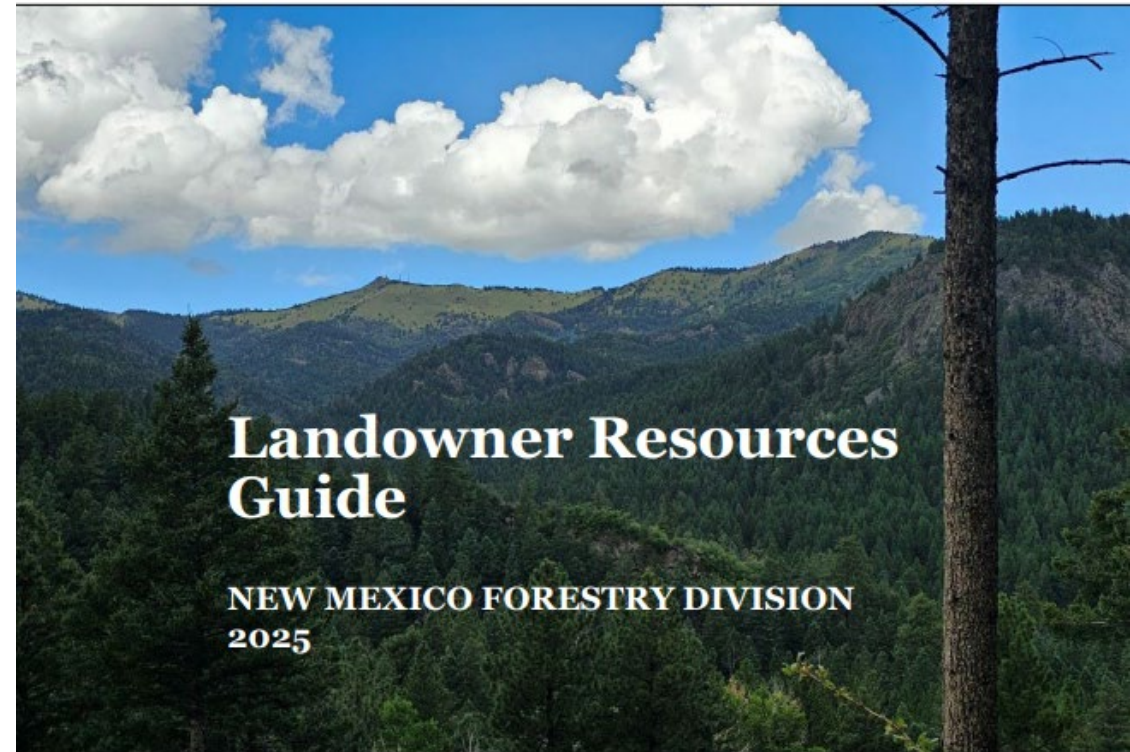
- Forest Stewardship Program
- Urban and Community Forestry
- Forestry and Fuels Grants
- Conserving Lands
- Other Resources

RECENTLY ADDED:

- Landscape Stewardship Planning
- Payments for Carbon Stewardship

10/7/2025

State Forestry Programs for Land Grants



Landscape Stewardship Planning Overview

- **Purpose:** Collaboratively develop forest stewardship plans for private landowners within defined landscapes.
- **Integration:** Blends individual landowner goals with collective forest resource assessments and tailored treatments.
- **Goal:** Makes forest stewardship planning and practice more accessible and effective.
- **Benefits of Scale:**
 - Streamlines plan development for the Forestry Division and partners.
 - Supports grant eligibility and competitiveness.
 - Promotes forest restoration at a landscape scale.



Conventional Forest Management Planning

- Forest Health Initiative (FHI) and other funding opportunities, such as NRCS EQIP, require a Forest Management Plan
- Forest Management Plans can be completed:
 - At no charge by the Forestry Division District Office; however, waitlists can be long.
 - For a cost by a private consultant / contractor

Landscape Stewardship Pilots: Our Approach & Early Learnings

Collaborative Solution: Grouping multiple landowners into single plans for broader impact and efficiency.

Pilot Phase: Developing a statewide strategy through two pilot landscapes in the Las Vegas District.

Funding: Utilizing USFS FY24 Inflation Reduction Act Landowner Support funding.

Focus: Engaging communities historically underrepresented in forestry programs.

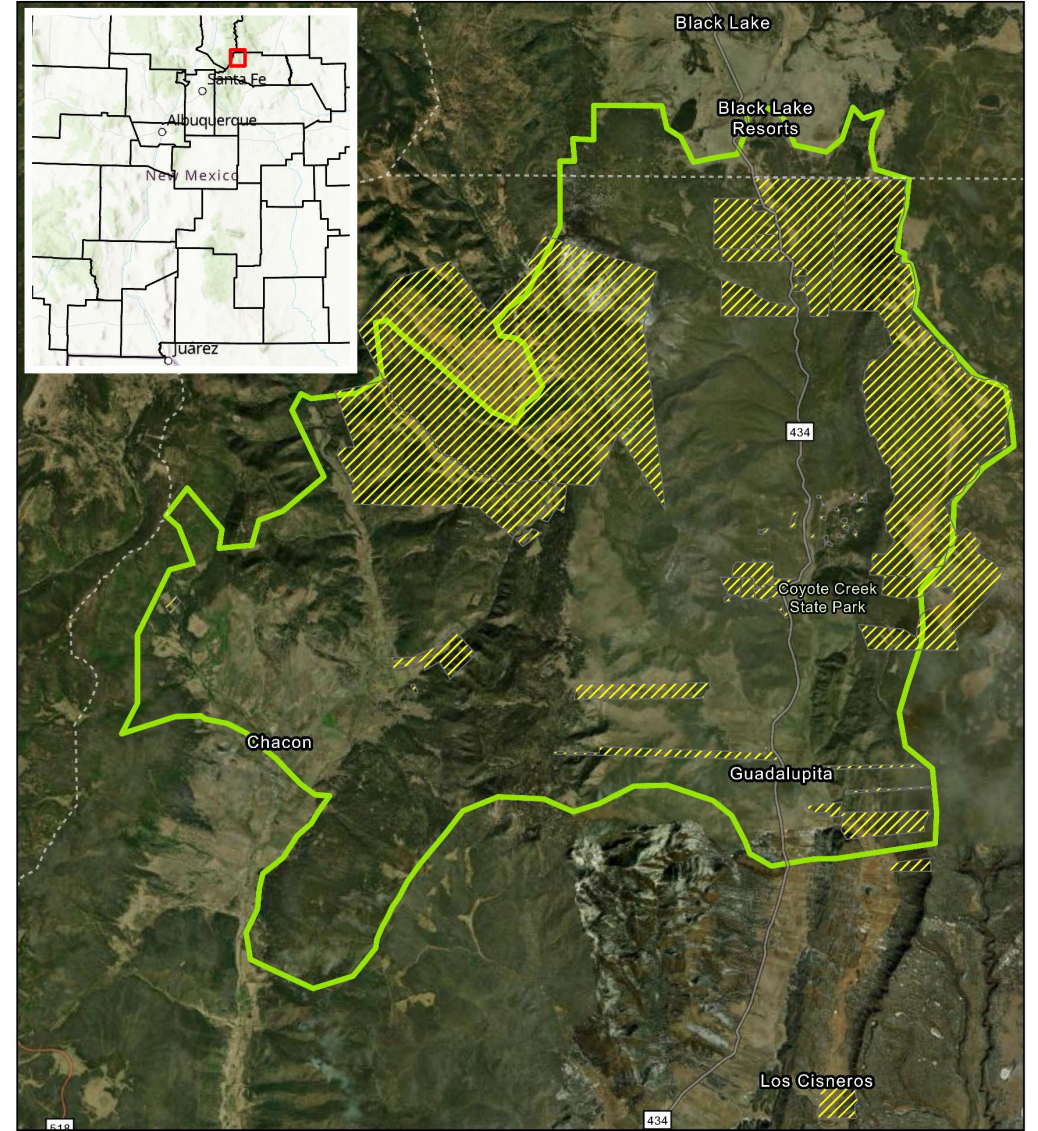
Lessons Learned: Documenting scalable methods, including strategic landowner outreach and engagement.

Pilot Landscape: Coyote Creek

- Acreage within boundary: ~56,500 acres
- Landowners: ~800 estimated landowners
- Participants to Date: 49 landowners
 - covering 17,510 acres

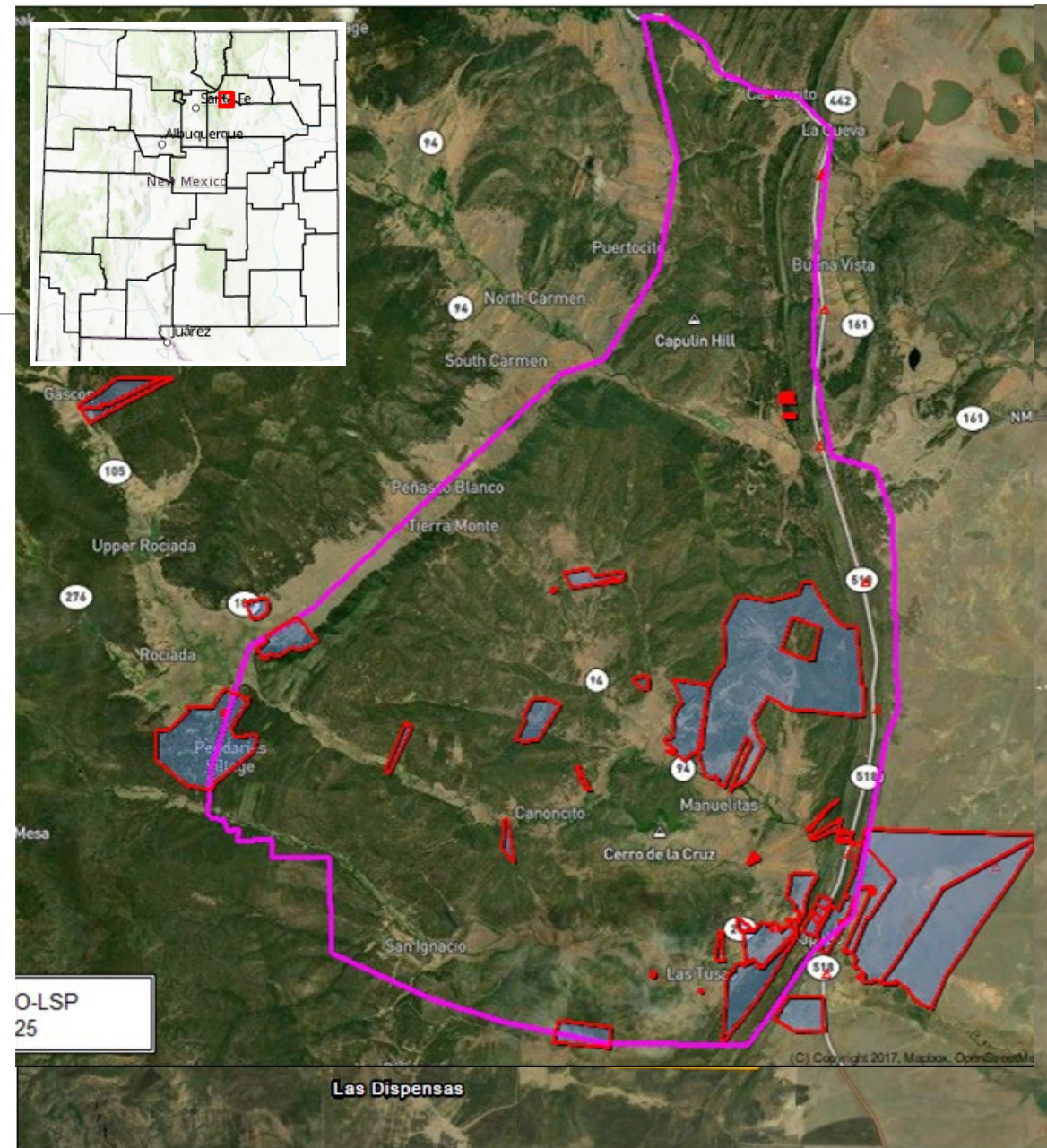


Coyote Creek Landscape Participation



Pilot Landscape: Sapello

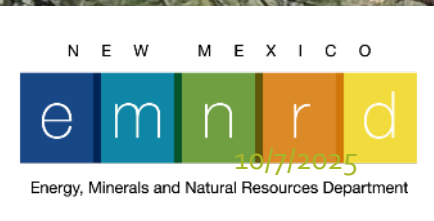
- Acreage within boundary: ~51,500 acres
- Landowners: ~850 estimated landowners
- Participants to Date: 35 landowners
 - Covering ~ 8,000 acres



Landscape Stewardship Plan Components

1. **Goals & Challenges:** Discuss similarities in land management goal and challenges in sample population
2. **Current Conditions:** Assessment results, including forest inventory, post-fire impacts, existing markets
3. **Desired Future Conditions:** Blending landowner goals and needs for forest resilience
4. **Management Recommendations:** Prescriptions for mapped units, market opportunities, etc.
5. **Priority Landscape Restoration Needs:** Opportunities for landscape-scale implementation
6. **Resources:** Funding opportunities, crosswalk with planning documents
7. **Landowner Addendums:** Landowner-specific info needed for Forest Health Improvement and other program participation (allows for adding landowner retroactively after plan has been finalized)

Landowner Payments for Carbon Stewardship Practices



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GOALS

- Increase participation of landowners in forest stewardship activities by offering programs that address financial needs and compensate for opportunity costs of practices with public carbon benefits.
- Increase carbon benefits from non-industrial private forest lands by creating a program dedicated to compensating landowners for:
 - Post-fire recovery to reduce soil carbon losses and avoid stand conversion
 - Soil stabilization activities
 - Reforestation activities, including site preparation and seedling protection
 - Pre-wildfire forest restoration to improve the resilience of existing carbon stocks by reducing the threat of future high-intensity wildfires
 - Thinning with prescribed fire

PROGRAM DESIGN

- **Fiscal Agent:** Sub-recipient partner administers landowner payments, provides technical assistance, providing planning support.
- **Target Communities:** 100% of projects must be benefiting underserved communities in areas with:
 - Stand-replacing wildfire inhibiting natural regeneration, or
 - Overly stocked forests at high risk of severe wildfire impacting carbon storage and watersheds.
- **Connection to Existing Initiatives:** Leverages Landscape Stewardship Planning communities, FHI program networks, and post-fire recovery efforts.
- **Direct Payments:** Landowners receive payments to implement carbon-focused practices, plus compensation payment to address opportunity costs.



CARBON STEWARDSHIP PRACTICES

Burned Area Recovery	Avoided Emissions
Erosion Control (mulching, log-erosion barriers) *	Thinning & Slash Management*
Seeding Disturbed Sites	Prescribed Fire*
Site Preparation	
Reforestation (+protection)*	

* Carbon benefit quantification based on acres of implemented practices.

Compensation Payments

- Accounting for opportunity costs and maintenance requirements
- Small acreage landowners (<15 acres):
 - Receive 15% of total project costs
- Large acreage landowners (>15 acres):
 - Receive 10% of total project costs

*Sliding scale to ensure equitable benefits to smaller acreage landowners who undergo similar project start-up efforts but have reduced implementation costs and thus reduced compensation payments.

- Cap on landowner compensation payments to be determined with Forest Stewardship Committee



Contact Us

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