

About the Program



The **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for Forestland Health** provides financial assistance to manage forests, woodlands, renovate old windbreaks and establish new ones. Forestland, windbreaks, cropland, and grassland all have the potential to qualify for the program if a “resource concern” is identified.

Primary resource concerns for the program are the health and condition of trees in windbreaks and forests, soil erosion that impacts water associated with excessive sediment. Specific examples of resource concerns may include:

- ◆ Windbreaks with gaps and dead trees
- ◆ Streambank erosion where additional tree planting can provide long-term reduction in soil loss
- ◆ Forest or woodlands that are over crowded (need thinning), or would benefit from additional tree planting; or contain a high percentage of invasive or undesirable trees and shrubs

EQIP for Forestland Health payment rates are based upon region-wide average costs. These rates are associated with practices such as:

- 380 – Windbreak Establishment
- 650 – Windbreak Renovation
- 484 – Mulching
- 490 – Tree/Shrub Site Prep
- 612 – Tree/Shrub Establishment
- 666 – Forest Stand Improvement
- 391 – Riparian Forest Buffer

Eligibility and Requirements

- ◆ EQIP is available statewide.
- ◆ Applicants must be engaged in agricultural production or forest management or have interest in the agricultural or forestry operation associated with the land offered for enrollment in EQIP.
- ◆ Tenants may apply with written support from landowners.
- ◆ Land must have a “resource concern” as determined by Kansas Forest Service district foresters and/or NRCS district conservationists.
- ◆ A forest management plan or Forest Stewardship Management plan is required. Plans are prepared by KFS district foresters at no cost to the applicant. Plans are not required prior to application, though they can speed up the process.

How to Apply

Applications are accepted continuously at county NRCS offices located in USDA Service Centers statewide. However, the application evaluation period cutoff date for the federal fiscal year is usually in November. Locations and contact information are available on the Web at www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov by clicking on “Find a Service Center” under “Kansas Links”. Additional program information is also located at http://www.kansasforests.org/rural_forestry/

NRCS will refer applicants to a Kansas Forest Service district forester who will visit the property and develop a management plan to guide the project. NRCS will then rank and prioritize the application based on criteria developed for Forestland Health and fund accordingly. After contracts are obligated by NRCS and plans are completed applicants may begin their projects.

Eligible Practices

NRCS provides financial assistance for selected conservation practices, including examples listed below.

Each year, NRCS re-evaluates the amount of financial assistance available for each practice in each state.

These evaluations consider the current costs for material and labor within the state, and also the fair marketplace compensation for opportunity costs that may arise (e.g. conversion of productive land).

If necessary, the amount of financial assistance is adjusted to keep pace with actual costs.

Mechanical Mowing

Chemical Control (herbicides)

Weed Barrier Fabric (squares or rolls)

Tree/Shrub Site Prep

Direct Seeding (Riparian Buffer)

Tree Planting (Hand or Machine & Tubes)

Riparian Forest Buffer Tree Planting, Bareroot or Container & Hand-planted or Machine Forest Stand Improvement (single stem treatment)

Windbreak Renovation Supplemental Planting, Bare Root

Windbreak Renovation Row Removal—Dozer

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