

# Standard 8

## HARVESTING TIMBER AND OTHER MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Standard 8 provides guidance as you plan your sustainable timber harvests and contract with qualified professionals to undertake any management activities outlined in your **management plan**.

### Performance Measure 8.1

*Landowner should use qualified natural-resource professionals and qualified contractors when contracting for services.*

#### INDICATOR 8.1.1

*Landowner should seek qualified natural-resource professionals and qualified contractors.*

Many states have licensing requirements for foresters, wildlife managers, and other professionals, and your state forestry agency is a good place to start in finding the help you need. The professionals listed by these systems have passed rigorous qualification exams and regularly update their education and skills to maintain their licenses.

#### INDICATOR 8.1.2

*Landowner should engage qualified contractors who carry appropriate insurance and comply with appropriate federal, state, and local safety and fair labor rules, regulations and standard practices<sup>1</sup>.*

<sup>1</sup> *Third-party assessors shall consider any complaints alleging violation of fair labor rules filed by workers or organized labor since the previous third-party certification audit. The auditor shall not take action on any labor issues pending in a formal grievance process or before federal, state or local agencies or the courts, however, until those processes are completed. Absent a record of documented complaints or noncompliances, contractors and managers are assumed to be in compliance with this indicator.*

### Resources: Finding a Qualified Professional

- Your state's forestry agency is a good place to start when you are looking for highly qualified professionals to help you with your timber harvest or other forest-management activities. Find a link to your state agency at [www.mylandplan.org/your-state-forestry-agency](http://www.mylandplan.org/your-state-forestry-agency).
- You also can find a qualified forester through the Certified Forester program administered by The Society of American Foresters: [www.safnet.org/certifiedforester/index.cfm](http://www.safnet.org/certifiedforester/index.cfm)
- The Wildlife Society has a Certified Wildlife Biologist program: <http://wildlife.org/learn/professional-development-certification/cwbawb-directory/>
- The Association of Consulting Foresters maintains a nationwide registry of forestry consultants: [www.acf-foresters.org](http://www.acf-foresters.org)
- The American Forest Foundation's website for woodland owners has extensive resources on choosing a forester ([www.mylandplan.org/choosing-consulting-forester](http://www.mylandplan.org/choosing-consulting-forester)), logger ([www.mylandplan.org/hiring-logger](http://www.mylandplan.org/hiring-logger)), or wildlife biologist ([www.mylandplan.org/wildlife-biologists](http://www.mylandplan.org/wildlife-biologists)), and visit [www.mylandplan.org/difference-between-forester-logger](http://www.mylandplan.org/difference-between-forester-logger) to learn the difference between a logger and a forester.
- A qualified natural-resource professional often will be familiar with, and can recommend, well-qualified contractors who are doing forestry-related work in your area.

#### STANDARD 8:

##### Forest Product Harvests and Other Activities

Forest product harvests and other management activities are conducted in accordance with the **landowner's objectives** and consider other forest values.

You **should** also stipulate that your contractors must follow all applicable laws and regulations, including state and federal requirements for fair labor practices. You are also encouraged to discuss liability issues with your insurance agents and attorney to gain a perspective on appropriate insurance minimums that might be required of the contractors you work with.

## Why Hire a Forester?

A professional forester will be your closest ally as you develop a management plan and undertake stewardship activities to gain or maintain certification of your land. A forester can:

- Help you understand how the trees, wildlife, soils, water, and other resources of your woods interact;
- Work with you to develop a management plan that complies with ATFS certification Standards and addresses your vision for your woodlands;
- Help you understand laws and regulations that apply to your woods;
- Provide advice and technical expertise to address challenges like invasive species, forest pests, and pathogens;
- Assist you in finding a reputable logger;
- Help you find markets for your forest products;
- Help you manage the legal and financial aspects of woodland-management activities; and
- Help you avoid costly mistakes.

A professional forester can help you evaluate a new woodland parcel that you plan to purchase, guide you in selecting and planting trees, help you manage prescribed burns and tree-thinning activities, and assist you in planning and implementing timber harvests and sales. The decisions you make at these times are crucial to the long-term health of your woods, so it makes sense to invest in a forester's advice and woodland-management expertise.

## INDICATOR 8.1.3

*Landowners should retain appropriate contracts or records for forest product harvests and other management activities to demonstrate conformance to the Standards.*

Landowners should review the ATFS Standards before planning management activities. When contracting for management activities, it is also important to specify that appropriate BMPs and laws be adhered to. Be sure to retain your contracts. As a general rule of thumb, hold on to contracts for three years.

## Performance Measure 8.2

*Landowner shall monitor forest product harvests and other management activities to ensure they conform to their objectives.*

## INDICATOR 8.2.1

*Harvest, utilization, removal, and other management activities shall be conducted in compliance with the landowner's objectives and to maintain the potential of the property to produce forest products and other benefits sustainably.*

The final **performance measure** in Standard 8 is that you or your designated representative must monitor harvests and other management activities to ensure that they conform to the objectives identified in your forest-management plan. The goal is to ensure that your woodlands maintain their ability to sustainably produce **forest products** and all the other benefits of sustainably managed woodlands into the future.

If you have planned well, used qualified natural-resource professionals and contractors, and conducted your management activities under an effective contract, you should be able to meet this requirement.

## CHECKLIST: THINGS TO INCLUDE IN YOUR CONTRACTS

When contracting for forestry activities, it is important to outline the requirements of your agreement with each contractor. A good contract **should** specify that your contractor must:

- ✓ Adhere to your state's **best management practices (BMPs)**;
- ✓ Ensure that special sites or habitats are protected;
- ✓ Adhere to your state's labor laws;
- ✓ Carry adequate liability insurance; and
- ✓ Protect soil and water integrity.

In addition, your contract should specify a contractor's responsibility for:

- ✓ Avoiding residual tree damage, and rectifying it if it occurs;
- ✓ Maintaining and restoring forest roads after the work is completed;
- ✓ Protecting and/or restoring fences and gates;
- ✓ Litter control; and
- ✓ Preventing hazardous material spills, and cleaning them up if they occur.



# Working with a forester

**Sarah Steen**  
**Holly Springs, Mississippi**

When Sarah Steen’s husband Adam presented her with a 160-acre tree farm in rural Mississippi as a birthday gift in 2010, Sarah was a novice in the art of managing a sustainable woodland. Even though her father is a forester, Steen realized that she had a lot to learn. That’s why she called on forester Justin Dewberry (an ATFS Regional Inspector of the Year in 2012) to help her deal with the challenges she faced.

When Adam bought the property, 38 acres were already planted in pine and enrolled in the USDA’s Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), which pays landowners to protect topsoil from erosion by converting former crop and pasture land into woodlands.

“The CRP program requires a conservation plan to manage insects and invasives and maintain a healthy forest,” Sarah says. “Because part of our land was in CRP, one of the very first things we did after buying the farm was meet with Justin. He has been a fantastic resource—someone we can always call on if we don’t know what to do. He got us connected with Tree Farm.”

After working with Dewberry to plan for the acreage enrolled in CRP, “We decided we wanted to plant more trees, and he helped us set up a forest-management plan for the rest of the farm,” Sarah relates. “In our first year [2010], our plan was to spray and burn and then plant more trees.” Nature, however, threw in some unexpected hitches.

Those “hitches” were grazing cows—a problem, since animals are not allowed on CRP acreage. Instead of planting, the Steens spent their first year fencing and herding cows. The next big battle was with invasive kudzu, which was overrunning the farm. Again they sought Dewberry’s help. Spraying and burning the weedy plant were the only options available on their CRP acreage, but on the rest of the farm, the family looked to a herd of 16 goats. “In a year, they’ve taken that kudzu right down to the ground,” says Sarah.

The Steens finally commenced their tree-planting plan in the fall of 2011, and they now have 90 acres planted in loblolly pine, with more planting in the works. “It’s amazing how many people it takes to make things happen, even on a small farm,” says Adam Steen. “We couldn’t have done it without Justin,” adds Sarah.



Photos: Rob Amberg