

# Landowner Assistance Through State and Federal Programs

Frances Dilsaver  
Resource Forester, Missouri Department of Conservation  
Springfield, Missouri

## GROWER RECOMMENDATIONS

Contact your local natural resource government agency. They can help you formulate a management plan, and will have suggestions about which government programs are available to help you accomplish your goals.

Knowing your soils is a key to being successful with your trees. Each county has a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office to serve the needs of that county, and soils is one of their areas of expertise. They will have soils information about your property, and will be able to interpret which soils are best suited for your purposes. This will help in the decision of where to plant, and what kind of growth you can expect.

The local Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) forester can provide a list of contractors to assist with planting, pruning, or removing trees. Similar agencies in other states should be able to provide the same service.

There are a wide variety of government programs that could be used to establish and maintain your trees. Which program to utilize will depend on individual situations, but this brief description of the programs currently available should help in deciding which option you should pursue.

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contains options for planting trees. This program is administered through the Farm Services Agency (FSA). The Forest Incentive Program (FIP) was designed to improve the productivity of the forest resource. Because the program is focused on productivity, the land enrolled in this program must meet a minimum productivity rate of 50 cubic feet of wood per acre per year. This rate is determined by soil type. FIP can be used to establish trees, and to maintain or improve trees. The program is administered through the NRCS.

The Stewardship Incentive Program (SIP) is the cost-share companion to the Forest Stewardship Program, which helps a landowner achieve their goals for their property. Establishing and improving trees is a component of this program that is administered through both the FSA and the MDC.

The Soil and Water Conservation Program is commonly called State Cost-Share. The DFR-4 part of the program has the goal of establishing trees on land previously used for agriculture. Because it is administered through local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), the availability of this program can vary from county to county.

The Missouri Agroforestry Program was created to promote the use of trees with other crops". Walnut plantings are commonly used in agroforestry in conjunction with grains, grass, cattle, berries, and even medicinal plants. The program is administered by the MDC.

The Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP) is a cost-share program designed to improve wildlife habitat on private lands. Tree planting and timber stand improvement are eligible practices. NRCS administers the program.

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is designed to address soil, water and related natural resource concerns on private lands. Cost-share practices can include tree planting if specified in the state or local priority area plan. NRCS has technical responsibility for the program.

Whether or not you use any of these programs, the agencies mentioned are available for providing free technical assistance, and an on-site visit if necessary. You, the landowner, are the key to good conservation and the future of our natural resources, and government agencies really are "here to help you" - use them.