

Tree Growth Forest Management & Harvest Plans

MFS Review Procedure

MFS Review Findings

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Tree Growth Forest Management & Harvest Plan

Required Elements

- Primary objective commercial forest products
- Outlines Activities to **regenerate** a crop of timber
- Outlines Activities to **improve** a crop of timber
- Outlines Activities to **harvest** a crop of timber

NOT a public document; MFS does not keep copies, Town should not either

Tree Growth

Forest Management & Harvest Plan

General requirements

- Must be written
- Must be prepared by a LF or prepared by a landowner and approved by a LF
- Must be certified by a LF as consistent with sound silvicultural practices
- Must be prepared for each parcel
- Must be updated every ten years



Tree Growth Forest Management & Harvest Plan

Suggested Plan Elements

Schedules and Recommendations for:

- Timber stand improvement
- Harvesting plans
- Regeneration activities



Tree Growth Forest Management & Harvest Plan Map

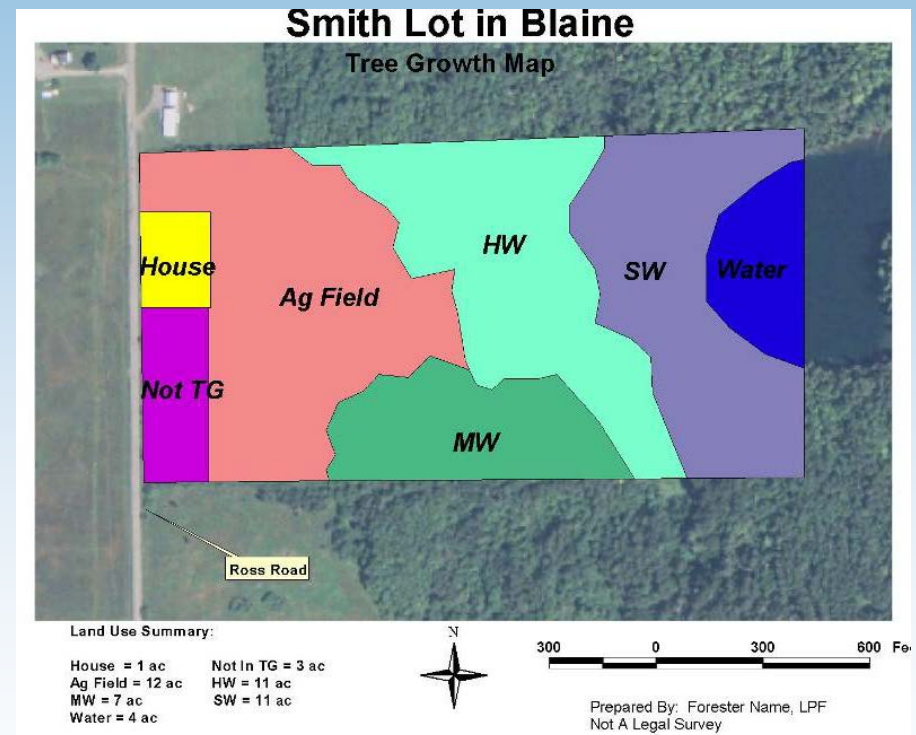
Shows the location of all land uses accurately

Shows the classified forest stand types as “*softwood*”, “*hardwood*” or “*mixed wood*” at a minimum

Must include:

Location of waterbodies

Location of wildlife habitat identified by DIFW



MFS assistance to Towns

36 MRS §575-A. Determining compliance with forest management and harvest plan

- Upon request of a municipal assessor... and in accordance with section 579, the Director of the Bureau of Forestry... **may provide assistance in evaluating a forest management and harvest plan to determine whether the plan *meets the definition of a forest management and harvest plan* in section 573, subsection 3-A.**
- Upon request of a municipal assessor... the Director of the Bureau of Forestry **may provide assistance in determining whether a harvest or other silvicultural activity conducted on land enrolled under this subchapter complies with the forest management and harvest plan prepared for that parcel of land...**

MFS TGTL Review Procedure

- Municipality requests MFS for assistance in writing.
- MFS requests municipality to obtain and provide us with copies of the management plan and all other pertinent materials.
- MFS puts together a Review Team (MFS staff).
- Review Team does a desk review of materials provided.
- Team determines if field visit is necessary (depending on whether a plan or harvest is being reviewed and other factors).
 - We look for strict compliance with the statute, and are advised and guided by Bulletin # 19
- Team reaches a final decision and notifies the municipality with a formal written response.
- All copies of plans, and other pertinent materials provided to MFS by the municipality are either returned to the municipality or destroyed (confidential information).
- The **Assessor** makes the final decision about how to proceed.

Important points

- When reviewing, MFS is working for the town, not landowner or forester
- May follow-up with Landowner or forester, after review is completed, if asked
- **Landowner or forester can ask for up-front guidance when developing FMP**
- MFS= Unbiased---but someone is usually unhappy
- MFS make a determination, but DOES NOT tell town how to proceed
- MFS refrains from judging the silviculture, as long as it's sound
- Length of the plan does not matter; content does

Vinalhaven TGTL Review

- Received request from Vinalhaven in early 2016 to review TG parcels.
- Reviewed Vinalhaven TGTL roster; compared to Forest Operations Notification database.
- 6 harvest notifications since 1991 for 28 parcels.
- Many parcels enrolled for over 30 years ... no harvest notifications

Vinalhaven TGTL Review

- Summer 2016: MFS staff reviewed forest management plans for compliance.
- September 2016: **17 parcels remained in TGTL.**
- MFS staff visited all remaining parcels to examine forest management activities on ground.

Vinalhaven TGTL Review

- **What we found...**
- Of the 17 remaining parcels, MFS found that the owners of **10 parcels** should consider transferring to Open Space or withdrawing from TGTL.
- Remainder should be re-evaluated toward the end of their 10-year planning periods (2017 – 2025).

Vinalhaven TGTL Review

- **What we found more specifically...**
- Largely custodial management;
- Weak and/or impractical recommendations concerning timber harvesting;
- Lack of active management even when markets were favorable;
- Harvested stands overtaken by brush, regeneration hampered by deer browse – no countermeasures taken;
- Misclassified land – not capable of growing trees for commercial harvest.

Vinalhaven TGTL Review

➤ Followup...

- As of September 2017, **12 parcels remain enrolled in TGTL.**
- Five of the parcels MFS reviewed have transferred to Open Space in recent months.
- Assessor working with several others to transfer to Open Space.
- Two of the remainder have received letters about recertification within the next couple of months.

Example of Inadequate TGTL Plan

TREE GROWTH / WOODLOT PLAN

SMALL WOOD LOT PLAN / MIXED WOOD LOT

LONG TERM:

CONSERVING SCENIC RESOURCES

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

PRESERVING OPEN LAND FOR RECREATION

COMMERCIAL TREE HARVEST

SHORT TERM:

THINNING OVERGROWN FOREST AREAS

REMOVING MAIMED/DISEASED TREES

DEVELOPING MEADOWS

CREATING TRAILS

HARVESTING PULP WOOD

MFS REVIEWS

Past 10 years

- Approximately 50 request
- 6 Towns never followed up
- 25 plans contained all required elements
- Some plans older than 10 years
- Recommendations not implemented on multiple parcels
- Three transferred to Open space

For More Info:

Tree Growth general info page:

www.maine.gov/dacf/mfs/policy_management/woodwise/tree_growth_tax_law.html

Property Tax Bulletin # 19 (Tree Growth):

www.maine.gov/revenue/forms/property/pubs/bull19text.htm

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