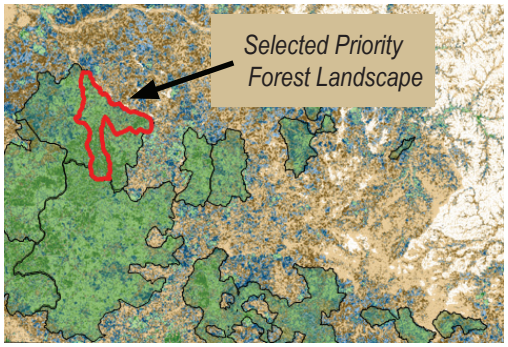
Landscape Stewardship Project

A Quick-Start Guide for Forest Stewardship Program Managers

Landscape stewardship brings together a variety of partners who have shared interests in the outcomes of forest stewardship. These partners, which need to include public agencies, communities, and forest landowners, among others, can work together so that current and future generations will enjoy the benefits of sustainably managed forests.

1 Identify a project area

Landscape stewardship is an appropriate tool for addressing the issues and opportunities identified in each State's Forest Assessment and Strategy. Priority areas identified in this Assessment and Strategy make strong candidates for a landscape stewardship project.



For example, a State may have identified a priority area where sensitive aquatic species are in serious decline due in part to inappropriate land management practices. A forest landscape stewardship coordinator can work with other State, Federal, and nongovernmental organizations to build a coalition committed to reversing the decline of these species.

Any strategy to improve ecosystem health requires the voluntary cooperation of many forest landowners within a given landscape. Using a collaborative approach that helps community members address their priorities benefits the landowners and the landscape at the same time.

6 Share your success

As the stewardship project unfolds, monitor its progress and assess the effectiveness of its strategies using these measures:

Process measures indicate how effectively the project roadmap is being carried out. For example, Are the communication efforts reaching the target audience? Were the messages understood and favorably received?

Performance measures indicate what was accomplished with the investment of project resources. For example, How many forested acres have been protected by a conservation easement?

Outcome measures are tied to project objectives and indicate the progress being made toward meeting these objectives. For example, What proportion of targeted landowners within the project area is managing their woodland with professionally prepared guidance?

Impact measures evaluate if project objectives are being met. For example, Have we improved the habitat of sensitive aquatic species in the priority forest landscape?

For a complete overview of a landscape approach to forest stewardship, see the Landscape Stewardship Reference Guide online:

www.landscapestewardship.org

Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry

Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters

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NA–IN–02–11
February 2011

Increasing the reach and influence of forest stewardship

2 Engage the community

The next step is to build a local constituency that will address State and regional issues. Work with community decisionmakers and other stakeholders, including both forest landowners and those who don't own forest land, to identify and agree on priorities for conservation. These priorities should address the community's social, economic, and environmental issues while contributing to the project's resource objectives.

3 Draft the project roadmap

There are two important questions to answer when developing a project roadmap:

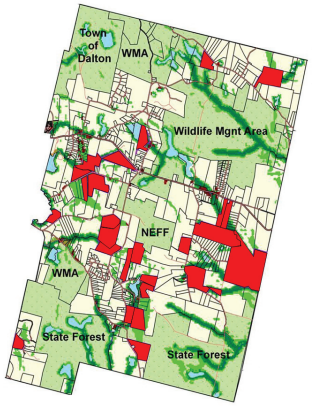
1. What is the community's vision for its future? The answer to this will frame the long-term outcomes it seeks from its forests.
2. What resources and conditions currently exist in a community's landscape? This information, especially with respect to private forest ownership, will provide a baseline against which progress can be measured. It is particularly important to not only determine forest landowner objectives and motivations, but to make the connection between community objectives and resource solutions, particularly those that require the participation of private forest landowners.

4 Build a foundation for success

It's important to be organized before beginning a landscape stewardship project. This includes such things as:

1. Building the team that will be responsible for making sure the roadmap is followed, gathering all needed resources, and increasing the ability of partners to contribute to the effort.
2. Aligning and integrating the project with existing State, Federal, and local programs.
3. Initiating training for both public and private sector project participants.
4. Engaging local business leaders and building the financial support needed to address the community's conservation priorities.

5 Achieve your shared vision



Identify forested parcels that are critical to community conservation priorities.

At this point, there should be a coalition of partners, a community-based team that's ready to go, a roadmap that will lead to success, and the resources to get the job done. Achieving a shared vision requires work on two fronts:

1. Creating a political and economic environment that supports private forest stewardship within the project area by conducting outreach and education and guiding public policy.
2. Engaging landowners as forest stewards by promoting conservation marketing, providing meaningful incentives, and offering appropriate technical assistance.

The goal of Forest Stewardship is to sustain the health, productivity, and diversity of the Nation's privately owned forest land to help meet the needs of current and future generations.