
SIGNUP ESTABLISHED FOR EMERGENCY FORESTRY PROGRAM

USDA-Farm Service Agency (FSA) Massachusetts State Executive Director Richard Burke announced that the official signup for cost-share assistance under the Emergency Forestry Restoration Program begins on July 28 and ends on August 17, 2011. Owners of private non-industrial woodland in Hampden and Worcester Counties who suffered severe damage from the June 1, 2011 tornados may be eligible for assistance under the EFRP. While the USDA-FSA has already been accepting applications from woodland owners, this announces an official signup period that is required by program regulations.

A woodland owner qualifying for EFRP assistance may receive financial assistance levels not to exceed 75 percent of the eligible cost of restoration measures which are aimed at restoring forest health and other forest related resources. The following types of measures may be eligible:

- Removing debris from woodland
- Site preparation for natural regeneration
- Tree planting

To be eligible for assistance, practices must **not** be started until **all** of the following are met:

- an application for financial assistance (FSA-848) has been filed
- the local FSA County Committee (COC) or its representative has conducted an onsite inspection of the damaged area
- the Agency responsible for technical assistance, such as the State forestry agency, has made a needs determination which may include cubic yards of earthmoving, etc., required for rehabilitation.

At the present time there is no funding available to fund restoration measures under the EFRP. Massachusetts has submitted a request for funding and will keep applicants informed of the status of that funding request.

Woodland owners in Hampden and Worcester Counties who may have suffered a loss should contact the USDA Office below that serves their county:

Hampden County

Ted Smiarowski, County Executive Director
Hampshire/Hampden County FSA Office
195 Russell Street, Suite B5
Hadley, MA 01035-0521
413-585-1000 (x2)

Worcester County

Kip Graham, County Executive Director
Worcester County FSA Office
52 Boyden Road, Room 103
Holden, MA 01520-2587
508-829-4477 (x2)