



CARBON STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

What the Program Does

The Carbon Stewardship Program (CSP) provides direct payments to private landowners to implement forestry practices that increase long-term carbon storage and resilience.

Program Criteria

Eligibility

- Non-industrial private forest landowners in NM
- Forested land suitable for practices that rebuild or retain forest carbon and improve long-term forest carbon resilience.
- Location:
 - Areas impacted by wildfire with elevated risks of erosion, sedimentation, or long-term carbon loss, **OR**
 - Priority landscapes or high-risk firesheds where treatments reduce wildfire risk and increase forest carbon resilience.

Prioritization Criteria

- Funding Context: Limited access to other funding sources.
- Carbon Benefits: Expected impact of proposed practices, including project scale and treatment effectiveness.
- Location Co-Benefits: Protection of downstream communities, critical infrastructure, or other high-value resources.
- Urgency: Need for timely treatment to prevent additional carbon loss or long-term forest type conversion.

*Funding source excludes Lea, Cibola, & Bernalillo Counties



Eligible Practices

Landowners may receive payments for implementing approved forestry practices, including:

- Post-fire erosion control (contour felling, mulching, seeding)
- Site preparation
- Reforestation
- Forest thinning
- Prescribed burning



How the Program Works

Before applying, landowners are strongly encouraged to contact their NMFD District Office to discuss project ideas and confirm eligibility.

- 1. Apply and Get Screened:** Landowners submit a standard application. NMFD reviews the application and may conduct a site visit. Eligible applications are prioritized based on criteria.
- 2. Develop a Practice Plan:** NMFD staff or an authorized contractor works with the landowner to create a practice plan outlining the approved treatments and timelines.
- 3. Approve the Plan and Sign the Agreement:** NMFD approves the plan and calculates payment amounts using established program rates. These rates are included in a landowner agreement with the fiscal agent.
- 4. Receive a Notice to Proceed:** The fiscal agent issues a Notice to Proceed and provides instructions for reimbursement.
- 5. Complete the Work:** The landowner hires a contractor to implement the approved practices within the timeframe in the practice plan.
- 6. Inspection:** After work is completed, NMFD staff or authorized contractors inspect the project to ensure it meets program standards.
- 7. Get Reimbursed:** The landowner submits the inspection form and cost documentation. The fiscal agent issues payment based on the lower amount between a) approved rates or b) actual expenses. A separate compensation payment is also included with the final reimbursement to help cover the time required to coordinate with NMFD, contractors, and the fiscal agent.

Participation Requirements

- Accept established program rates
- Pay contractors directly
- Avoid using other federal funds for the same work
- Maintain implemented practices for 10 years
- Submit a one-year monitoring report for reforestation projects and allow property access for follow up monitoring up to 3 years post-planting.



Scan this QR code to open the program application and explore additional program resources



Funding is provided through the USDA Forest Service's Inflation Reduction Act Landscape Scale Restoration initiative.