



North Carolina Forest Service

An agency of the N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services



Eastern Region

BMP Newsletter Update

What Is This? And Why We're Doing It . . .

This newsletter will focus on BMP-related topics, and will include a specific BMP-focused theme in each issue. We want to keep you updated on what's going on related to forestry BMPs, rules, water resources, and let you know what kind of water-related projects the North Carolina Forest Service is working on.....*we do a lot more than ride around in our green pickup trucks and put out wildfires, you know....*

We hope that this quarterly newsletter will supplement your relationship and communication with our agency's Rangers and Foresters in your area.

If you want to get a printed copy of each new edition of this newsletter, or if you wish to receive an email notification that the new edition is posted to our website, send us an email with your preference, to: forestry.npsunit@ncagr.gov

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BMP Assistance from NCFS:

Identify Streams on Site

Determine Stream Buffer & SMZ Width

Loan Bridgemats for Crossing Streams or Ditches

Pre-Harvest Planning

Road Layout

Harvest Inspection

BMP Focus: Forest Roads

A good road can lead you to prosperity..... And a bad road can lead you to a hard time.

It sometimes seems hard to believe that anybody would need to build a new access road to harvest timber, when you think about the millions of little woods road, farm roads, hunting trails, and old rail-road trams that criss-cross all over eastern North Carolina.

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BMP Focus: Forest Roads {continued}

Know The Rule !

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act explains forestry (“silvicultural”) activities that are exempt from having to obtain a federal permit, when conducted in a wetland.

But, it never fails: the place that you need to cut timber is the place where there is no good road for log trucks, so that means you need to build a new road (or greatly improve an old road). Forest roads are time-consuming to install correctly and can become a long-term headache for maintenance, trespassing, runoff, and water control.

But fear not, there is ample assistance available for you, and most of the time that assistance won’t cost you! The N.C. Forest Service can meet with you on site and examine your options for building a good quality road. The NC Forestry BMP Manual has an extensive chapter on forest roads, including information for building or maintaining a forest road in a wetland site. So what’s the big deal about wetlands, anyway?

Well, here’s the bottomline: A forest road that is constructed in a wetland, for the purposes of silviculture, is exempt from having to get a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the N.C. Division of Water Quality, so long as certain conditions are met when the road is built, and while the road is used, or maintained. These federally-required conditions are spelled out in 15 mandatory BMPs in federal rules, and are included in the rules appendix of the NC Forestry BMP Manual.



This new forest road was constructed to access and harvest timber in a large wetland forest.

BMP Focus: Forest Roads {continued}

When you build a forest road in a wetland, or a low-lying and floodprone area, pay attention to what the rules say, use all appropriate BMPs, and:

- ◆ **Make sure that the road is for silvicultural reasons. If the road is mainly intended for non-forestry usage, then you may be challenged about whether or not a permit is needed for the road.**
- ◆ **Only cross a stream, creek, or ditch when you have no other alternative.**
- ◆ **Install ample culverts for cross-drainage, so you don't block the natural flow of water across the landscape.**
- ◆ **Keep roads at least 50 feet away from any creek or natural open water.**

Don't Do It !

Stream crossings are the #1 water quality problem in forestry !
Avoid crossings at all costs.

N.C. Forest Service Team Looks Into Swamp Logging

Logging timber from a mucky, bottomland swamp is tricky business. As if logging it isn't tough enough, trying to make sure that a suitable stand of new trees properly regenerates afterwards is no easy task either. Over the last few years, the N.C. Forest Service has received concerns about the success of new forest tree seedling regeneration after logging in muck swamp systems. So, a team of foresters with expertise ranging from water quality, silviculture, and forest regeneration was pulled together to assess the status of swamp logging in the state, and consider the scope of this issue. Early on, the team recognized a lack of suitable research knowledge about these types of swamp, which usually contain a mixture of cypress, blackgum, and ash. While the N.C. Forest Service is not seeking to develop new rules about swamp logging, there appears to be a need for enhanced technical assistance and guidance regarding how a swamp can be logged in a way that both minimizes water quality risk, and assures prompt successful regeneration of the next forest. If you have a swamp harvest area that you would like the N.C. Forest Service to evaluate, contact Jim Slye at the Region-1 office in Kinston, at 252-520-2402.



Photo of a swamp forest in eastern North Carolina immediately after harvest.

North Carolina Forest Service

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District Office BMP Contacts

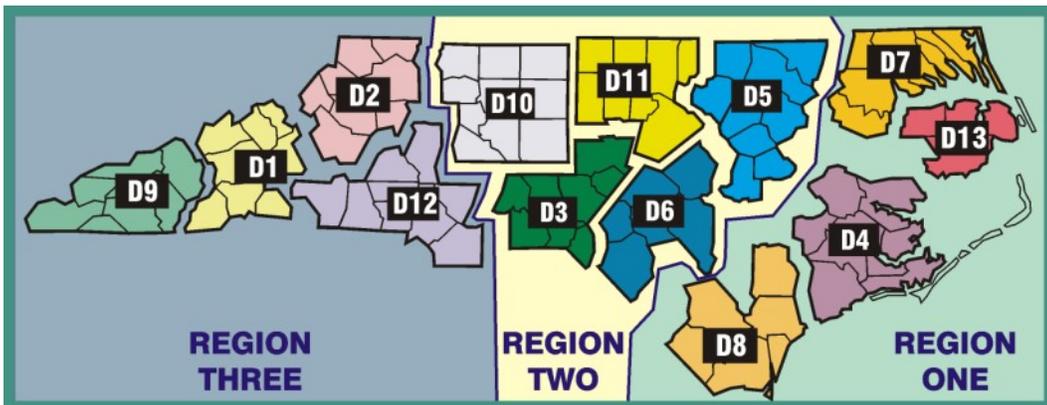
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Surf The Web

- Manage and Protect Your Forest - www.ncforestservice.gov
- NCD&CS Agricultural Services - www.ncaagr.gov
- Keep Your Home Safe From Wildfire - www.ncfirewise.org
- Go Out and Learn in the Forest - www.ncesf.org
- Locate NC-Grown Farm and Forestry Products - www.ncfarmfresh.com

Where Does Your Water Flow?

North Carolina has 17 large river basins. The largest four river basins are:

- Cape Fear: 9,149 square miles of land
- Yadkin-Pee Dee: 7,213 square miles of land
- Neuse: 6,192 square miles of land
- Tar-Pamlico: 5,440 square miles of land

As a size reference, 1 square mile equals 640 acres!

If we get familiar with where our river's flow, then we might be careful about polluting the streams and waterways, because what we do will affect somebody else downstream.

