What is a cost-sharing program?
Cost-share programs are incentives programs to help landowners defray the cost of some common conservation and forestry practices, by repaying a set percentage of implementation costs. They are offered by organizations to incentivize landowners to apply conservation practices they may not otherwise implement.

Why consider cost-share?
Cost-share reduces up-front capital, reducing risk and increasing the overall rate of return on a financial investment in forestry, and reducing the expenses associated with conservation and ecosystem restoration practices.

How do I choose a cost-share program?
Before you look into cost-share programs and practices, you should have a management plan prepared. A good management plan will clearly define the objectives for the property being managed. The first step in choosing a cost-share program is to line up the landowner objectives with a program with similar goals and contract requirements.

Who provides cost-share?
These programs are usually implemented by federal or state government offices, like the SCFC and USDA FSA and NRCS, but there are some programs available from private conservation organizations, such as regional Longleaf Implementation Teams.

What practices are covered?
Pre-commercial thinning, site-preparation, tree planting, firebreak maintenance, prescribed burning, wildlife habitat enhancements, and agroforestry or silvopasture conversion are just some of the forest management practices for which cost-share payments are available.

How to apply
To take advantage of these programs, gather your management plan, your plat or tax ID# to verify ownership, and your IRS W-9 will determine if you meet the financial qualifications. Apply for cost-share, on all relevant practices, with your local SC Forestry Commission project forester, and your local USDA office. The US Fish and Wildlife Service, and other agencies may have cost-share for special projects.
When to apply?
You should ask at your local offices about cost-sharing opportunities as soon as you plan to implement any forestry or other conservation practices.

When to implement?
If you are applying for cost-share funding, delay implementing practices until you receive verification of your application results. If you implement practices before being approved, you may be denied reimbursement for materials or work. If tree establishment is not approved for funding, don’t wait to apply again in another year, as the increased cost of site preparation and the lengthened investment period may nullify any benefit of cost-share.

Cost-share programs for landowners' forests

SCFC PROGRAMS
Forest Renewal Program (FRP)
Program objectives: Ensure a future timber supply for SC forest industry
Practices covered: Site preparation, tree planting, timber stand improvement (TSI) at 40% of cost
Requirements: Non-industrial private landowner, with a stand size of 10-100 acres, IRS w-9, proof of ownership, forest management plan, commit to manage for 10 years.

Southern Pine Beetle Program (SPB)
Program objectives: Minimize SPB outbreaks and restore stands impacted by SPB
Practices covered: Site prep and planting at 50% of costs, or timber stand improvement (TSI) pre-commercial thinning at 60% of cost.
Requirements: Non-industrial private landowner, with a stand size of 10-100 acres, IRS w-9, proof of ownership, forest management plan, limits on maximum stocking levels, commit to manage for 10 years.

USDA FSA PROGRAMS
Emergency Forest Renewal Program (EFRP)
Program objectives: Restore stands damaged by major natural disasters, like hurricanes, major wildfires, floods, etc. (only available after major disasters).
Practices covered: Site preparation, replanting, at 75% of costs.
Requirements: Non-industrial private landowner, with a stand size of 10-100 acres, IRS w-9, proof of ownership, forest management plan and an FSA-assigned Farm Number.
**Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)**

Program objectives: Reduce soil erosion, improve water quality, create wildlife habitat on agricultural lands. Practices covered: Pine and hardwood planting, thinning, prescribed burning, native grass planting, permanent wildlife habitat establishment, riparian buffers, field borders, filter strips and wildlife opening establishment, at 50% of costs plus annual per acre payment.

Requirements: A multi-year contract with a non-industrial private landowner, covering the management of recently active agricultural fields, IRS w-9, proof of ownership, forest management plan, 10-15 year contract, and an FSA-assigned Farm Number.

**USDA NRCS**

**Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)**

Program objectives: Comprehensively address resource concerns and encourage landowners to adopt additional conservation practices. Practices covered: Practices that help conserve and enhance soil, water, air, and related natural resources on their land, annual payments are based on conservation actions taken.

Requirements: A multi-year contract with a non-industrial private landowner, forestland must be Green certified, and must have no apparent erosion, improved by landowner in last 10 years, and have maintained firebreaks, IRS w-9, proof of ownership, forest management plan, and an FSA-assigned Farm Number.

**Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**

Program objectives: Promote agricultural production and environmental quality and address resource concerns such as erosion, non-native invasives and threatened and endangered species. Practices covered: Prescribed burning, site preparation & tree planting, pre-commercial & commercial thinning, road stabilization and wildlife management practices, at 75% or 90% of costs.

Requirements: A 1-10 year contract with a non-industrial private landowner IRS w-9, proof of ownership, and an FSA-assigned Farm Number.

**Healthy Forest Reserve Program (HFRP)**

Program objectives: Promote the recovery of endangered and threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), improve plant and animal biodiversity, and enhance carbon sequestration. Practices covered: actions to restore, enhance or measurably increase the recovery of threatened or endangered species, improve biological diversity or increase carbon storage.

Requirements: A 10-year Conservation easement contract, proof of private or tribal ownership, or written agreement between landowner and tenant for contract duration.
**US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE**

**Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (Partners or PFW)**

Program objectives: To provide expert technical advice and cost-share to restore fish and wildlife habitats.


Requirements: Private ownership

**Cost-share links**

- FRP [http://www.state.sc.us/forest/frpbrochure.pdf](http://www.state.sc.us/forest/frpbrochure.pdf)
- SPB [http://www.state.sc.us/forest/spbguide.pdf](http://www.state.sc.us/forest/spbguide.pdf)
- PFW [http://www.fws.gov/partners](http://www.fws.gov/partners)

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