Overview and Background of NRCS and Forestry

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Primary Federal agency authorized to work on private lands to help landowners protect their soil, water and other natural resources

- Technical agency of USDA
- Field staff based in 88 USDA Service Centers serving Minnesota landowners
- Voluntary technical and program assistance for farmers and landowners
Farm Bill Legislation

Basis for most USDA and NRCS conservation programs and policies come from the Farm Bill:

- 1985
- 1990
- 1996
- 2002
- 2008
- 2014
- 2018
Changes to NRCS Programs in 2018 Farm Bill

**Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**
- Adds Resource Concerns
- Raises cap for organic producers
- New enrollment option to address resource concerns
- Advance payments for Historically Underserved Producers
- Forest Stewardship and/or Forest Management Plan required (CAP 106)
Conservation Practice Standards
Forestry Conservation Practice Standards

- Access Control (472)
- Alley Cropping (311)
- Firebreak (394)
- Forest Stand Improvement (666)
- Forest Trails and Landings (655) Eng
- Prescribed Burning (338) *Graz land sp.
- Riparian Forest Buff (391) WQ/Eng./WBio
- Tree/Shrub Establishment (612) Eng.
- Tree/Shrub Pruning (660)
- Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (490)
- Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380)
- Windbreak/Shelterbelt Renovation (650)
- Woody Residue Treatment (384)

New Practices:
- Fuel Break (383)
- Multistory Cropping (379)
- Road/Trail/Landing Closure and Treatment (654) Eng
- Silvopasture (381)
Questions?