

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part 53
Chapter 10

Forestry
Woodland Management

Page 1

- 1.1 Purpose.** This chapter documents the policy, authorities, and responsibilities relevant to the management of woodland resources on Indian forest lands. Woodlands are a component of the overall forest resource. As such, woodlands are subject to most of the same forest management policies and standards as other forest vegetation/cover types.

There are two components to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) woodland management program: 1) the administration of Woodland Management Forest Projects (WMFP) implemented with Forestry Projects funding, and 2) the administration and implementation of all other woodland management activities including, but not limited to, planning and environmental compliance; silvicultural treatments; the harvesting of woodland forest products via permits or contracts; insect and disease control; fuels management; monitoring; reporting; and documentation.

- 1.2 Scope.** This policy applies to all Indian Affairs (IA) offices and programs participating in the management, accountability, utilization, or protection of woodlands on Indian forest lands. Other Federal agencies and programs that are involved in woodland management on Indian lands are encouraged to ensure that the standards prescribed herein are met.

- 1.3 Policy.** It is IA's policy that all woodlands on Indian forest lands be managed and protected as effectively as possible through the application of appropriate silviculture and sound forest management principles.

1.4 Authorities.

A. Statutes and Regulations.

- 1) 25 CFR 163, General Forestry Regulations
- 2) 25 U.S.C. Chapter 33, National Indian Forest Resources Management Act
- 3) 25 U.S.C. § 466- Indian forestry units; rules and regulations
- 4) 16 U.S.C. § 594- Protection of timber owned by United States from fire, disease, or insect ravages
- 5) 18 U.S.C. Chapter 91 – Public Lands, § 1853, 1855 and 1856

B. Guidance.

- 1) 303 Departmental Manual (DM) 2, Indian Trust Responsibilities - Principles for Managing Indian Trust Assets

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part 53

Forestry

Chapter 10

Woodland Management

Page 2

- 2) 586 DM 1, Timber Management - General Policies and Responsibility
- 3) 53 IAM 10-H: Indian Forest Management Handbook, Woodland Management, 2016

Additional guidance may also be found in other Forestry IAM chapters (Part 53) and handbooks. The IAM chapters can be accessed here:

<http://www.bia.gov/WhatWeDo/Knowledge/Directives/IAM/index.htm>

Handbooks can be accessed here:

<http://www.bia.gov/WhatWeDo/Knowledge/Directives/Handbooks/index.htm>

1.5 Responsibilities.

A. **Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs** is responsible for:

- 1) Developing national woodland management policies;
- 2) Providing assistance in the implementation of regional woodland management program direction, oversight, and guidance;
- 3) Maintaining the national program budget, and funding justification and procedures for efficient and effective program administration;
- 4) Establishing reporting standards and requirements.

B. **Regional Directors** are responsible for:

- 1) Developing regional policies, standards, and woodland management guidelines for woodland management plan development and woodland management program implementation;
- 2) Approving forest management plans which address woodland management;
- 3) Providing technical assistance to field offices including Tribal programs, monitoring and evaluating field activities and expenditures, and making recommendations regarding program oversight;
- 4) Reviewing, compiling, and approving woodland management project proposals, annual project planning reports, and annual accomplishment reports;
- 5) Reviewing and retaining current woodland management literature for distribution to Tribes, BIA Agencies, and Field Offices;
- 6) Allocating available funds to field programs for approved woodland management activities, and reallocating funds when necessary;

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part 53

Forestry

Chapter 10

Woodland Management

Page 3

- 7) Reviewing and compiling woodland management accomplishments and expenditure reports from Tribes, BIA Agencies and Field Offices for annual BIA Central Office reporting requirements.

C. Agency Superintendents are responsible for:

- 1) Preparing and implementing economically feasible woodland management activities consistent with woodland management plans, sound silvicultural principles, and woodland policy in consultation with the Tribe(s);
- 2) Preparing and submitting to the Regional Director an annual Woodland Management Accomplishment Report for each fiscal year that non-recurring funds are utilized by either the Agency or the Tribe(s), and submitting it to the Regional Director within the requested timeframe;
- 3) Preparing and submitting to the Regional Director an annual Report of Timber Cut (ROTC), which includes non-timber forest products harvested from woodlands;
- 4) Maintaining program funds accountability consistent with project funding intent.

1.6 Definitions.

- A. Commercial Woodland** is land qualifying as forest, containing less than 5% commercial timber species crown cover, diameters at least 3 inches at root collar (DRC) of woodland species, and considered of high site quality capable of growing at least 5 cubic feet/ac/year of merchantable material. Commercial woodland describes that portion of the woodland producing marketable woody products which are currently or prospectively accessible, not withdrawn from such use, and not already accounted for within commercial or noncommercial timberland.
- B. Forest or forest land** means an ecosystem at least one acre in size, including timberland and woodland.
- C. Woodland** means forest land not included within the timberland classification, stocked, or capable of being stocked, with tree species of such form and size to produce forest products that are generally marketable within the region for products other than lumber, pulpwood, or veneer.
- D. Woodland Project** means a treatment or activity carried out using non-recurring Woodlands Management Forest Project (WMFP) funding.

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part 53

Forestry

Chapter 10

Woodland Management

Page 4

1.7 Woodland Cover Types. The BIA recognizes seven woodland cover types as defined by the BIA Branch of Forest Resources Planning (BOFRP) in its 1988 publication, "*Native American Woodland Resources: A National Overview*" for non-recurring woodland project funding purposes. Additional woodland cover types may be recognized by the BIA Director upon request of the Regional Director.

- A. The ***Pinyon-Juniper*** type accounts for the vast majority of the woodland acreage nationally. These stands are composed of varying mixes of pinyon pines and junipers throughout the Southwest and Great Basin. Woodlands end where timber crown cover is 5 percent or more (timberland status begins).
- B. The ***Juniper*** type of the Northwest is a variant of pinyon-juniper. Rocky Mountain and western junipers predominate. This type is found in Idaho, Oregon and Northern California.
- C. ***Non-timber Oak*** woodlands have been identified in California, Arizona, Oregon, Washington, Utah, New Mexico, Colorado and Oklahoma. They most often hold the niche between timberland and savanna that is quite droughty and harsh.
- D. ***Riparian*** woodlands are found in most regions of the country. They are defined by their obligate tree species and are generally composed of cottonwood and willow forests, with alder, maple, elm, ash, and other associated species.
- E. The ***Mesquite*** type is found in lower elevations of the Southwest, Southern California and Oklahoma with most of the acreage in Indian Country centering in Arizona. This most xeric of the woodland types includes honey, velvet, and screwbean mesquite and catclaw acacia. Mesquite grows best in flood plains, along dry washes and other intermittent drainages.
- F. ***Aspen*** woodlands are found in the northern Rockies and intermountain regions. They exist as pure stands on moist sites, or in association with Rocky Mountain juniper and other species on the dry end of its range. Aspen woodlands tend to be climax to the site (whereas aspen timberlands are seral with conifers becoming later dominants to the area).
- G. The ***Sabal Palm*** type is found exclusively on the Seminole Indian Reservation in Florida. This woodland type is on the mesic end of the forest spectrum, where wetland pasture is below it and mixed stands of palm/hardwoods/conifers are above.

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part 53

Forestry

Chapter 10

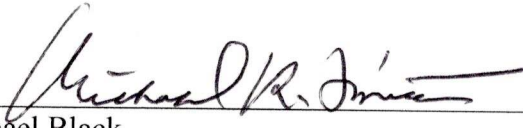
Woodland Management

Page 5

1.8 Standards, Requirements, and Procedures.

- A. Proposals.** WMFP proposals to the BIA non-recurring program are competitive and must include descriptions of the proposed project, desired results, and a project cost detail that includes personnel requirements, estimated salaries and wages, travel expenses, and equipment/supply costs. The proposal may also include a discussion of the potential economic spin-offs in terms of numbers of jobs created on and off the reservation, salaries and wages (Indian and non-Indian), expected Tribal revenues, etc. A Tribal resolution or other authority supporting the woodland project is a required component of the proposal. For many Tribes or Tribal members, the most important and commonly practiced uses of woodland species center on cultural/traditional uses. Proposed woodland management activities should protect, enhance, sustain, or restore these culturally important woodland sites.
- B. Selection Criteria.** Selection criteria will vary somewhat from region to region. Important considerations for project selection are available budget, alignment with forest management plan goals and objectives, and project feasibility, among other considerations.
- C. Woodland Management Activities.** This includes WMFPs and all other woodland management activities not implemented with WMFP funding, such as fire management activities (i.e., Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) activities, Hazardous Fuel Reduction (HFR) projects, fuelbreaks, etc.) All woodland management activities will be implemented using the guidance referred to in Section 1.4 of this policy.

Approval

for 
Michael Black
Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs

10-11-2016

Date