



Introduction to NRCS' Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

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Natural Resources Conservation Service



Accessing Grant Funds for Wildfire Resilience & Fuels Management
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What is EQIP?

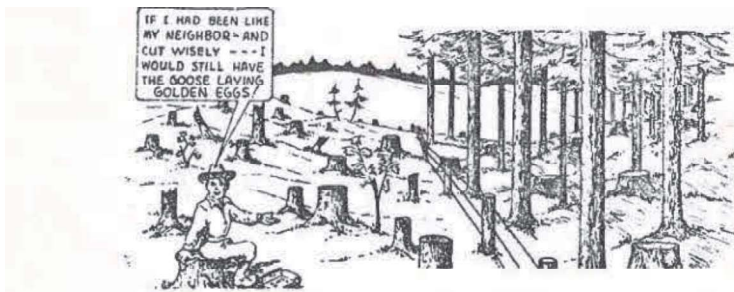
- Created in 1996 and is now NRCS' principal program for delivering conservation assistance to private landowners.
- Provides technical and financial assistance to agricultural producers and non-industrial forest managers.
- Is a voluntary cost-share incentives program to encourage private investment in conservation practices. It is not meant to cover the whole cost.
- Conservation practices can lead to cleaner water & air, healthier soil, better wildlife habitat, and more desirable forest structure & species composition.





EQIP Eligibility

- Applicant must own or lease the property.
(needs land management authority/control)
- Average adjusted gross annual income (AGI) must be less than \$900,000 for the last three years.
- No minimum acreage requirement.
- Single applicant cannot receive > \$450,000 in cost-share incentives per Farm Bill.
- EQIP incentive payments cannot be used for required CAL FIRE action(s) under a timber harvest operation.



*Make your land
productive*



EQIP Payments

- EQIP pays a flat rate per unit for each Practice included in a contract.
- EQIP incentive payments are reimbursable.
 - Payments are not released until work is certified as meeting NRCS standards and specifications.
- Historically Underserved (HU) participants receive a higher incentive pay rate.
 - HU participants include socially disadvantaged, beginning farmer, veteran, and limited resource individuals.
- Participants will receive a Form 1099 to report EQIP payments on their tax return.



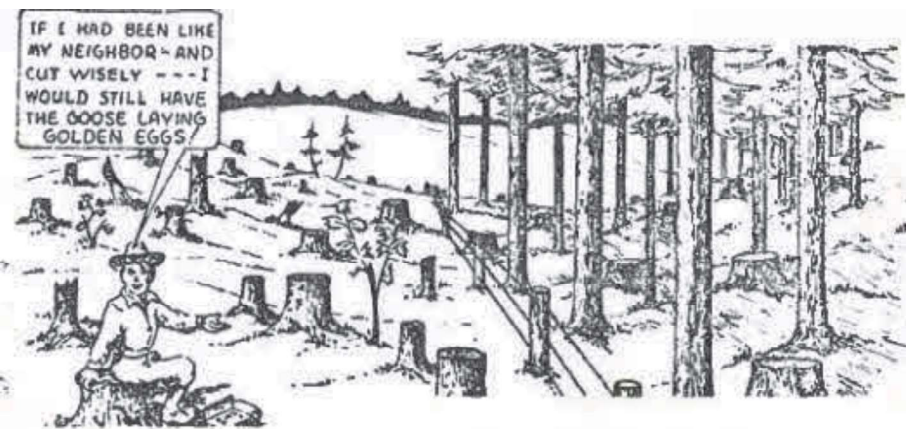
EQIP Application & Evaluation

- Applications are accepted year-round.
- Applications are evaluated and ranked through a competitive process one to four times per year (batching periods).
- Addresses natural resource concerns, including Soil, Water, Air, Plants, and Animals (SWAPA).



EQIP Contracts

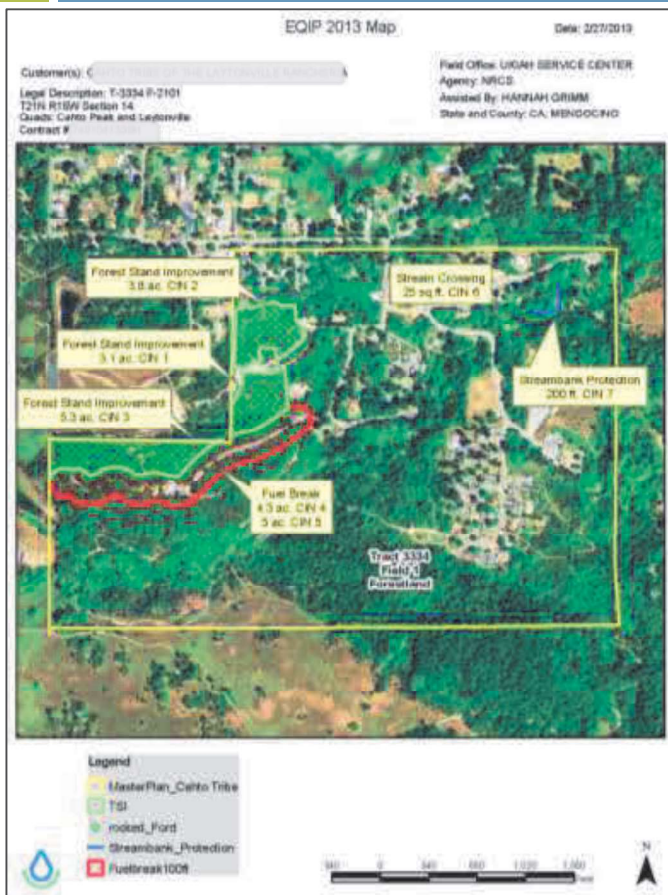
- Cannot start work until cleared by NRCS staff.
 - Environmental review must be complete.
- Contracts are generally 3 years
 - Contract Items will be scheduled out over the course of the contract, but can complete items faster.
- Cannot add to a contract or conduct work outside treatment locations identified on the contract map.



*Make your land
productive*



Conservation Planning



- A Conservation Plan will be developed for all applications.
- The plan will be based upon applicant's objectives.
- Technical staff will conduct a resource inventory which may include an assessment of fuel loads, plant health, plant composition and road conditions.
- Treatment units and practices will be mapped and described in the plan.



EQIP Priorities on Forestland

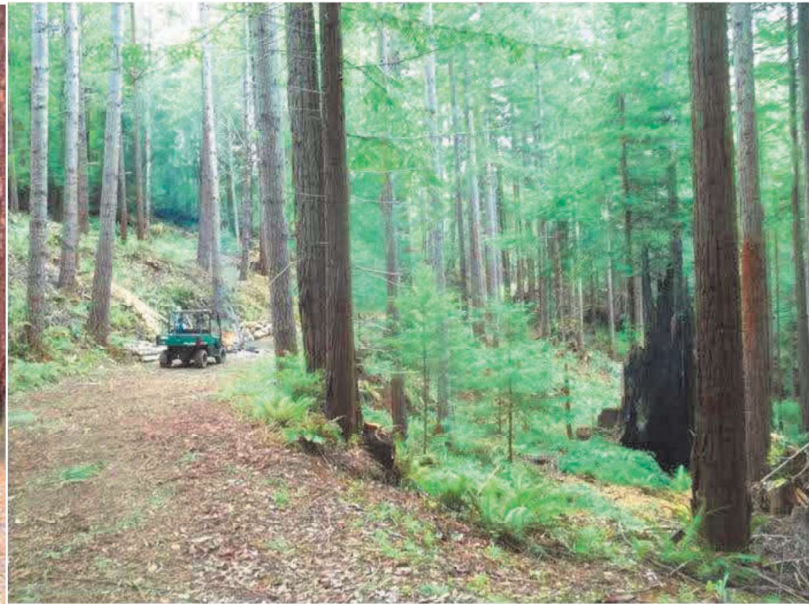
- **Reduce Fuel Loads:** thinning, fuel breaks
- **Improve Forest Health:** thinning, reforestation, plant competition control
- **Improve Oak Woodland Health:** conifer removal
- **Reduce Sediment Delivery:** road improvements





Eligible Forestland Practices: Fuel Breaks

Strategic Heavy Fuel Reduction
Aims to Alter Fire Behavior



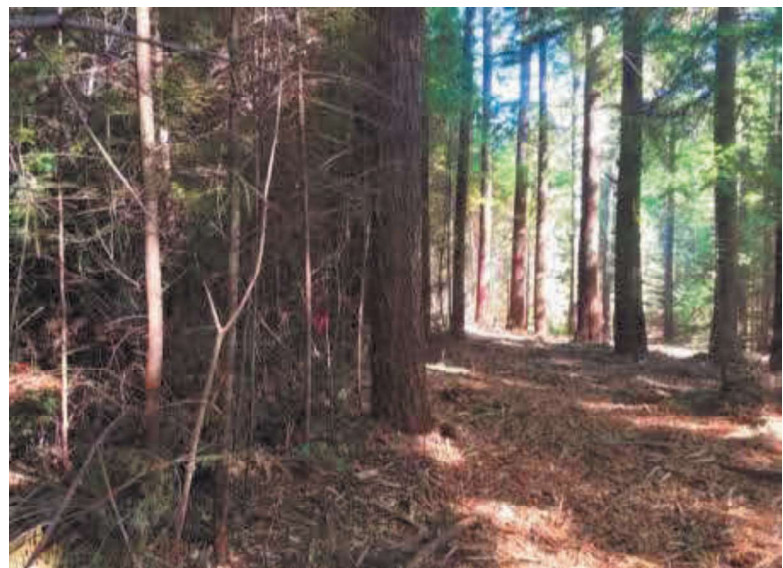


Eligible Forestland Practices: Forest Stand Improvement

Thinning to Reduce Fuel Loading

Thinning to Reduce Competition and Release

Thinning to Adjust Species Composition





Eligible Forestland Practices: Forest Stand Improvement

Removal of Conifers and Other Evergreen Species in
Deciduous Oak Woodlands





Eligible Forestland Practices: Reforestation

Tree/Shrub Site Preparation
Tree/Shrub Establishment



Source: Mark Egbert



Source: Ree Slocum Photography



Eligible Forestland Practices: Tree/Shrub Pruning

Reduce Ladder Fuels

Improve Wood Quality

Stimulate Increased Fruit/Nut Production

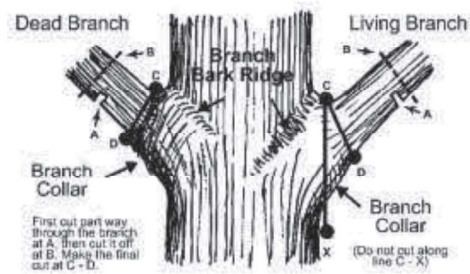


Before

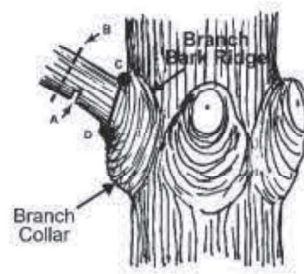


After

Proper Pruning Principles



Hardwoods



Conifers



Eligible Forestland Practices: Woody Residue Treatment

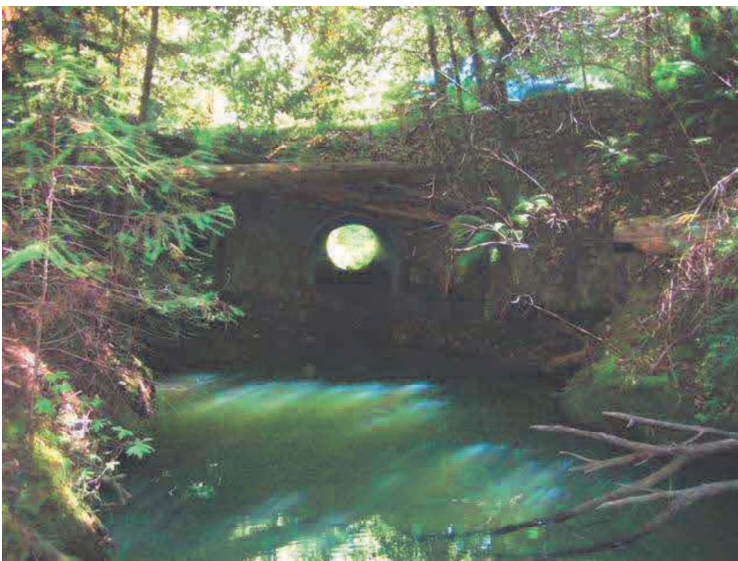
Slash Treatment Following Thinning
Chipping, Mastication, Pile/Burn, Lop/Scatter
Clean Up after Catastrophic Events





Eligible Forestland Practices: Roads

Stream Crossing Upgrades Culverts, rocked fords, bridges



Before

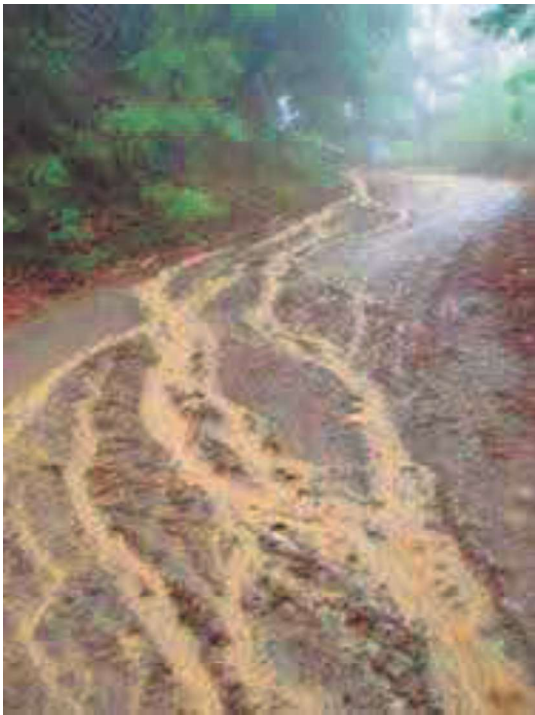


After



Eligible Forestland Practices: Roads

Access Road Reshaping Road Surface Erosion Control



Rolling Dip



Thank You



To sign up for EQIP:
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