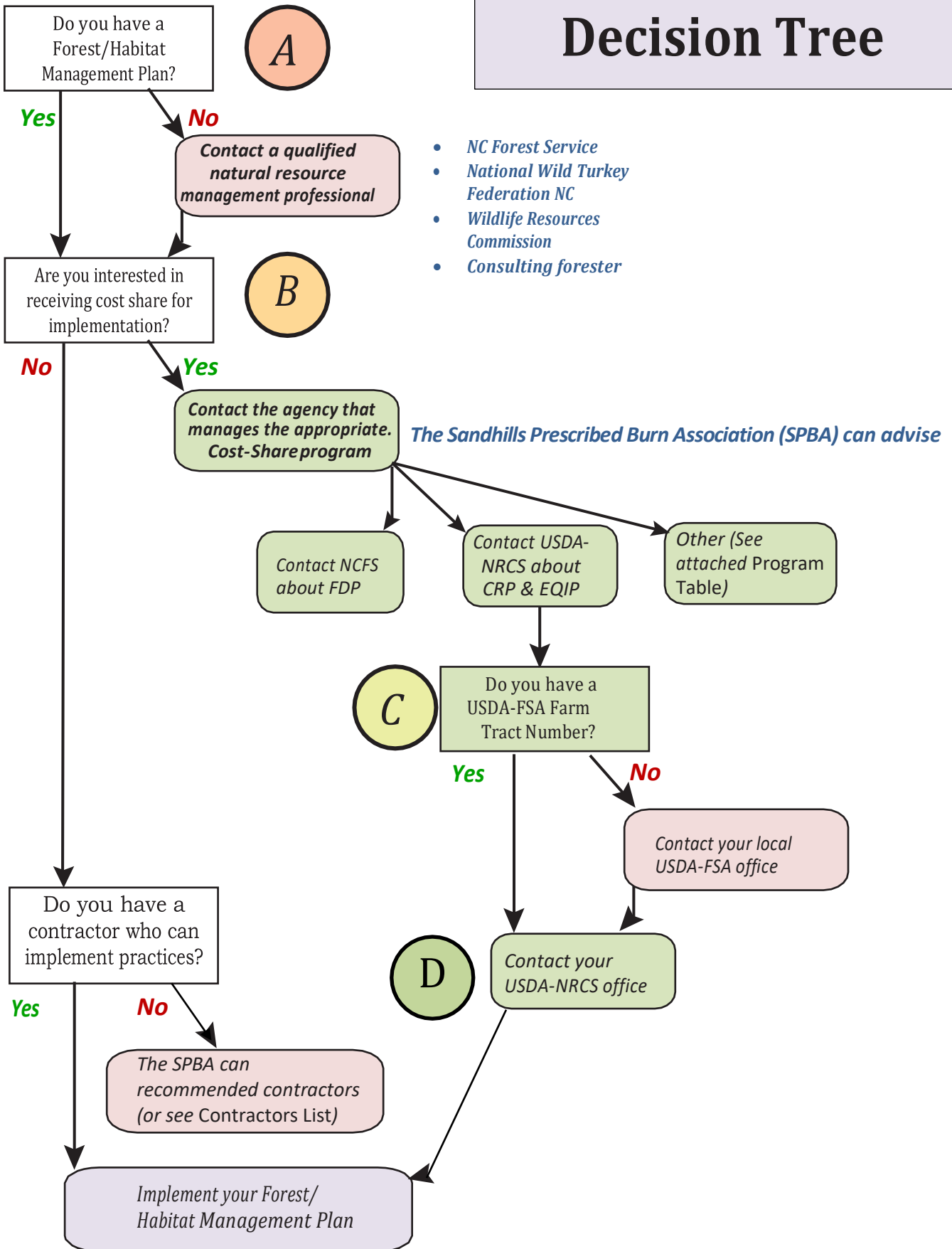


Decision Tree



Program Table

A

A Forest/Habitat Management Plan includes an inventory and map of your forested land, a description of your objectives for the land, and a description and schedule of the management activities and conservation practices to be carried out. Forest Management Plans can be prepared by the NC Forest Service, National Wild Turkey Federation, or NC Wildlife Resources Commission, or you can pay to have one prepared by a certified forester. The SPBA or your local Cooperative Extension staff can help you with this process.

B

You are eligible for Cost-Share if you have control of the land, a Forest Management Plan, and an Adjusted Gross Income of less than \$900,000. Your local USDA FSA office will help you prepare some key forms (Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Determination, Adjusted Gross Income, and Members Identification for Entities and Joint Operations).

Your NRCS District Conservationist will then help you prepare the Cost-Share application. You will need to bring the following to this meeting:

- 1. Proof that you control the land you wish to enroll (a copy of the deed or an "Agreement to Allow Installation of Conservation Practices" form),*
- 2. Your Social Security Number or EIN Number,*
- 3. A voided check from the account where you want the program funds to be deposited,*
- 4. Your Forest/Habitat Management Plan,*
- 5. Farm Tract Number.*

C

Registering your land with the USDA and getting a Farm Tract Number is the first step in applying for Cost-Share and other USDA programs. Getting this number will not cost you anything. To get a Farm Tract Number, make an appointment with your local USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. Bring your Social Security Number or EIN number with you to that meeting. (If your land is held in an LLC or other type of company, call the FSA office to learn about needed documentation.)

D

After you have submitted your application, an NRCS representative will make an appointment to come visit the land, to develop conservation plans on practices you will implement in the near future.

NRCS will rank all of the applications according to local resource concerns, the amount of conservation benefits that will be provided, and cost effectiveness. The main resource concern in this region is Longleaf pine ecosystem restoration. Therefore, priority will be given to those applications that enhance habitat, improve native groundcover, and promote prescribed burning.

If your application is pre-approved for funding, a certified letter will be mailed to you. You will have 15 days to respond to say that you would like to proceed with the contract. You can get guidance on how to do the work from the SPBA, the NC Forest Service, or a certified forester. Once the work is completed and inspected, NRCS will pay you the agreed-upon amount of Cost-Share money.