

Resources utilized when conducting American Tree Farm System (ATFS) inspections in Michigan, 2021 ATFS Standards

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Approved by the Michigan Tree Farm Committee; Updated on 10/6/2022

Important steps prior to submitting an ATFS inspection for approval:

1. Communicate with the ATFS Regional Coordinator responsible for the county in which you are conducting the ATFS inspection.
2. If the parcel is a new Tree Farm or the landowners are new Tree Farmers, work with the ATFS Regional Coordinator to get both the Tree Farm and the Tree Farmer information created in the ATFS database.
3. Once the Tree Farm and Tree Farmer information is entered in the ATFS database, ask the ATFS Regional Coordinator to assign the inspection to you. The Tree Farm and Tree Farmer information **MUST** be entered in the ATFS database, and the inspection **MUST** be assigned to you before you can submit an ATFS inspection for approval. Even if the Tree Farm and Tree Farmer information is already entered in the ATFS database (a re-inspection), the inspection **MUST** be assigned prior to submitting for approval.
4. Complete the ATFS inspection. Utilize this Michigan-specific resource document for completing the inspection and also refer to a detailed copy of the [2021 ATFS Standards](#). You can complete the inspection one of two ways. You can enter the information directly in the [ATFS database](#) (this requires logging in with your username and password). Or, you can enter the information in a [fillable 021 inspection form](#). If you choose to complete the fillable 021 inspection form, you **MUST** make sure you are actually using the fillable pdf file in an Adobe program. If you choose to complete the fillable 021 inspection form, email it to the appropriate ATFS Regional Coordinator for approval, OR if you are confident you completed the inspection correctly, you can email the form to inspectors@forestfoundation.org with the subject line "Upload021". Also refer to a separate document titled "[How to submit the 2021 inspection form, for inspectors and administrators](#)".

Completing the general information section at the beginning of the fillable 021 form:

- State = MI.
- Tree Farm Number – Work with the appropriate ATFS Regional Coordinator to obtain a Tree Farm number if one does not exist already.
- Initial Inspection – If the parcel has never been certified, it is an initial inspection. You must choose Certified/Recognition or Pioneer.
- Reinspection – If the parcel has been certified before, you must choose Recertification/Renewal, Pioneer, or Decertification.
- Field Inspection Date, Remove/Interview Date, and Type of Interview. You must enter a field inspection date OR remote/interview date (and choose type of interview). You may only do a phone or email inspection if you have visited the parcel within the last 180 days.
- Primary Owner Contact and Co-Owner – Enter all the pertinent information under Primary Owner Contact, and under Co-Owner (if applicable). If there is next generation family member

who will be the future landowner, please enter their information under Co-Owner. Please note the phone number format when typing should be XXX-XXX-XXXX.

- Ownership Type – Choose the appropriate ownership type.
- Tree Farm – Enter all the pertinent information under Tree Farm. Be sure you are differentiating between forested acres and total acres of the parcel – only forested acres are certified in ATFS. Also, under Location, please enter an accurate legal description that can be used to digitize the parcel in the ATFS Geographic Information System (GIS) database.
- Soil Type – Choose the appropriate primary and secondary soil types.
- Conservation Activities – Answer the questions about conservation activities.
- Cost Share – Answer the questions about cost share.
- Landscape Management Plan – Answer the questions about the landscape management plan.
- Notes/Updates – Enter any other information that is important and not covered elsewhere in the inspection form.
- Approvals –
 - Type the landowner's name (an electronic signature) along with the date, and check the box indicating the landowner's permission.
 - Type your name in the signature block for Qualified ATFS Inspector AND type your first and last name separately.
 - You must also type your Certified Inspector ID Number and choose a recommendation (Certification/Recognition, Pioneer, or Decertification).
 - State Approval – Per a vote by the Michigan Tree Farm Committee on 11/11/2021, this part is completed by the ATFS Regional Coordinator who covers the county where the Tree Farm is located.

Resources to which you should refer when completing an ATFS inspection are found in the table below. Please note that these resources specifically pertain to conducting ATFS inspections in Michigan, based on guidance drafted by the Michigan Tree Farm Committee. Also note that Standards that MUST BE MET FOR ATFS certification ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN BLUE AND DENOTED WITH THE WORD “SHALL”; Standards NOT REQUIRED FOR ATFS CERTIFICATION ARE NOT HIGHLIGHTED IN BLUE AND DENOTED WITH THE WORD “SHOULD”. Also note that ALL QUESTIONS IN THE INSPECTION FORM MUST BE ANSWERED ACCURATELY, WHETHER THE STANDARD IS A “SHALL” OR A “SHOULD”.

PM 1.1, SHALL – Make sure the landowner has an appropriate written forest management plan.
1.1.1., SHALL – Refer to the forest management plan to be sure that the plan is active and adaptive and the landowner's goals are being addressed.
1.1.2. (a), SHALL – Refer to the forest management plan and examine the plan to be sure that future conditions are discussed with management options that can reasonably be modified in case conditions change.

1.1.2. (b), SHALL –

- Refer to the forest management plan and cross reference with [Michigan Forestry Best Management Practices for Soil and Water Quality](#).
- Forest health – Refer to [Michigan Department of Natural Resources \(DNR\) Forest Health page](#).
- Soils – Refer to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) [Web Soil Survey](#).
- Water – Refer to [Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy \(EGLE\) Water Resources Division](#).
- Wood and fiber production – Refer to [Michigan DNR Forest Products Industry page](#).
- Threatened and Endangered Species – Ask the local [Michigan DNR Service Forester](#) to conduct a database check on the Michigan Natural Features Inventory ([MNFI](#)). Also refer to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation ([IPaC](#)) for Threatened and Endangered Species. PLEASE NOTE that Species of Special Concern ARE NOT the same as Threatened and Endangered Species.
- Special Sites –
 - Archaeological Special Sites – Ask the local [Michigan DNR Service Forester](#) to perform a database check. If the Michigan DNR Service Forester finds that there is an archaeological site in the Section that contains the parcel, the next step is to contact Stacy Tchorzynski, Archaeologist with Michigan DNR State Archaeology Program, at 517-388-4657 or tchorzynskis@michigan.gov and inquire about archaeological sites on the parcel. Stacy should have access to State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) archaeological data. Also refer to the [National Register of Historic Places](#).
 - Landowner-designated Special Sites – Ask the landowner if he or she would like to designate any areas as Special Sites.
 - Unique Natural Community Special Sites – When the DNR Service Forester checks the MNFI database for Threatened and Endangered Species, unique natural communities will also show up in the results. For ATFS in Michigan, a unique natural community is any with the MNFI designation S1 (critically imperiled in Michigan) or S2 (imperiled in Michigan).
- Invasive species – Refer to the Midwest Invasive Species Network ([MISIN](#)) and the local Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area ([CISMA](#)).
- Forest of Recognized Importance (FORI) – The Michigan Tree Farm Committee has a specific definition as follows:
 - Forest is part of a large intact forest (> 500 acres) AND in Southern Michigan, where Southern Michigan is defined as a parcel in any county within the Southwestern Lower Peninsula or Southeastern Lower Peninsula denoted by Regions 4 and 5 on the Michigan Tree Farm Committee map. To see the map, visit the [Information for Michigan Foresters page](#), then click on “Committee Map”.
 - Forest is located within 0.5 mile of a Great Lake.
 - Forest provides habitat for Threatened or Endangered species. In other words, if an MNFI database check showed a detection of Threatened or Endangered Species AND the forested habitat provides required habitat for such species (determined by the ATFS inspector), the forest is a FORI.
 - Forest designated as a [Michigan Deer Wintering Complex](#).
 - Forest contains a riparian area within the regulated riparian management zone on a unique river such as a [Federal Wild and Scenic River](#) or a [State Natural River](#).

1.1.2. (c), SHOULD –

- Refer to the forest management plan and cross reference with [Michigan Forestry Best Management Practices for Soil and Water Quality](#).
- Fire – Discuss with the landowner and the local fire officer such as the Township fire officer or other appropriate professional about rules related to burn permits, and also refer to the [Michigan DNR burn permits management system](#) and the [Michigan Prescribed Fire Council](#).
- Wetlands – Refer to the [Michigan EGLE wetlands page](#) and the [Michigan EGLE Wetlands Map Viewer](#).
- Desired species – Discuss with the landowner.
- Recreation – Discuss with the landowner.
- Conversion – Discuss with the landowner. An example of a common, relevant conversion activity is the conversion of an upland fallow field to forest whereby native tree and shrub seedlings are planted as a restoration practice.
- Forest aesthetics – Refer to the Generally Accepted Forest Management Practices (GAFMPs).
- Biomass – Refer to the [Michigan DNR Biomass Harvesting Guidance](#).
- Carbon – Several forest carbon programs are on the horizon in Michigan so stay in communication with organizations such as conservation districts, Michigan State University, Michigan DNR, and American Forest Foundation. Many of these programs are not yet in Michigan, but a list of well-known and up-and-coming forest carbon programs in the U.S. include [City Forest Credits](#), [Climate Forward](#), [Core Carbon](#), [Family Forest Carbon Program](#), [Forest Carbon Works](#), [Green Trees](#), and [NCX](#). Also refer to the [National Conference of State Legislatures page](#) on forests and carbon.

1.1.3., SHOULD – Discuss monitoring efforts with the landowner.

PM 2.1, SHALL – Refer to [Michigan Forestry Best Management Practices for Soil and Water Quality](#), perform a site assessment, and discuss with the landowner or local government officials any local ordinances. Also refer to a list of relevant Federal and State laws at the end of this resource document.

2.1.1., SHALL – Discuss with the landowner any violation of laws and actions taken to correct such violations.

2.1.2., SHOULD – Ask the landowner who has helped him or her manage the natural resources and confirm that only qualified professionals have helped manage the natural resources, and ensure that management practices were not carried out illegally. Examples of illegal practices in Michigan would be hiring a professional to apply pesticides when that professional is not on the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) Certified and Licensed Pesticide Applicator contractor list, or crossing a stream with logging equipment during a timber harvesting operation without consulting with Michigan EGLE about a stream crossing permit.

PM 3.1, SHALL – Determine if any trees have been harvested or if any afforestation practices (tree/shrub planting projects in previously non-forested areas) have taken place since 2015. If so, discuss stocking with the landowner and perform a site assessment. Stocking and productivity

are subjective and depend on the objectives of the landowner and the opinion of the natural resource professionals.

3.1.1., SHALL –

- Discuss stocking with the landowner and perform a site assessment, particularly to ensure stocking has achieved desired levels within five years after timber harvesting activity (where such activity occurred), as well as stocking goals for tree/shrub planting projects. Stocking and productivity are subjective and depend on the objectives of the landowner and the opinion of the natural resource professionals (e.g., the minimum stocking needed for an open-canopy oak forest or savanna is much lower than the minimum stocking needed for a closed-canopy oak forest).
- The planting of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) is not accepted in the current ATFS Standards. Backcrossed hybrid trees are NOT considered GMOs.
- Be sure to enter the Regeneration Type, Acres, Species, and Est. year for reforestation and afforestation on the ATFS inspection form.

PM 4.1, SHALL – Perform a site assessment and cross reference with [Michigan Forestry Best Management Practices for Soil and Water Quality](#).

4.1.1., SHALL – Perform a site assessment and cross reference with [Michigan Forestry Best Management Practices for Soil and Water Quality](#).

4.1.2., SHALL – Perform a site assessment and cross reference with [Michigan Forestry Best Management Practices for Soil and Water Quality](#).

PM 4.2, SHALL – Refer to the forest management plan and perform a site assessment to determine if pests (native and non-native) are present, if pest management is being implemented, and if so, if a range of activities are being considered.

- For information on forest health, refer to the [Michigan DNR Forest Health page](#).
- Refer to and discuss Integrated Pest Management ([IPM](#)).
- For non-native invasive species, refer to [MISIN](#) and the local [CISMA](#).
- If the landowner is using pesticides, refer to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) pesticide label on pesticide container (following this label IS THE LAW).
- Also refer to MDARD [pesticide laws and regulations](#).

4.2.1., SHOULD – If pesticides are being used, refer to and discuss [IPM](#).

4.2.2., SHALL – Refer to the EPA pesticide label on pesticide container. Also refer to MDARD [pesticide laws and regulations](#).

PM 4.3, SHALL – If the landowner has used prescribed fire treatments, be sure to enter Acres and Month/year of most recent burn, by objective type, on the ATFS inspection form.

4.3.1., SHALL – Discuss objectives with the landowner, as they pertain to prescribed fire. If the landowner is using prescribed fire treatments, discuss with the landowner and the local fire officer such as the Township fire officer or other appropriate professional about rules related to burn permits, and also refer to the [Michigan DNR burn permits management system](#) and the [Michigan Prescribed Fire Council](#). Also refer to the [Michigan Forestry Best Management Practices for Soil and Water Quality](#).

5.1.1., SHALL –

- Ask the local [Michigan DNR Service Forester](#) to conduct a database check on [MNFI](#) for Threatened and Endangered Species.
- Also refer to USFWS [IPaC](#) map viewer for Threatened and Endangered Species.
- Also make note of any Threatened and Endangered Species (if you are able to identify them) during the field visit.
- PLEASE NOTE that Species of Special Concern ARE NOT the same as Threatened and Endangered Species.
- You MUST answer the question about which resources were consulted – AT THE VERY LEAST you must indicate that you obtained a result from the MNFI database.
- If there are known occurrences of Federally Threatened and Endangered Species, make a note of which Federally Threatened and Endangered Species (and Acres affected) are present by choosing from the species listed on the ATFS inspection form.
- If there are known occurrences of State Threatened and Endangered Species, list them in the Notes/Observations box next to 5.1.2.

5.1.2., SHALL – Perform a site assessment and cross reference management activities with the habitat requirements of any Threatened and Endangered species that may be utilizing the parcel. Specifically make a note indicating how management activities will help protect such habitat.

PM 5.2, SHOULD – Discuss with the landowner and refer to forest management plan for recommendations regarding specific desired plant and animal species. If the landowner identified specific desired species or forest communities, choose from the list provided in the ATFS inspection form and if the species or forest community is not in the list, choose “Other” and indicate which species or forest community the landowner desires.

5.2.1., SHOULD –

- Refer to [Michigan Society of American Foresters \(SAF\) forest management page](#) for information about managing various forest types.
- Refer to informational resources about wildlife and wildlife management, such the [Michigan DNR Wildlife Action Plan](#) and “[Managing Michigan’s Wildlife: A Landowner’s Guide](#)”.
- Refer to informational pages and organizations that focus on particular groups of wildlife:
 - General wildlife: The [Wildlife Society, Michigan Chapter](#)
 - Mammals: [National Deer Association](#)

- Birds: [American Bird Conservancy](#); [Michigan Audubon Society](#); [Ruffed Grouse Society and American Woodcock Society](#); [Quail Forever](#); [National Wild Turkey Federation, Michigan Chapter](#)
- Fish and fish habitat: [Michigan DNR Forests For Fish](#); Michigan Clean Water Corps (MiCorps); [Michigan Trout Unlimited](#)
- Herps (amphibians and reptiles): [Michigan Society of Herpetologists](#)
- Insects: [Michigan Entomological Society](#); [Michigan Pollinator Initiative](#)

PM 5.3, SHOULD – Refer to the forest management plan and perform a site assessment to determine if management is accounting for forest health.

- For information on forest health, refer to the [Michigan DNR Forest Health page](#).
- Refer to and discuss [IPM](#).
- For non-native invasive species, refer to [MISIN](#) and the local [CISMA](#).

5.3.1., SHOULD –

- Determine which forest health issues are relevant, and refer to the forest management plan and perform a site assessment to determine if management is accounting for forest health.
- Specifically indicate which forest health issues are present.
- If wildfire is an issue, choose from the list of mitigation measures in the ATFS inspection form and list Acres.
- Answer the question about which measures are being implemented to address forest health concerns.

5.4, SHOULD – Maintaining or enhancing FORI is not required for ATFS certification (unless that particular activity is required by law or according to best management practices in Michigan Forestry Best Management Practices for Soil and Water Quality). **HOWEVER**, accurately answering this question about whether the parcel is a FORI, is required. Also, you **MUST** list which resources were consulted to determine relevance of FORI. You can list the Michigan Tree Farm Committee definition as the resource.

- **FORI** – The Michigan Tree Farm Committee has a specific definition as follows:
 - Forest is part of a large intact forest (> 500 acres) **AND** in Southern Michigan, where Southern Michigan is defined as a parcel in any county within the Southwestern Lower Peninsula or Southeastern Lower Peninsula denoted by Regions 4 and 5 on the Michigan Tree Farm Committee map. To see the map, visit the [Information for Michigan Foresters page](#), then click on “Michigan Tree Farm Committee Map and Contact Info”.
 - Forest is located within 0.5 mile of a Great Lake.
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 - Forest designated as a [Michigan Deer Wintering Complex](#).
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5.4.1., SHOULD – If FORI are present, perform a site assessment to determine if management activities are helping maintain or enhance the FORI.

PM 6.1, SHOULD – Refer to the [GAFMPs](#) and cross reference with a site assessment.

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PM 7.1, SHALL –

- You **MUST** list which resources were consulted (even if Special Sites are not present) to determine if there is a presence of Special Sites. For archaeological sites, Michigan DNR, SHPO, and National Register of Historic Places are the resources. For landowner-designated sites, the landowner is the resource. For unique natural communities, Michigan DNR and MNFI are the resources.
- If Special Sites are present, you **MUST** indicate which sites are present, number of occurrences and how they are protected per the questions on the ATFS inspection form.

7.1.1., SHALL –

- Archaeological Special Sites – Ask the local [Michigan DNR Service Forester](#) to perform a database check. If the Michigan DNR Service Forester finds that there is an archaeological site in the Section that contains the parcel, the next step is to contact Stacy Tchorzynski, Archaeologist with Michigan DNR State Archaeology Program, at 517-388-4657 or tchorzynskis@michigan.gov and inquire about archaeological sites on the parcel. Stacy should have access to SHPO archaeological data. Also refer to the [National Register of Historic Places](#).
- Landowner-designated Special Sites – Ask the landowner if he or she would like to designate any areas as Special Sites.
- Unique Natural Community Special Sites – When the DNR Service Forester checks the MNFI database for Threatened and Endangered Species, unique natural communities will also show up in the results. For ATFS in Michigan, a unique natural community is any with the MNFI designation S1 (critically imperiled in Michigan) or S2 (imperiled in Michigan).

PM 8.1, SHOULD – Ask the landowner to provide documents, or have a conversation, indicating that only qualified professionals have helped manage the natural resources.

8.1.1., SHOULD – There are numerous types of natural resource professionals:

- Foresters, wildlife biologists, and ecologists – This would include professionals who actively write management plans or implement habitat management such as tree marking for timber harvesting. Common credentials include MDARD Qualified Foresters, Certified FSP management plan writers, Technical Service Provider (TSP) foresters who write NRCS management plans, Certified Foresters with SAF, Registered Foresters with Michigan DNR, foresters with Association of Consulting Foresters, and Certified Wildlife Biologists with The Wildlife Society (TWS).

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Arborists and tree service companies – This would include professionals who actively implement tree care work such as tree health treatments, tree removal near buildings, and tree pruning. A common credential for arborists is Certified Arborist with International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). ➤ Producers – This would include mills and loggers. Two recognized credentials for loggers are Qualified Logging Professional with Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and Master Logger. ➤ Pesticide applicators – In Michigan, to perform work for a fee where pesticides are being applied (common for controlling non-native and native forest pests and diseases), a contractor must be on the MDARD list of Certified and Licensed Pesticide Applicators. ➤ Planters – This would include professionals who offer planting services, including the planting of trees and shrubs, wildflowers, and grasses.
8.1.2., SHOULD – Ask landowner to provide documents showing that only qualified professionals who carry insurance and follow the law have helped manage the natural resources.
8.1.3., SHOULD – Ask the landowner to provide documents showing records of all management activities.
PM 8.2, SHALL – Discuss with the landowner if management activities conform to the objectives specified in the forest management plan. Also discuss the landowner’s protocol for monitoring forest harvest activity.
8.2.1., SHALL – Discuss with the landowner if management activities conform to the objectives specified in the forest management plan. Also discuss the landowner’s protocol for monitoring forest harvest activity.

List of Relevant Laws and Best Management Practices for ATFS in Michigan

There are numerous Federal, State, and local laws and regulations that are relevant to forestry and other habitat management. While all pertinent laws cannot be listed in detail, there are several that should be mentioned:

Federal Laws—

- [Migratory Bird Treaty Act](#) (1918) provides protection to birds officially listed as migratory birds.
- [Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act](#) (1947) pertains to the Federal regulation of pesticide distribution, sale, and use. The text on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) pesticide labels on pesticide containers should be interpreted as Federal law.

- [Wilderness Act](#) (1964) established the National Wilderness Preservation System. There are 16 protected Wilderness areas in Michigan. Nordhouse Dunes in Mason County is one example.
- [National Historic Preservation Act](#) (1966) secures protection of archaeological resources and sites on public land and land owned by Native Americans.
- [Wild and Scenic Rivers Act](#) (1968) established a national system of Wild and Scenic Rivers, whereby activities are regulated within buffer zones adjacent to such rivers. Of Michigan's approximately 51,438 miles of river, 656.4 miles are designated as Wild and Scenic. A couple of examples in Michigan include the Manistee River, below Tippy Dam to the bridge on State Highway M55, as well as the segment of the Pere Marquette River that is downstream from the junction of the Middle and Little South Branches to the junction with U.S. Highway 31.
- [National Environmental Policy Act](#) (1969) promotes the enhancement of the environment, and includes the requirement that all Executive Federal agencies prepare Environmental Assessments (EAs) and Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) that contain information about the potential environmental effects of proposed Federal agency actions. However, NEPA does not apply to the President, Congress, or the Federal courts.
- [Clean Air Act](#) (1970) provides regulation of air quality and air pollutants.
- [Clean Water Act](#) (1972) provides regulation of pollutants in water of the U.S.
- [Endangered Species Act](#) (1973) protects species currently in danger of extinction (Endangered) and those that may become Endangered in the foreseeable future (Threatened).
- [Plant Protection Act](#) (2000) provides that the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) may issue regulations "to prevent the introduction of plant pests into the United States or the dissemination of plant pests within the United States."

State laws—

- [Commercial Forest Act](#), Parts 511 and 512 of Public Act 451, 1994, as amended (since 1925) is a property tax reduction program for eligible landowners with a written forest management plan and who are implementing management.
- [Right to Forest Act](#) of 2002 provides that properly implemented forestry practices are protected from public or private nuisance complaints.
- [QFP](#), Public Acts 42 and 45 of 2013 is a property tax exemption program for eligible landowners with a written forest management plan and who are implementing management.
- Part 17, [Michigan Environmental Protection Act](#), of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA) provides for the protection of air, water, and other natural resources and provides the right to any person to bring action against another person or entity regarding degradation to natural resources.
- Part 31, (Section 3108) [Water Resource Protection](#) (Floodplain Regulatory Authority), of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA

- 451, as amended (NREPA) regulates, through permitting, the construction, filling, or changing of grade within 100-year floodplains.
- Part 31, (Section 3109) [Water Resource Protection](#) (Discharge into state waters), of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA) addresses direct or indirect discharges of harmful substances.
 - Part 83, Pesticide Control, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA), and related State regulations, regulate pesticide products including their use, the people that apply them, licensing requirements, and penalties. Refer to MDARD [pesticide laws and regulations](#).
 - Part 91, [Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control](#) (SESC), of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA) prevents soil erosion and requires a permit for any earth change that disturbs one or more acres of land or that is within 500 feet of a lake or stream (exceptions include plowing and tilling for crop production and activities associated with logging or mining).
 - Part 301, [Inland Lakes and Streams](#), of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA) protects inland lakes and streams, whereby permits are required for activities such as crossing streams and disturbing land below the ordinary high water mark.
 - Part 303, [Wetlands Protection](#), of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA) protects wetlands, which are defined as “land characterized by the presence of water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances does support, wetland vegetation, or aquatic life, and is commonly referred to as a bog, swamp, or marsh.” Under this regulation, activities such as placing fill material, removing soil, construction, and draining surface water are prohibited unless a permit is obtained from Michigan EGLE.
 - Part 305, Natural Rivers Act, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA), regulates development and land uses within designated State Natural Rivers. There are 16 State Natural River systems in Michigan. For more information, visit the [Michigan DNR Natural Rivers database](#).
 - Part 323, [Shorelands Protection and Management](#), of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA), provides for the designation and management of areas along the Great Lakes shoreline, whereby a permit is required for certain activities in these designated areas.
 - Part 353, Sand Dunes Protection and Management, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA), provides designated Critical Dune Areas along the Great Lakes shoreline. A permit is required for all new uses in Critical Dune Areas mapped by Michigan EGLE in the “[Atlas of Critical Dune Areas](#)”.
 - Part 365, Endangered Species Protection, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA), protects [Threatened and Endangered species](#) from being harmed during project activities, unless a permit is issued by Michigan DNR.

- Part 413, [Transgenic and Non-native Organisms](#), of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA), regulates the possession and movement of non-native terrestrial and aquatic organisms.
- Part 515, [Forest Protection and Forest Fires Act](#), of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA), establishes machinery to protect forestlands from fires. A permit is required for burning on or adjacent to forestland.
- [National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System](#) (NPDES) – Michigan Environmental Protection Act, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA) pertains to required permits for fixed forestry activities such as permanent log storage areas maintained by mills.

Local laws, ordinances, and other regulations vary by County and Township. County and Townships should be consulted for more details.

Best management practices (BMPs) pertain not only to Federal, State, and local laws and regulations, but also practices that “go beyond the law”. In Michigan, BMPs pertaining to forestry are published in the [Michigan Forestry Best Management Practices for Soil and Water Quality](#). Michigan forestry BMPs that exceed the law include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Provide guidance on the prevention and cleanup of chemical spills during forest harvesting activities.
- Establish Riparian Management Zones (RMZs) along lakes, rivers, and streams that are not regulated as State Natural Rivers or Federal Wild and Scenic Rivers.
- Establish RMZs along Michigan DNR Designated Trout Streams. Refer to Michigan DNR [Inland Trout and Salmon regulation maps](#).
- Protect vernal pools and seeps.
- Provide specifications pertaining to the planning and placement of forest roads, skid trails water diversion devices, stream crossings, log landings, to minimize erosion and rutting.
- Use an [IPM](#) strategy to control non-native invasive species and other undesirable species.