§ 230.3 National program administration.

(a) The Chief shall develop and oversee all Program policy and procedures and monitor the implementation of such policy and procedure over the life of the Program.

(b) The Chief shall annually distribute among the States such cost-share funds as may be available for the Program after addressing the public benefit incidental to such distribution and after giving appropriate consideration to the following: The total acreage of nonindustrial private forest land in each State, the potential productivity of such land, the number of owners eligible for cost sharing in each State, the need for reforestation in each State, the opportunities to enhance non timber resources on such forest lands, and the anticipated demand for timber and nontimber resources in each State. In making distributions under this paragraph, the Chief shall consult with a group of not less than five State Foresters selected by a majority of the State foresters.

(c) Tree planting, tree maintenance, and tree improvement are national priorities for cost-share practices under the Programs. In addition to these practices, the Chief, in consultation with the State Foresters, may develop other national priorities for practices to be cost shared under the Program and shall communicate such priorities to guide administration of the Program.

(d) The Chief shall review and determine approval of State plans, including any revisions of such plans.
(e) The Chief, in consultation with the State Foresters, shall annually re-evaluate and set the percentage of Program funding to be made available for landowner forest stewardship plan development (§230.7(a)(1) of this subpart).

(f) The Chief may enter into such agreements with any other USDA agency as are necessary to administer the Program. These agreements may include provisions authorizing the collection of Program participant information, the management of accounting ledgers, and the disbursement of payment to participants.

(g) The Chief shall retain final authority to resolve all issues which may arise in the administration of the Program.

§ 230.4 State program administration.

(a) In each State participating in the Program, the Secretary of Agriculture, in consultation with the State Forester, shall establish a State Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee whose composition meets the requirements of section 19(b) of the Act. The Committee shall be chaired by the State Forester, or the designee thereof.

(b) In each State participating in the Program, the Committee shall recommend to the State Forester for approval:

(1) Stewardship Incentive Program needs within the State;

(2) The minimum contiguous acreage of eligible nonindustrial private forest land, consistent with §230.5(c) of this subpart;

(3) Those nationally approved practices that will be eligible for cost-share assistance within the State;

(4) Those nationally approved technical practices and minimum specifications to be used in implementing practices;

(5) The cost-share levels, by practice, which will encourage tree planting, maintenance, and improvement, and other high priority practices within the State that will result in multiple resource benefits;

(6) The fixed rate or reimbursement or designated percentage of total cost for practice components;

(7) The distribution mechanism for the allocation of cost-share funds within the State;

(8) The assignment of technical responsibility, by type of Program practice, to the appropriate Service Representative;

(9) Guidelines for establishing annual priorities for the approval of landowner applications;

(10) The mechanisms for ensuring landowner compliance with practice specification;

(11) The mechanisms to monitor State participation in the Program; and

(12) Any adjustments in Program guideline, administration, or funding levels to better achieve Program objectives within the State.

(c) The State Forester, after giving full consideration to the recommendations of the Committee, shall approve Program administration procedures as set forth in paragraph (b) of this section. In the event a Committee fails to make timely recommendations with regard to any matter listed in paragraph (b) of this section, the State Forester is authorized to approve administrative procedures for implementing the Program without further delay.

(d) To participate in the Program, the State Forester, in consultation with the Committee, shall develop a State plan that shall provide baseline data on the forest resources of the State; outline threats to the forest resources of the State; describe economic and environmental opportunities that are linked with the forest resources of the State; address management problems, opportunities, and objectives associated with intermingled Federal, State, and private land ownership patterns within the State; and make planning recommendations for Federal, State, and local implementation of the Act.

(1) The State Plan shall cover a 5-year period, identify management goals for nonindustrial private forest lands and set priorities for achieving the goals and objectives identified for the State for each year.

(2) State Foresters may use existing resource inventories, landowner surveys, and other relevant planning data to develop the State plan.