

Part 535 – Operations and Management

Subpart F – Exhibits

535.53 Performance Benchmarks

Level 1 Training

This training is suggested for GS–5 and GS–7 employees who work in areas where forestry or agroforestry practices are a significant part of the workload. On completion, the trainee:

- Can identify the principal forestry-related species (overstory, understory) and agroforestry-related species in the area.
- Is familiar with the principal soils in the area, understands their potentials and limitations for forestry and agroforestry use, and knows how to use published soil survey data and interpretations.
- Can use appropriate inventorying methods when working with a cooperator and knows how to involve the cooperator in every detail.
- Knows how to use common forestry tools properly.
- Understands and uses the technical guide in working with cooperators.
- Can assist a cooperator in planning use and treatment of forestland on a limited complexity. This may include planning for wood production, grazing resource use, recreation, and other related uses.
- Can assist a cooperator in agroforestry design, layout, species selection, space requirements, maintenance, and renovation.
- Can assist a cooperator in erosion control, particularly with respect to disturbed forestland as well as road and trail layout, design, maintenance, and protection.
- Understands tree and shrub establishment techniques.

Level 2 Training

This training is suggested for GS-9 soil conservationists and foresters in training toward GS-11 staff forester positions. Upon completion the trainee:

- Meets all the training requirements listed for level 1.
- Has trained GS-5 or GS-7 employees in the items listed for level 1 training.
- Can identify common native and introduced woody plants in the area.
- Has assisted in plot data collection activities. This includes:
 - Working as a member of a team in selecting forest stands, taking measurements, and recording data.
 - Working as a member of a team in selecting windbreaks and collecting and recording data.
 - Helping with the development or revision of forest and agroforestry interpretations.
 - Understanding the selection, use, and limitations of the appropriate site tables, site curves, and yield tables.
- Assists in the development of ecological site descriptions and soil-related interpretations.
- Has developed working relationships with State forestry agency personnel at the local level.
- Knows the desirable and undesirable characteristics of the principal trees and shrubs in ornamental, wildlife, and urban use in the area.
- Knows the local marketing situation for wood products, i.e., species used, size, and quality requirements.
- Has assisted an NRCS forester or other qualified person in marking trees for harvest cutting and forest improvement.
- Has assisted landowners with conservation planning on more complex forest stands, conditions, or situations.

Level 3 Training

This training is suggested for GS-11 soil conservationists or foresters in training toward GS-12 staff forester positions. On completion the trainee:

- Meets all the training requirements listed for level 2.
- Conducts training sessions for soil conservationists on subjects covered at lower training levels.
- Gives public presentations on conservation forestry activities.
- Prepares articles on conservation work involving the use of trees.
- Takes leadership in conducting plot data collection activities.
- Has a working knowledge of the soil classification system and the relationship of soil to plant growth and management:
 - Understands and can use the database information systems associated with plot data collection, ecological site descriptions, and soil-related interpretations:
 - Ecological Site Inventory (ESI)
 - Ecological Site Description (ESD)
 - National Soil Information System (NASIS)
- Develops ecological site descriptions and soil-related interpretations.
- Works with the State forestry agency and cooperates with other agencies and organizations in developing and applying forestry and agroforestry programs and practices to coordinate conservation planning activities.
- Assists in making environmental assessments for projected work affecting forested areas.
- Performs occasional assignments of the type normally given to a GS-12 staff forester.

Level 4 Training

This training is suggested for GS-12 staff foresters in training toward higher grade staff forester positions. On completion the trainee:

- Meets the training requirements listed for level 3 training.
- Prepares training materials and conducts training sessions for soil conservationists or other lower grade employees.
- Participates in activities of professional organizations.
- Performs occasional assignments of the type normally given to a higher grade staff forester.
- Develops working relationships with employees of the State forestry agency, consultant foresters, industry foresters, and foresters with other agencies and organizations; and Provides State and/or regional leadership in developing ecological site descriptions and soil-related interpretations. This includes expertise in the use of the associated database information systems:
 - ESI
 - ESD
 - NASIS