



This issue's cover photo was taken in Mitchell County at the N.C. Forest Service's water quality ranger training course. Each year, Water Resources Branch staff and water quality foresters provide water program training for new field staff members across the state. The objective of this training is to provide students with sufficient information and practical instruction to allow them to deliver the N.C. Forest Service's water program. An emphasis on water quality laws and forestry BMPs is a focus of much of the course.

The classroom and field training encourages new staff members to ask questions and helps improve consistency in program delivery across our topographically diverse state.

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Limits on the Forest Practice Guidelines exemption

Forest Practice Guidelines (FPGs) related to water quality are performance standards for protecting water quality during forestry operations in North Carolina. Enacted in 1990 and readopted in 2018, these nine standards provided a "forestry exemption" from certain required steps for other land disturbing activities greater than one acre in North Carolina.

The North Carolina Sedimentation Pollution Control Act (SPCA) of 1973 is the state law requiring that one or more acres of land disturbances must have and implement an erosion and sediment control plan. Such a plan is approved by either the N.C. Division of Energy, Mineral and Land Resources (DEMLR), or a local delegated government program.

The forestry exemption does not give forestry activities a 'free pass'. The exemption relieves the owner and operator from having to prepare an erosion control plan, submit the plan, wait for approval and process the paperwork. Such plan reviews commonly have \$100 per acre fee! Additionally, onsite rainfall is recorded and noncompliance circumstances are self-reported.

FPGs do not provide an exemption from other state [water quality standards](#), such as turbidity, loss of use or petroleum discharge.

The FPGs are baseline requirements that can minimize sediment pollution as required by the state's SPCA. The exemptions provided by the FPGs are limited, and protective measures may be needed to comply with federal or state water quality standards.

BMPs can be the best and lowest cost solution to comply with the FPGs and other water quality regulations.

Contact a N.C. Forest Service water quality forester for assistance in preharvest planning, training for your logging crew, identifying stream or waterways and questions about FPG inspections (see page 4 for contact information).

Read more about this topic [here](#).

NCFS Moreland Gueth Water Quality Award

The agency's 2021 water quality award was presented to Austin Harriett, service forester for District 4. Austin joined the N.C. Forest Service in 2012 as a service forester in District 5 after graduating from N.C. State University in 2011 and working for a consulting forester. In 2015, he transferred to District 4 as a service forester. Austin demonstrated exceptional efforts in delivering the water quality program services such as 32 tract inspections and 32 reinspections, four preharvest plans and 10 stream identifications. His nominator emphasized Austin's thoroughness during stream identifications for riparian buffer rule areas, knowledge of streamside management zone layout and road construction and ability to communicate the actionable items that protect water quality to landowners and forest industry representatives.

Congratulations Austin!



Austin Harriett (left) being presented with the 2021 Moreland Gueth Water Quality Award at the New Bern District Headquarters by Assistant State Forester Sean Brogan (back), Region 1 Assistant Regional Forester of Forest Management Paul Mowery (center) and Watershed and Conservation Staff Forester AJ Lang (right).

When is a ford stream crossing the right choice?



Fords are harden surfaced, low water crossings in which a vehicle drives directly through and across the stream channel. Ideal site characteristics for fords include low streambanks solid and level stream bottoms and straight section of stream channel.

Appropriate places for a ford crossing may include:

- A stream that has an existing rocky bottom surface.
- A crossing that will only see occasional, infrequent use.
- Streams that are too wide for bridgemats or multiple culverts.
- A low-flow stream that often dries up during the year.
- Areas prone to beaver activity that could dam-up a culvert crossing.

Fords are not for skid trails. They are only for logging truck access.

Both pictures above are good examples of stable ford crossings. Note the gently sloping and stable road approach ways.

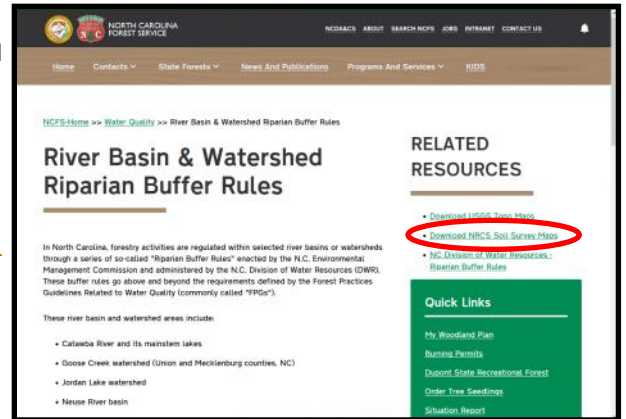
Accessing Soil Survey Maps

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) recently updated its website changing how printed versions of soil surveys are accessed. Obtaining the printed version of a soil survey is necessary to identify streams subject to the riparian buffer rules.

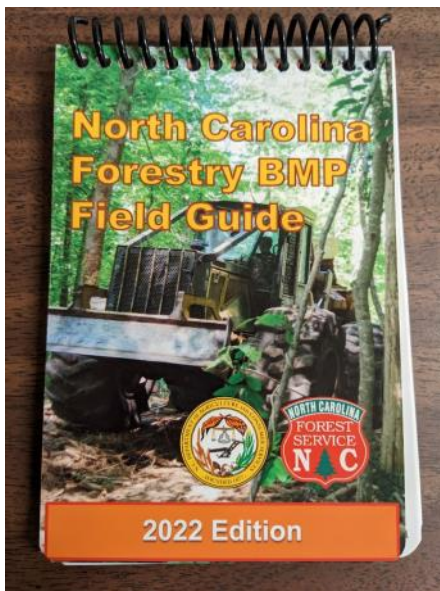
The soil survey manuscripts are available using the "box.com" app utilized by the NRCS. The app allows you to download each map sheet to your computer one at a time, as well as the book text.

Step by step directions on how to access these maps can be found on the N.C. Forest Service website under [Programs and Services](#)>>[Water Quality](#)>>[River Basin & Watershed Riparian Buffer Rules](#). Under "Related Resources" (see red circle below) you will find a link to [Download NRCS Soil Survey Maps](#).

Contact the appropriate [District Office](#) or water quality forester (see page 4) to request a buffer rule stream determination.



Forestry BMP Field Guides



Front cover of the North Carolina Forestry BMP Field Guide 2022 edition.

The North Carolina Forestry BMP Field Guide was revised to align with the content of the recently updated BMP manual. In addition to the updated information, the 2022 edition contains some new pictures and QR codes for additional information.

Like the first edition, the field guide is full-color and pocket-sized. It illustrates proper implementation of BMPs and other erosion control practices that can be used to help maintain water quality during timber harvesting or other forestry activities.

Also digitally available here:

https://www.ncforestservice.gov/water_quality/bmp_fieldguide.htm



Back cover acknowledging funds that supported printing.

Printed copies of the field guide were received in late November 2022. Staff with the Water Resources Branch will distribute copies to all NCFS districts and may provide copies upon request via email to NCFS.Water@ncagr.gov.

Many thanks to our sponsors for their contributions towards printing these field guides!

Did you know...

The North Carolina Forestry BMP manual contains seeding options for all four seasons. These erosion control seeding recommendations were field-tested and selected because they are relatively low-cost, readily available, easy to apply and widely adaptable for many soil conditions.

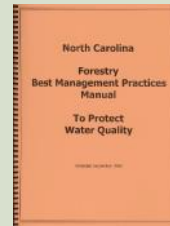
Other native and/or non-invasive or non-exotic grass species may also be appropriate for your site. Talk with your local feed & seed stores, county ranger and county extension service for their recommendations. Other useful links on this topic:

- <https://www.ces.ncsu.edu/>
- <https://www.ncagr.gov/pollinators/seeds.htm>
- <https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/herbaceous-plants-for-wildlife>



For recorded and live webinars related to forestry and/or erosion control, check out:

- [The Forestry & Natural Resources Webinar Portal](#)
- [How the River Flows Podcast](#)
- [N.C. Forest Service BMP Videos](#)



Contact your local **N.C. Forest Service county office** for a copy of the 2021 updated BMP manual!

North Carolina Forest Service

WATER RESOURCES BRANCH

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