

US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, SAVANNAH DISTRICT  
SILVICULTURE EXEMPTION CHECKLIST

This checklist is to assist you in submitting complete and proper information. Please keep in mind that this is not an exhaustive list. Each project has unique components and **more or less information may be required** by the project manager to complete a Silviculture Exemption Verification on any given project. There is no requirement at 33 CFR Part 323.4 or 40 CFR Part 232.3 for a landowner to obtain exemption verification from the USACE prior to conducting silviculture activities in waters of the US. The Section 404(f) silviculture exemption is a statutory exemption that cannot be granted or denied by the USACE, and our role is merely to verify whether a proposed silviculture activity in "waters of the US" qualifies for the exemption. The USACE and the USEPA are the only federal agencies that can verify whether or not an activity qualifies for silviculture exemption. Neither the Georgia Forestry Commission, nor any other state agency can verify whether or not a proposed silviculture activity qualifies for the Section 404(f) exemption. We appreciate your cooperation in providing this information at the time of your request. Failure to provide this information may delay our ability to respond to your request.

1. \_\_\_ **Written request** that fully describe all silviculture activities that may result in a discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the US, including streams and wetlands, and includes the information listed below. This includes, for example, roads, crossings, mechanical site preparation, and ditching.
  - a. \_\_\_ **Name, address, and phone number** of applicant, current property owner(s), harvesting contractor and agent/consultant (if applicable).
  - b. \_\_\_ **Location** description of property or review area (road names, cross streets, nearest town, etc).
  - c. \_\_\_ **Directions** to the property or review area from the nearest interstate highway.
  - d. \_\_\_ **Coordinates** of center of property or review area in **decimal degrees** (xx.xxxx°N, -xx.xxxx°W format). Linear projects should also include decimal degrees location of the start and end of the review/project area.
  - e. \_\_\_ **Size** of property or review area in acres.
  - f. \_\_\_ **Name of nearest named waterbody** (stream/river/lake) to which the property or review area is hydrologically connected, closest TNW, name and number of drainage basin (if the property is connected to an unnamed tributary, then specify the nearest named waterbody, e.g. unnamed tributary to the Savannah River).
  - g. \_\_\_ The GFC letter recommending formal exemption verification to the USACE.
2. \_\_\_ **Project name.** The name of the project/tract of land.
3. \_\_\_ **Past Actions** including JDs and Permits with the US Army Corps of Engineers Action ID number.
4. \_\_\_ **Property record(s)** for the property or review area.
5. \_\_\_ **Photographs** should be representative of the site and may include, but not limited too, pictures of the wetlands, soils, tributaries, and vegetation on the site. Photographs will help in determining the need for a site visit.
6. \_\_\_ **Past, present, and future plans.** To comply with Section 404(f), a landowner must demonstrate silviculture management. Either a Forest Management Plan or the following indicators may be used by the USACE and/or the USEPA to determine whether an activity would be considered part of an ongoing silviculture operation. This list of indicators is not all inclusive and may not cover all silviculture activities. At a minimum documentation outlining **Past, Current, and Future** silviculture must be provided.
  - a. \_\_\_ **Forest Management Plan** illustrating that silviculture has been, is currently and will be conducted into the future and prepared by a Georgia Registered Forester. The plan should include at a minimum the following items:
    - 1) \_\_\_ A statement that timber production is the primary land use of the landowner.
    - 2) \_\_\_ Provides for maintaining or restoring the health of the land in order to provide a sustainable flow of silviculture uses, benefits, products, and services.

- 3) \_\_\_ Affords desired conditions, objectives, and guidance for stand specific management decisions. Desired conditions may be long-term aspirations and, therefore, may only be achievable over many plan periods; however, desired conditions should be realistic.
- 4) \_\_\_ Objectives that are realistic, achievable, and within reasonable budget assumptions.
- 5) \_\_\_ Meet desired goals of "Land suitability" (see 36 CFR Part 219.3).

b. \_\_\_ **Characteristics of Ongoing Silviculture**

- 1) \_\_\_ Evidence of prior management activities, including, but not limited to: stumps from earlier harvests; aerial photographs documenting past management activity; and/or records of past tree establishment, cultivation or utilization. **(Past)**
- 2) \_\_\_ Evidence of implementation of pre-existing forest management that includes timber harvesting and reforestation. The evidence should have been developed by a trained Georgia Master Timber Harvester Program participant or a Georgia Registered Forester, and outline the harvest method and haul routes. **(Past)**
- 3) \_\_\_ For recently harvested bottomland hardwood forest land that are specified in the Memorandum to the Field dated November 28, 1995, where tree stumps were left in place to provide coppice sprouts, monitoring reports may be necessary to insure adequate restocking and that species conversion is not evident. **(Current)**
- 4) \_\_\_ For recently harvested areas considered to be within "waters of the US", skid trails have been minimized and installed in accordance with federal and Georgia approved Best Management Practices (BMPs) for logging operations. **(Current)**
- 5) \_\_\_ The landowner is engaged in a forest management activity(s) such as boundary maintenance; firebreak construction and maintenance; invasive plant, insect, or disease control, and/or timber stand improvement (TSI). **(Current)**
- 6) \_\_\_ The forest land is enrolled in a third party certification program (e.g., Tree Farm, Forest Stewardship Council, Sustainable Forestry Initiative, etc.) or is enrolled in conservation, silviculture, or agricultural-use tax status. **(Current and Future)**
- 7) \_\_\_ Low ground-pressure equipment or mat logging techniques has and/or will be used on especially wet sites to minimize ground disturbance and soil compaction to facilitate adequate regeneration. Mat logging should incorporate acceptable techniques that maximize the facilitation of adequate regeneration. **(Current and Future)**
- 8) \_\_\_ Intensive mechanical site preparation (i.e., shearing, root raking, soil disturbance, etc.) has not and/or will be employed in those stands specified in the Memorandum to the Field dated November 28, 1995, to facilitate the conversion to pine plantations. **(Current and Future)**
- 9) \_\_\_ Forest roads have been constructed in accordance with Georgia and federal BMPs and are consistent with the purpose and practice of silviculture. Silviculture roads are typically narrow, low-cost and minimally spaced as to be practical and economically feasible. **(Future)**

7. \_\_\_ **Maps** which must include: scale, north arrow, title block with date, property name, drawing number/preparer, revision dates, roads and waterway names and project/property boundaries.

- a. \_\_\_ **Vicinity/Location Map** including exact location of the property or review area. It should include the nearest intersection of two state highways or other identifiable reference points. A USGS quadrangle map and/or street atlas is preferred.
- b. \_\_\_ **Map of Wetlands and Other Waters, show all on-site ditches/water conveyances** and all wetlands within the associated relevant reach. Include data points taken, referencing a specific data form, location of photographs taken including direction of each representative photograph specific details, and features critical to your conclusion (e.g., culverts, berms, areas of sheetflow, stormdrain connections, impoundments, etc.).
- c. \_\_\_ **Soils Map** available at: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm>.

- d. \_\_\_ **Aerial Map** with property or review area limits and wetland/waters sketch including date of photo, available at: <http://earth.google.com/>.
- e. \_\_\_ **USGS Topographic Map** including quadrangle name and date, available at: [http://store.usgs.gov/b2c\\_usgs/b2c/start/\(xcm=r3standardpitrex\\_prd\)/.do](http://store.usgs.gov/b2c_usgs/b2c/start/(xcm=r3standardpitrex_prd)/.do).
- f. \_\_\_ **Flood Plain Map**, available at: <http://msc.fema.gov>.
- g. \_\_\_ **National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Map**, available at: <http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/Mapper.html>.
- h. \_\_\_ **Infra-red maps** (optional).
- i. \_\_\_ **Engineering Surveys**, e.g. two foot or less topographic map of the site (optional).
- j. \_\_\_ **LIDAR** is highly recommended where available and eases the review of a project including: desktop verification requests, re-verification requests and determining whether a site visit is necessary.

Questions can be directed to the following offices:

Coastal Branch - (800)-448-2402

Piedmont Branch - (678) 422-2735