

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

**FOREST TRAILS AND LANDINGS**

(Acre)

**CODE 655**

**DEFINITION**

A route, travel-way or cleared area within a forest.

Timing and use of equipment will be commensurate with site and soil conditions to maintain site productivity and minimize soil erosion, displacement and compaction.

**PURPOSE**

- Provide access to forest stands for management.
- Provide access for removal and collection of forest products.
- Provide access to forested areas for recreation.
- Minimize onsite and off-site damage to resources during periods of access.

Slash, debris and vegetative material left on the site after construction will not present an unacceptable fire or pest hazard or interfere with the intended purpose.

Water bars, rolling dips, timber bridges, rock plunge pools, and other drainage measures for trails shall be of sufficient size, intervals and gradient for adequate drainage and erosion control.

Trails and landings where appropriate shall be sufficiently revegetated to control erosion.

Noxious plants will not be used for revegetation.

**CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES**

On forested areas [where harvest operations are scheduled or have been completed](#).

Comply with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations during the installation, operation and maintenance of this practice including [“The Acceptable Management Practices for Maintaining Water Quality on Logging Jobs in Vermont.”](#) All necessary permits shall be obtained by the landowner or their agents prior to construction.

**CRITERIA**

**General Criteria Applicable To All Purposes**

Trails and landings will be of a size, gradient, number and location to economically and efficiently accomplish the intended purpose and expected users and equipment. They shall be configured to minimize adverse onsite and off-site impacts such as accelerated erosion, riparian zone degradation, stream channel and streambank damage, hydrology modification, other water resource damage, aesthetics or unacceptable damage to advance regeneration, residual growing stock, wildlife habitat, fragmentation, or restrict wildlife movement.

Additional conservation practices may be utilized to address resource issues: [Access Road \(Code 560\)](#); [Critical Area Planting \(Code 342\)](#); [Diversion \(Code 362\)](#); [Structure for Water Control \(Code 587\)](#); [Cover and Green Manure Crop \(Code 340\)](#); [Filter Strip \(Code 393\)](#); [Riparian Forest Buffer \(Code 391\)](#); [Lined Waterway or Outlet \(Code 468\)](#); and, [Mulching \(Code 484\)](#).

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service.
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## CONSIDERATIONS

Assure safe ingress and egress to site.

Locate landings and trails to preserve aesthetic qualities.

Monitor landings and trails to remove refuse and garbage and visually check for significant fuel and oil spillage and leaks to protect water quality.

Landings and trails may be closed for erosion control, safety and liability, and reduced maintenance costs.

Landings and trails may be used for wildlife food and cover plantings.

Landings and trails may be utilized as firebreaks.

Consider cultural resources and environmental concerns such as threatened and endangered species of plants and animals, natural areas and wetlands.

## PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Specifications for applying this practice shall be prepared for each site and recorded using approved specification sheets, job sheets, technical notes, and narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other acceptable documentation.

The access system, culverts, fords, bridges, and sediment control structures shall be located on the conservation plan map, soils map, or location sketch map. Indicate drainage areas on the map for perennial stream crossings. Large areas for shaping and grading, and critical areas for water bar installation or vegetation establishment shall also be shown on the map.

Culverts larger than 24 inches in diameter and bridges shall conform to the standard and specifications for "Structure for Water Control", Practice Code 587.

Specifications for revegetation of landings and trails should include species, timing of planting, and method of planting, as well as nutrient application rates, source and amounts of nutrients and method of application.

## OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Periodic inspections of landings and trails will be conducted and where necessary repairs will be made.

Landings and trails utilized as firebreaks will be properly maintained to accomplish this purpose.

Watercourses and water quality shall be protected during and after removal and transport of trees. Upon completion of harvest, landings and trails will be left in a stable condition.

Landings and trails may be closed for erosion control, safety and liability, and reduced maintenance costs.

Landings and trails no longer needed can be "put to bed" by removing high maintenance structures, such as culverts and bridges, and can be restored to a vegetative cover by planting and seeding.