



Eastern Region

## **Guide for Tree Planting and Maintenance Plans for Newly Planted Trees**

### **USDA Forest Service Great Lake Restoration Initiative Grants**

Organizations that plant trees through a U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant agree to maintain newly planted trees and other vegetation for a reasonable life span, with particular emphasis on the initial 3-year establishment period. Maintenance work may be done by the applicant or partners. This document is a guide for summarizing the planting plan and developing a maintenance plan. Use planting and maintenance standards generally accepted by the industry; they can be found in resources such as the [Guidance for Preparing Proposals for Landscape Tree Planting](#) and references cited in that guidance.

**Planting Location Name (City, Town, Watershed, etc.):**

**Grantee:**

**Maintenance Contact:**

**Email:**

**Year(s)/Season(s) of Planting:**

**# Trees/# Shrubs to be Planted:**

**Type(s) of Plant Stock (e.g., B & B, container, bareroot):**

**Size (average caliper; include details in table on last page):**

**Describe how activities below will be completed. If an activity is not applicable, briefly explain.**

**1. Tree Planting and Maintenance Personnel**

- a. Identify the parties responsible for tree planting and maintenance during the grant period as well as long-term maintenance beyond the life of the grant. Describe the roles of each party.

b. Describe the experience level of tree planting and maintenance personnel. If volunteers, homeowners, or inexperienced staff will be utilized, they should receive basic training and literature on proper maintenance techniques. Is training needed, and how will you provide it?

c. When trees are planted on private property, the property owner should sign an agreement to confirm they will maintain and protect the trees and provide access to the organization responsible for planting and maintenance. If applicable, what steps have you taken to ensure maintenance of private property?

d. How will you periodically confirm tree maintenance work is performed correctly?

## 2. Tree Watering Process

Describe in detail how trees will be watered, the time period and frequency of watering, and the source of the water at the planting locations (or how it will be delivered). For the first year, trees should be watered from planting date through September on a weekly basis. Watering may be reduced the 2nd and 3rd years, depending on rainfall and site conditions.

## 3. Mulching Trees

Describe how mulch and/or other ground treatments will be used to reduce competing vegetation and improve tree health. Identify quality control measures that will maintain proper mulch depth (2-4" for landscape trees) and keep mulch 1-2" away from the base of the tree trunk.

## 4. Staking and Guying Trees

If staking is deemed necessary due to mowing, vandalism, or wind conditions, describe the staking and guying method and materials to be used. Also describe plans (timing and responsible party) for inspection and removal.

## 5. Checking Tree Health

The grantee will check trees regularly (at minimum every 6-12 months) to identify and address tree health concerns. Indicate who will be inspecting the trees, frequency, the tree inspection process, and what follow-up will occur.

## 6. Tree Protection

Young trees may be easily damaged by human activity, animals, equipment, or competition from weeds and invasive plants. Describe how planted trees will be protected.

## 7. Pruning

Newly planted trees should need little pruning if they were properly cared for at the nursery. In the first year after planting, remove only dead or broken branches. In later years, weakly attached limbs can be removed, and structural pruning can be done if needed. Describe how any needed pruning will be done.

**8. Tree Warranty**

Trees planted under contract should include a warranty for replacement (due to poor condition or mortality), unless otherwise stated in the grant narrative. Describe your expected warranty conditions.

**9. Tree Replacement**

The grantee should be prepared to fully replace all trees that are in poor condition or die prior to the end of the project grant agreement, unless loss is due to natural disaster beyond the control of the project manager or is allowed for in the grant narrative. If the plan allows for some tree mortality within the establishment period, the grant narrative should include a target survival rate, tree replacement would occur below that rate. Describe tree replacement plans.

