

TO: Clifton Warren, Alabama State Executive Director
Deborah Tannenbaum, Florida State Executive Director
Arthur Tripp, Georgia State Executive Director
Bobby Etheridge, North Carolina State Executive Director
Laurie Funderburk, South Carolina State Executive Director
John Litz, Tennessee State Executive Director
Ronald Howell, Virginia State Executive Director
John Perdue, West Virginia State Executive Director

FROM: Shanita Landon
EFRP/EFRP Program Manager

**SUBJECT: Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP) – Approved
Implementation and Onsite Inspection Waiver – Hurricane Helene -
Multiple States**

As a result of the recent damage sustained from Hurricane Helene, DAFP is taking measures to expedite and streamline producer assistance.

Therefore, DAFP is approving EFRP implementation of all EFRP practices and authorizing an extended signup from October 15, 2024, through June 1, 2025 for the following States:

Alabama
Florida
Georgia
North Carolina

South Carolina
Tennessee
Virginia
West Virginia

Signup implementation from policy in 1-EFRP (Rev.1) paragraph 101, authorizes FSA to perform an individual onsite inspection within 45 days of accepting FSA 848 to determine whether the damage met EFRP requirements. However, due to the severity of storm damage, DAFP is **also** waiving onsite inspections for the following practices:

- EF-1, Hardwood Forest Restoration
- EF-2, Softwood Forest Restoration
- EF-3, Mixed Forest Restoration
- EF-4, Longleaf Pine Restoration

If the onsite waiver is used, it is recommended that dated producer photographs, GPS points, and a description of damage are collected to show initial damage. Onsite inspections are always required for all USDA employees and should be completed by the DD or STC designee. In addition, onsite inspection waivers do not apply to environmental reviews.

Any applicable onsite waiver in place for the related disaster will apply to late filed applications filed within 30 days of the end of the sign-up period and associated with the referenced disaster event.

For work started before implementation approval or filing of an application, follow policy in 1-EFRP (Rev 1) paragraph 131. In addition, there may be other flexibilities related to debris removal and fence repair that may apply, such as an ER850 and a Stafford presidential declaration. The combination of these items together (in addition to an onsite waiver) may allow some activities to begin cleanup work. However, it will be limited to:

- Actions with no new ground disturbance (surface debris removal)
- Repair, improvement, or minor modifications not exceeding depth of previous tillage (fence repair)
- Planting actions not exceeding depth of previous tillage
- Emergency program actions (including EFRP and EFRP) that have a total cost share of less than \$5,000
- Individual farm participation in FSA programs **where no ground disturbance or change in land use occurs** as a result of the action.

If conditions exist that are outside of the parameters above, a separate site-specific FSA-850 or environmental assessment must be completed for the proposed project.

If questions arise, please contact EFRP/EFRP Program Manager, Shanita Landon.