

E	FORESTRY OPERATIONS AND PRE-HARVEST PLANS
<p>This section describes the Zoning Ordinance review process for commercial forestry operations in Clarke County that exceed one acre of harvested area.</p>	
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Forestry is classified as a permitted use in the Agricultural-Open Space-Conservation (AOC) and Forestry-Open Space-Conservation (FOC) zoning districts which make up the vast majority of the land area in Clarke County. The County Zoning Ordinance defines forestry as the “operation of timber tracts, tree farms, forest nurseries, the gathering of forest products, or the performing of forest services.”

Forestry operations involving the cutting or logging of any trees for profit that exceed one acre of harvested area require the submission of a **Pre-Harvest Plan** per [Section 6.27 of the Zoning Ordinance](#). Operators must file a complete Pre-Harvest Plan application with the Department of Planning at least 10 business days before commencing the harvest operation. The application must include a cover sheet identifying:

- Property location (address or tax map number)
- Owner name and contact information
- Name of forest consultant and contact information (if applicable)
- Name of logger and contact information
- Date range for harvest operation

The required components of a Pre-Harvest Plan are described in detail in [Section 7.9 of the Zoning Ordinance](#) and are summarized below:

- A map of the subject property identifying:
 - Property boundaries
 - Streams and drainages, including crossings
 - Vegetated buffers (see Zoning Ordinance Section 7.4)
 - Road and trail locations
 - Log landings and mill seats

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- Streamside Management Zones (SMZs)
- Other environmental concerns
- Where appropriate, the applicant shall provide written notes to address the following:
 - Road and trail specifications
 - Harvesting equipment to be used
 - Timing of harvest
 - Logging contract specifications
 - Special planning for wet areas
 - Obstructions such as rock outcroppings
 - When and where best management practices (BMPs) will be installed.

The minimum standards and criteria for the following elements of a Pre-Harvest Plan shall be as set forth in the [Virginia's Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality, BMP Field Guide July 2002 \(as amended\)](#):

- Haul roads and drainage features
- Skid trails and drainage features
- Log decks, landings, and mill seats
- Streamside management zones
- Clear cuts for forest regeneration and wildlife habitat
- Seeding bare soil
- Required buffer areas. Additional requirements for buffer areas are found in [Section 7.9D \(Required Buffer Area\)](#).

Pre-Harvest Plans are valid until completion of the harvest activity which includes all required stabilization and remediation activities. Standards for remediation including remediation plans are found in [Section 7.9E \(Remediation of excessive clearing activities\)](#).

If you plan to conduct a forestry operation that meets the criteria for a Pre-Harvest Plan, contact Lorien Lemmon, Conservation Planner & GIS Coordinator to discuss your project and answer any questions that you may have.