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USDA Disaster Block Grant -- Timber Loss Relief Program

Frequently Asked Questions Version 4-2-26

Program Purpose

Q: What is the Timber Loss Relief Program (TLRP)?

A: The USDA Disaster Block Grant - Timber Loss Relief Program (TLRP) is a new disaster recovery program administered by the N.C. Forest Service (NCFS). Funding for the program comes from a USDA block grant provided to the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for Helene recovery. It is separate and different from other existing forestry financial assistance programs. Rather than offering a cost-share reimbursement payment for approved forestry practices, the TLRP can provide a direct payment to eligible woodland owners to help offset a portion of the lost income/value of their timber that was damaged or destroyed because of Hurricane Helene.

Q: Are there other nonforestry programs under this USDA block grant that may be helpful to landowners?

A: This USDA block grant allocated for Helene recovery has some other nonforestry categories that may be helpful to landowners, particularly those who are farmers, Christmas tree producers and/or agricultural producers. These nonforestry categories address:

- infrastructure loss
- market loss for commodities and value-add products
- future economic loss categories

Details on these opportunities can be accessed at:

<https://www.ncagr.gov/agdisaster/FederalBlockGrantAssistance>

Important! The nonforestry categories have a different sign-up process and timeline (March 30, 2026 – May 15, 2026) than the TLRP, which is the program this FAQ document addresses.

Eligibility

Q: What counties are eligible for the TLRP?

A: Eligible North Carolina counties are those that received a Presidential disaster declaration because of Hurricane Helene. The following 39 counties are eligible: Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Cabarrus, Caldwell, Catawba, Cherokee, Clay, Cleveland, Forsyth, Gaston, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Iredell, Jackson, Lee, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mecklenburg, Mitchell, Nash, Polk, Rowan, Rutherford, Stanly, Surry, Swain, Transylvania, Union, Watauga, Wilkes, Yadkin and Yancey.

Q: Where can I find information on the TLRP?

A: Woodland owners in the 39 eligible counties listed above can contact their local N.C. Forest Service county ranger's office for general TLRP information. A directory of N.C. Forest Service offices and their contact

information can be viewed at www.ncforests.service.gov/contacts. N.C. Forest Service staff will be able to assist with the application process.

The N.C. Forest Service will also maintain a TLRP webpage that provides program information. That webpage is available at www.ncagr.gov/divisions/nc-forest-service/managing-your-forest/tlrp.

Q: Who is eligible to participate in the TLRP?

A: To be eligible for the TLRP, applicants must fall into one of the following categories:

- citizen of the United States.
- resident alien: for purposes of this part, resident alien means “lawful alien” as defined in 7 CFR part 1400.
- partnership consisting solely of citizens or resident aliens of the United States.
- corporation, limited liability corporation or other farm organizational structure organized under State law consisting solely of citizens or resident aliens of the United States; or,
- Indian Tribe or Tribal Organization, as defined in section 4(b) of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C 5304).

Q: Does my woodland qualify for the TLRP?

A: To qualify, a woodland must be in one of the 39 eligible counties; be at least 10 acres of contiguous woodland; contain merchantable timber at least 6 inches in diameter measured at diameter breast height (4.5 feet above ground level); and, must have had moderate, severe or catastrophic-level damage from Helene.

Q: If a woodland owner/timber producer owned the property at the time of Hurricane Helene but sold it before applying for the TLRP, are they still eligible to receive funds?

A: No, to be eligible to receive funds through the TLRP, a landowner must be the current owner of record or lessee with right to the timber crop for the property in an eligible county.

Q: If a woodland owner conducted a timber salvage harvest on the forestland impacted by Hurricane Helene, are they still eligible to apply to the TLRP?

A: Yes, a woodland owner who conducted a post-Helene timber salvage harvest may still be eligible to participate in the TLRP. Any salvage harvest income derived from qualifying woodlands with moderate, severe or catastrophic Helene damage would need to be documented on the TLRP application forms to help determine eligibility and potential TLRP payments.

Q: If I am participating or have participated in other state or federal programs, am I still eligible to participate in the TLRP?

A: Yes, you may still be eligible to receive TLRP funds even if you have received funds from other state and federal grant programs.

Q: Will applying to the TLRP impact my eligibility for other grant programs?

A: Applying to the TLRP should not impact your ability to apply to other grant or forestry cost-share programs. The TLRP is a payment program to woodland owners, also known as timber producers, to help them recover a portion of their lost income from timber crop damage because of Hurricane Helene. If you are applying to another grant or cost-share program for reforestation activities, such as the Forest Development Program (FDP), there would not be a duplication of benefits because FDP pays for reforestation practices while the Timber Loss Relief Program pays for timber crop loss. If there are any questions, it is recommended that TLRP landowner applicants acknowledge their TLRP participation with other programs’ representatives early in the discussion to verify there are no issues with participation.

TLRP Application Process & Timelines

Q: When and how can a woodland owner apply for the TLRP?

A: The TLRP will utilize a two-month long enrollment period for landowners. The N.C. Forest Service will announce when the application period will open and landowners will be able to apply through their local NCFS

county ranger's office. Contact information for those county offices can be viewed at www.ncforestservice.gov/contacts. This webpage also provides contact information for the N.C. Forest Service district offices to which N.C. Forest Service county ranger offices report.

Q: Who can assist me when applying to the TLRP?

A: N.C. Forest Service foresters and rangers will be able to provide details to landowners on how they can obtain, fill out and submit the TLRP's landowner application form.

Q: What documentation will a landowner need to submit to apply to the TLRP?

A: Landowners will need to submit a TLRP landowner application form (TLRP Form #1) and a NC Substitute W-9 tax form. Both will be available for download at the TLRP webpage. TLRP landowner application forms can only contain parcels from one county, so a landowner with impacted parcels in more than one county will need to submit more than one TLRP landowner application.

Each TLRP landowner application form can contain information on up to five impacted parcels within that county. If a landowner has additional impacted parcels in that county, they can request a supplemental form where those additional parcels in that county can be listed. Requests can be made through N.C. Forest Service staff.

Q: What supporting documentation will be needed to complete a TLRP application?

A: In addition to the landowner application and the landowner's NC Substitute W-9 tax form, a TLRP timber damage assessment report (TLRP Form #3) associated with the landowner's application will need to be submitted for each impacted parcel. Other helpful documentation could include timber salvage receipts (if applicable), timber damage photos, satellite imagery, forest stand maps, etc.

Q: Who can complete a TLRP timber damage assessment report?

A: TLRP timber damage assessment reports must be reviewed and contain the signature of a registered, licensed or Society of American Foresters-certified (SAF) forester before being submitted to the N.C. Forest Service.

Landowner applicants are encouraged to work with qualified (registered, licensed or SAF-certified) private foresters to have their property's timber damage assessment report completed. N.C. Forest Service staff can provide a list of private consulting foresters that may be able to assist, as well as a subset of that list of consulting foresters who have verified they are willing to assist with TLRP landowner applications and the required timber damage assessment reports.

If a landowner is not able to find a private forester to assist them with completion of the TLRP timber damage assessment report, they can contact their N.C. Forest Service county ranger's office for additional assistance.

Q: Are there any funds to help pay for the expense of having a private forester complete a TLRP timber damage assessment report?

A: There are TLRP state service provider technical assistance funds that can be requested through the N.C. Forest Service that can reimburse qualified foresters for completing a landowner's timber damage assessment report. These state service provider funds may be requested by the assisting forester using the state service provider application funding allocation and reimbursement request form (TLRP Form #2) before their work for the landowner begins. The assisting forester would also need to submit an NC Substitute W-9 tax form to ensure proper payment processing.

Q: If an impacted owner already has a comprehensive cruise valuation report of their woodlands impacted by Hurricane Helene, do they still have to submit a timber damage assessment report to qualify for the TLRP?

A: Yes, the TLRP timber damage assessment report will still need to be submitted. The information contained in the comprehensive cruise valuation report should be helpful when completing that TLRP form.

Program Payment Information

Q: Will the potential TLRP program payment cover the entire financial value of the timber damaged and/or lost due to Hurricane Helene?

A: Unfortunately, no. Limited federal funding for the TLRP was provided, and the TLRP can only potentially offset a portion of a woodland owner's Helene-related timber loss.

Q. How long will it take to get my program payment once my landowner application and associated timber damage assessment report have been submitted?

A: Once all TLRP landowner applications and timber damage assessment reports are received and the TLRP application period is closed, N.C. Forest Service staff will determine potential program payment amounts and also compare that to total TLRP funds available. If more dollars are requested than available, prorating of TLRP landowner payments will need to occur to stay within the TLRP budget. At that point final payment amounts for eligible landowner participants will be determined and payment processing requests will be made. Eligible payments will likely not be made until approximately 4-5 months from the opening of the TLRP Landowner application enrollment period.

Q. How many TLRP payments should I expect?

A: The N.C. Forest Service anticipates making one landowner payment for each eligible, Helene-impacted tax parcel.

Q. Can a landowner elect to have a TLRP payment paid out to another individual or entity?

A: The current owner of record is required to be the applicant for eligibility determination procedures. Should the owner of record elect to delegate authority to another individual or entity, a power of attorney form will need to be submitted before processing the subject application. Payment will be processed to the applicant as identified on the NC Substitute W-9 tax form.

Q. Can you split up TLRP payments if there are joint owners?

A: No, each eligible TLRP payment will be made to the landowner or their designated power of attorney whose information is listed at the beginning of the TLRP landowner application, regardless of the potential existence of other joint owners.

Q: How will TLRP payments be calculated?

A: TLRP potential payments will be calculated using information provided on the Timber Damage Assessment Report. Factors such as acres impacted, forest type, site productivity, timber class (pulpwood vs. larger trees) and level of Helene timber damage will be utilized to determine a potential payment amount. Potential payment amounts may be reduced (pro-rated) if total dollars requested are greater than available TLRP funds.

Q: How can I receive my TLRP payment?

A: All TLRP landowner applicants will be required to complete a NC Substitute W-9 Tax Form for 1099 reporting purposes, and hardcopy checks will be mailed to them using the information on that form. The state will be using a third-party company for payment processing, and direct deposits will not be an available option.

Q: If I participated in and received a TLRP payment, do I have to reforest the associated property?

A: No, the TLRP does not have a reforestation requirement.

However, if your property needs an updated forest management plan, reforestation, timber stand improvements, etc., your local N.C. Forest Service county ranger and/or a private consulting forester can provide details on relevant technical and financial assistance programs.

Q: What can my program payment be used to purchase?

A: Unlike some programs that are specifically related to reforestation or equipment replacement, the TLRP is to help recover lost income from the timber crop that was destroyed because of Hurricane Helene. Once your

application has been approved and you receive your payment from the State of North Carolina, that is your money to spend as you see fit.

Tax-Related Information and Resources

Q: Will TLRP payments be reported to the government?

A: As part of the application process, all applicants will be required to complete a NC Substitute W-9 tax form for 1099 reporting purposes.

Q: Will my TLRP payment impact my calendar year 2024 taxes (when Hurricane Helene hit) and calendar year 2026 taxes (when TRLP payments will likely be paid out)?

A: TLRP payments may result in impacts to your 2024 and 2026 taxes. TRLP participants should consult with their tax professional to determine associated tax consequences and necessary reporting.

Helpful resources can be found on the National Timber Tax website at www.timbertax.org.

N.C. Forest Service – State Headquarters TLRP Contacts

TLRP Landowner Applications: mandy.tallman.marty@ncagr.gov 919-857-4823

TLRP State Service Provider Funding Requests: jaimie.cappelletti@ncagr.gov 919-857-4832

TLRP Timber Damage Assessment Reports; Program Oversight: ron.myers@ncagr.gov 919-857-4811