

§ 160D-921. Forestry activities.

- (a) The following definitions apply to this section:
- (1) Development. – Any activity, including timber harvesting, that is associated with the conversion of forestland to nonforest use.
 - (2) Forest management plan. – A document that defines a landowner's forest management objectives and describes specific measures to be taken to achieve those objectives. A forest management plan shall include silvicultural practices that both ensure optimal forest productivity and environmental protection of land by either commercially growing timber through the establishment of forest stands or by ensuring the proper regeneration of forest stands to commercial levels of production after the harvest of timber.
 - (3) Forestland. – Land that is devoted to growing trees for the production of timber, wood, and other forest products.
 - (4) Forestry. – The professional practice embracing the science, business, and art of creating, conserving, and managing forests and forestland for the sustained use and enjoyment of their resources, materials, or other forest products.
 - (5) Forestry activity. – Any activity associated with the growing, managing, harvesting, and related transportation, reforestation, or protection of trees and timber, provided that such activities comply with existing State rules and regulations pertaining to forestry.
- (b) A local government shall not adopt or enforce any ordinance, rule, regulation, or resolution that regulates either of the following:
- (1) Forestry activity on forestland that is taxed on the basis of its present-use value as forestland under Article 12 of Chapter 105 of the General Statutes.
 - (2) Forestry activity that is conducted in accordance with a forest management plan that is prepared or approved by a forester registered in accordance with Chapter 89B of the General Statutes.
- (c) This section shall not be construed to limit, expand, or otherwise alter the authority of a local government to:
- (1) Regulate activity associated with development. A local government may deny a building permit or refuse to approve a site or subdivision plan for either a period of up to:
 - a. Three years after the completion of a timber harvest if the harvest results in the removal of all or substantially all of the trees that were protected under local government regulations governing development from the tract of land for which the permit or approval is sought.
 - b. Five years after the completion of a timber harvest if the harvest results in the removal of all or substantially all of the trees that were protected under local government regulations governing development from the tract of land for which the permit or approval is sought and the harvest was a willful violation of the local government regulations.
 - (2) Regulate trees pursuant to any local act of the General Assembly.
 - (3) Adopt ordinances that are necessary to comply with any federal or State law, regulation, or rule.
 - (4) Exercise its planning or zoning authority under this Chapter.
 - (5) Regulate and protect streets. (2019-111, s. 2.4; 2020-3, s. 4.33(a); 2020-25, s. 51(a), (b), (d).)