

**Maine Forest Service: Forest Online Resource Tool (FOResT)**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**  
**November 3, 2021**

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# Maine Forest Service: Forest Online Resource Tool (FOResT)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### November 3, 2021

#### General

- **What if I don't have a computer?**
  - a. Contact the Maine Forest Service for alternative filing of a Forest Operations Notification.
  - b. You can create an account and review the summary of a FON on a smart device.
- **What do I need to log into FOResT**
  - a. You need an email address to create an account. Once you have [created your account in FOResT](#), you will log in using the email address and password you created for that account.
- **Where can I find more information about Forest Operation Notifications?**
  - a. Visit our Forest Operations Notifications webpage:  
[https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mfs/rules\\_regs/fons.html](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mfs/rules_regs/fons.html)
- **What's the website location that you're calling the "Forest page"?**
  - a. [https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mfs/rules\\_regs/forest\\_home.html](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mfs/rules_regs/forest_home.html)  
This is the page on the Maine Forest Service's website with information about the new FOResT system.
- **Can you give us a better idea about "Phase 2" in terms of when it will occur and the funding likelihood?**
  - a. There are a number of ideas about possible further improvements, but "Phase 2" is conceptual at this point. We still have to identify priorities and funding.
- **How do I access FOResT?**
  - a. The direct link to it is: <https://mfs.forest.maine.gov/>
- **Will you share the meeting chat(s) from the FOResT Overview/Demo presentations? And is there a summary of verbal Q&A?**
  - a. This document and other resources can be found here:  
[https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mfs/rules\\_regs/forest\\_home.html](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mfs/rules_regs/forest_home.html)
- **Will the site be cell-phone friendly - an App? Then I can meet the LO or Harvester and walk him/her through it**
  - a. FOResT is not completely mobile-friendly yet.
  - b. As of June 17, 2021, you can [create an account](#) and [review the Summary page](#) on a mobile device.
  - c. We are currently working to make FOResT completely usable on a mobile device.
    - a. Tentative release – January/February, 2022
- **Are notifications required for tribal land that is held in trust by the federal government?**
  - a. The tribal government is responsible for enforcing state laws on trust land. So in most instances MFS would not receive a notification for activities on trust lands.
- **What if logger or landowner does not have computer?**
  - a. Contact the Maine Forest Service for alternative filing of a Forest Operations Notification.
  - b. All the public libraries in the state have computers available for public use.
  - c. You can create an account and review the summary of a FON on a smart device.

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- **When can you print out drafts and how?**
  - a. Printing out drafts is currently not possible.
  - b. It is not ideal, but you could take screenshots of the data

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#### Creating an Account / FOResT ID

##### [Video Resource](#)

- **When will the system be ready?**
  - a. The system is now available.
  - b. Visit: <https://mfs.forest.maine.gov/>
- **What's the website to create an account?**
  - a. Visit: <https://mfs.forest.maine.gov/>
  - b. You'll create an account right from the main FOResT page "Create an Account" ([Video Resource](#))
- **Do I need an email address?**
  - a. Yes, an email address is required to create an account in FOResT.
  - b. The login to FOResT is your email address and password you provided when you created your FOResT account.
  - c. There are free email services available online.
- **How about using a family member's email?**
  - a. Your FOResT ID must be tied to a single email address that you have access to.
- **Can multiple accounts be tied to the same email?**
  - a. No, one email per FOResT account or one FOResT account per email. However, the same user (with one FOResT ID) may have multiple roles on a FON. E.g. a user may be both the designated agent and the licensed forester, or both the designated agent and the logger, or the landowner, harvester, and licensed forester, etc. The role can be different for each FON you're participating on.
- **Where do I get my FOResT ID Number?**
  - a. Check out this [Video Resource](#)
  - b. The FOResT ID number is included in the email sent to you when you confirmed your FOResT User Account

Signed In As: [REDACTED] FOResT User ID: [REDACTED]

- **All parties need an account, does that mean also the logger and the landowner?**
  - a. Yes. All participants on a FON need to [set up an account](#) that will give them a FOResT ID number so that they can certify (sign) a FON.
- **Does the landowner also need an ID, even if the notification is being filed by a forester/designated agent? Or can their contact info simply be added?**
  - a. All participants in a notification need a FOResT ID (See [Contacts Section/Electronic Signatures](#) below)
  - b. In certain circumstances, a Maine Licensed Forester with a fiduciary responsibility to the landowner can sign on their behalf, without the need for the landowner to create an account.

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- **What if there are multiple landowners – say three siblings?**
  - a. One co-owner will need to create a FOResT ID for the group using their email address. We are not able to process separate accounts for a single ownership.
- **Are the landowner and harvester sections required fields for a notification to be approved?**
  - a. Yes, this is the same as current/previous requirements.
- **Are all the harvesters being notified that they will need a FOResT acct?**
  - a. We have been including a flyer with all requests for paper FONS since June 2020 that FONS are going online and that they will need to [create an account](#).
  - b. We have sent multiple announcements out on our logger email listserv
  - c. A flyer about FONS going online is included in each 2020 Landowner Report mailing.
- **What can I do if I do not receive the confirmation email after I have clicked the “Create Account” button?**
  - a. You can:
    - a. go to the [FOResT](#) and click the [Sign In](#) button in the upper right corner of the page
    - b. enter the email address and password for the account you are trying to set up.
    - c. click the Sign In button
    - d. the system will resend the confirmation email to your email account to finish the confirmation process.
  - b. You should receive this email confirmation in just a few minutes. If you do not see it in your inbox:
    - a. Make sure your email is not blocking message from *no-reply@timmonsgis.com*.
    - b. Also check your "spam", "junk", or other folders.
- **Family ownerships, can several individuals be listed as owners?**
  - a. A FON must have one landowner with a FOResT ID which is linked to a single email address.
  - b. One landowner will need to [create a FOResT user account on behalf of other co-owners](#).
- **What if I do not receive or deleted the email confirmation to finish setting up my account?**
  - a. Try to sign into FOResT.
    - a. You will be presented with a message that your email address has not been confirmed.
    - b. This also generates a new confirmation email to be sent to the email address you are trying to sign in with.
    - c. Check your email and follow the instructions in the message so you can begin using FOResT
  - b. You should receive this email confirmation in just a few minutes. If you do not see it in your inbox:
    - a. Make sure your email is not blocking message from *no-reply@timmonsgis.com*.
    - b. Also check your "spam", "junk", or other folders.
- **What if we have multiple harvesters involved on one FON?**
  - a. The landowner or designated agent may identify themselves as the harvester, with the understanding that MFS will contact them if there are questions about the harvest.

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[Dashboard](#)

[Video Resource](#)

- **Can I delete a FON?**
  - a. Yes, if it is a draft FON. (The update to FOResT on June 17, 2021 allows you to delete draft FONs you created.)
  - b. FONs with Pending Certification or Active status cannot be deleted.

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## Overview Section

### [Video Resource](#)

- **Why is the forester button not able to be used in this case?**
  - c. You need to include your forester license number in your profile which will allow you to indicate you are a forester on a FON.
- **Can the 2-year maximum period for a FON be extended to a longer period for long-term landowners?**
  - a. The two-year validity of notifications is set forth in law.
- **If you're a DA, what is the responsibility associated with being a DA? What happens if there's a problem associated with the harvest?**
  - a. A designated agent is a person, company or other entity that is authorized by the landowner to act on the landowner's behalf for timber harvesting and related activities on the landowner's property.
  - b. However, not being listed as a landowner's designated agent may not exempt you from legal responsibility if you are involved in the timber harvest and/or related activities.
- **What if we have multiple harvesters involved on one FON?**
  - b. The landowner or designated agent may identify themselves as the harvester, with the understanding that MFS will contact them if there are questions about the harvest.

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## Mapping Section

### [Video Resource](#)

- **What year is the imagery?**
  - a. The imagery is the most recent supplied by ESRI. <https://community.esri.com/t5/arcgis-pro-questions/esri-basemap-imagery-acquisition-dates/td-p/88510>
- **Can I delete points (e.g. for a road or harvest area)?**
  - a. Yes, you can delete points
  - b. The instructions to do this are displayed when you begin to draw an activity on the map.
- **Can you import GPS files? Shapefiles? KMZ files?**
  - a. Not currently
- **Is there the ability to upload GPS points?**
  - a. No. This functionality will not be provided in the application. (This would require additional geoprocessing within the application to convert the GPS coordinates to either a polygon or line. But note that using the mapping functionality in the app eliminates transposition errors and translation between different GPS coordinate systems: latitude-longitude, decimal degrees, decimal minutes, UTM...)
- **Do users have to digitize or can they upload all info as a shape file?**
  - a. At this point users will have to digitize. We are working to add a process to allow notifiers to submit attachments to a FON.
- **Can you create multiple, non-contiguous polygons?**
  - a. Yes, as long as the features are within the **notified** town
- **The old FON map required only to show truck/haul roads. The new digitized maps now want to have skid roads mapped?**
  - a. No, you do not have to map skid roads
- **Can you draw a road without triggering the road questions?**
  - a. The road question only display for road construction in LUPC towns/townships/plantations.
- **What's a PBR?**
  - a. A [permit by rule](#) (primarily for some permanent stream crossings that do not require a full permit).
- **How will payment be made for PBR fees for stream crossings on Road construction activities?**
  - a. Any permits including PBRs still need to be submitted separately on the appropriate form.
  - b. FOResT does not accommodate online payments for permit fees, etc.
- **Will the digitized map be run through the MNAP process for RTE (rare/threatened/endangered species)? And details be sent to all parties?**
  - a. No. This may be added in a future version but is not currently available.



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- **Does MFS prefer we notify for small, known planned harvest areas annually - and then updating the FON via amendment or covering larger geographical areas with the initial notification (ie a quarter township)?**
  - a. The law and rules state that landowners may file one FON per town/township in which they are working, though it does not prevent them from filing more than one FON in a given town/township. Issues with filing a single FON per town may arise in terms of the required maps. The FOResT system for filing FONs makes it possible for landowners to map multiple separate harvest areas within the same town, so this is an option for landowners. Under the law, the FON must include a “map locating the harvest site in relation to known or easily identifiable terrain features such as a road junction or a stream and a road junction.” Perfect accuracy, especially for larger harvest areas is not expected in the FOResT system, just a reasonable representation of where the harvest will occur. Users should strike a balance by avoiding the extremes – either unnecessarily detailed maps that may have to be modified later, as well as maps of excessively broad areas that do not meet the letter or spirit of the requirement to locate the harvest site in relation to road/terrain features on the ground.
  - b. In the October 26, 2021 update, you can add amendments, or attachments, to “active” FONs at the bottom of the Summary page ([Video Resource](#)).
- **Is there statewide streams/wetland data in the app and a flag if your harvest block or road crosses them but you don't enter a crossing?**
  - a. A road that is mapped across a water body will not automatically be flagged to identify that there's a crossing, the notifier has to map a crossing manually.
  - b. The system will not automatically check to notify you that the road crosses a stream/wetland. That functionality has not been built into the application.
  - c. There are streams/wetland data in the FOResT system and in the mapping function. However, **maps are advisory**. As with any FON, users should apply standards based on conditions on the ground, identifying where water bodies occur and how standards apply, and laying out harvest operations accordingly.
- **What's the definition of a temporary road and what are the requirements associated with removing a temporary road?**
  - a. Neither Chapter 21 nor Chapter 27 require permits for temporary roads; however, there is a time limitation on temporary roads, as there is for temporary crossings.
  - b. A temporary road or crossing is one that is in place for no longer than 7 months, per DEP rules.
  - c. If a temporary road is in place longer than 7 months, permit(s) may be required.
- **Can you notify a harvest for more than one town?**
  - a. A FON can only cover activity in one town. If a harvest occurs in more than one town, a separate FON must be filed for each town.
  - b. This requirement has not changed, this the same as FON submissions in the past.

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**Activity Details Section**

[Video Resource](#)

- **Should we check off the "harvest within 75' of a stream" box to cover any unmapped streams we may encounter?**
  - a. Yes

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**Contacts Section / Electronic Signatures**

[Video Resource](#)

- **Please explain how to do electronic signatures.**
  - a. Please view the following video the demonstrates how other parties approve their participation on a FON: <https://youtu.be/EQqMIN43Q3g>
- **Will harvesters get an email saying they need to digitally sign?**
  - a. Yes
- **Can a Licensed Forester who has a fiduciary responsibility to the landowner file a notification for the landowner?**
  - a. Yes. Chapter 20 rules allow a licensed forester with a fiduciary responsibility to the landowner, or a forester who is in the direct employ of the landowner, to file and sign the notification on behalf of the landowner.
  - b. The update on August 25, 2021 now allows this.
- **Why can't one person be the designated agent for all the needed signatures?**
  - a. In the August 25, 2021 update Licensed Foresters can sign for the landowner in certain circumstances (see previous question)
  - b. Otherwise all parties on a FON need to [create a User Account in FOResT](#).
- **Why isn't the "find licensed forester" button working for me?**
  - a. You need to have the licensed forester's FOResT ID number, just entering their last name is not sufficient/won't work.
- **How would you like us to fill in the form if we're unsure of who the harvester will be?**
  - a. Make sure the harvesters you work with already have an account in FOResT so when the time to submit the FON that step is taken care of.
  - b. File the FON only when the harvester is known.
- **What if we have multiple harvesters involved on one FON?**
  - c. The landowner or designated agent may identify themselves as the harvester, with the understanding that MFS will contact them if there are questions about the harvest.

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## Summary Section

### [Video Resource](#)

- **Is there a way to print the whole Summary for recordkeeping?**
  - a. Yes. The update on October 26, 2021 has put a button called “Print Summary” on the Summary Page that will allow you to print the whole Summary.
  - b. [Video Resource](#)
  
- **Can others see my contact information?**
  - a. The only people who can see your contact information are the other parties on your FOResT Operations Notifications and MFS staff.

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**Submitting / Approved FON**

[Video Resource](#)

- **The FON is now a 7-digit number?**
  - a. Correct.
- **Is this approved FON available to the public online?**
  - a. No. The approved FON can only be viewed by those contacts listed on the FON
  - b. State staff and the town Code Enforcement Office (in organized town) where activity is occurring will be able to view approved FONs.
- **How quickly after I've submitted the FON will the LO and Harvester will receive their e-mail?**
  - a. They should receive their email within minutes if not seconds.  
([As in the demos](#), which was live: Greg received the email within moments of completing the FON.)
- **Can the landowner or harvester make changes to a submitted FON, or do they just have the ability to accept/reject it?**
  - a. They can only accept (by signing) or reject a completed FON. Only the originator of the notification can make changes. Once a FON has been certified/signed by all parties and accepted by MFS, it can no longer be changed.
- **What if a participant hits the decline button and then changes their mind and wants to participate? Can they go back in and accept?**
  - a. If the FON is not already active, the participant can ask the FON submitter to withdraw the FON and recertify it.
  - b. Once the participant declines, it cannot be undone unless it is withdrawn and recertified by the submitter.
- **Will there still be a 14-day wait period or will the notification be valid as soon as everyone certified it?**
  - a. It will be valid as soon as all participants sign.
- **Are towns notified of FONs?**
  - a. The MFS will continue to notify town Code Enforcement Officers of FONs received for activities in their town.
- **Can a landowner submit a single Forest Operations Notification per town in which they are working?**
  - a. Yes. The law and rules state that landowners may file one FON per town/township in which they are working, though it does not prevent them from filing more than one FON in a given town/township. Issues with filing a single FON per town may arise in terms of the required maps. The FOResT system for filing FONs makes it possible for landowners to map multiple separate harvest areas within the same town, so this is an option for landowners. Under the law, the FON must include a “map locating the harvest site in relation to known or easily identifiable terrain features such as a road junction or a stream and a road junction.” Perfect accuracy, especially for larger harvest areas is not expected in the FOResT system, just a reasonable representation of where the harvest will occur. At this time, FOResT does not directly accept amendments or modifications. Users should strike a balance by avoiding the extremes – either unnecessarily detailed maps that may have to be modified later, as well as

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maps of excessively broad areas that do not meet the letter or spirit of the requirement to locate the harvest site in relation to road/terrain features on the ground. Once an amendment process is in developed in FOResT, it will become easier to submit a FON which may, if necessary, be modified later to adjust or add harvest areas.

- **A harvest cannot start before all parts of a notification are complete?**
  - a. Correct, this is the same as current/previous requirements.
  
- **If there is no reply from the landowner for a submitted FON, how long before there is any action from the FOResT app?**
  - a. FOResT does not take any action if there is no reply, i.e. the FON remains as incomplete/draft and no FON number is issued.
  - b. You can contact the landowner directly to make sure they've received an email and let them know they should verify their participation in the notification by following the instructions in the email.

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## Amendments

- **Can we later amend a certified FON? Example: adding a harvest on a different parcel on the other side of the same Town.**
  - a. In the October 26, 2021 update, you can add amendments to “active” FONS at the bottom of the Summary page ([Video Resource](#)). That process may include the ability to add harvest areas.
- **Will it be possible to make an amendment to your notification when it becomes active?**
  - a. No. Once the FON has been certified/signed by all parties and becomes active it can no longer be edited.
  - b. In the October 26, 2021 update, you can add amendments, or attachments, to “active” FONS at the bottom of the Summary page ([Video Resource](#)).

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## Landowner Reports

- **Will paper Landowner Reports still be used for 2020?**
  - a. Yes, paper landowner reports will be used for all active paper FONS.
- **Will this be connected to the year-end report?**
  - a. Yes. Landowner Reports for FONS in FOResT will be available for completion in December within FOResT.
- **When can I enter my year-end report?**
  - a. In the October 26, 2021 update, you can enter landowner reports for active FONS any time.