

Support the Forest Inventory & Analysis (FIA) Program



Photo courtesy Texas A&M Forest Service

ABOUT NASF

The National Association of State Foresters (NASF) is comprised of the directors of state and territorial forestry agencies and the District of Columbia.

NASF represents state and territorial forester interests by influencing forest policy and leading efforts to optimize social, economic, and environmental benefits of trees and forests.

Learn more at www.stateforesters.org

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The **nation's forest census** has been in place since the 1930s and provides excellent scientific continuity. The program is the fundamental national and state supported data collection, analysis, and reporting system regarding the past, current, and potential future condition of the nation's forests. Data gathered through FIA are essential to understanding long-term forest health, management potential, and socioeconomic contribution of the nation's forests.

FIA enables forest managers and the natural resource community to understand the scope and scale of trends and changes in forest conditions and to make projections of future conditions. Funding for FIA supports state and private lands, which account for two-thirds of America's forests and provide public benefits such as clean air and water, wildlife habitat, outdoor recreation, jobs and wood products.

NASF FY17 and FY18 Recommendation: \$83 million

Fully funds the base portion of the 2015 USDA FIA strategic plan. NASF is concerned with the recent proposed and realized reductions to the USDA Forest Service Research and Development budget and recommends a total R&D funding level of \$303 million—\$83 million allocated to FIA.

- NASF members are the primary partners in FIA program delivery, contributing more than \$4 million annually in state resources to shorten measurement cycles, increase the number of research plots and measure additional forest attributes, all adding to a better understanding of our forest resources.
- FIA is the only reliable means of gauging changes to timber supplies, wildlife habitat and other natural resources. FIA assesses the rate of land use changes, the loss of native plant species, the spread of non-native insects and much more. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the FIA program allowed experts to estimate timber losses of over four billion cubic feet of wood, and helped affected regions design ecological, economic, and societal restoration strategies.
- Through FIA, the USDA Forest Service implements annual forest sampling in 49 states, with Hawaii and the United States territories receiving specialized periodic sampling. In FY14, more than 42,000 field plots were measured. **Nationally there is one plot for every 6,000 acres, or more than 300,000 plots nationwide across all forest ownerships.**
- Through a national network of on-the-ground plot measurements and rigorous data analysis, FIA is able to answer important questions about our nation's forests. The FIA program provides value to all forest stakeholders by supporting:
 - National, regional and state-level analysis of forest trends;
 - Economic development through forest products industry planning and investment;
 - Forest health and land-use change monitoring;
 - Wildfire protection and risk analysis, and
 - Wildlife habitat assessments.
- When sufficiently funded, FIA provides a regular return interval to established plots, every 5 years in the east and every 10 years in the west based on the tree growth rates in these different regions. **FIA is important for rural communities to attract forest industry development, a sector which contributes at least 2.8 million jobs to the national economy and approximately six percent of total manufacturing Gross Domestic Product.**
- FIA is one part of a larger effort coordinated by USDA Forest Service Research and Development that addresses many critical needs. Researchers work in a range of biological, physical, and social science fields to promote sustainable management of the diverse forests and rangelands nationwide. FIA enhances many of these other research objectives by providing the data underlying analysis of threatened and endangered wildlife species habitat, invasive pests, fire risk, forest products removals, and more.