



Trees and Forests: America's Natural Capital

Trees and forests built America and are essential for the nation's growth and success. The National Association of State Foresters (NASF) is pleased to provide the Administration and Congress with recommendations for capitalizing on the benefits of trees and forests.

Trees and forests are America's fundamental infrastructure, offering real solutions to America's challenges

Actively and sustainably managed forests offer real and lasting solutions to economic, energy, social, and environmental challenges by:

- Supporting 2.4 million jobs in existing and emerging industries, offering living wages in many areas with limited job options (source: National Alliance of Forest Owners);
- Providing a renewable raw material for a manufacturing industry that produces essential wood and paper products and energy – the forestry sector is one of the top 10 manufacturing industries in 47 states (source: American Forest & Paper Association);
- Cleaning the air we breathe and water we drink – forests produce human health benefits valued at \$6.8 billion (source: U.S. Forest Service);
- Creating and sustaining diverse fish and wildlife habitat and
- Providing community benefits and recreation opportunities that enhance our quality of life.

Professional forest and wildland fire management maximizes economic, environmental, and social benefits

- **America's trees and forests are a national asset requiring professional management and protection.** State forestry agencies employ and partner with professional foresters and wildland fire managers to maximize the economic, environmental, and social benefits of trees and forests. Trained professionals are essential for protecting communities from the massive wildland fires and insect/disease epidemics that are devastating America's forests. Forest threats have far-reaching economic and ecologic impacts.
- **Active management enhances forest health and productivity while mitigating or even preventing the destruction of America's forests.** State forestry agencies employ and partner with professional foresters to manage publicly-owned forests as well as assist private landowners in managing their forests. Active management based on sound science maximizes public benefits from both public and private forests. Forestry professionals and accessible markets are essential for active management.

State Foresters and state-based solutions produce results for America

- **State forestry agencies ensure that work gets done on the ground efficiently and effectively.** State Foresters manage the resource professionals, partnerships, and infrastructure that provide the "boots on the ground" for successfully managing and protecting the nation's trees and forests. This includes delivering technical and financial assistance to America's private forest



owners, who own fifty-six percent (56%) of America's forests and produce ninety-percent (90%) of America's forest products.

- **State Forest Action Plans offer a practical, long-term roadmap for investing state, federal, and other resources where they will be utilized most effectively.** These state-based documents identify forest related threats, prioritize needs, and outline strategies for each state, U.S. territory, and the District of Columbia.

Take Action: Recommendations for the Administration and Congress:

1. Increase landowner assistance on private forestland, active forest management on federal forestland, and reforestation on all forestland.
2. Increase investment in State & Private Forestry, State Fire Assistance, and federal forest management to enhance public benefits and minimize wildland fire costs and risks.
3. Prioritize investments in key USDA Forest Service programs:
 - State & Private Forestry: Forest Health, Forest Stewardship, Urban & Community Forestry, and Landscape Scale Restoration;
 - Wildland Fire: Prevention, Suppression, Hazardous Fuels, and State Fire Assistance;
 - National Forest System: Timber Sales and Forest Health and
 - Research: Forest Products, Forest Inventory and Analysis.
4. Recognize State Forest Action Plans (FAPs) as the go-to documents for forest management and conservation decision-making; and use Forest Action Plans as primary source documents for federal agency forest planning, annual project planning, and rulemaking.
5. Support passage of Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) legislation that provides state forestry agencies with the flexibility to target federal funding based on State Forest Action Plans (FAPs).
6. Support passage of Wildland Fire Funding Fix legislation to stop fire borrowing, while reducing or capping federal agency funding for fire suppression which currently continue to grow at the expense of other program budgets.
7. Enhance states' ability to carry out forest management activities across all boundaries by expanding management options, such as those provided for in the "Good Neighbor Authority."
8. Promote the USDA Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program as the credible data source for measuring the nation's forest resource and answering sustainability questions.
9. Encourage development of new technologies and markets for wood, such as in mass timber buildings and wood-based biomass energy.
10. Ensure federal policies related to green building and forest certification recognize all major programs operating in the U.S.
11. Elevate forest invasive species as a national priority and promote collaboration between U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) agencies to develop a unified strategic plan.
12. Ensure forest owners have favorable tax policies, robust markets for wood products, and support from forest management professionals to keep forests productive and healthy.

The National Association of State Foresters urges the Administration and Congress to prioritize America's trees and forests when making decisions and recognize the vast contribution of trees and forests to the infrastructure and well-being of our nation.