

NASF RESOLUTION NO. 2016-1: Reforestation, Nursery and Genetic Resources Program

ORIGIN OF RESOLUTION: NASF Forest Resource Management Committee

ISSUE OF CONCERN:

State operated tree seedling nurseries are a key provider of planting material for family-owned forests. They grow a diversity of commercial and non-commercial species on a speculative basis, making plants available in generally smaller quantities for reforestation and afforestation projects that historically do not place nursery pre-orders. Over the last decade several states have opted to close their nursery and in some of those instances concerns have arisen as to the availability of adequate quantities of planting stock. In other cases, states are concerned that a reduction in seedling demand will make it difficult generating sufficient sales to fund their operation. At the same time budget challenges have caused a reduction in state tree improvement programs. In addition, climate change, an acceleration in invasive species occurrence and other environmental factors are creating a growing need for increased attention to seed provenance, conservation of genetic resources and development of more resistant and adaptive species.

BACKGROUND:

The Forest Resource Management Committee recently completed the report titled *National Survey of State Operated Tree Seedling Nurseries and Tree Improvement Programs*. The report offers a comprehensive view of such programs throughout the country and identifies capacities, concerns and technical assistance needs. In July of last year, the Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters Nurseries Working Group developed an Issues Paper highlighting additional concerns and needs.

RESOLUTION:

The National Association of State Foresters recommends that the US Forest Service Reforestation, Nursery and Genetic Resources Program carefully review information provided in the above referenced documents as base information in guiding the activities of the program, specifically focusing on:

- The importance of coordinating cooperative efforts, learning opportunities and technical exchange between state, federal, tribal, academic and other partners;
- Coordinating gene conservation, seed provenance documentation and genetic improvement;
- Supporting states in the development of skilled personnel;
- Providing regional coordination to assist in matching seedling supplies with seedling demands;
- Promoting reforestation/afforestation programs that ensure the sustainability of the nation's forest resource and
- Maintaining open communication and cooperation with private nurseries involved in growing conservation planting materials.

In addition, it is recommended that the National Association of State Foresters and the US Forest Service form a joint task force to study and outline future reforestation needs on state, private and federal lands and develop recommendations on sufficiently meeting those needs.

NASF ACTION: (x) Approved () Disapproved () Tabled

Date of Action: September 20, 2016