

Farm Bill Overview

TITLE VIII FORESTRY

SUMMARY OF FORESTRY TITLE

July 8, 2008

Forest Land Base

Approximately forty-five percent of all forestland in the United States, or 354 million acres is under non-industrial private ownership, contributing significantly to America's clean water and air, wildlife habitat, recreational resources and timber supplies.

Social & Economic Reasons for Assisting Private Land Forests

- **Family owned: 262 million forested acres belong to families and individuals**
- **Jobs & rural economies: paper & wood manufacturing generates \$230 billion dollars in annual sales**
- **Wood for houses, furniture, and paper: 92% of all trees harvested in the U.S. come from private forests**
- **Part of farm and ranch life: More than 75 million acres of forests in the U.S. are part of a farm or ranch**

Environmental Benefits of Forests

- **Clean water: two-thirds of the nation's drinking water comes from forests**
- **Clean air & stable climate: A single tree can absorb 10 lbs. of carbon dioxide per year**

Threats to Private Forests

- **Development pressures:** An average of 1 million acres of private forests is converted every year to development
- **Forest health problems:** 27 million acres of non federal forests are at risk of insect and disease damage, including 90 million acres which are at risk for wildfire
- **Minimal planning for the future:** Management planning helps families make a long-term commitment to the land. Estimates suggest that only 3% of family forest owners have a written management plan.
- **Loss of markets for forest products:** More than 330 mills have closed since 1997 and more that 158,000 jobs have been lost.

Sec. 8001 National Priorities for Private Forest Conservation

Establishes three priorities for allocation of funds:

- 1. Conserving and managing working forests for multiple values and uses.**
- 2. Protecting and restoring forests from a range of threats and restoring appropriate forest types in response to such threats.**
- 3. Enhancing public benefits from private forests.**

NATIONAL REDESIGN THEMES



Sec. 8002 Long-term Statewide Assessments and Strategies for Forest Resources

Requires states, to be eligible for funding under CFAA, to develop and submit to the Secretary of Agriculture (1) a statewide assessment of forest resource conditions, trends, threats; (2) a strategy for addressing threats to forest resources; and, (3) a description of resources needed from all sources to address the strategy.

Assessments are to be coordinated among state forester or equivalent, state forest stewardship coordinating committee, state wildlife agency and state technical committee. An annual report on use of funds is required.

Authorization of appropriation of up to \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012.

Sec. 8003 Community Forest and Open Space Program

Establishes a grant program to provide federal matching grants to help local governments, tribes, or NGOs acquire private forests that are threatened by conversion to non-forest uses and are intended to provide public benefits to communities.

Up to 10% for administration and technical assistance and is subject to appropriations

Sec. 8005 Changes to the Forest Resources Coordinating Committee

Establishes the Forest Resource Coordinating Committee at Secretary level to coordinate private non-industrial forestry activities within the Department of Agriculture and with the private sector.

The coordinating committee includes the chiefs of FS and NRCS, administrators of FSA and CSREES, and a representative from a State technical committee.

Non-fed reps with 3-year terms include State Foresters, State Fish and Wildlife agency, NIPF owner, Industry, Conservation Orgs., consultants, others.

Sec. 8006 Changes to the State Forest Stewardship Committee

Replaces requirement for a statewide Forest Stewardship Plan with *Statewide Assessment and Strategies for Forest Resources*. State committees make recommendations on the Statewide assessment to State Forester.

Adds State Technical Committee representative.

Sec. 8007 Competition in Programs Under Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978

Requires a portion of CFAA funds, as determined by the Secretary, be available competitively to State Foresters. State Foresters are the only eligible entity.

Secretary to consult with new Forest Resource Coordinating Committee to determine competitive allocation of funds.

Sec. 8008 Competitive Allocation of Funds for Cooperative Forest Innovation Partnerships

Secretary is authorized to competitively allocate not more than 5% of CFAA funds to support innovative national, regional, or local education, outreach, or technology projects that would increase the ability of USDA to address national priorities outlined in Sec. 8001.

Sec. 8001 Addresses National Priorities for Private Forest Conservation.

Subtitle E: Miscellaneous Provisions

Sec. 8402 Hispanic-Serving Institution Agricultural Land National Resources Leadership Program

**Competitive grants to Hispanic serving
institutions for undergraduate Forestry
scholarships.**

Sec. 9012 Forest Biomass for Energy

Directs the Secretary, through the FS, to conduct a competitive research and development program to encourage the use of forest biomass for energy. Authorization of appropriation of \$15 million for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2012.

Sec. 9013. Community Wood Energy

Provides for a Forest Service administered matching grant program for both community wood energy systems and woody supply feasibility studies. The intent of the program is to assist communities in both conversion of public buildings to wood-based power generation and in development of sustainable wood supply plans to meet the needs of the wood energy systems. Authorization of appropriation of \$5 million for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2012.

Healthy Forests Reserve Program

- **Adds a permanent easement option**
- **Makes available \$9.75mil/FY in CCC funds for FY2009-FY2012. No funds under this provision for FY2008.**

INTEGRATED PROGRAM DELIVERY

Purpose: Identify opportunities and outline actions for integrating S&PF delivery with complementary programs administered by other Federal agencies.

Example: Alignment in mission priorities between S&PF and NRCS; efforts will be made to move toward mutual delivery of programs and plans.

TEAM MEMBERS

Conservation Districts

- Charles Holmes
- Johnny Sundstrom
- Dr. Orval Gigstad
- Ralph Thier (staff)

State Foresters

- Alec Giffen (Maine)
- Bob Harrington (Montana)
- John Burwell (Oklahoma)
- Steve Kline (staff)

Forest Service

- Ted Beauvais
- Gretta Boley
- Peggy Polichio
- Stephanie Bertaina (staff)

NRCS

- Andree DuVarney
- Bruce Wight
- Joyce Swartzendruber
- Andy Mason (staff)

POLL CONDUCTED

Team conducted an informal poll of the state conservationists, state foresters, and the conservation districts to obtain input from the field concerning the perceived level of cooperation that currently exists among our agencies.

BARRIERS

Forestry not a priority

Lack of adequate and stable funding

Insufficient levels of technical skills and assistance

Administrative barriers

INTEGRATION OF PLANNING TOOLS

We need to resolve issues related to the content and organization of forest stewardship plans and find ways to integrate those plans into NRCS Conservation Plans.

INTEGRATING FOREST STEWARDSHIP & CONSERVATION PLANS

Create a national core template for integration

Learn about and describe what works in four state models (Maine, Montana, Arkansas, Washington)

Bring in mapping/spatial component as well (i.e., Customer Service Toolkit and Web Det)

Report on status at Sept 29 NASF meeting

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

We need for foresters within state forestry agencies to meet NRCS requirements for becoming Technical Service Providers, and/or identify other approaches of entering into contribution agreements so that they can provide technical services required for financial assistance.

SUMMARY

While we can't measure exact effects, we know that pressures on forest resources are extensive

The same approaches and methods will not adequately address current and future needs

Some cooperative steps are being taken to address needs

Farm Bill Issues and Beyond

Water

Energy

Global Climate Change

Open Space



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