



National Association of State Foresters | 444 N. Capitol St NW, Suite 540 | Washington DC 20001 | 202.624.5415 | www.stateforesters.org

## ECONOMIC STIMULUS: PROVIDING GREEN JOBS BY REINVESTING IN THE NATION'S FORESTS

During this economic crisis, thousands of jobs have been lost as the U.S. forest products industry has contracted due to all-time lows in home construction and reduced demand for paper and packaging materials. Investments through a federal economic stimulus package in existing USDA Forest Service programs will help restore these green jobs as well as improve the health of the nation's forests. NASF represents the directors of forestry agencies from the fifty states, eight U.S. territories and associated states, and the District of Columbia who hold the primary responsibility of delivering Forest Service State & Private Forestry (S&PF) programs and can ensure rapid deployment of federal funds at the local level.

**To ensure the greatest number of jobs are created where they are needed most, funds allocated under State & Private Forestry authorities must be available for a full range of projects and not be limited by project type or geographic region.** NASF supports the House passed version of the stimulus package (H.R. 1), which includes \$550M for "shovel-ready" activities on non-federal forests including:

- Reducing the threat of wildfire by removing hazardous fuels on the highest priority acres as defined by states and local communities.
- Restoring non-federal forest ecosystems through suppression of insect and disease outbreaks, reforestation, and restoration of watersheds and streams.
- Conducting urban tree inventories and health assessments, plant trees, respond to threats of insects and diseases, and remove and utilize infested trees.
- Developing clean, renewable wood energy systems in communities left vulnerable to price uncertainties in home heating and energy costs.

NASF believes the Senate's version of the stimulus package (S. 336) does not take full advantage of existing S&PF programs and recommends amending the bill to allow greater flexibility in the use of hazard fuels reduction and hazardous mitigation funds.

**Proposed Language Changes to S. 336:** New language is in blue.

### WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT (including transfer of funds)

For an additional amount for "Wildland Fire Management", \$650,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2010, **of which \$300,000,000 is for hazardous fuels reduction, hazard mitigation activities in areas of high risk of catastrophic wildfire, forest health, wood to energy grants and rehabilitation and restoration activities on Federal lands, and of which \$350,000,000 is available for work on State and private lands using all the authorities available to the Forest Service State fire assistance hazardous fuels projects, volunteer fire assistance, cooperative forest health projects, city forest enhancement, and wood to energy grants on State and private lands: *Provided, That amounts in this paragraph may be transferred to "State and Private Forestry" and "National Forest System": ~~Provided, That of the funds provided for State and private land fuels reduction activities, up to \$50,000,000 may be used to make grants for the purpose of creating incentives for increased use of biomass from national forest lands.~~***

NASF strongly urges Congress to expand the Capital Improvement and Maintenance portion of the stimulus funding to directly support projects on state as well as federal lands since similar needs and job opportunities exist. Projects on federal lands should be coordinated in consultation with the State Forester. Further, **since current state forestry agencies' budgets reflect overall economic conditions, federal stimulus funds should not be tied to matching requirements in order to make an immediate impact.**

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