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Farm Bill Conference Report passed by House supports healthy forests

Farm Bill language supports the work done by state foresters nationwide by giving them the tools they need to keep our forests healthy for generations to come.

Washington DC, January 29, 2014 – State foresters across the country are encouraged by the inclusion of key forestry provisions in the Farm Bill Conference Report. The House-approved Conference Report includes many provisions that will help state foresters and our partners – from communities to the federal government – accomplish our shared goal of ensuring the long-term health and sustainability of the nation's forests. We applaud Agriculture Committee leaders and the House for codifying the longstanding role of state-based BMPs in managing stormwater runoff associated with silviculture activities, reauthorizing Forest Action Plans, including language to clarify the authority of the USDA Forest Service's crucial role in mobilizing wildland fire resources to respond to incidents across the country, for providing permanent authority for stewardship contracting, and broadening the good neighbor authority (piloted in Utah and Colorado) which allows state foresters to work directly with our federal partner agencies to assist them in managing forest lands.

"We greatly appreciate the work put into the report by the Conference Committee and the House. It provides important tools and legal certainty that are both vitally important to improving and maintaining the health of the nation's forests," said National Association of State Foresters (NASF) Executive Director Jay Farrell. "These programs are key to responding to the threats and issues identified in every state's [Forest Action Plan](#)."

"We appreciate the continued support for the state Forest Action Plans in the bill," stated Farrell. "And hope that the Senate will move quickly to pass this Farm Bill."

Thanks to the work done on the [Farm Bill conference report](#), NASF is happy to see that the above priorities are slated to receive continued support when the final version of the Farm Bill passes both chambers of Congress.

The National Association of State Foresters is comprised of the directors of state and territorial forestry agencies and the District of Columbia. NASF seeks to advance sustainable forestry, conservation, and protection of forest lands and their associated resources. <http://www.stateforesters.org>

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