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State foresters encouraged by Senate Energy and Natural Resources forestry hearing

NASF urges Congress to implement reform of federal forest management focused on ensuring long-term sustainability of the social, economic, and ecological benefits derived from forests.

Washington DC, February 6, 2014- Today the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held a hearing to consider Senator Wyden's (D-OR) O&C Bill and Senator Barrasso's (R-WY) National Forest Jobs and Management Act of 2014. State foresters share in the concerns expressed by witnesses and Senators from both sides of the aisle about the trajectory of our federally owned forest lands and the rural communities and economies that rely on these lands. Through [NASF Resolution 2013-4](#), state foresters agree that more must be done to address the growing backlog of active management on federal forests:

The pace and scale of active forest management must increase substantially to begin to restore our federal forests to a more sustainable, resilient condition, and to provide the continued benefits of a viable forest products business sector, clean air, clean water, recreation opportunities, wildlife habitat, and commodities for our nation's economy.

"State foresters appreciate the leadership of Chairman Wyden and Ranking Member Murkowski in holding this hearing and hope that we can move forward with real federal forest management reform," said Chris Maisch, Alaska State Forester and President of NASF. "We commend Senator Barrasso for bringing forward the National Forest Jobs and Management Act and putting his ideas on the table. The 15-year pilot program envisioned under the bill addresses many concerns that state foresters have with the status quo of federal forest management. NASF looks forward to further reviewing Senator Barrasso's bill and we are committed to working to find a bi-partisan solution to break the current management gridlock on federal forests across the entire country to improve forest health and ensure continued delivery of the social, economic and ecological benefits forests provide."

NASF is encouraged that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is talking about ways to improve forest health through active management on federal forests, and by the deep understanding expressed during the hearing today about the impact that federal forests have on local communities and economies. Only Congress can make the needed reforms to ensure that federal forest lands are managed sustainably to provide the full suite of social, economic and ecological benefits to society. Now is the time for action.

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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