



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE FORESTERS

## 2018 Farm Bill Conference Committee Forestry Title Requests

### **Adopt House language codifying Landscape Scale Restoration**

By adopting the House language for codification of the Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) program (Sec. 8104 of House Bill; Sec. 8101 of Senate Bill) and setting the LSR authorization level at \$23 million, Congress will provide robust support for nationwide forest program delivery.

**NASF recommends that the Senate authorization language for LSR be changed in the following ways:**

- **Keep reference to Statewide Assessments and Strategies (Forest Action Plans)** in the purpose and requirements sections of LSR. Forest Action Plans are the guide for delivering Cooperative Forestry programs, including LSR, and should be included in the stated purpose of the LSR program and as a requirement of LSR grant proposals.
- **Maintain program eligibility for state forestry agencies and their close partners.** The intent of LSR has always been to fund national priorities as detailed in state Forest Action Plans. Allowing all entities to apply for LSR funding may reduce the role of state foresters in directing LSR funds to the most critical restoration needs on the landscape.
- **Include House text allowing a portion of LSR funding to be flexibly allocated** to state foresters to address the highest priorities in their Forest Action Plans.
- **Define "private forest land" and "state forest land" accurately** to include all lands, not just those that are "rural" according to the USDA secretary. Forest management and health initiatives don't just take place in rural areas. In fact, over 25 percent of LSR funding goes to communities to address water quality, invasive species, and other critical forestry issues.

### **Retain House report language on Forest Inventory Analysis and loss of private forest land**

The House report language on Forest Inventory and Analysis (pg. 237 of House Report) and the loss of private forest land (pg. 238) provisions are essential to tracking and responding to deforestation, i.e. the conversion of forested acreage to other land uses like residential or commercial development.

## **Ensure adequate support for the Forest Legacy Program**

The House language would reduce the authorized funding level for the Forest Legacy Program to \$35 million (Sec. 8102). The Forest Legacy Program supports the conservation priorities of states and should be authorized at a minimum of \$65 million (the historic level). Alternatively, Congress should retain the current statutory language of “such sums as necessary” regarding authorized funding for this program.

## **Adopt House language related to cross-boundary fuels work**

The House language related to cross-boundary hazardous fuels work (Sec. 8332 of House Bill; Sec. 8401 of Senate Bill) would allow for more hazardous fuels work to be accomplished by state forestry agencies on state or private land, while the USDA Forest Service accomplishes more of this work on federal land. This increase in cross-boundary fuels work will better protect communities from wildfires that start on federal lands, and conversely, federal lands from wildfires started on private and state lands.

## **Adopt Senate language related to the Timber Innovation Act**

The Senate language on the Timber Innovation Act (Sec. 8642 and 8643 of Senate Bill; Sec. 8501 of House Bill) includes the creation of a research and development program for wood building construction and authorization for a wood innovation grant program, both of which would bolster the development of US wood products markets that support good forest management.

## **Adopt Senate language amending the Small Tracts Act**

The Senate language amending the Small Tracts Act (Sec. 8621) would expand the USDA Forest Service’s authority to make small, strategic sales of lands that are physically isolated or have lost their National Forest character. The sales of these lands would provide the necessary resources to purchase national forest inholdings, greatly improving the effectiveness of federal lands management and reducing both federal and state forest management costs.

## **Include federal forest management reforms**

Robust federal forest management reforms would promote the health, productivity, and safety of federal forests. Both the House and Senate language include a variety of federal forest management reforms (Sec. 8301 through Sec. 8321 of House Bill; Sec. 8611 of Senate Bill) that are in line with NASF's recommendations for increasing active management on federal forests.

For more information, please contact:

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