



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE FORESTERS

444 North Capitol Street NW | Suite 387 | Washington, DC 20001 | www.stateforesters.org

February 11, 2021

The Honorable Joe Biden
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The National Association of State Foresters (NASF) and its members congratulate you on your successful campaign for our country's highest office. Today we request your leadership and pledge our support in addressing some of the most pressing concerns facing our nation today, including – but certainly not limited to – climate change, wildfires, and America's economic recovery.

Established in 1920, NASF is a non-profit organization composed of the directors of forestry agencies in all 50 states, eight U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia. Our members directly manage and protect state and private forests – which encompass nearly two-thirds of the nation's forests – and regularly assist in the conservation of federally managed forests and grasslands.

Perhaps no partnership has been more important in the history of U.S. forestry than the partnership between state foresters and the USDA Forest Service. State forestry agencies and the USDA Forest Service share the same fundamental goal – healthy, resilient, and productive forests – and the same core responsibility – to protect, conserve, and enhance forests.

Since the early 1900s, Congress has recognized and reinforced this natural government-to-government partnership for America's forests with landmark legislation, including the Weeks Act of 1911, the Clarke-McNary Act of 1924, the Cooperative Forest Management Act of 1950, the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978, and the 1990 and 2008 Farm Bills. Today, state forestry agencies are the leaders in supporting forest management on all land ownerships and the primary deliverers of federally supported forestry assistance nationwide.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating effect on the nation's economy, negatively impacting many state forestry agency budgets. We look forward to working with your administration and congressional leaders to ensure state forestry agencies are able to continue supporting the forestry sector, local jobs, and economic recovery.

Executive Director
Jay Farrell

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More must be done to minimize the threat of catastrophic wildfire. With more people living in fire-prone landscapes close to wildlands, protecting state, local, private, and federal lands from wildfire has become increasingly difficult. Without increased and coordinated efforts in active forest management, wildfires will continue to pose a threat to America's forests and communities.

Along with this letter we have provided several policy recommendations designed to increase active management of federal, state, and private forests. Active forest management is critical to creating and maintaining forests nationwide that are resilient to the threats exacerbated by climate change – including infestations, wildfire, and extreme drought – and capable of sequestering carbon, producing renewable fuels, and mitigating the effects of climate change.

NASF stands ready to support the Biden-Harris administration in providing the forestry leadership our country needs. Please do not hesitate to call on us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe A. Fox". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Joe Fox
NASF President
Arkansas State Forester