



Chris and Ned,

On behalf of The Trust for Public Land and the American Forest Foundation, we'd like to thank you for taking the time to meet with us on Tuesday regarding the Forest-Climate Working Group. We look forward to delivering the Forest-Climate Working Group's policy platform to you as soon as possible in January. We hope that these consensus recommendations from the forest community will help inform the Obama administration's thinking on the forest carbon sequestration and forest adaptation components of climate change policy.

In advance of those coalition recommendations, The Trust for Public Land and the American Forest Foundation would like to reiterate what our two organizations see as immediate opportunities for the new administration to advance forest-climate policy. It is our belief that many of our partners in the Forest-Climate Working Group would likely also be supportive of these requests and might potentially be interested in helping to implement them where appropriate.

The following policy recommendations are suggested as near-term actions to position America's forests for climate change mitigation and adaptation. These actions should be seen as a prelude to a more complete set of forest-climate policies as part of comprehensive federal climate change legislation.

Policy Recommendations:

- Develop a national strategy that maintains working private forests, promotes healthy, resilient forests, and directs forest adaptation efforts at a national scale. Consider tasking this activity to the USDA Forest Resource Coordinating Committee, as restructured in the 2008 Farm Bill.
- Ensure that states prepare for climate change challenges by directing that State Forest Resource Assessments and Strategies (mandated in the 2008 Farm Bill) and State Wildlife Action Plans adequately address climate change adaptation issues and needs.
- Provide funding and administrative direction for both financial and technical assistance to private forest owners to help them manage their forests to adapt to climate change. In particular the following programs, if funded adequately, are well suited to providing this assistance:
 - US Forest Service, Forest Stewardship Program
 - US Forest Service, Forest Legacy Program
 - US Forest Service, Forest Health Management Program
 - Natural Resource Conservation Service, Healthy Forest Reserve Program
 - Natural Resource Conservation Service, Environmental Quality Incentives Program
 - US Fish and Wildlife Service, Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund Program



- Identify immediate opportunities to direct incentive dollars from the above-mentioned programs into a series of forest-carbon demonstration projects that can begin creating capacity and expertise to bring climate mitigation activities to scale under federal cap and trade legislation.
- Through the US Forest Service, Research and Development Program, increase the focus and provide additional funding for research and analysis that will demonstrate the appropriate management practices needed to support forest adaptation efforts.
- Support full funding and implementation of the USFS Forest Inventory and Analysis Program as a means for continuous inventory and monitoring of the affects of climate change on forests.

In addition to the above policy and funding recommendations, we strongly encourage the administration to identify an initial set of key “adaptation landscapes” where these tools can be focused and integrated across ownerships and forest ecosystems. There are several model projects underway that would fit this approach, including our efforts that we described for you in the Connecticut River watershed of CT, MA, VT, and NH. This work involves the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, state agencies, and a range of private partners at all scales working toward common adaptation goals across a 400 mile-long north to south landscape. Our organizations are very interested in this concept and look forward to working with you to explore opportunities for landscape-scale collaboration. By focusing efforts into these adaptation landscapes, we hope to foster public-private and interagency collaboration at the landscape scale to achieve high level adaptation goals.

Thank you again for your time.

Sincerely,

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