



June 7, 2020

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The Honorable Jim Hubbard
Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250

Via email

Dear Undersecretary Hubbard:

One of the core beliefs of the National Association of Forest Service Retirees is the importance of addressing emerging national issues professionally and deliberately with facts and science. For the past two years, NAFSR has focused our attention on the national issue of reforestation and the necessity for improving forest regeneration on both public and private lands. Chief Christiansen has endorsed our focus on this issue.

In the past six months, we have seen interest in reforestation issues growing. In his State of the Union address, President Trump said that the United States would participate in the "Trillion Trees" global initiative. Interest is also growing among members of Congress and their staffs and within some advocacy groups. What we've also seen is that some who are interested in this issue don't grasp the breadth of the issue nor all the components of the forest regeneration process.

Richard Guldin, our NAFSR Board member representing the R&D mission area, has prepared a paper that addresses questions he has fielded recently about aspects of the emerging forest regeneration issue from a variety of sources—other NGOs, OSTP, and Hill staff. The first five years of his Forest Service research career focused on solving forest regeneration issues in the South, so he is well-equipped to provide a broad overview of the forest regeneration process and

bottlenecks that currently exist. The paper has been peer-reviewed by six technical and policy experts.

A successful reforestation cohesive strategy of the scale envisioned in the State of the Union address and the various legislative proposals already introduced or still being drafted should be both holistic—covering all the steps in the reforestation process—and sound—scientifically and technically. Solutions to the bottlenecks identified in the paper should be key components of any proposal.

NAFSR commends the report to you and encourages you to use its key points to help shape the policies and programs that will be needed to help create millions more acres of young resilient forests that survive and thrive. If the nation is going to unite around reforestation legislation and invest in a reforestation cohesive strategy for the next two decades, the chances of success will be greater if all the links in the forest regeneration chain are strong.

Sincerely,

James L. Caswell

James L. Caswell, Chair
National Association of Forest Service Retirees

Attachment

Cc: Chief Christiansen