



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE FORESTERS

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

November 29, 2022

The Honorable Homer Wilkes
Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW–Suite 202-W
Washington, DC 20250-0108

Dear Undersecretary Wilkes,

The National Association of State Foresters (NASF) appreciates your leadership in advancing opportunities and support for private forestland owners and climate-smart forestry practices. We know you understand how crucial our work with family forest landowners is to achieving national conservation goals, and we look forward to continuing this work with you.

We write to you today with regards to the \$450 million provided in the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) in support of private forest landowners, including underserved landowners, to be delivered through the authorities of 16 U.S. Code § 2109a.

NASF represents the directors of forestry agencies in all 50 states, U.S. territories, nations in free association with the U.S., and the District of Columbia. Among state foresters' most important constituents are private forestland owners, hence our vested interest in the successful implementation of this historical level of funding.

We recognize and appreciate the Biden administration's efforts to engage states and other partners throughout the implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the IRA. Our continued partnership with the Forest Service will help to leverage the breadth of our networks and ensure that we are able to meet this historic moment and effect lasting positive change for America's forests.

We also understand this provision within the IRA presents challenges that will require thoughtful navigation. A collaborative approach to its implementation – one that encourages private forest landowners to voluntarily adopt climate-smart forestry practices – will be best achieved in coordination with state forestry agencies: the number one deliverers of technical forestry assistance to private landowners.

Executive Director
Jay Farrell

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Through technical assistance, landowners are equipped with the unbiased, science-based information they need to sustainably manage their forests now and into the future. The vast majority of forestry assistance in the U.S. is provided by local government and NGO, boots-on-the ground professionals in the communities where USDA producers live. Partners like state forestry agencies are essential to delivering USDA technical assistance to these landowners.

We respectfully ask that you consider convening the diverse set of stakeholders needed to successfully implement this funding, in order to identify individual organizational strengths and opportunities where state agencies and NGOs can partner together. We understand the desire to quickly deliver results; however, we think it will be important to take these steps up front to ensure program design and delivery will be successful in the long-term.

We appreciate your consideration and thank you for your ongoing support of private forestland owners and climate-smart forestry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kacey KC', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kacey KC
NASF President
Nevada State Forester