

SUPPORTING DISASTER RECOVERY FOR FOREST LANDOWNERS



The southern region of the U.S. has been devastated by natural disasters in the past two years, including Hurricane Idalia in 2023, a 2023 drought in gulf states that led to widespread tree beetle outbreaks in 2024, and Hurricanes Helene and Milton in 2024. This has impacted over 4 million acres of forests across 8 states (AL, FL, GA, MS, NC, SC, TN and VA).

A robust supplemental funding response to these disasters is critical to support our southern forests, including both block grant payments to timber owners and funding for Cooperative Forestry programs to support state forestry agency response.

TAKE ACTION: TIMBER BLOCK GRANTS

Provide \$1.38 billion* through USDA for timber block grant funding for private landowners impacted by these disasters, to be implemented by state forestry agencies. Design of these block grants should include:

- Grants to be administered by the USDA Forest Service;
- Flexibility for each state to set the parameters of its block grant to meet the needs of its landowners;
- Eligibility for all private landowners, regardless of the size of the damage, ownership type or AGI;
- Congressional direction on landowner payment caps and timeframe to operationalize agreements (e.g., 180 days from bill passage); and
- Preferential tax treatment for block grant income received by landowners.

**Represents an estimate of timber value loss on private lands only across the 8 states impacted by disasters, and may be updated as timber damage assessments are refined*

Private Forest landowners are left vulnerable in the wake of disasters

Private forest landowners, who manage the majority of our nation's forests, lack adequate tools to recover from natural disasters. Unlike other commodities, private forest landowners have no access to crop insurance or safety net programs, leaving them vulnerable after events like hurricanes, wildfires and floods.

Healthy private forests are essential to the environment and economy

Supporting disaster recovery policies ensures landowners can continue to manage forests that provide public benefits, including carbon sequestration, wood products, biodiversity and clean air and water.

**WE MUST SAFEGUARD
THE PUBLIC BENEFITS
PROVIDED BY
PRIVATE FORESTS**

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ADDITIONAL NEEDS FOR SUPPORTING DISASTER RECOVERY FOR FOREST LANDOWNERS

- **State Agency Support Funding**

Provide \$101 million through the USDA Forest Service's State, Private and Tribal Forestry (SPTF) account to support state agencies in delivering Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act disaster support, including:

- Urban and Community Forestry – assist communities with re-establishment of tree canopy lost to hurricanes and/or flooding;
- Landowner Assistance – assist private landowners to reestablish damaged forest resources, especially for those who are not able to access NRCS/FSA programs due to lack of clear title;
- State Fire Assistance and Volunteer Fire Assistance – assist landowners and communities with preparation for, and addressing, increased wildfire risk from fuel build-up; and
- Tree Nurseries – bolster nursery capacity to ensure adequate stock for post-hurricane reforestation needs.

- **Support for the Forest Products Supply Chain**

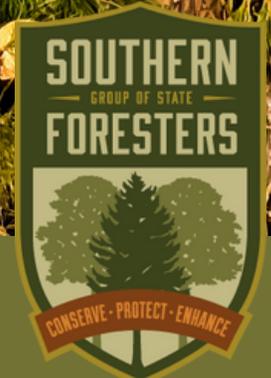
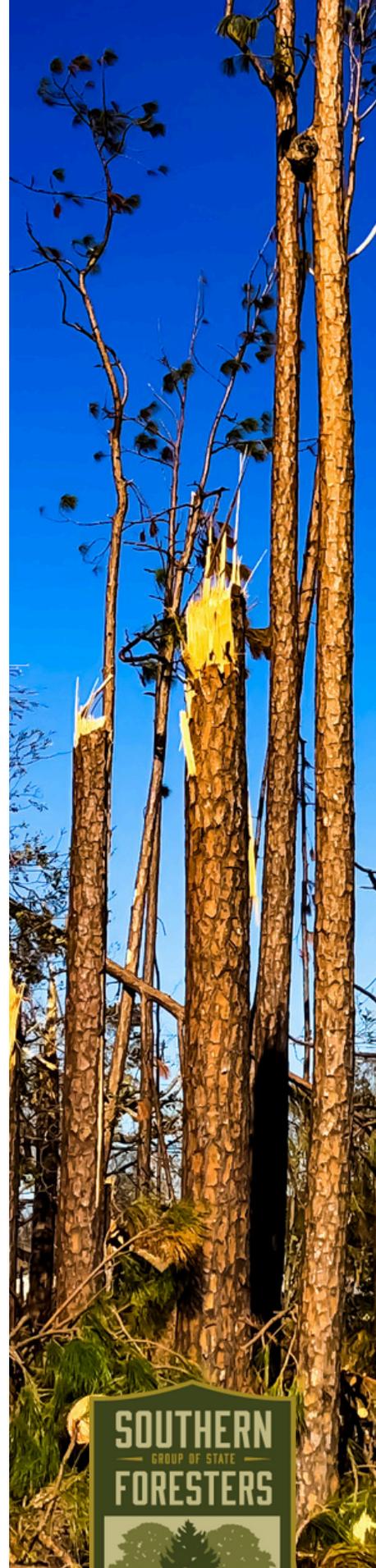
Provide financial support modeled after concepts from S4251 (Loggers Economic Assistance and Relief Act) and the Pandemic Assistance for Timber Harvesters and Haulers (PATHH) Program.

- **Southern Research Needs**

Provide \$15 million through USDA Forest Service Research & Development for increased costs associated with Forest Inventory and Analysis in hurricane-impacted areas, damage to facilities, equipment and research sites, and critical post-disaster ecological and socio-economic assessments.

- **Additional Legislative Needs**

- Tax Treatment – Pass the Disaster Reforestation Act (S217/HR655), creating tax certainty for landowners who need to reforest after a disaster.
- Enhance the Emergency Forest Restoration Program and improve its efficacy for landowners through the Emergency Conservation Program Improvement Act (S231/HR6717) and Emergency Pine Beetle Response Act (S3838/HR8024).
- Deliver funding through FEMA to support hazard tree removal in beetle-impacted communities, including along roads, rights-of-way and adjacent to structures.



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