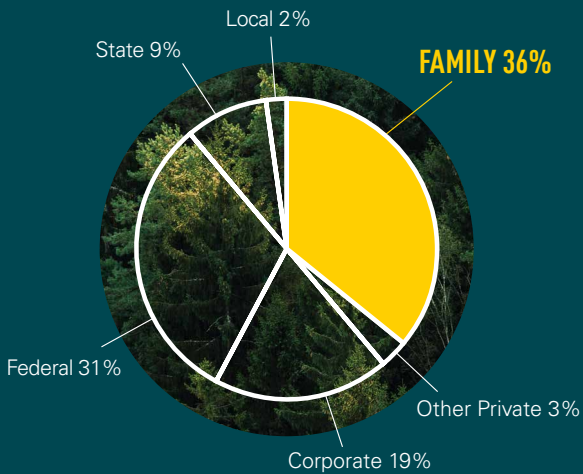


CARBON IN FAMILY FORESTS:

BUILDING CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND INVESTING IN RURAL ECONOMIES



FAMILY FORESTS ARE ESSENTIAL TO HELPING THE U.S. TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE:



U.S. FOREST OWNERSHIP

U.S. forests occupy more than **750 MILLION ACRES** and are the nation's largest terrestrial carbon sink — **OFFSETTING UP TO 15%** of U.S. emissions each year.

FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS OWN THE LARGEST PORTION OF AMERICA'S FORESTS — 36% — more than the government or corporations, making them essential for maintaining and enhancing this important carbon sink, especially in the face of increasing threats like wildfire that are exacerbated by a changing climate.

Most family forest owners do not generate regular income from their land, and **1 OUT OF 3 OWNERS HAVE AN ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF LESS THAN \$50,000**. The high cost of forest management most often prevents landowners from implementing the necessary strategies to keep their forests healthy and productive, despite the invaluable ecosystem services these forests provide for local communities. However, with the **RIGHT COMBINATION OF MARKET-BASED APPROACHES AND FINANCIAL INCENTIVES**, we can support families as they undertake these activities and continue their hard work to voluntarily provide all Americans with the **CLEAN AIR, WATER, WILDLIFE HABITAT, RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, AND FOREST PRODUCTS** we use every day



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

TO INVEST IN THE FUTURE OF FAMILY FORESTS

1. SUPPORT THE RURAL FORESTS MARKETS ACT (S. 1107):



Currently, high upfront costs prevent many family forest owners from participating in the carbon market. This bipartisan bill would authorize the USDA to provide loan guarantees to private investors investing in carbon projects designed specifically for small-scale landowners, helping to catalyze these projects and provide new revenue streams for landowners

2. USE EXISTING USDA CONSERVATION PROGRAMS TO CO-INVEST IN CLIMATE SMART FORESTRY ACTION:



In total, Farm Bill conservation programs are the single largest federal source of funding for private land conservation. To make sure these programs encourage carbon sequestration and storage Congress should:

- **Provide innovative financing mechanisms** like the Regional Conservation Partnership Programs Alternative Funding Arrangements to co-invest with private finance in a pool of resources that can be funneled to projects that produce measurable, verifiable results.
- **Strengthen the Forest Inventory and Analysis** to account for more frequent data collection and better monitor and measure forest carbon.

3. EXPAND TAX INCENTIVES FOR CARBON CAPTURE AND STORAGE:



To include biological carbon capture and storage that is measurable and verifiable and works alongside existing carbon markets.

4. PRIORITIZE ACCESS FOR HISTORICALLY UNDERSERVED GROUPS:



To achieve equity and maximum climate impact, we must ensure conservation programs and financial incentives can be equally accessed by all family forest owners, including those that have been historically underserved. Outreach and enrollment of African American and other minority landowners will be critical on the paths to both climate change mitigation and environmental justice.

**These recommendations are shared by a diverse coalition of the Forest Climate Working Group, representing the whole forest supply chain.*

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