

Press Release



Western Forestry Leadership Coalition

Delivering Resources, Partnerships, and Solutions for Western Forestry Challenges

Western Forestry Leaders Release Framework for Forests and Climate Change

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Denver, CO (Feb. 23, 2009) A coalition of state and federal forestry leaders last week released a position statement outlining central climate change policy themes for the forestry sector. These themes include a set of 10 principles and key approaches to develop forest climate change policies at the regional, state and local levels across the west.

Western forests in the U.S. are some of the most valuable and productive forests in the world. The forests act as net sinks for carbon; annually removing 74.0 million metric tons. Given their ability to remove and store carbon from the atmosphere, it is important to maintain the amount of forest as well as the health of forests. Healthy and abundant western forests as carbon sinks will not only be key to regional efforts to reduce atmospheric carbon, but to national and international efforts as well. Actively-managed forests must be recognized as part of the climate change solution. To address this, the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition (WFLC) has developed a forest and climate change framework with the goal of curbing the affects of increasing temperatures through forest management strategies that are adapted to climate trends thus helping forests sustain their health while also being able to contribute to reducing carbon in the atmosphere.

"This framework reflects the thinking of leaders in key forestry areas. Research provides us with the scientific foundations, the US Forest Service combined with State Agencies give us the ability to apply these principles across boundaries for the benefit of all society," said US Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station Director Bov Eav. To accomplish this takes more than just the WFLC. "That is why we encourage and work with collaborative groups like the Forest-Climate Working Group (FCWG), which just released their Policy Platform on Capitol Hill," states Jay Jensen, WFLC Executive Director. (http://www.forestfoundation.org/AFF_FCWG_revised_2-20.pdf)

Under the themes of adaptations and mitigation in the Framework, the WFLC asserts that trees and forests are most effectively included in climate change policies when these policies:

- *Are Based on Best Available Science*
- *Promote Forest Resiliency and Sustainability While Providing for Goods and Services*
- *Endorse Full-Carbon Accounting with Forest Offset Projects*
- *Support Market-Based Solutions*
- *Prevent Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions by Increased Use of Forest Products, Woody Biomass, and Renewable Energy from Biomass*
- *Are Developed through Collaboration*
- *Pursue Innovative Activities and Partnerships*
- *Are Cost-Effective and Practical*
- *Are Performance Driven*
- *Promote Learning and Innovation*

The Western Forestry Leadership Coalition believes that observing the policy themes, principles and approaches in the framework are fundamental to policy makers and forest land managers as they work together to develop greenhouse gas inventory methodologies, adaptation strategies, and mitigation projects.

To read the *Framework* and the 2007 *WFLC Climate and Forests Policy* please go to

http://www.wflcweb.org/pressandpolicy/policy_statements_resolutions.php

The Western Forestry Leadership Coalition is a unique state-federal partnership working with the people and resources in the west. The WFLC 34-person membership consists of western State and Territorial Forestry Agencies and the US Forest Service: western Regional Foresters, Research Station Directors, and the Forest Products Lab Director. The Coalition has staff support based in Denver, CO. Their mission is to promote science-based forest management that serves the values of society and ensures the health and sustainability of western forests. For more information please visit www.wflcweb.org