



Building Community Capacity for Sustainable Forest Management

We recognize that the spectrum of forest landownership has expanded. Nonindustrial private forest land is owned by individuals but is also found in multi-owner patches, community forests, including both community-owned and community-managed forests and forest collaboratives.

We believe that federal financial and technical assistance programs for forest landowners need to account for these changing patterns of ownership and be accessible to a broader range of landowners across a broader range of forested landscapes.

These programs also need to encourage people to collaborate by working and learning from each other. This requires restructuring and reinventing these programs including the ways they are delivered.

Our Priorities

- Financial and technical assistance programs need to develop and sustain healthy forest landscapes across generations.
 - ◇ Insure community security through consideration of land and forest tenure issues including inter-generational land transfers, community development, jobs and other livelihood issues, workforce development and community character as these factors are associated with sustainability of the forested landscape.
- Align federal resources to support community-based engagement and partnerships in natural resource management.
 - ◇ Acknowledge that in many communities, existing networks of practitioners could provide services. This will require retrofitting programs and reallocating funding.
- Insure federal agency ability to work with groups and communities must be strengthened in order to deliv-

Maryland Offers Outreach and Assistance to Landowners in Multi-owner Blocks

Baltimore County Dept. of Environmental Protection and Sustainability, in cooperation with the Harry Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology and the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay's *Forestry for the Bay* program, and others, has recently been awarded a grant to pilot outreach to multi-owner forest patches with the goal to engage landowners in cooperative management.

A recommended multi-owner management approach is to conduct a forest health assessment (such as a "NED-lite" quantitative assessment of forest composition and structure, health, regeneration, and invasives, etc.), followed by establishment of an entity (such as a woodland owners association or collective) to guide implementation of a forest management plan based on the assessment.

A second related phase of this effort, led by the MD DNR Forest Service and with partners from the initial outreach project, would continue outreach and provide technical and cost-share assistance to implement multi-owner patch-based management plans. All management efforts are intended to serve multiple objectives, including maintenance of a suite of ecosystem services for Chesapeake Bay restoration, and provision of forest products as appropriate for landowner and community benefits.

er programs and accomplish on the ground outcomes through community-based groups and existing practitioners.

- ◇ Develop increased capacity in collaboration skills, collaboration best practices and community input into state assessments.

Our Recommendations

1. Community security

- Program requirements should prioritize local hiring as a first source. Local knowledge is important and local hiring builds a stewardship ethic.

Maryland Standardizes Requirements for Cost Share Programs

The Maryland DNR Forest Service, in cooperation with Federal and other State agencies through its NRSC Forestry Subcommittee, has been working to develop standardized requirements and guidelines for preparation of Forest Stewardship Plans with the intent that the Plan will qualify landowners for multiple Federal and State cost share programs for sustainable forest management practices.

The agencies are also structuring landowner programs to allow "stacking" of Federal and State cost-share, which together would reimburse landowners for up to 90% of practice costs.

- Sustainable forest management education/ continuing education should be available for the local work force.
- Contemporary and innovative tools for land retention and intergenerational land transfer should be made available. These tools must be widely known and accessible to the diverse universe of nonindustrial private forest landowners.
- Tax incentives to keep land forested are encouraged.
- State forest assessments should include community-based forest management activities as well as consideration of green jobs.
- Niche markets must be developed for specialty and non-timber based forest products.
- Eco-enterprise zones are encouraged.
- Land trusts should be facilitated.

2. Expanded focus on multi-owner and/or community-based forest activities.

- The definition of private forest land ownership should be changed to encompass the broader spectrum of landowners across broader scales including community forests, cross boundary collaboratives and multi-owner forest patches.
- Technical service provider and outreach coordinator eligibility should be expanded to include community-based organizations (CBO) actually based in the community.
- Access to existing programs for different kinds of landowners must be insured both through redefinition of program eligibility and through appropriate outreach approaches to these different landowners.

3. Retrofitting and funding financial and technical assistance programs

- Increase capacity of CBO's to work with private forest

landowners.

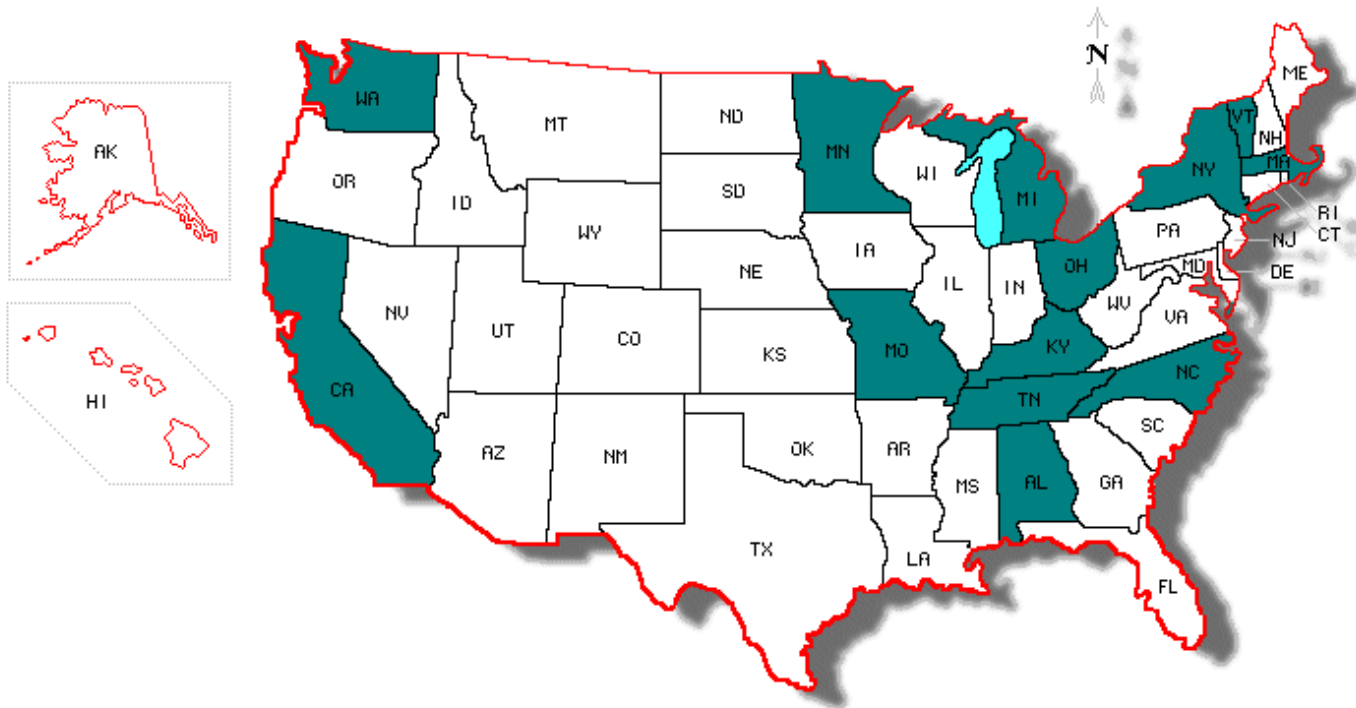
- Change program eligibility requirements to provide access by CBO's
- Provide opportunities for CBO's to develop their capacity: grant programs, education, on the ground implementation, changes in match requirements
- Establish funding criteria to insure that program funds reach CBO's and practitioners that work directly with landowners.
- Change program eligibility requirements to encourage investments in landscape-scale activities.
- Change program requirements to allow continuing funding for successful projects (rather than always funding pilots or short term activities)

4. Building federal agency capacity

- Develop strategies to improve community input into state assessments.
- Develop collaboration best practices for agencies.
- Collaboration is a required part of agency skill training.
- Agencies must develop skills in outreach/making programs accessible to a broader range of forest landowners.
- Agencies should improve their abilities to work effectively with CBO's in the delivery of assistance programs.
- Develop and implement performance metrics and evaluation criteria for federal agencies that insure collaboration best practices are utilized.

Who We Are

The Coalition for Eastern Forests and Communities is comprised of over thirty organizations and individuals who joined together to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of communities and forests in the Eastern U.S. by sharing, developing and advocating for effective national policy solutions that promote healthy forest ecosystems and vital communities.



Coalition Partners

American Forests (DC)

Biomass Energy Resources Center (VT)

Communities Committee (MI, MO, MN)

Forest Guild (MA)

League of Rural Voters (MN)

Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (KY)

National Network of Forest Practitioners (OH, NY, TN, WA)

Sowash Ferrier (OH)

The Greening of Detroit (MI)

The National Community Forestry Service Center (NC)

Tuskegee Volunteer Power Corporation (AL)

Watershed Research and Training Center (CA)

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