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Climate Resilience/Carbon Stewardship of America's National Forests/Grasslands: June 23rd U.S. Department of Agriculture Memorandum

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U.S. Department of Agriculture ("USDA") Secretary Tom Vilsack issued a June 23rd memorandum titled:

Climate Resilience and Carbon Stewardship of America's National Forests and Grasslands ("Memorandum")

See Secretary's *Memorandum* 1077-004.

The intent of the *Memorandum* is to direct the USDA Forest Service to:

- Restore forests
- Improve resilience
- Address the climate crisis

The *Memorandum* is stated to be at least in part in response to the Biden Administration's "Executive Order on Strengthening the Nation's Forest, Communities, and Local Economies."

That Executive Order mandated that USDA undertake various actions to pursue:

. . . science-based, sustainable forest and land management.

Such actions are stated to include:

- Reducing wildfire risk
- Accelerating reforestation
- Restoring ecosystems
- Supporting forest products jobs and markets in rural communities
- Definition and inventory of old-growth and mature forests on federally managed lands

The Secretary's *Memorandum* identifies:

- Forests at risk
- Current management of such areas
- How potential data gaps may be resolved

The U.S. Forest Service is then required to develop what is described as a “decision support tool” to enhance:

- Carbon stewardship
- Wildlife habitat
- Watersheds
- Outdoor recreation

Additional activities the U.S. Forest Service is required to undertake include:

- Development of plans for increasing the safe use of prescribed fire
- Fostering innovative markets for sustainable forest products
- Conducting an inventory of old-growth and mature forests
- Accelerating reforestation
- Boosting nursery capacity to grow more seedlings for post-fire recovery

The U.S. Forest Service is also required to utilize new data, tools, and ecological knowledge in pursuit of equity and environmental justice.

A copy of the *Memorandum* can be downloaded [here](#).