



Key Messages

International Year of Forests 2011

Date: 11 Jan 2011

1. The USDA Forest Service – in partnership with other organizations – is working to promote the United Nations International Year of Forests 2011.

- Each year, the United Nations (UN) declares a special theme to promote global awareness of an issue. For 2011, the theme is International Year of Forests (IYOF) to raise global awareness of the urgent need to conserve forest resources and to highlight their importance in everyday life (<http://www.un.org/en/events/iyof2011/>).
- Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack believes a healthy and prosperous America relies on healthy forests and grasslands and the benefits they provide: clean air and water, carbon storage, renewable energy, food and fiber, fertile soils, wildlife habitat, and recreation opportunities.
 - Healthy forests and grasslands are elements of integrated landscapes that need to be restored, conserved, and managed across **all lands** – from remote wildlands to urban centers. For more information, please visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/video/tidwell/index.html>
- The Forest Service will sponsor a wide array of activities to highlight the Secretary's vision as outlined above, with a focus on major U.S. forest conditions and trends related to sustainable land management.

2. The USDA Forest Service is one of the leading world forestry agencies working to restore and sustain forest health and landscapes for future generations to enjoy and treasure.

- The agency operates the **largest forestry research organization** in the world.
 - Agency scientists and managers are applying the best peer-reviewed, science-based knowledge and management practices.
 - For more information, please visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/research/>
- **Protecting and enhancing water resources and watershed health** are prime concerns.
 - With 53 % of the nation's surface supply of drinking water coming from public and private forests, the agency is working hard to ensure water quality and quantity.
 - Integrated landscape conservation plans tailored to geographic areas address how the Agency can continue to provide water and water-related ecosystem services.
 - For more information, please visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/water/>
- Forest managers are focused on how to **make landscapes more resilient to climate change**.
 - Climate change is placing forests under increasing stress that exacerbates the threats of fire, disease, and insects. Forest management in an environmentally sound manner is crucial to sustaining our forests.
 - For more information, please visit the Forest Service Climate Change Resource Center at <http://www.fs.fed.us/ccrc/>
 - For more information on Forest Management, please visit: <http://www.fs.fed.us/forestmanagement/index.shtml>

- The Agency is creating **green jobs and volunteer opportunities** related to conservation and outdoor recreation for sustainable communities.
 - Under the President’s economic stimulus program, the FS spent more than \$1 billion in 2010 creating almost 20,000 new private sector jobs in many communities affected by the downturn located near national forests.
 - For more information, please visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/> and click on “Jobs and the Forest Service Recovery Act Projects.”
 - Volunteers are important to the Forest Service and they perform many and varied types of work, whether in a one-time project, several months, seasonally, part time, or full time. For more information, please visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/> and click on the Volunteer Opportunities link.
- **Reconnecting Americans, especially children, with nature** is another key focus area.
 - The agency offers a wide variety of outdoor recreation and conservation education programs and activities that engage Americans in our history, culture and natural bounty.
 - For more information, please visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/kids/> and <http://www.discovertheforest.org/>

3. The Forest Service will partner with other organizations for 2011 IYOF activities.

- In partnership with other organizations, the Forest Service will host/coordinate a number of activities to celebrate International Year of Forests and to foster the exchange of knowledge on practical strategies to promote sustainable forest management.
- The Forest Service is dedicated to building, improving, and sustaining partnerships and collaborative work to build strong communities and healthy ecosystems.
- For more information, please visit <http://www.fs.fed.us>, and look for the IYOF logo that will connect you to information about Forest Service IYOF events.