

NATIONAL REPORT ON SUSTAINABLE FORESTS—2015: CONSERVATION OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

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Abstract—The National Report on Sustainable Forests—2015 relies on Montréal Process Criteria and Indicators (C&I) for Forest Sustainability to organize and present data relevant to U.S. forests. The 2015 report addresses seven criteria, the first of which is Conservation of Biological Diversity, which is organized into nine indicators that address three sub-criteria: ecosystem diversity, species diversity, and genetic diversity. Selected highlights from the report include the following. Total forest land area increased by 14 million acres since the previous report. Area of timberland increased by 7 million acres, with a 14 million acre increase in large diameter size class and a 7 million acre decrease in medium and small diameter size class. Woodlands (41%) and forest (31%) are more protected than other types of natural vegetation (16%). Between 2001 and 2011, net loss of interior forest was between 7.0 and 20.0 percent, varying with landscape scale. Greatest proportion of numbers of forest bird species with increasing population trends compared to the number of species with decreasing trends occurred in mixed wooded plains of the eastern Great Lakes and scattered valley and plains systems in the West; greatest proportion of species with decreasing trends compared to those with increasing trends occurred in oak forests of the southern Appalachians, pine and northern hardwood forests of the upper Midwest and Great Lakes, and montane and arid high plains systems in the intermountain West.

Between 1966 and 2011, about 19% of forest-associated bird species increased in populations and 20% decreased. Decliners include species associated with early successional or wetland habitats. Some generalist bird species and some that favor dead trees as foraging and nesting substrates have increased. Results for all nine indicators are presented in the poster.

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