



Shaping the future for birds

*From Public
Comment
7-20-10*

July 16, 2010

Mr. Bill Timko
Deputy Director, Forest Management
U.S.D.A. Forest Service
Forest Management, Mailstop-1103, 1400
Independence Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20250-1103
Sent via email: btimko@fs.fed.us

Dear Mr. Timko:

Please accept this letter in support of the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR) proposal titled "Missouri Pine-Oak Woodlands Restoration Project (MoRWR)", submitted by the Eastern region on behalf of the Mark Twain National Forest, 5 May 2010. We support this proposal for the following reasons:

Shortleaf pine-oak woodland ecosystems once dominated more than six million acres in the Ozark region of southern Missouri. This ecosystem was characterized by large, widely-spaced trees, many greater than 120 years of age, with a nearly complete and diverse carpet of grasses, sedges, and forbs forming the ground cover. Today, barely 600,000 acres of shortleaf pine-oak woodland remain in scattered parcels.

NatureServe ranks shortleaf pine/bluestem woodland as critically imperiled. The Missouri Chapter of The Nature Conservancy considers restoration of this natural community its highest priority. The CFLR proposal area also coincides with The Nature Conservancy's highest priority Ozark watershed, containing 35 globally significant plants and animals.

Restoration of pine woodlands would help to increase populations of Bachman's Sparrow, Prairie Warbler, and Red-headed Woodpecker, all United States WatchList species that have suffered decades of decline, as well as allow for the potential reintroduction of the federally-endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Brown-headed Nuthatch, the latter considered a species in need of immediate management attention by Partners in Flight.

In addition to American Bird Conservancy, top administrators from a variety of state and federal agencies committed their support to the project. These include the National Park Service – Ozark National Scenic Riverways, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Geological Survey, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Missouri Department of Conservation, Central Hardwoods Joint Venture Management Board, and The Nature Conservancy.

This project will provide additional raw materials to an existing forest products market. MoPWR is estimated to yield approximately 118 million board feet of sawtimber and 850,000 tons of biomass over a ten-year period with a net value of \$9.3 million and \$1.7 million respectively. These added products and investments will support over 160 new jobs and have annual economic impact of over \$5.7 million in the Missouri Ozarks. These numbers include not only the direct effect of jobs in the primary wood processing industry (such as logging and sawmill operations) but also indirect and "induced" effects in the secondary wood products industry (such as cabinet shops, log cabs, paperboard manufacturing and so on) and in the economy as a whole as a result of the increased employment opportunities. (Results are based on data collected by the US Bureau of Economic Analysis, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the US Department of Agriculture, and the Missouri Department of Conservation in 2005 and 2006.)

We are aware of the meeting of the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program Advisory Committee, 20-22 July 2010, and understand that the purpose of the meeting is to review proposed CFLRP projects and make recommendations for project selection to the Secretary of Agriculture. We ask that this letter be placed in the record, and that an ABC staff person be allowed to provide comment to the Council during the comment period scheduled in the agenda.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George H. Fenwick". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

George H. Fenwick, PhD
President

CFLR proposal review meeting

ABC believes in working through effective partnerships to enhance populations of high-priority bird species. In addition to American Bird Conservancy, top agency administrators from a variety of state and federal agencies committed their support to the project. These include the National Park Service – Ozark National Scenic Riverways, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Geological Survey, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Missouri Department of Conservation, Central Hardwoods Joint Venture Management Board, and The Nature Conservancy.

Several species of birds ABC considers high-priority and in need of immediate conservation action would greatly benefit from the landscape-scale restoration of the 125,000 acres of Shortleaf pine-oak woodland proposed. These are Bachman's Sparrow, Red-headed Woodpecker, Prairie Warbler, Brown-headed Nuthatch, and potentially the federally endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker (would be enough habitat to support a re-introduced population of the latter).

ABC also believes in creating "green jobs" in concert with bird habitat conservation. This project will provide additional raw materials to an existing forest products market. These added products and investments will support over 160 new jobs and have annual economic impact of over \$5.7 million in the Missouri Ozarks. These numbers include not only the direct effect of jobs in the primary wood processing industry (such as logging and sawmill operations) but also indirect and "induced" effects in the secondary wood products industry (such as cabinet shops, log cabs, paperboard manufacturing and so on) and in the economy as a whole as a result of the increased employment opportunities.