



UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON
**AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION,
& FORESTRY**

U.S. SENATOR DEBBIE STABENOW, CHAIRWOMAN

Forestry

The Rural Prosperity and Food Security Act invests in the protection, conservation, productivity, and health of our nation's forests, which provide clean drinking water, recreational opportunities, timber, and valuable habitat that supports wildlife and biodiversity. It leverages our forests as a key tool to address the climate crisis and expands urban and rural reforestation projects to plant trees in communities nationwide.

Importantly, the bill works to address the wildfire risk through science-based restoration and supports new and innovative wood products that bring good-paying jobs to rural communities.

Addressing the Climate Crisis:

The bill ensures that our nation's forests will continue to sequester carbon. It designates over 100,000 acres of forest – the largest acreage ever protected in a Farm Bill – as wilderness. It strengthens the connections between farmers, forest owners, and rural communities to enhance reforestation efforts and provides a federal loan guarantee to support small forest landowners developing sustainable land management practices and looking to enter environmental markets. It also builds on the bipartisan REPLANT Act to promote seed development, expand nursery capacity, and prioritize reforestation projects.

For the first time, the bill recognizes the importance of forests in cities and towns by establishing the **Office of Urban and Community Forestry** to provide financial and technical assistance to expand green spaces in communities, mitigate stormwater runoff, and improve the quality of life in urban and suburban communities.

Wildfire Prevention and Forest Health:

The bill increases the pace and scale of forest management to protect communities and vulnerable ecosystems from wildfire. It expands the Forest Service's authority to address forest health challenges through expedited environmental analysis, aids utility companies' ability to prevent wildfires on public land, and establishes a

National Prescribed Fire Training Program to ensure that effective management practices are being implemented.

The bill **expands the Good Neighbor Authority**, which keeps our forests healthy and productive, by allowing counties and tribal communities to undertake restoration projects and retain the proceeds from the sale of timber harvested on federal land for authorized restoration projects.

Bringing the Forest Service Into the 21st Century:

The bill utilizes new technology to improve forest carbon data monitoring and establishes a centralized and publicly available database of Forest Service activities and key features on federal land. This database will be a critical resource to researchers, private landowners, land managers, and wildland firefighters.

Timber Innovation:

The bill encourages the use of less energy-intensive materials, such as wood, to be used as structural building material and continues several programs that stimulate innovation and support for American wood products, markets, and energy.