

USE OF REMAINING FUNDS

Pub. L. 107-171, title VIII, §8001(b), May 13, 2002, 116 Stat. 468, provided that: “Notwithstanding the amendment made by subsection (a) [repealing former sections 2103 and 2103b of this title], the Secretary of Agriculture may use funds appropriated for fiscal year 2002 for the forestry incentives program or the stewardship incentive program, but not expended before the date of enactment of this Act [May 13, 2002], to carry out sections 4 and 6 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 [former sections 2103 and 2103b of this title], as in effect on the date before the date of enactment of this Act.”

PURPOSES OF FOREST LAND ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

Pub. L. 107-171, title VIII, §8002(a), May 13, 2002, 116 Stat. 468, provided that: “The purposes of this section [enacting this section and amending section 6962 of Title 7, Agriculture] are—

“(1) to strengthen the commitment of the Secretary of Agriculture to sustainable forest management to enhance the productivity of timber, fish and wildlife habitat, soil and water quality, wetland, recreational resources, and aesthetic values of forest land; and

“(2) to establish a coordinated and cooperative Federal, State, and local sustainable forestry program for the establishment, management, maintenance, enhancement, and restoration of forests on nonindustrial private forest land.”

§ 2103a. Forest Stewardship Program**(a) Establishment**

The Secretary, in consultation with State foresters or equivalent State officials, shall establish a Forest Stewardship Program (hereafter referred to in this section as the “Program”) to encourage the long-term stewardship of nonindustrial private forest lands by assisting owners of such lands to more actively manage their forest and related resources by utilizing existing State, Federal, and private sector resource management expertise and assistance programs.

(b) Goal

The goal of the Program shall be to enter at least 25,000,000 acres of nonindustrial private forest lands in the Program by December 31, 1995.

(c) “Nonindustrial private forest lands” defined

For the purposes of this section, the term “nonindustrial private forest lands” means rural, as determined by the Secretary, lands with existing tree cover, or suitable for growing trees, and owned by any private individual, group, association, corporation, Indian tribe, or other private legal entity.

(d) Implementation

In carrying out the Program the Secretary, in consultation with State foresters or equivalent State officials, shall provide financial, technical, educational, and related assistance to State foresters or equivalent State officials, including assistance to help such State foresters or equivalent officials to provide financial assistance to other State and local natural resource entities, both public and private, and land-grant universities for the delivery of information and professional assistance to owners of nonindustrial private forest lands. Such information and assistance shall be directed to help such owners understand and evaluate alternative actions they might take, including—

(1) managing and enhancing the productivity of timber, fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, wetlands, recreational resources, and the aesthetic value of forest lands;

(2) investing in practices to protect, maintain, and enhance the resources identified in paragraph (1);

(3) ensuring that afforestation, reforestation, improvement of poorly stocked stands, timber stand improvement, practices necessary to improve seedling growth and survival, and growth enhancement practices occur where needed to enhance and sustain the long-term productivity of timber and nontimber forest resources to help meet future public demand for all forest resources and provide the environmental benefits that result; and

(4) protecting their forests from damage caused by fire, insects, disease, and damaging weather.

(e) Eligibility

All nonindustrial private forest lands that are not in management under Federal, State, or private sector financial and technical assistance programs existing on November 28, 1990, are eligible for assistance under the Program. Nonindustrial private forest lands that are managed under such existing programs are eligible for assistance under the Program if forest management activities are expanded and enhanced and the landowner agrees to meet the requirements of this chapter.

(f) Duties of owners

To enter forest land into the Program, landowners shall—

(1) prepare and submit to the State forester or equivalent State official a forest stewardship plan that meets the requirements of this section and that—

(A) is prepared by a professional resource manager;

(B) identifies and describes actions to be taken by the landowner to protect soil, water, range, aesthetic quality, recreation, timber, water, and fish and wildlife resources on such land in a manner that is compatible with the objectives of the landowner; and

(C) is approved by the State forester, or equivalent State official; and

(2) agree that all activities conducted on such land shall be consistent with the stewardship plan.

(g) Stewardship recognition

The Secretary, in consultation with State foresters or equivalent State officials, is encouraged to develop an appropriate recognition program for landowners who practice stewardship management on their lands, with an appropriate, special recognition symbol and title.

(h) Authorization of appropriations

There are hereby authorized to be appropriated \$25,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 1991 through 1995, and such sums as may be necessary thereafter, to carry out this section.

(Pub. L. 95-313, §5, as added Pub. L. 101-624, title XII, §1215(2), Nov. 28, 1990, 104 Stat. 3525; amend-

ed Pub. L. 102-237, title X, §1018(a)(1), Dec. 13, 1991, 105 Stat. 1905.)

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 5 of Pub. L. 95-313 was renumbered section 8 and is classified to section 2104 of this title.

AMENDMENTS

1991—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 102-237 substituted “State foresters” for “State Foresters” wherever appearing in introductory provisions.

§ 2103b. Watershed forestry assistance program

(a) Definition of nonindustrial private forest land

In this section, the term “nonindustrial private forest land” means rural land, as determined by the Secretary, that—

(1) has existing tree cover or that is suitable for growing trees; and

(2) is owned by any nonindustrial private individual, group, association, corporation, or other private legal entity, that has definitive decisionmaking authority over the land.

(b) General authority and purpose

The Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service and (where appropriate) through the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, may provide technical, financial, and related assistance to State foresters, equivalent State officials, or cooperative extension officials at land grant colleges and universities and 1890 institutions for the purpose of expanding State forest stewardship capacities and activities through State forestry best-management practices and other means at the State level to address watershed issues on non-Federal forested land and potentially forested land.

(c) Technical assistance to protect water quality

(1) In general

The Secretary, in cooperation with State foresters or equivalent State officials, shall engage interested members of the public, including nonprofit organizations and local watershed councils, to develop a program of technical assistance to protect water quality described in paragraph (2).

(2) Purpose of program

The program under this subsection shall be designed—

(A) to build and strengthen watershed partnerships that focus on forested landscapes at the State, regional, and local levels;

(B) to provide State forestry best-management practices and water quality technical assistance directly to owners of nonindustrial private forest land;

(C) to provide technical guidance to land managers and policymakers for water quality protection through forest management;

(D) to complement State and local efforts to protect water quality and provide enhanced opportunities for consultation and cooperation among Federal and State agencies charged with responsibility for water and watershed management; and

(E) to provide enhanced forest resource data and support for improved implementa-

tion and monitoring of State forestry best-management practices.

(3) Implementation

In the case of a participating State, the program of technical assistance shall be implemented by State foresters or equivalent State officials.

(d) Watershed forestry cost-share program

(1) In general

The Secretary shall establish a watershed forestry cost-share program—

(A) which shall be—

(i) administered by the Forest Service; and

(ii) implemented by State foresters or equivalent State officials in participating States; and

(B) under which funds or other support provided to participating States shall be made available for State forestry best-management practices programs and watershed forestry projects.

(2) Watershed forestry projects

The State forester, an equivalent State official of a participating State, or a Cooperative Extension official at a land grant college or university or 1890 institution, in coordination with the State Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee established under section 2113(b) of this title (or an equivalent committee) for that State, shall make awards to communities, nonprofit groups, and owners of nonindustrial private forest land under the program for watershed forestry projects described in paragraph (3).

(3) Project elements and objectives

A watershed forestry project shall accomplish critical forest stewardship, watershed protection, and restoration needs within a State by demonstrating the value of trees and forests to watershed health and condition through—

(A) the use of trees as solutions to water quality problems in urban and rural areas;

(B) community-based planning, involvement, and action through State, local, and nonprofit partnerships;

(C) application of and dissemination of monitoring information on forestry best-management practices relating to watershed forestry;

(D) watershed-scale forest management activities and conservation planning; and

(E)(i) the restoration of wetland (as defined by the States) and stream-side forests; and

(ii) the establishment of riparian vegetative buffers.

(4) Cost-sharing

(A) Federal share

(i) Funds under this subsection

Funds provided under this subsection for a watershed forestry project may not exceed 75 percent of the cost of the project.

(ii) Other Federal funds

The percentage of the cost of a project described in clause (i) that is not covered