



## BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB FACT SHEET

# Infrastructure Investments in Forest Restoration

Managing our National Forests Like Their Future—and Ours—Depends on it

The U.S. Forest Service has over 80 million acres of land at moderate to high risk of catastrophic fire.

President Biden's American Jobs Plan outlined a goal to **"Maximize the resilience of land and water resources to protect communities and the environment."** Restoration and management of America's national forests is an investment in our natural infrastructure that protects our communities, municipal water supplies, and fish and wildlife habitat – and provides natural climate solutions. Forest restoration also delivers jobs to American workers in communities across the country.

**10% of high-risk acres for wildfire drive 80% of the risk for people – and the Forest Service manages about half of those acres.**

U.S. FOREST SERVICE

America needs a \$45 billion investment in federal forest restoration over the next 10 years.

Lava Mountain Fire, Shoshone National Forest, Wyoming,

Kristen Homig/US Forest Service

# FOREST MANAGEMENT PROTECTS COMMUNITIES

“Restoration and hazardous fuels treatments reduce tree density and fuel loads, thus decreasing the risk of high-severity fire on a site. An increase in the pace and scale of forest treatments is necessary to mitigate for the increased wildfire activity across the West.”

Wasserman, et. al. “Wildfire Trends Across the Western US: Forest Fires Have Increased in Size, Severity, and Frequency Across Western Forests,” Ecological Restoration Institute at Northern Arizona University, 2020

## ← UNTREATED VS. TREATED →

This photo was taken after the Rosland Road Fire on the Deschutes National Forest near La Pine, Oregon. The left side of this road is untreated, while the right side was treated with commercial thinning and prescribed fire three years before. The crown fire spotted from the left side into the treated area, dropped from the canopy and decreased in intensity.



## HEALTHY FORESTS STORE MORE CARBON

U.S. forests currently offset 11% of total U.S. carbon emissions. Forests could store approximately 30% of needed carbon reductions according to the United Nations. Restoring forests, avoiding forest conversion, and improving forest management each delivers substantial carbon savings.

Cocoonino National Forest, Arizona.

Deborah Lee Soltes/US Forest Service

## SUSTAINABLE FORESTS ENHANCE WILDLIFE HABITAT

Managing for a mix of young and old forest habitat types supports a broader diversity of wildlife species because active management replicates the natural disturbances that typically occurred in forests. Research has shown that mule deer, elk, and many other wildlife species benefit from forest management practices.



## FORESTS PROTECT DRINKING WATER SOURCES

**55% of the American drinking water originates from forests.**

AMERICAN FORESTS

Our nation's forests play a key role in providing a steady supply of naturally filtered water. Healthy forests act like a sponge, holding snow melt and rain that cycles through river systems and ultimately into drinking water for most of our country. Restoring forests and creating resilient forest cover in a watershed leads to at least a 20% decrease in costs for water treatment downstream.

A watershed warning sign burned in the 2013 Rim Fire marks the entrance to an area damaged in the nearly 260,000 acre burn. Fires result in loss of vegetation, exposure of soil to erosion, and increased water runoff that may lead to flooding, increased sediment, debris flows, and damage to critical natural and cultural resources.





Federal infrastructure policy should invest at least \$45 billion over the next 10 years in federal forest management and reforestation.

## \$40 BILLION FOR FEDERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT

Working collaboratively through a sustained investment in shared stewardship with states, local communities, and private landowners over the next 10 years can begin restoring our federal forests and watershed health, while protecting our communities, providing jobs, and improving biodiversity.



A \$5 billion investment in reforestation will allow the U.S. Forest Service and state forestry agencies to increase seedling production capacity, hire and train reforestation crews, and begin increasing contractor capacity for reforestation work.

## \$5 BILLION FOR REFORESTATION

The Reforestation Hub estimates that over 11 million acres of federal lands need reforestation. Failure to reforest these acres will create millions of acres of brushfields, which can be lower quality habitat and are vulnerable to future reburns. Active reforestation of these lands can also help sequester more than 16 million tons of carbon per year.



Investing a minimum of \$20 billion in forest management will treat the 20 million acres of National Forest System land at the highest risk for wildfire.

## CONTACTS

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