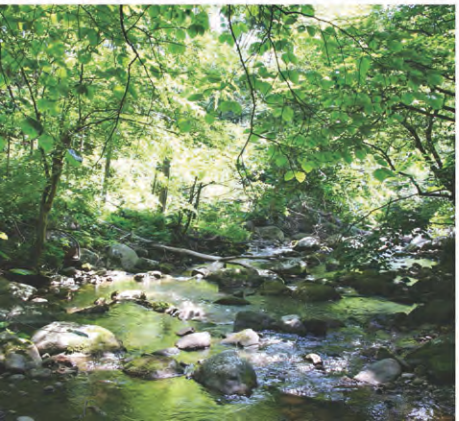
Virginia Department of Forestry

FOREST ACTION PLAN



Trends and Conditions: Three important changes affecting Virginia now and in the future.

1. Continued population growth and the associated demographic changes, such as an aging population and increased ethnic diversity;
2. Continued loss of forestland – currently 16,000 acres annually – throughout the Commonwealth, and
3. Dramatic changes in private forest ownership, particularly from one generation to the next. (Private individuals, families and companies own 80% of Virginia's forestland.)

Direct Threats to Virginia's Forests:

1. Expansion of the wildland-urban interface and the associated dangers of increasing wildland fires and threats;
2. The sustainability of forest resources, especially in the area of new markets and products;
3. Potential impacts associated with climate change;
4. Devastation from non-native species, insects and disease;
5. A decline in reforestation of our lands;
6. The loss of a viable forest industry (currently valued at $27.5 billion annually);
7. The decline of certain species of trees, such as ash, hemlock, walnut and oak;
8. The diminishing focus on tree improvement efforts, and
9. Insufficient funding for natural resources programs and conservation education.

Multi-State Issues Affecting Virginia's Forests:

1. The restoration of the Chesapeake Bay;
2. Invasive species, such as Southern Pine Beetle and Emerald Ash Borer, and their impact on forest health;
3. The restoration of diminished tree species, such as American chestnut, longleaf pine and shortleaf pine;
4. Conservation of land across the Commonweath, and
5. The restoration of the Appalachian forest.

With Proper Support, VDOF Can:

1. Protect citizens, their property and the forest resource from wildfire;
2. Protect, promote and enhance forested watersheds, non-tidal wetlands and riparian areas;
3. Improve the stewardship, health and diversity of forest resources;
4. Conserve the forestland base;
5. Promote forest industry and diversified markets, including ecosystem services markets for landowners;
6. Collect, maintain and disseminate forest resource inventory information and applied research;
7. Manage agency resources to effectively and efficiently accomplish these strategic initiatives, and
8. Strengthen the culture of preparedness across state agencies, their employees and customers.

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