



July 28, 2010

**NOTICE OF A PUBLIC LISTENING SESSION ON WORKING FORESTS FOR
THE PRESIDENT'S AMERICA'S GREAT OUTDOORS INITIATIVE**

Please join senior representatives from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) for a public listening session on conservation, recreation and reconnecting people to the outdoors. The session will be held Monday, August 9, from 12:30 to 5:00 p.m. in Concord, New Hampshire.

This past April at the White House Conference on America's Great Outdoors, President Obama signed a memorandum establishing the America's Great Outdoors Initiative to develop a conservation agenda worthy of the 21st century and to reconnect Americans with our great outdoors. The President understands that protecting and restoring the lands and waters that we love and reconnecting people to the outdoors must happen at the local level.

Therefore, President Obama directed the principal leaders of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative to travel across the country to listen and learn from people directly involved in finding grassroots solutions to conserving our lands and waters and reconnecting Americans to the outdoors. The President indicated that the sessions should engage the full range of interested groups, including tribal leaders, farmers and ranchers, sportsmen, community park groups, foresters, youth groups, businesspeople, educators, state and local governments, and recreation and conservation groups.

Private working forests play a critical role in providing for green markets, rural economic development, habitat for animals and birds, places where people go for refuge and wonder, and responding to climate change. This public listening session and discussion is an opportunity for leaders of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative to hear from you about the challenges and opportunities facing working forests on private lands and about solutions for building a 21st-century private working forest land conservation and recreation agenda and for reconnecting people with the outdoors. Here are the details:

Listening Session and Discussion Information

When: Monday, August 9th, 12:30 – 5:00 p.m.

Where: Grappone Conference Center, 70 Constitution Avenue, Concord, NH

For directions, go to: http://www.grapponeconferencecenter.com/contact_us.php .

Who : Senior Washington, D.C., and local leadership from USDA and CEQ will be present to hear your thoughts and to participate in a conversation with you about America's Great Outdoors.

Please Register: This event is free and open to the public. For planning purposes it would be helpful if you would pre-register by 5:00 p.m., August 6, 2010 by sending an email to **Tiffany Benna** at tbenna@fs.fed.us with your name, the name of the organization with which you are affiliated, if any, and your telephone number. *Include in your email your primary area of interest by noting your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choice of the Concurrent Breakout Listening Sessions listed below.* We will make every effort to accommodate everyone. Please also let us know if you have any special needs.

In the event you are unable to participate in person, please submit your comments and stories via the America's Great Outdoors website at <http://www.doi.gov/americasgreatoutdoors/> .

If you have questions, please contact Tiffany Benna at 603.536.6241, or tbenna@fs.fed.us.

We hope you will participate and look forward to hearing from you.

Choice of Concurrent Breakout Listening Sessions:

1. Promoting markets and providing incentives for traditional wood products and new markets for working forests;
2. Providing incentives, investments and policies to support the strategic conservation of working forest landscapes;
3. Providing incentives, investments and policies to re-connect Americans, including outdoor recreation and educational experiences, to working forests;
4. Maintaining and managing working forests in the face of climate change; and
5. Engaging youth to be the future conservation leaders of working forests

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