

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY (NCSSF)
2002 SCIENCE PROGRAM

**Project A-3, Survey the Lessons Learned About Managing Forests for
Biodiversity and Sustainability Based on Practical Experiences**

[an 18-month, \$250K project, starting 1 July 2002, sponsored by the Sustainable Forestry Partnership]

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ABSTRACT

A major problem in sustainable forestry in the United States is that current information about the existence, scope, effectiveness, landowner attitudes, successes, and failures of forest biodiversity programs is extensive but scattered. A nationally oriented project is proposed for funding by the National Commission on Science for Sustainable Forestry (NCSSF) to document lessons learned about managing forests for biodiversity.

Developers for this project include eleven multidisciplinary scientists and extension personnel from four universities and one US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) lab associated with the Sustainable Forestry Partnership (SFP) comprising three land grant universities (Auburn, Oregon State, and Penn State) and the USDA-Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service. Partners already have linkages to almost every county in the United States via the Extension Service network; they also have ties with public and private organizations that conduct sustainability research, teaching, and extension projects.

Approach and methods in the project include four integrated phases to collect, summarize, simulate, and disseminate information on biodiversity programs to forest managers across the continental United States:

Phase I identifies and evaluates components of federal, state, and private programs for biodiversity conservation, at local, state, regional, and national scales, using key informant and regional expert panel data collection strategies;

Phase II develops and summarizes a database that compares findings from operational programs across the continental United States (Phase I) with existing standards for biological diversity defined in forest certification (e.g., FSC, SFI) programs and/or cited in broad-based (Montreal, North American Test) criteria and indicator systems;

Phase III uses landscape-level Geographic Information System (GIS) analyses to assess spatial/temporal changes in species and habitats that result from specific biodiversity management strategies and landowner responses identified in Phase II; and

Phase IV organizes and presents the database, comparisons, simulations, and findings on forest biodiversity so that land managers, practitioners, regulators, scientists, policymakers, and the general public can readily use them.

Outcomes of project findings and implications will be distributed by web-based electronic summaries placed on the national SFP website [<http://sfp.cas.psu.edu/>]. Traditional methods using printed materials, speeches, and a series of three regional meetings will also be used to disseminate results. The NCSSF Board will receive a PowerPoint summary of project results and the entire electronic database which, upon approval, can be distributed to all those interested in forest biodiversity management.