

## **Talking Points for the Secretary**

- Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP) was signed into law as part of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003. The program is authorized to be carried out from 2004 through 2008 and will allow enrollment to two million acres.
- The program was established for the purpose of restoring and enhancing forest ecosystems to: 1) promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species, 2) improve biodiversity, and 3) enhance carbon sequestration.
- There are three options for enrollment into the HFRP are: 1) a 10-year cost-share agreement, for which the landowner may receive 50 percent of the cost of the approved conservation practices; 2) a 30-year easement, for which the landowner may receive 75 percent of the market value of the enrolled land plus 75 percent of the cost of the approved conservation practices; or 3) an easement of not more than 99 years, for which landowners may receive 75 percent of the market value of the enrolled land plus the cost of the approved conservation practices.
- To be eligible for enrollment, land must be private land which will restore, enhance, or measurably increase the likelihood of recovery of a threatened or endangered species; improve biological diversity; or increase carbon sequestration.
- Technical assistance will be provided to help program participants in complying with the terms of restoration plans under the HFRP.
- Safe Harbor will be made available to landowners enrolled in the HFRP who agree, for a specified period, to restore or improve their land for threatened or endangered species habitat. In exchange, they avoid future regulatory restrictions on the use of that land protected under the Endangered Species Act.