



The US Forest Service's Strategic Framework For Responding to Climate Change

Global climate change is dramatically altering forest and grasslands for present and future generations. Forest and grassland produce many ecosystem services on which society relies: water, clean air, wood products, recreation, wildlife habitats, and biological diversity. Many of the most urgent forest and grassland management problems of the past 20 years—wildfires, changing water regimes, and expanding forest insect infestations—have been driven in part by changing climate. The effects and magnitude of climate change vary across the country, and scientists expect this to continue.

To better address these challenges the Forest Service has developed a ***Strategic Framework for Responding to Climate Change*** to help us set priorities and to make informed decisions for sustaining forest and grassland resources. Seven key goals will help the Forest Service carry out the mission of sustaining forests and grasslands under a changing climate. To achieve these goals the Forest Service will need to work collaboratively with a broad range of agencies and partners and the public at large.

Forest Service goals for addressing climate change for the benefit of human and ecological health and wellbeing:

- **SCIENCE** - Advance our understanding of the environmental, economic, and social implications of climate change and related adaptation and mitigation activities on forests and grasslands.
- **ADAPTATION** - Enhance the capacity of forests and grasslands to adapt to the environmental stresses of climate change and maintain ecosystem services.
- **MITIGATION** - Promote the management of forests and grasslands to reduce the buildup of greenhouse gases, while sustaining the multiple benefits and services of these ecosystems.
- **POLICY** - Integrate climate change, as appropriate, into Forest Service policies, program guidance, and communications and put in place effective mechanisms to coordinate across and within Deputy Areas.
- **SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS** - Reduce the environmental footprint of Forest Service operations and be a leading example of a green organization.
- **EDUCATION** - Advance awareness and understanding regarding principles and methods for sustaining forests and grasslands, and sustainable resource consumption, in a changing climate.
- **ALLIANCES** - Establish, enhance, and retain strong alliances and partnerships with federal agencies, State and local governments, Tribes, private landowners, non-governmental organizations, and international partners to provide sustainable forests and grasslands for present and future generations.

We recognize that these goals will not be realized immediately. Only through ongoing implementation actions over many years will we make our vision and goals a reality.

For more information on Forest Service response to climate change:
<http://www.fs.fed.us/climatechange/>

For scientific background on climate change related to forests and grasslands:
<http://www.fs.fed.us/research/fsgc/climate-change.shtml>