



West Virginia Division of Forestry
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Earl Ray Tomblin, Governor
Randy Dye, Director/State Forester

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One Year Later, Forest Action Plan Remains a Critical Priority

Protecting current and future forests will benefit West Virginia's residents and economy

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – One year after finalizing the Forest Action Plan, West Virginia State Forester Randy Dye said that the Division of Forestry is keeping the protection of West Virginia's forestland a significant priority. Steps he and his agency outlined last year will ensure that forests continue to provide recreational, economic and environmental benefits.

“Protecting our forests means protecting jobs, protecting family friendly recreation and protecting the water we drink and the air we breathe,” Dye said. “Making sure we have the resources to implement our Action Plan will pay off for our residents, our economy and our wildlife. It will protect our forests now and into the future.”

The Forest Resource Assessment and Strategy is West Virginia's official Forest Action Plan. It was designed to address potential forestry problems before they start and to offer solutions for current challenges, including threats from invasive species, wildfire and development. The plan was crafted using state-based expertise and relies on input from the public and cooperation with other partners and agencies.

The West Virginia Forest Action Plan was submitted along with plans from all 50 states and the U.S. territories to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in June 2010. These plans were part of the 2008 Farm Bill's provisions to conserve, protect and enhance America's forests. The plan describes where there is the greatest need so that resources are used efficiently and effectively.

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Since finalizing its plan, the West Virginia Division of Forestry has been actively addressing the priorities it identified, including:

- providing assistance to non-industrial private forest landowners to better manage their forests
- working closely with Volunteer Fire Departments to improve detection of forest fires and to suppress them more quickly
- providing technical assistance to private sector businesses to help grow the state's wood products industry
- working jointly with the West Virginia Department of Agriculture to detect and suppress outbreaks of forest insects and diseases
- providing loggers with the training necessary to do a better job on their timber harvesting operations

The plan can be viewed online at www.wvforestry.com/events_12022K1.cfm. Information about all the Forest Action Plans and national trends on America's forests is available at www.ForestActionPlans.org.

Nationally, insects, disease and the risk of fire threaten more than 100 million acres of forests. Locally, West Virginia has 12 million acres of forestland that are subject to the same threats.

"Forests are not only economic engines, they're a renewable resource," Dye said. "In that sense they are an invaluable part of our state's economy. Implementing our Forest Action Plan will ensure that our forests continue to provide benefits for years to come."

For more information about the Division of Forestry, visit www.wvforestry.com.

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