



# THE PACIFIC FOREST TRUST

*Working Forests Work Wonders For Us All.*

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## **Broad Coalition Calls for Land Conservation Funding in Federal Climate Bill**

*Fifty Groups Urge Senators to Act to Prevent Domestic Deforestation  
And Associated Greenhouse Gas Emissions*

WASHINGTON, DC – A broad coalition of forest land owners, environmental groups, carbon market experts and land trusts are urging lawmakers to dedicate funding in federal climate legislation for permanent conservation easements on private U.S. forest, farm and ranch land. Nearly 50 groups from around the country have joined to write a letter to Senate Committee Chair leaders Baucus, Boxer and Lincoln asking them to slow the conversion of domestic lands. Permanent land conservation, which landowners undertake voluntarily, would prevent release of an additional 15 percent of all U.S. greenhouse gas emissions and would offer an important source of clean, renewable biomass energy as well as sustainable rural jobs.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture projects 75 million acres of forest, farm and grazing lands will be converted and developed in response to financial pressures over the next half-century. Once converted, these lands lose both their current carbon storage and future ability to safely remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere and store them for extremely long periods of time.

“Permanent conservation easements will safeguard our most abundant national climate solution – our natural landscapes. To protect the carbon stored in the land, lawmakers should dedicate allowances in the federal climate bill for the permanent conservation of our nation’s working forests, farms and ranchlands,” says Laurie Wayburn, president of the Pacific Forest Trust, who is meeting with lawmakers to deliver the letter this week.

“The bill passed by the House makes provisions for preventing international forest loss – a critical objective,” Wayburn says. “We’re simply asking for the same consideration for our productive lands here at home, where countless Americans depend on this vital climate resource for their livelihoods.”

By setting aside allowances in the bill to fund conservation easements, lawmakers would keep working forests and agricultural landscapes in production, while forever conserving their ability to provide a broad range of ecosystem services ranging from sustainably harvested wood to a well-balanced climate.

“In this economy an increasing number of forest landowners are being pressured to sell their land — many have no other option,” says Leah W. MacSwords, Kentucky State Forester and president of the National Association of State Foresters (NASF). “By setting aside allowances in the bill to fund conservation easements, lawmakers would protect the ability of working landscapes to stabilize the climate in addition to providing food, wood, water, wildlife habitat and a host of other public benefits.”

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## **Coalition Letter – page 2 of 2**

To read the coalition letter online, visit: <http://bit.ly/ClimateConservationLetter9-22-09>.

**MEDIA:** Laurie Wayburn and other coalition members are available to comment on the letter. Call Chris Harrison at 415-561-0700 ext. 13 or e-mail [charrison@pacificforest.org](mailto:charrison@pacificforest.org) to arrange an interview.

### **About the Pacific Forest Trust**

The Pacific Forest Trust (PFT) is dedicated to sustaining America's vital working forests for all their public benefits – wood, water, wildlife and a well-balanced climate. PFT strives to keep these vast and vital forests working by pursuing a comprehensive strategy to Retain, Sustain and Gain. PFT helps Retain our nation's infrastructure by directly conserving critical forestlands in the Pacific West. PFT helps Sustain working forests by practicing state-of-the-art forest stewardship practices on the thousands of acres it manages in the Pacific West. And PFT helps landowners and the public Gain from working forests by leading regional and national efforts to develop new eco-system services that yield financial returns from management practices that reduce carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions, enhance watershed quality and protect fish and wildlife habitat. The Pacific Forest Trust is headquartered in San Francisco, California and has additional offices in Oregon, Washington state, New England and Washington, D.C. To learn more about PFT, please visit:

<http://www.PacificForest.org>.

### **About the National Association of State Foresters**

The National Association of State Foresters (NASF) represents the directors of forestry agencies from the fifty states, eight U.S. territories and associated states, and the District of Columbia. For more information, visit [www.stateforesters.org](http://www.stateforesters.org).

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