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Forestry, Conservation and Environmental CEOs Establish Common Ground on the Role of Private Working Forests as a Natural Climate Solution

48 CEOs agree on common vision for increasing the contribution of forests and forest products to climate mitigation

LINK TO RELEASE

WASHINGTON, DC – 48 environmental, conservation and forest business leaders today announced an agreement of principles on the important role sustainably managed forests and forest products can play in mitigating climate change.

Today, forests in the U.S. offset 15% of the country's industrial carbon emissions. Carbon sequestration in sustainably managed private forest lands and carbon storage in forest products can provide a natural solution to climate change while also providing a wide variety of additional benefits like clean air and water, wildlife habitat, and good paying jobs.

The principles are signed by the CEOs of American Forests, American Forest Foundation, Environmental Defense Fund, National Alliance of Forest Owners, The Nature Conservancy, and the CEOs of 43 forestry businesses representing over 46 million acres of working forests across the United States.

The executives are united in a common vision: to harness the power of the private forest sector to address climate change, we must engage forest owners of all sizes, support strong rural economies, and ensure sustainable, science-based practices.

The policy principles encourage incentive and market-based approaches to increase the carbon benefits of working forests and forest products. They recognize the important role that private sector participation, investment, and partnerships can play in expanding carbon benefits from the forest sector. The principles underscore the importance of safeguards that promote positive outcomes for forests and the climate, healthy markets for forest products, and investments needed to strengthen rural communities. They also emphasize need for robust science, data and life cycle analysis to guide policy.

The principles provide a common starting place for signing CEOs, and their respective organizations, to engage policymakers, business leaders in other sectors, investors, shareholders, and other stakeholders in discussions about climate solutions available through forestry and wood products.

For More Information:

[CLICK HERE TO READ THE FULL CEO PRINCIPLES](#)

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE FULL LIST OF SIGNERS](#)

[CLICK HERE TO READ COMMENTARY FROM SIGNING CEOS](#)

Private Working Forests as A Natural Climate Solution

Climate change poses a significant challenge to our environment, our economy and our communities. Carbon sequestration in sustainably managed private forest lands and carbon storage in forest products can provide a natural solution to climate change while also providing a wide variety of additional benefits like clean air and water, wildlife habitat, and good paying jobs.

Forest owners and forest products manufacturers are well positioned to optimize the carbon potential of the private working forest value chain through sustainable forest management and the manufacture of sustainable forest products. Forest owners and managers should be empowered with the tools they need to increase overall forest carbon sequestration using sustainable forest management practices and technologies, and site-appropriate reforestation. Healthy, sustainable forest products markets are essential to optimizing the benefits of forest carbon on private lands and in the materials and products they produce. For example, solid wood construction at scale using new engineered wood technologies, like mass timber produced from sustainably managed forests, presents a significant opportunity to store carbon and reduce energy consumption and related carbon emissions in the built environment.

Private forests are under increasing threat from uncharacteristic wildfire, pests and disease, drought and extreme weather events that can cause significant carbon releases and other environmental damage. In many private forests, addressing these threats requires sustainable management such as thinning, prescribed fire, and other forest management techniques that bolster forest health and resilience.

Public policies should include market and incentive-based approaches that help capture the potential of private forests and forest products to sequester more carbon, while ensuring sustainable forest management to maintain and improve forest health and resilience, boost private sector investment in rural communities, and help keep forests as forests.

Policy is strengthened through advances in science, technologies, techniques, and practices to improve forest carbon inventories and provide better information to landowners, forest managers and the public regarding the contribution and management of forests and forest products for climate mitigation. Such advances also support forest practices that benefit the environment and forest economies.

Maintaining sustainable private working forests at scale to benefit the climate requires investing in the jobs, businesses, and infrastructure necessary to support a strong forest economy. Such investments must help sustain markets that increase the carbon mitigation benefits of forest and wood products, provide additional environmental benefits, and strengthen rural communities.

Leadership and innovation in the private sector play an important role in advancing and informing public policy. Throughout the economy, businesses are seeking natural climate solutions to reduce their carbon footprints. A growing number of partnerships between private companies, the forest sector, and environmental and conservation organizations are driving investment in the significant carbon potential of sustainably managed forests and forest products. The insights and experience gained from such early action provides an important basis for effective policy.

Policy Principles

As leaders of the environmental, conservation and forest business communities, we recognize that private working forests and forest products can play an important role in mitigating climate change. The following principles outline our shared vision for increasing the contribution of forests and forest products to climate mitigation.

- ▶ Policies should include incentives and market-based mechanisms and should be designed to be accessible and credible to maintain working forests, increase carbon benefits across the working forest value chain, and encourage broad participation from forest owners, forest products manufacturers and potential investors.
- ▶ Public funding should be directed to improve forest carbon science and data collection and incentivize the development of new technologies, techniques, and practices to improve forest carbon inventories and life cycle analyses for forest products.
- ▶ Increased public funding and policies should focus on innovative approaches to increase carbon benefits in and from forests and improve the scalability and outcomes of USDA private forest conservation programs, such as the Forest Legacy Program, State and Private Forest Grant Programs, the Healthy Forests Reserve Program.
- ▶ Policies should encourage, recognize, and reward private sector partnerships that advance the carbon potential of sustainably managed forests and forest products at scale.
- ▶ Policies should help spur investments in the rural jobs, businesses, and infrastructure necessary to support a strong forest economy.
- ▶ Policies to reward the carbon benefits of forest products, such as mass timber and other advanced building materials, must be based on scientifically sound life cycle analysis and include safeguards to promote positive outcomes for forests and the climate.
- ▶ Policies should support updating building and architectural codes to reflect the carbon benefits of advanced wood construction.
- ▶ Public funding should be invested in training programs for architects, builders, and other professionals who make important decisions about building materials and their sourcing.
- ▶ Policies should ensure sustainability through practices such as forest certification, use of best management practices and other approaches that support clean air and water, wildlife habitat, the conservation of ecologically sensitive areas, and other environmental benefits.



About the CEO Principles

The CEO Principles are a shared vision for increasing the contribution of forests and forest products to climate mitigation from leaders of the environmental, conservation and forest business communities. The signing CEOs recognize that private working forests and forest products can play an important role in mitigating climate change through thoughtful policy, private sector engagement, and investment in rural communities.

Tom Martin

PRESIDENT AND CEO,
AMERICAN FOREST
FOUNDATION

Jad Daley

PRESIDENT AND CEO,
AMERICAN FORESTS

Fred Krupp

PRESIDENT, ENVIRONMENTAL
DEFENSE FUND

David P. Tenny

PRESIDENT AND CEO,
NATIONAL ALLIANCE
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Jennifer Morris

CEO, THE NATURE
CONSERVANCY

John Cashwell

REPRESENTATIVE, BBC LAND, LLC

Gerrity Lansing

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Dave Rumker

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CAMPBELL GLOBAL, LLC

Joel Caswell

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
CASWELL THOMPSON, INC.

Brian Davis

CEO AND PRESIDENT,
CATCHMARK TIMBER TRUST

J. Travis Bryant

PRESIDENT & CEO, COASTAL
FOREST RESOURCES COMPANY

Paul Young

FOUNDING MEMBER,
CONSERVATION RESOURCES

Joe Sanderson

MANAGING DIRECTOR, DOMAIN
TIMBER ADVISORS

Earl D. Barrs

Wanda T. Barrs
DUE SOUTH INVESTMENTS, 2020
FOREST LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION
FOREST LANDOWNER OF THE YEAR

Marc Walley

PRESIDENT, FOREST
INVESTMENT ASSOCIATES

Mike McFetridge

CIO, GLOBAL FOREST PARTNERS, LP

Douglas Reed

PRESIDENT, GREEN DIAMOND
RESOURCE COMPANY

Jeff Nuss

PRESIDENT AND CEO, GREENWOOD
RESOURCES, INC.

Peter Sikora

CEO, GIUSTINA RESOURCES

William Peressini

PRESIDENT AND CEO, HANCOCK
NATURAL RESOURCE GROUP

Marc Brinkmeyer

OWNER, IDAHO FOREST GROUP

James D. Irving

CO-CEO, J.D. IRVING, LIMITED

Troy Harris

MANAGING DIRECTOR,
JAMESTOWN, LP

Mark Sherman

PRESIDENT, KEWEENAW LAND
ASSOCIATION, LIMITED

Toby Luther

PRESIDENT AND CEO, LONE
ROCK RESOURCES

Stephen Hicks

PRESIDENT AND CEO, LONGYEAR

Nicole Kimzey

COO, MERRILL & RING

Bob Lyle

PRESIDENT, MOLPUS
WOODLANDS GROUP

David Brand

CEO, NEW FORESTS

Alexander Ingraham

PRESIDENT, PINGREE
ASSOCIATES, INC.

René Ancinas

CHAIRMAN & CEO, PORT BLAKELY

Mike Covey

CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER, POTLATCHDELTIC

David Nunes

PRESIDENT AND CEO, RAYONIER, INC.

Thomas Walker

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR,
RED RIVER FORESTS, LLC

Craig Blair

PRESIDENT AND CEO, RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT SERVICE, LLC

Grady Mulbery

PRESIDENT AND CEO, ROSEBURG
FOREST PRODUCTS

Mark Emmerson

CHAIRMAN AND CFO, SIERRA
PACIFIC INDUSTRIES

Bob Ratliffe

PRESIDENT, SILVER CREEK
CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

Randy Hereford

PRESIDENT AND CEO,
STARKER FORESTS, INC.

Scott Griffin

PRESIDENT AND CEO, SUPERIOR
PINE PRODUCTS COMPANY

Blake Stansell

CEO, THE FORESTLAND GROUP, LLC

James Hourdequin

CEO, THE LYME TIMBER COMPANY LP

Mike Claridge

PARTNER, HEAD OF FORESTRY &
AGRICULTURE, THE ROHATYN GROUP

Brian Luoma

PRESIDENT AND CEO, THE
WESTERVELT COMPANY

Steve Killgore

CEO, TIMBER PRODUCTS COMPANY

Tom Johnson

MANAGING DIRECTOR, TIMBERLAND
INVESTMENT RESOURCES, LLC

Tom Colgan

CEO, WAGNER FOREST MANAGEMENT

Devin Stockfish

PRESIDENT AND CEO, WEYERHAEUSER

Commentary from Signing CEOs

“Families and individuals own the largest portion of America’s forests, and their valuable contributions address some of our country’s most pressing conservation issues. We proudly stand alongside our partners to recognize and elevate that contribution. More than 21 million families own forests in the U.S., so every time their work is empowered and their forests are supported, we get one step closer to properly tapping natural climate solutions that will have a significant impact on both climate and rural American communities.”

– Tom Martin, President and CEO, American Forest Foundation

“America’s forests and forest products already capture nearly 15 percent of our carbon dioxide emissions, and have potential to do even more. Private forest owners steward over half of our nation’s forests, and they are positioned to implement forest practices at scale that can grow this powerful forest carbon sink. Now is the time for America to partner with our nation’s private forest owners to capture this opportunity.”

– Jad Daley, President and CEO, American Forests

“Climate change is an urgent, existential threat that requires us to seek a diverse set of creative solutions. The signers to these principles may not agree on everything, but we all recognize that privately owned and sustainably managed forests can play an important role in sequestering carbon and providing additional benefits like clean air, clean water and wildlife habitat. With the right policies and market incentives in place, the forest sector can be a leader in reducing emissions and building resilience in the face of mounting climate impacts.”

– Fred Krupp, President, Environmental Defense Fund

“These principles show how leaders can come together from different perspectives to establish common ground for the common good. Private working forests, the products they produce and the rural communities that sustain them, are the beating heart of natural climate solutions in the U.S. Together they help reverse the impacts of climate change better than any other segment of our economy while sustaining 2.5 million American jobs. By harnessing the power of markets, science and sustainable practices, we can empower them to do even more. Modern forestry harnesses the power of forest product markets to support rural communities with jobs that are helping mitigate climate change.”

– David P. Tenny, President and CEO, National Alliance of Forest Owners

“To maximize the role of forests in our collective work to combat climate change, we need more carbon on the landscape. To do that, we need strong safeguards to protect carbon stocks and new incentives for climate smart management of private working forests. We’re pleased to join so many voices across the forestry sector on these principles for ensuring our forests play a central role as a natural climate solution.”

– Jennifer Morris, CEO, The Nature Conservancy

“Sustainably managed forests and climate-positive forest products are critical for accelerating the transition to a renewable economy and a climate-stable future. BTG Pactual is pleased to stand with The Nature Conservancy, the Environmental Defense Fund and others in our industry to ensure that our global forest economy delivers natural climate solutions at scale, and positively impacts biodiversity, water and inclusive rural economic development.”

– Gerrity Lansing, Head, BTG Pactual Timberland Investment Group

“The recognition by non-industrial stakeholders of private timberland’s pivotal role as a net positive contributor to carbon storage, emissions, and conservation is a milestone for productive efforts to advance public policies that produce significant environmental benefits.”

– Joel Caswell, CEO, Caswell Thompson

“Promoting forest stewardship and sustainability through state of the art management practices is not only integral to CatchMark’s operations and essential for our ongoing business success, but also is critical to the success of our industry and the entire forest sector.”

– Brian Davis, CEO and President, CatchMark Timber Trust

“We are committed to managing the resources entrusted to us for the betterment of all stakeholders and we believe sustainable forest management is an integral part of the solution to addressing climate change. Coastal has been actively managing its forests for over 70 years, and today our timber inventories are greater than ever. Our forests are providing more clean air, clean water and superior wildlife habitat thanks to our intensive management approach.”

– J. Travis Bryant, President & CEO, Coastal Forest Resources Company

“The majority of our working forests are in rural areas. In order to continue to sustainably manage our forests it is critical we support fair competitive markets and jobs while supporting rural America.”

– Earl D. Barrs, Wanda T. Barrs, Due South Investments, 2020 Forest Landowners Association Forest Landowner of the Year

“Giustina Resources welcomes this opportunity to share what we have learned in over 100 years of sustainably managing our family forests and to learn from others as we work together in the pursuit of natural climate solutions.”

– Peter Sikora, CEO, Giustina Resources

“As large scale landowners and active participants in the carbon offset market, we believe there is great potential for private landowners to be meaningful contributors to climate change solutions. We are delighted to work with such esteemed partners on a shared vision.”

– Douglas Reed, President, Green Diamond Resource Company

“It’s imperative for public policies to recognize working forests as natural climate solutions to enable continued investment in sustainable forestry and to reward the carbon benefits of forest products, thereby fully incorporating natural climate solutions into climate change mitigation strategies.”

– William Peressini, President and CEO, Hancock Natural Resource Group

“We believe that healthy forests are a natural solution to climate change. Our company utilizes technology and our logging contractors as tools to actively manage private and public forests alike. Not only do our actions mitigate catastrophic wildfire, but they also create forest conditions that store carbon, produce clean air and water, promote the manufacture of wood products, and offset the impacts of climate change.”

– Marc Brinkmeyer, Owner, Idaho Forest Group

“Lone Rock Resources is excited to be a part of the shared vision described in these principles. Our company is committed to sustainable forest management practices that support robust carbon sequestration in our forestlands, which when coupled with a strong market for wood products to store the carbon, is a fundamental element to aggressively confronting climate change.”

– Toby Luther, President and CEO, Lone Rock Resources

“At Molpus, we fully support the CEO Principles and believe that private working forests are a critical carbon mitigation and natural climate solution. As a long-term timberland manager and a signatory to the United Nations-supported Principles for Responsible Investment, Molpus’s core focus is the responsible stewardship of the forest investments we manage. We are proud of the myriad benefits our working forests provide, including valuable contributions to the environment, the economy, and the communities where we live and work.”

– Bob Lyle, President, Molpus Woodlands Group

“Pingree Associates fully endorses the principles described in Private Working Forests as A Natural Climate Solution. Pingree is a private family owned company that has owned timberland in Maine for eight generations. Our family has always taken a forward looking approach to sustainability, conservation, and now climate change. We view timberland as an important tool to fighting climate change and helping our world get to a stronger, healthier future. Our forests provide clean air, clean water, habitat for wildlife, and timber for a robust forest economy that supports good paying rural jobs. Private forests are the backbone of the forest economy and one of the greatest tools available to fight climate change. If we are going to actively combat climate change forests will need to be a part of the solution, and enhancing their contribution potential through well designed and implemented policy will ensure that forests keep producing solid wood products that lock up carbon, and keep growing trees that actively sequester carbon and service solid wood markets. Pingree has been sustainably managing our forests for generations, and look forward to continuing that philosophy for generations to come in a healthier and more resilient climate.”

– Alexander Ingraham, President, Pingree Associates, Inc.

“As a family-owned company focused on cultivating a healthy world, tackling the climate crisis is an urgent priority. Our working forests must be part of the solution so the next generation can continue our stewardship.”

– René Ancinas, Chairman & CEO, Port Blakely

“Rayonier is proud to join NAFO and our other partners in addressing the climate challenges our society faces. Private working forests play an indispensable role in providing natural climate solutions that help reduce carbon in the atmosphere by sequestering large amounts of carbon both in the forest ecosystem and in the wood products produced from harvested trees. As our society utilizes more sustainably produced forest products and replaces more carbon intensive materials such as concrete or steel, we will thus help to ensure the long-term sustainability of our ecosystem.”

– David Nunes, President and CEO, Rayonier, Inc.

“As a global manager of long-term working forest investments, we are well-positioned to advocate market-based policies promoting working forest solutions to climate change and to execute strategies that expand the role of forests through private investments in afforestation and improved forest management. RMS is already advancing these principles by providing access and support for basic and applied research on the role of working forests in addressing climate change, expanding investor and key stakeholder awareness through regular carbon storage and sequestration reporting, and Partnering with selected architectural schools to increase knowledge of the positive climate impacts of sustainably managed forests.”

– Craig Blair, President and CEO, Resource Management Service, LLC

“Sierra Pacific Industries values collaborative partnerships that seek solutions and policies recognizing the role of sustainable forest management and forest products in helping to achieve positive climate outcomes. As a result of the long-term investment we have already made with forest carbon offset projects registered under California’s offset program, we know that effective climate policy can create both climate and economic benefits. These benefits are achieved while maintaining a vibrant rural economy and continuously storing carbon through the wood products in homes and buildings.”

– Mark Emmerson, Chairman and CFO, Sierra Pacific Industries

“Superior Pine Products Company supports the CEO Climate Change Principles because of the current and future importance of managing our private working forests on a sustainable basis in order to support climate mitigation. Our Company employs the best forest management practices and techniques that naturally sequester Carbon, while also providing forest products, jobs, recreation, and a host of other benefits directly influencing the health and well-being of the private forest community. I believe that these principles should supplement public policies grounded in reasonable and sound forest management that will support and improve climate mitigation well into the future.”

– Scott Griffin, President and CEO, Superior Pine Products Company

“Signing on to the CEO Principles was an easy choice for The Forestland Group. For over 25 years, our company has been managing natural forests to mitigate climate change, drive positive ecological impacts, support rural economic resilience, and maximize financial returns for investors. We look forward to building on this legacy alongside NAFO and other signatories to the CEO Principles.”

– Blake Stansell, CEO, The Forestland Group, LLC

“We are signing on because we believe the need to address climate change is one of the most pressing issues of our time and all businesses have a responsibility to look for solutions. Our role is to understand the science pertaining to the role of forests, forest management, and forest products in mitigating climate change, then to participate in the design of regulations and market based solutions that will enable our businesses to contribute meaningfully to climate solutions.”

– James Hourdequin, CEO, The Lyme Timber Company LP

“Westervelt is proud to be a part of this important dialogue within the forest business and conservation sectors. We believe conservation, sustainably managed working forests and forest products are essential in a natural climate solution to capture the benefits of carbon storage and mitigate the effects of climate change.”

– Brian Luoma, President and CEO, The Westervelt Company

“We are proud of the critical role our timberlands play in addressing climate change. Our job as a private timberland steward is to sustainably manage the resource to yield a continuous supply of timber for durable wood products while ensuring that the forest is healthy and resilient. Our lands produce a stream of benefits beyond timber, including: clean air, clean water, wildlife habitat, recreation, and carbon benefits. We have partnered with conservation groups who recognize the value of the benefits that our lands provide. By acknowledging these values, these partnerships enable us to continue managing these lands as forests, ensuring a continuous benefit stream. The NAFO climate solution principles recognize the carbon potential of private timberlands and will help ensure that these lands play a critical role in mitigating climate change.”

– Steve Killgore, CEO, Timber Products Company

“Slowing, mitigating, and eventually reversing the impacts of climate change will require collaboration, innovation, and a shared vision for how the problem can be addressed. The private working forests upon which we and others practice sustainable forestry plays an important role in helping us remove carbon from the atmosphere. In addition, our ability to use the timber produced in these forests to store more atmospheric carbon in long-lived, durable products, like Mass Timber, can unquestionably make an impact in the fight against global warming. A deeper and more engaged commitment to cooperative problem solving among members of the corporate, investment, government, and non-profit sectors is the key to developing the public policy frameworks and markets necessary for these things to happen. That is why we at Timberland Investment Resources, LLC have chosen to become a signatory to the CEO Principles.”

– Tom Johnson, Managing Director, Timberland Investment Resources, LLC

“Our forests play a critically important role as a natural climate solution, but we know addressing the significant challenges of climate change will require collaboration with a broad coalition of partners. These principles represent an important first step in bringing together industry and environmental groups around a shared commitment to climate action. We look forward to working with this coalition to advocate together for effective climate policies in the future.”

– Devin Stockfish, President and CEO, Weyerhaeuser