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USDA Announces Formation of Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Advisory Committee

WASHINGTON, March 8, 2010- Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced he is seeking nominations from the public for the new Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Advisory Committee. The committee will inaugurate a new level of collaboration between the USDA Forest Service and the American people in the restoration of forested landscapes.

"About 60 million Americans depend on national forests for clean, abundant water, and all Americans rely on healthy forest ecosystems to mitigate the effects of climate change," said Vilsack. "This committee will help us prioritize the work that needs to be done and empower citizens and the Forest Service to work together through the entire process of ecological restoration work, from identifying needs on the landscape to achieving ecological objectives in ways that provide jobs and protect local communities from wildfire."

The committee will include up to 15 members who will offer a balanced perspective and wide-ranging expertise in fields such as ecological restoration, fire ecology, fire management, rural economic development, ecological adaptation to climate change, fish and wildlife ecology, and the utilization of woody biomass and small-diameter trees. Committee members will serve terms of up to two years.

The Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Advisory Committee was authorized by the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009. The Act encourages collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forested landscapes. For information on the USDA Forest Service Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, please visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/CFLR/index.shtml> .

For more information on selection criteria and the application process, please reference the Federal Register Notice at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-4686.pdf>.

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The agency manages the 193 million acres of National Forest System land, provides stewardship assistance to non-federal forest landowners, and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world. For more information, visit: www.fs.fed.us.

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