

**APLU Forest Health Initiative White Paper**  
**Background material for authors and section leads**  
**December 28, 2017**

**Section Structure**

The final document is intended to be accessible by a broad audience that includes agency personnel, legislators and their staff, university and agency administrators, scientists, and interested members of the public. Because of the breadth of the intended audience, the document should be synoptic and synthetic in nature, concise, and written in a style that is not highly technical or laden with jargon. Each section should summarize the topic in a relatively comprehensive, but very concise format, with sections being no more than 1000 words in length. Sections can include up to two or three figures or tables if appropriate, but tables and figures are not required. Each section should identify the most salient and critical issues that have broad regional, national, or international relevance. Similarities and differences regarding issues and conditions in forests of the United States, Canada, and Mexico should be addressed when appropriate through examples.

**Section Lead**

The Section Lead is responsible for working with the team to ensure that the section is written by the deadline, to facilitate communication among the section writing team, to ensure that the writing captures the breadth needed, and to ensure that the section generally adheres to the stylistic structure defined above. Section leads may be asked to participate in two or three brief conference calls for updates or to ensure commonality across sections.

**Working Definition of Forest Health**

“Forest health” has been defined and used in multiple ways from utilitarian and ecological perspectives. No single definition of forest health is widely agreed upon and appropriate use of the term has been debated in the literature. Given variability in use of the term, there appears to be general acceptance that the term can have different connotations and uses depending on perspective or the focus of the issues under consideration. Therefore, operationally defining the term is important. As a working definition for launching this initiative, we adopt a relatively broad use of the term “forest health” as describing the condition of the forest with respect to

- prevalence of insects and disease;
- resilience and vulnerability to large-scale fire, disturbance, or other biological, climate, or physical impacts; and
- ability to sustain human needs, ecological integrity, and desired ecosystem components and functions.

Forest health thus is shaped by the complex interface of current and historical management activities, movement and persistence of insects and disease organisms, disturbance events, climatic conditions, and other factors. This working definition will be refined and modified as necessary based on the input and engagement of the writing team.

## **Forestry White Paper Chapters and Lead Authors**

Executive Summary - Eric Young - SAAESD

Introduction - John Hayes, Colorado State University

Committee Charge - John Hayes

Justification – Status of the Nation’s forest health - Red Baker, University of Florida

Justification – Importance of forest health to the economy, people, and the environment - Mark Rickenbach, University of Wisconsin

Committee Process - Wendy Fink, APLU

Program Priorities - Impacts of forest health on forest products and forest production – Charles Goebel, University of Idaho

Program Priorities – Forest health and water quality and quantity - Susan White, North Carolina State University

Program Priorities – Urban environments and forest health - Yadong Qi, Southern University A&M

Program Priorities – Nature tourism and forest health - Robin Shepard, NCCFA

Program Priorities – Impacts of forest health on fish, wildlife, and the environment - Keith Owens, Oklahoma State University and Kim Babbitt, University of New Hampshire

Funding Considerations - Wendy Fink

Partnerships - Robin Shepard

Conclusions - John Hayes

Appendices - Wendy Fink