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USDA Forest Service invests \$188M to keep forests working, conserve private forestland through President Biden's Investing in America Agenda

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Washington, June 29, 2023 - Today the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced a \$188 million investment through President Biden's Investing in America agenda to conserve some of the most economically and ecologically significant forestlands across the nation.

The funding will support 34 projects to conserve more than 245,000 acres of working forests that are critical to rural economies in 22 states and one island territory, as part of the agency's [Forest Legacy program](#). \$100 million of this funding comes from President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, which provides an additional \$250 million for similar projects next year, and \$88 million comes from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

"These forests, identified by state, tribal, and non-profit partners as vital to local communities, are critical to the health of our planet and the livelihoods of millions of Americans," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "As private forest landowners continue to face pressures to convert forests, the Forest Legacy program keeps working forests working. Thanks to President Biden's Investing in America agenda, we are ensuring that the most important forested landscapes continue to provide economic and social benefits to the communities that depend on them for their lives and livelihoods."

The Forest Service shared news about the fiscal year 2023 Forest Legacy investments earlier today at an event in Rangeley, Maine where Governor Janet Mills, and partners including The Nature Conservancy and Trust for Public Land, celebrated the completion of the Quill Hill to Perham project -- a nearly 14,000-acre Forest Legacy program project that supports wildlife habitat, recreation and contributes \$6 million to the local sustainable timber economy.

America's public and private forests provide critical habitat for wildlife, support outdoor recreation, provide families with food and other resources, protect clean water, and are vital to forest products economies. They play a significant role in the local social and economic fabric, especially for disadvantaged and tribal communities, and support carbon sequestration and climate resilience.

States, with input and in coordination with tribes and non-profits, will use land easements and purchases to conserve the most ecologically and economically important forests that are under threat of being converted to non-forest uses.

For a complete list of fiscal year 2023 projects, or to learn how states can apply for fiscal year 2024 funding, visit <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/private-land/forest-legacy/program/fy23-funded-projects>. States can also contact their Forest Service regional office for more information.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, ensuring access to healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate-smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean-energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

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