

## McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Research Program

The McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Research Program (PL87-788) is funded through the USDA National Institute for Food and Agriculture as a formula-based and competitive program for forestry and natural resources research at land-grant and related universities.

These funds, approximately \$500,000 annually over the past several years, are managed by the College of Natural Resources at the University of Idaho. The program provides funding for critical state and regionally focused forestry and natural resources research, including graduate student support.

### Current Research

The University of Idaho College of Natural Resources uses McIntire-Stennis funds to develop research programs that result in a greater understanding of best forestry and natural resource management practices in the inland Northwest and their effect on public policy and economic and social systems.

The projects address vital natural resource issues in Idaho, including decreasing wildfire hazards, reducing forest ecosystem disturbances, improving grazing practices, monitoring climate variation, and facilitating and reducing conflict in land-use decision making.

Results are often directly connected to ecosystem sustainability and the health of rural economies and communities. Specifically, our goals are to:

- Provide timely, critical scientific knowledge, technology and innovative management processes to federal, state and local governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in the management of forest and range ecosystems and the products and services they produce.
- Increase research infrastructure at Idaho's land-grant university to ensure University of Idaho's scientists and students have access to state-of-the-art technology and instrumentation to support the creation of relevant knowledge; store critical data and information; model ecosystem functions and services; develop new products and services; and implement research administration and management processes to increase efficiency.
- Develop the skills and capabilities of the future natural resource workforce by providing today's students with hands-on and field-based education and research networking opportunities with practicing professionals and university scientists.



### Accomplishments

McIntire-Stennis funds, aligned with other leveraged state and private research funding, produce information that helps landowners better understand how to balance the production of ecosystem products and services with environmental sustainability. For example:

- Potlatch Corporation, the city of Troy, Idaho, and the Idaho Panhandle, Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests are interested in enhancing and sustaining water supplies while reducing wildland fire hazards and increasing productivity in products and services that flow from forest and range lands. The College of Natural Resources' McIntire-Stennis research has generated research findings and new approaches to modeling and management that directly address these needs.
- Research funds have been used to demonstrate proactive inclusion of wildlife habitat management practices into the management of Idaho's Lava Lake Land and Livestock Ranch in southern Idaho. Being able to test strategies to promote conservation of intact ecosystems and create alternatives to federal listing of species with private landowners is a sensible and collaborative way to address Idaho's complex natural resource situations.
- Research is being used in bioregional planning efforts in the greater Spokane and Coeur d'Alene area to enable communities to deal harmoniously with urban sprawl and amenity-driven development that fragments natural landscapes.

### **Consequences of Reduced Funding**

The most immediate consequence of reducing McIntire-Stennis support would be the loss of support for the University of Idaho's College of Natural Resources graduate students, who are our future natural resource professionals. We would also lose scientific support staff responsible for the efficient and effective operations of our forestry research infrastructure. Lack of funds to purchase critical technology and scientific instrumentation would limit our ability to provide needed and relevant data to our students and result in natural resource graduates who have not been exposed to the latest technology and professional practices.

Most importantly, a reduction would directly impact College of Natural Resources researchers' ability to collaborate with the natural resource managers who interact directly with Idaho's public. Idaho's forest products industry depends on our research support to inform managers of important trends and economic impact forecasts. The ultimate consequence of reduced funding would be diminished opportunities to provide scientific evidence and innovative management approaches to address critical natural resource issues in Idaho and the West.

For more information, please contact:

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