Roundtable on Sustainable Forests

*A Partnership for the Future*

# 2008–2011 Work Plan Addendum

**Purpose:** This 2008 -2011 Work Plan should be used as an addendum to the Roundtable on Sustainable Forests (RSF) 2006 -2010 Work Plan. It builds upon the 2006-2007 accomplishments (e.g. communications/outreach, indicator workshops) and aligns RSF activities to effectively enhance and build upon upcoming events in 2010-11 such as the World Forestry Congress release (2009), the release of the National Report on Sustainable Forests (2010), and the International Year of the Forest (2011).

The 2006-2010 Work Plan describes RSF's mission, purpose, history, governance, participation, infrastructure, and the four major themes for RSF activities which are consistent with this addendum:

1. Reporting and Monitoring Progress Toward Sustainable Forests
2. Coordinating with Related National Data and Indicator Efforts
3. Fostering Sustainable Forest Management through the Application of the C&I
4. Engaging the Broader Community of Forest Stakeholders at Multiple Scales

Added work items not in the 2006-2010 Work Plan are shown in bold.

**RSF 2006-2007 and Related Sustainable Forests Accomplishments:** A major focus of the RSF in 2006 – 2007 was to launch the 2010 National Report consultation process providing the USDA Forest Service with stakeholder input on data collection, reporting, and presentation priorities for the 2010 National Report. There was a specific emphasis on two new indicators, The Resilience of Forest-Dependent Communities and The Importance of Forests to People involving a workshop with a diverse group of social science stakeholders. In addition, the Communications and Outreach Working Group was reestablished, with one of its primary areas of focus to expand stakeholder involvement in the National Reporting process. The RSF continued to strengthen connections with efforts already underway, including regional roundtables (e.g., the Southern Roundtable on Sustainable Forests), tribal indicator efforts, sub-national indicator efforts (e.g., Baltimore County), and international activities (e.g., the United Nations Forum on Forests). Another key effort was an exploration of the roles, merits and opportunities of the Montreal Process C&I on the nation's private forests. This effort was led by the university- and extension-based Sustainable Forest Partnership (SFP).

## RSF Activities for 2008–2011:

### 1. Reporting and Monitoring Progress Toward Sustainable Forests

At the national level, the Montreal Process C&I continues to provide a framework to enhance interagency cooperation, efficiencies for data gathering and consistent reporting on the forest conditions within the country. It also provides an impartial and science based template to

convene varied stakeholders together to understand and promote sustainable forest management at both a national and regional level. The RSF will continue to monitor progress of the Montreal Process Working Group and maintain communicate with the members of its U.S. delegation.

The RSF will also play a key role in the development and utilization of the 2010 National report through:

- Facilitating coordination of data from other sectors, such as states, NGOs, universities, and technical experts willing to serve as resources and/or provide data**;**
- Assisting in the dissemination of the report through various partners and communication media; and
- **Implementing an impartial process among stakeholders to analysis and communicate the outcomes from the 2010 report. This would involve three specific deliverables, all of which should include a regional focus whenever possible:**
    - **A Sustainable Forests Report companion product, along the lines of Multiple Perspectives that summarizes significant outcomes and meaningful trends between the two national reports. It should represent a diversity of stakeholder views and not intended to be a Roundtable consensus statement.**

*[TIMING: Begin scoping in Feb 2008, begin implementation with the release of draft National Report, and complete with release of final National Report.]*

- **A multi-media presentation that highlights the results from Indicator # 44 - Importance of Forests to People. This new indicator is of a much more qualitative nature and offers a unique communication opportunity to connect people to forests.**

*[TIMING: Begin Aug-Dec 2008 to scope out project; complete in 2010 with release of final 2010 report.]*

- **A report that discusses "Sustainable Forests – Next Steps" after the 2010 report is released. This will involve a workshop incorporating a futuring exercise that illuminate consequences of current trends with a specific emphasis on recommendations to federal, state, and country decision and policy makers.**

*[TIMING: Begin in 2010 with release of Sustainable Forests report; complete in 2011 in conjunction with the International Year of the Forest.]*

## 2. Coordinating with Related National Data and Indicator Efforts

The RSF will continue to communicate and coordinate with other national and regional level indicator development efforts to ensure linkages are made to other reporting efforts (Heinz Center, EPA, Census of Agriculture, etc.). All of these endeavors provide an opportunity to place the work on indicators for sustainable forest management in broader contexts that can provide linkages to environmental, economic, and social processes that interact with forests and forest management, but are usually considered to be outside the forest ecosystem or sector. A specific focus will be on Climate Change and its impact on sustainable forests in the country.

## 3. Fostering Sustainable Forest Management through the Application of the C&I

The RSF will continue to foster opportunities for all stakeholders (including private landowners, tribes, communities, etc.) to illustrate the applications of the C&I to their work. The RSF will also continue to serve as a platform for stakeholder connections, through brief presentations at meetings, postings to the RSF electronic mailing list, information on the RSF website, and other outlets.

The RSF will continue to support the university- and extension-based Sustainable Forest Partnership (SFP), which will work closely with other organizations that serve private forest owners in efforts to define and communicate the concepts of the C&I in ways that are meaningful to landowners and how the principles can be applied.

**The RSF will investigate development of a consistent sampling protocol for agro-forestry and urban forestry "working tree" plantings that may have application nationwide. Protocols are currently being developed for the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program in KS, NE, SD, and ND through the Great Plains Initiative, being coordinated by the Nebraska Forest Service, Towards this end, the USDA National Agro-forestry Center will help convene a RSF meeting in 2009 at the Lied Conference Center in Nebraska City, NE. The RSF will also investigate funding to expand the FIA program inventory of agro-forestry and other working tree plantings in urban areas. Key contacts for the project are Richard Straight, USDA National Agro-forestry Center and Andy Mason, USDA NRCS**

## 4. Engaging the Broader Community of Forest Stakeholders at Multiple Scales

The RSF will continue to engaging the broader community at multiple scales by connecting its Montreal Process C&I focus on national data and reporting to other efforts already underway, including regional roundtables (e.g., the Southern Roundtable on Sustainable Forests), tribal indicator efforts, sub-national indicator efforts (e.g., Baltimore County), and international activities (e.g., the United Nations Forum on Forests), as well as connections to new efforts, such as workshops on ecosystem services. RSF meetings, as well as the website and electronic mailing list, will serve as a platform for connecting RSF participants to these other activities.

- **Develop specific recommendations for a communications and outreach national program that is regionally grounded, based on the theme about "Why forests are important to me?" and brings relevance to the concept of sustainable forests. It should promote a clear and compelling articulation of the need for sustaining the nation's forests with consistent messaging executed through a highly strategic effort of communications, grounded by highly credible data.**

*[TIMING: Begin January 2009 to scope out project; complete in 2011 in conjunction with the International Year of the Forest.]*

- **Provide a convening platform with partners to further national dialogue on opportunities and challenges for developing a national policy on sustainable forests. The format for this effort is envisioned to consist of three regional listening sessions**

**and a concluding national workshop. This effort will be contingent on acquiring financial commitments and resources from outsides sources.**

*[TIMING: Begin scoping in Feb 2008 with grant requests, with planned implementation in June 2008-2009.]*