



# Roundtable on Sustainable Forests

*A Partnership for the Future*

## **National Meeting – Are America’s Forests Sustainable?** *Status, Challenges and Our Next Steps*

**June 29, 2011 | The DuPont Hotel, 1500 New Hampshire Avenue, Washington, DC**

### **Meeting Summary**

On June 29, 2011, the Roundtable on Sustainable Forests (RSF) convened a national meeting in Washington, DC. Sixty-eight participants representing a broad spectrum of forest interests including, state, and federal government, non-governmental organizations, academia and the private sector, gathered to provide discuss the status of the Nation’s forests, as well as identify challenges and develop possible avenues for RSF stakeholders to enhance the sustainability of America’s forests.

The [participant list](#) and [agenda](#) are posted on the RSF website.

The meeting objectives were as follows.

- Contribute to the ongoing stakeholder dialogue on the sustainability of the Nation’s forests with public and private forest sector leaders;
- Identify the priority challenges to sustaining the Nation's forests;
- Build agreement on priority action strategies to sustain of our Nation’s forests; and
- Inform the direction and future work of the RSF.

### **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Joel Holtrop, Deputy Chief, National Forest System, US Forest Service, and Co-chair of the RSF, welcomed participants to the meeting and thanked those who contributed to the development of the *National Report on Sustainable Forests – 2010* ([National Report](#)). He pointed out that while the US Forest Service is the lead for generating the National Report, the process by which it was developed had been informed by a full spectrum of interests and represents a reflection of RSF stakeholder input. Mr. Holtrop charged participants with providing feedback as to how to utilize the National Report to better inform dialogue and information about America’s forests and how the RSF can be most effective moving forward.

Jim Finley, Professor of Forest Resources, Pennsylvania State University, Member of the Sustainable Forests Partnership, and Co-chair of the RSF, also welcomed participants to the meeting and noted that 2011 is the International Year of Forests. Dr. Finley highlighted the opportunity to move dialogue to a different localized scale. While the National Report states forests are sustainable now, America's forests are threatened in ways that are perhaps not as visible to the public and are subtler issues. The goal for both the National Report and RSF stakeholders is to bring greater public attention to these forest health issues, in part, by taking this discussion from the RSF venue into communities.

Dr. Finley underscored that the RSF has an opportunity to demonstrate the meaning of sustainable forests. The RSF could be instrumental in taking the tools and principles about sustainable forest management and scaling them to a community level, thus helping people to make better decisions about where they live.

Michael Buck, Sustainable Forestry Representative, National Association of State Foresters (NASF), and RSF Co-chair, also thanked participants for participating in the meeting. He encouraged participants to engage actively in what he hoped would be creative dialogue during the Samoan Circle later in the day which was designed to foster innovative thinking.

### **Keynote Address**

Joel Holtrop introduced the Keynote Speaker, Tom Tidwell, Chief of the US Forest Service, noting that Mr. Tidwell has a tremendous responsibility to oversee approximately 35,000 employees and activities in every state. Mr. Tidwell's role as the Chief Forester reflects the US Forest Service's sense of responsibility of being a caretaker of all the Nation's forests.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Tidwell reflected on the expectation that, because of his position, he knows everything about America's forests. In his 34-year career, he revealed that every day he learns something new and impressive about the Agency's activities and employees. Mr. Tidwell noted that the US Forest Service has access to the best information and because of that, is having better dialogue and making better decisions on sustainable forest management than ever before.

Mr. Tidwell noted that the National Report provides information about forests as well as opportunities to accomplish improved forest management. He viewed the National Report as a tool to contribute to ongoing meaningful dialogue; broaden and deepen public understanding and support of sustainable forests; and help the Nation focus on where it needs to improve forest management practices.

He also recognized the parallel RSF stakeholder effort based on the draft National Report, the Sustainable Forests Action Strategy (SFAS). In this document, stakeholders presented a set of recommended actions to help combat three trends they observed in the National Report including: (i) long-term decline in forest health; (ii) continued change in land use; and (iii) continued loss of infrastructure.

Mr. Tidwell then provided an overview of some ongoing forest health challenges including the bark beetle infestation and record fire behavior, saying that it is often difficult to garner attention to these issues until they have reached the threshold of catastrophic. Therefore, the US

Forest Service is seeking ways to communicate to and engage the public and thereby reduce risk of these ongoing challenges in the future.

Another trend Mr. Tidwell pointed out was increasing amounts of land purchased for development due to lower land values. He noted that, as the economy changes, we can expect to see a significant loss in forested acres once that land is developed.

The National Report also addresses loss of infrastructure necessary to maintain and restore forests. Mr. Tidwell outlined the need to find ways to make it economically viable for private landowners to stay on their lands and to restore National forests, especially if Congress is unable to appropriate money to sustain our lands. Mr. Tidwell emphasized that in addition to job creation, the key is also having the infrastructure to restore forests so they continue to be able to provide necessary ecological services that the public depends upon.

While the National Report provides a strong basis of factual information and data upon which to have this RSF dialogue, if the discussion stays in this room, it will not fulfill the responsibility of helping people understand the importance of forests in this country. The key question is how to reach the broader public, and more importantly, the younger generation, many of whom have lost a connection to the outdoors and land due to increasing urbanization. Mr. Tidwell charged participants with helping to find ways to for Americans to reconnect with the land and demonstrating positive changes that occurred as a result.

Following his remarks, Mr. Tidwell responded to a couple of participant questions. One participant asked how he envisioned circumstances that would make it economically viable for landowners to continue to own their lands. Mr. Tidwell responded that helping the public and elected officials better understand the benefits of keeping these forested lands forested would in turn, lead to more opportunities such as tax law or regulatory changes to enable active land management.

Another participant asked what opportunities Mr. Tidwell saw at the Federal level to leverage momentum from the release of the National Report and coordinate funding with related departments (e.g., water quality, biomass) to help compete with real estate development markets and preserve the landscape. Mr. Tidwell responded by highlighting activities under America's Great Outdoors Initiative (<http://americasgreatoutdoors.gov/>), such as departments and agencies coordinating to help Americans reconnect with the outdoors. He also noted that there is ongoing discussion between departments about the importance of forest restoration, combined with optimism that forthcoming regulations and rulemaking will reflect the importance of being able to restore these landscapes.

### **Setting the Stage: 2010 National Report on Sustainable Forests and the Stakeholder Sustainable Forests Action Strategy**

Richard Guldin, Director, Quantitative Sciences, US Forest Service, presented the US Forest Service findings and plans to utilize the National Report. A copy of his PowerPoint presentation is available at [RICHARD GULDIN, US FOREST SERVICE](#). Dr. Guldin noted that the US Forest Service is seeing that the public is starting to recognize the value of ecosystem services but that

value has not yet reached the point where private landowners receive financial incentives for managing their lands to provide the benefits of these services.

Dr. Guldin highlighted the following three overarching issues for the Nation's forests.

1. Loss of forest lands and working forests;
2. Forests, climate change and bioenergy: climate change is increasing uncertainty, making adaptive management more challenging; bioenergy demands are causing certification programs to consider these rising pressures on forests; and
3. Forest health and disturbance patterns: there are unprecedented impacts and patterns that increase the need to grapple with the interplay between changes in forest ownership, cover, bioenergy, disturbance and impacts on sustainability.

Referencing the National Report, Dr. Guldin outlined potential paths forward, noting that the National Report calls for flexible and adaptive management techniques that work with natural processes and that are socially and economically sensitive. He also pointed out the need to consider how to generate innovative ecosystem services, such as carbon sequestration and wood based bioenergy without pursuing them at the cost of other sustainability priorities. Finally, there is a need for ongoing broad scale monitoring to continue informing dialogue and evaluation as to whether management practices are having the desired effects.

In closing, Dr. Guldin suggested the National Report provides better data to spark dialogue, saying that future decisions should promote inclusive dialogue at every level and reflect the interests of stakeholders to move towards a more sustainable future.

Following his presentation, Dr. Guldin responded to several questions. One participant expressed support for engaging the energy industry, and asked Dr. Guldin to comment on sustainability, rural infrastructure, the role of woody biomass in national energy policy, and how to put it forward in the face of a highly centralized energy sector.

Dr. Guldin responded, saying that in some parts of the United States the energy sector has made unilateral decisions about investments and that this is likely to continue if stakeholders do not engage more proactively to integrate biomass production into a landscape level set of programs.

Another participant asked whether the US Forest Service would consider a dialogue with the U.S. Department of Energy regarding new standards and subsidies on biomass. Dr. Guldin was unsure of the specific answer, however, he said there was a USDA and Department of Energy team of experts looking at this issue.

One participant asked about working with the media to better address mixed messages from the National Report. For example, how has there been between an increase in urbanization and loss of biodiversity when no forest acres have been lost since 1880? Dr. Guldin responded, saying that while there was no decrease in forest area since 1880, America lost areas that people have attachments to since forests are not in the same places as they were in 1880. He explained the challenge is to look for ways to help conserve forests in areas where people live. Today,

there are 11million private landowners, 1 million of which tend to own 10-15 acres and live in cities 100-200 miles away. A broader dialogue is needed to look carefully at this issue of fragmentation and help private landowners work more collaboratively at the landscape level.

### **RSF Stakeholder Sustainable Forest Action Strategy**

Michael Buck, NASF, provided a brief overview of the RSF stakeholder Sustainable Forest Action Strategy (SFAS) including the challenges, recommendations, and actions to date. Noting there is no staff for the RSF, a group from the RSF Core Group drafted the SFAS, a document they viewed as a complementary and implementable strategy based on the draft National Report. They then gathered stakeholder input on the draft via a series of webinars and one national RSF meeting in October 2009.

Given the fragmentation referenced by Dr. Guldin, Mr. Buck observed that U.S. stakeholders need to be able to unite as a community and present to the outside world a clear picture of what we should do right now to advance sustainable forest management. He charged panelists with providing input on the SFAS to drive the future agenda of what the RSF should be doing to expedite those actions.

### **Forest Stakeholders: Perspectives on the State of the Nation's Forests - Panel I**

Robin O'Malley, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center, provided some introductory remarks, referencing Mr. Tidwell's point about connecting people to the forests, and underscoring that the RSF, as a trusted and credible group, provides important opportunities to bring the public together to talk about sustainable forests.

Mr. O'Malley cited the following fundamental characteristics of information that are used to make credible decisions.

- (i) it needs to be based on good science
- (ii) there needs to be political legitimacy (e.g., not spun in any one direction); and
- (iii) there must be user-relevance, meaning it has to be something people care about and people actually use in a concrete way to make changes.

Going forward, the RSF needs to consider who the audience is and how information contained in the National Report can be utilized.

The first panelist, Rita Hite, Vice President, Public Affairs, American Forest Foundation (AFF) explained that the mission of AFF is to sustain America's family forests. The 11million families that own America's land are the basis for sustainable forest management and keeping those lands forested.

Ms. Hite provided an example of family forests, telling a story about a retired woman who inherited land from her father that was later hit by a wildfire and devastated. To restore the land, she took a job at a convenience store and got help from the state Department of Natural

Resources and the local community. This is a good example of a private landowner taking initiative to restore their lands, even with limited resources. The challenge we face is whether we have private landowners who are willing to do this.

Ms. Hite outlined some options for incentivizing smallholder management, including: markets, policy tools, and tax and payments incentives. While the National Report mentions a decline in markets, there are other sectors such as green building, which are growing exponentially. The question is how small land holders can engage in these types of new and emerging markets.

The second panelist, Dave Tenny, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Alliance of Forest Owners (NAFO), provided a brief overview of his organization. NAFO was established in 2008 to focus on advocacy on behalf of private forest owners. It now has 61 members and represents 80 million acres. NAFO came together as a result of the need to better engage the policymakers at the federal level.

Mr. Tenny observed that, to understand what motivates behavior on the land you need to understand the relationship between land and marketplace and how those signals are responded to. He outlined the following signals that private landowners are looking for.

- ***Policy:*** whether forests are part of a solution or part of a problem (e.g., opportunities vs. costs for the land)
- ***Markets:*** forest owners rely on markets for investments they make on their lands. For example, with biomass/energy it is hard to get investment for this unless it is commercial scale. With carbon, the fear of the landowners' community was not about whether biomass would be part of energy policy, but whether or not regulating carbon on the land was an asset or a liability.
- ***Relationship between potential signals of markets:*** RSF could be instrumental in looking at relationships between land and the markets in which they operate.

The third panelist, John Shannon, Arkansas State Forester, Arkansas Forestry Commission, introduced himself as representing the NASF. He stated that state foresters support a broad concept of sustainable forests and the National Report findings are in-line with their findings in their home states.

Mr. Shannon believes that the acreage and the resilience and ability to rebound make America's forests sustainable. He also explained that forested land will remain forested if it makes economic sense to do so. Therefore, elements that contribute to sustainable forests such as the forest health protection unit, Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) data, and the Firewise program should continue to be supported and groups like RSF and engaged stakeholders could help encourage this.

Following the panelists' presentations, participants posed several questions. Regarding the transition from science to policy, one participant asked whether panelists were comfortable enough with the National Report findings to build a policy dialogue on it. Mr. Shannon responded, saying to the extent that people accept data, it a straightforward and unbiased report that should be well received. Mr. Tenny also responded, saying he was not necessarily

concerned with the data in the National Report, but rather whether people understand the issues and data.

Another participant asked whether the National Report provides enough information for the bioenergy discussion. Mr. Tenny responded, saying the relationship between data, behavior and policy is the most important, and it is not yet clear how the National Report and future outcomes will influence these relationships.

One participant asked how the panelists would use the National Report to communicate with the people they deal with. Ms. Hite said the National Report could serve as the basis for many real-life stories the AFF tells about landowners, by helping to make those examples politically relevant to policymakers.

Another participant asked what the RSF could do to ensure private landowners have the means to restore and care for their lands. Ms. Hite highlighted the need for policy solutions through green building, the Farm bill or tax policies, explaining that if the majority of forest owners think doing nothing is the best thing, then there will not be much progress. She also underscored the need to try different things such as market research and non-traditional methods of stakeholder outreach.

In regards, to market signals, one participant asked whether panelists thought it was possible to find common ground on voluntary standards (e.g., carbon vs. biomass). Mr. Tenny responded, saying it is not clear if voluntary policy changes the discipline of forestry; however, costs will change the way a landowner manages. Uncertainty drives future investment. Carbon is a great example—no one looks at that as a good near-term investment.

### **Audience Questions and Comments for Panelists**

Following panel presentations and question and answers, participants were invited to provide additional comments or questions. One participant commented that accountability was a key factor to creating incentives which change behavior. Another participant suggested that in working with private landowners, the RSF consider how to encourage people to manage their forests to be sustainable even following disaster.

Ms. Hite responded to this comment, explaining that while there are policy tools to enable this resilience, the crux of the issue is that most landowners do not understand what to do in the face of disaster. Therefore, capacity building and communications to engage landowners is critical so they understand available resources and tools.

Regarding communication at the local level, several people commented that while the National Report was valuable, the next step for dissemination and implementation should include outreach to help landowners understand what it means for them. Additionally, conducting a cross-walk analysis to translate research into its application for management could be a tool for creating dialogue between researchers, and land managers and landowners.

## **Midday Speaker**

Michael Goergen, Jr., Chief Executive Officer and Executive Vice President, Society of American Foresters, provided some reflections on panel presentations and subsequent discussion. Mr. Goergen opened by highlighting the connection between people and the lands, underscoring the importance of this connection in influencing political discourse, decision-makers and the media. Underpinning this fundamental connection and influence is the availability of credible data from sources such as FIA, to inform discussions, dialogues, reporting, policymaking, etc.

While the acres of forested lands have remained constant for the last 150 years, Mr. Goergen pointed out that America is still losing productive and important forests in critical places. While it is a success to have maintained the same amount of land, America is still losing critical places.

Mr. Goergen posited that while America's forests are sustainable, the more critical question is whether we are going to sustain them. To do this, there must be policy, funding and direction that demonstrate forests are important and that we need to sustain them. This includes economic incentives and opportunities for small landowners at the local level.

Mr. Goergen highlighted that while the National Report provides valuable information to use in conjunction with local examples to help make connections back to constituencies, he also noted that to reach a broader audience, messages need to be focused in a way that is also consumable by decision-makers.

## **Forest Stakeholders: Perspectives on the State of the Nation's Forests – Panel II**

Bob Fledderman, Manager, Emerging Issues, MeadWestvaco lead the second panel presentation by first outlining driving forces on the nation's forests, including: globalization, biomass (as more of an energy security issue than a climate change issue), climate change, and loss of working forests (turning production forests into recreation and conservation forests and erroneously assuming forests will take care of themselves). A copy of his PowerPoint presentation is available at [ROBERT FLEDDERMAN, MEADWESTVACO](#)

In addressing the question as to whether America's forests are sustainable, Mr. Fledderman explained that this is not a simple yes or no question. Rather, it is a question of whether forests are becoming more or less sustainable. To ensure the National Report is useful, RSF and the US Forest Service will need to drive it to decision-makers, managers and landowners at the state level if not further.

Mr. Fledderman concluded with some recommendations for the RSF, including:

- Take forest sustainability to higher resolutions (state or finer scale);
- Provide accurate projections of available fiber at higher resolutions;
- Use bioenergy as an opportunity to help maintain healthy forests; and
- More work is needed from urban, fragmented and semi retired timberlands.

The second panelist, Scott Jones, President and Chief Executive Officer, Forest Landowners Association, opened by saying the National Report helps stakeholders to argue for policy that's sustainable. A copy of his PowerPoint presentation is available at [SCOTT JONES, FOREST LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION](#).

Mr. Jones outlined some major threats to sustainable forestry, including: a majority of land owned by private small landowners which in turn, means a huge burden on back of many individuals to ensure sustainability. This fragmented ownership dynamic is heavily influenced by factors such as: open access to healthy markets, an uncertain regulatory environment, foreign market demands, and gaps in demonstrating sustainability.

Mr. Jones said that while third-party certification programs or regulatory compliance are options for demonstrating sustainability, not all of these programs are necessarily equal or readily available to all landowners. To ensure forests are sustained, we must first consider how to sustain and incentivize the people who own those lands.

The third panelist, Laurie Wayburn, Co-Chief Executive Officer and President, Pacific Forest Trust, began her presentation by saying the National Report is great, but is missing the following driving indicators.

1. Landowner decisions to maintain forested lands as a driver of sustainability;
2. Public acknowledgement and investment in forests; and
3. Private investment in sustaining forests.

Ms. Wayburn explained that while data in the National Report is robust, it is not aligned with a call to action around the opportunities to positively affect forest management in the next ten years. For example, there is a misalignment between the short-term investor interests for forest products, and public long-term interest to maintain forested lands. If policies are developed around short term interests appealing to private landowners, we will misalign between public and private interests.

Ms. Wayburn provided some feedback as to where the National Report could be instrumental in informing next steps, such as:

- Bringing more people into the discussion and creating more alignment between kind of investment we want in forests and available resources. For instance, USDA and US Forest Service could reach out to larger entities (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Transportation) that steward resources people are concerned about.
- Recognizing there is a disconnect between forests as financial instruments and help to better align those interests.

### **Audience Questions and Comments for Panelists**

Following the panel presentations, participants posed some questions for discussion. One participant requested that panelist provide more specific suggestions for future RSF activities,

given the realities of the economy and challenges such as changing landowner patterns. A panelist responded that landowners can be great advocates if they have access to the right tools and messages. The key is putting these messages to landowners in a way they can easily incorporate and act upon them.

Another participant asked how to better incorporate water issues into sustainable forest management. Ms. Wayburn suggested it may be time to consider federal legislation that looks at creating investment in private land stewardship for its water. To do so, the case needs to be made that having those watersheds in good condition is a better investment than putting in more water treatment facilities. It may also be worthwhile for the RSF to partner with the Surface Water Resources Roundtable or interested private companies (e.g., Coca-Cola) and determine ways to integrate forests in those processes to better protect valuable watersheds.

### **Samoan Circle Discussion**

*The Samoan Circle is a method of non-facilitated stakeholder sharing (similar to the fishbowl method). Samoan elders used the method to discuss issues of importance to the community. Stakeholders sit in a circle around an inner circle of four people. Participants in the inner circle are allowed to speak while participants in the outer circle remain silent. When a stakeholder from the outer circle wants to join the conversation, they replace one of the speakers sitting in the center of the circle after they have finished their comment. The speaker then moves to the outer circle.*

Michael Buck, NASF, introduced the Samoan Circle as an opportunity to bring additional value to the day's discussion, encouraged all to participate and introduced Marvin Brown, a Natural Resource Planning/Policy Consultant to moderate the discussion.

Mr. Brown opened discussion by providing brief highlights of what he heard from the day's discussion. He then invited the RSF Co-chairs to start the discussion by reflecting on whether the National Report would be a critical piece to achieving sustainable forests and if so, how.

Michael Buck responded, recognizing that one of the key factors to achieving these aims is to determine who the audience is for the National Report. He suggested that perhaps the National Report still does not have a specific audience or venue for discussion to review the whole landscape, due to the fragmented nature of management amongst public and private landowners.

Joel Holtrop reflected that the purpose of the RSF is not only to present and honor the effort that went into producing the National Report, but to ensure that dialogue with stakeholders continues so that the next National Report is even more useful at the local level.

Jim Finley called for the need to move the information in the National Report down to the state level but that the lack of interest and buy-in into the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators (C&I) poses a challenge for doing so.

Other meeting participants then engaged in the Samoan discussion. Their comments are summarized and grouped into the following categories.

- scaling down;
- feedback on the National Report;
- suggested next steps;
- and the future role for the RSF.

### **Scaling Down**

- From a local county perspective, the RSF and the development of the National Report has been a transformative process. Scaling the information in the National Report down to a local level will need to be achieved over time.
- One challenge to scaling the information down is that, while some states use the C&I in their assessments, not all aspects of the C&I framework are relevant.
- Fifteen New England states used the C&I as a framework for assessment. Some felt the framework was a bit overwhelming but it was valuable and the states want to continue using it going forward.
- Involve partners such as private companies or investors to help implement C&I at the county and local levels.

### **Feedback on the Report**

- The National Report standardizes the definition of sustainability and gives a point of discussion and also informs decision-making on local and state levels.
- What does the National Report tell us about the capacity of America's forests to sustainably provide water, food, fiber and energy of a growing population and in a changing climate? What do forests mean in the context of these other priorities?
- What were the lessons learned in the 2003 National Report and what mechanisms were adopted in trying to make that document useful? Are we repeating those mistakes or avoiding some of the pitfalls of what happened with that National Report?

### **Next Steps for Report**

- We have to get the stakeholders involved in defining what they want to sustain from an environmental, economic and social perspective.
- There is value in asking RSF stakeholders to help translate and interpret this National Report for those who cannot, to test the assumption that we can all really explain this to those who are unfamiliar. This will help us get the messages out.
- There are tremendous opportunities for teachable moments through news media given the attention to forest fires lately. It would be helpful to have the US Forest Service communications staff involved with disseminating messages from the National Report.
- Review the National Report data and develop simple tools such as a report card on the state of the Nation's forests. Alternatively, present the data/results as green, yellow or red, in order to facilitate easy-to-digest information for a broader range of forest managers and owners.
- There are often requests from the Congressional Staff on different forest issues who want information at the last minute. It would be useful to reach out to Congressional

Staff in DC and provide them with a briefing document about the results of the National Report that they can pass along to other staff.

### **Role for RSF**

RSF leadership asked participants to reflect on the potential role for the RSF going forward. Nothing that the National Report came out of this multi-stakeholder dialogue that RSF created and asking:

- How can this conversation amongst different stakeholders be used to best inform upcoming policy?
- What is it about the RSF that you can collectively leverage and what would you lose if it did not exist?

Participants responded with suggestions on how the RSF could best contribute to sustainable forest management in the future:

- There is an opportunity for the RSF to help connect the dots at different scales with all the entities and interests represented at the RSF.
- RSF is the one place to focus on the topic of sustainable forests and take it out of conception and put it into terms that Americans can grasp.
- Improve collaboration with other roundtable interests: energy, ecosystems, water, etc. RSF needs to make other people in other disciplines realize that forests provide an opportunity to embrace all of these objectives because forest ecosystems are unique and provide so many benefits to other systems.
- Collect a series of quotes from users who are not foresters that demonstrate the value of the National Report at the local level.
- Define an indicator for the RSF that demonstrates its value and that it is measurable (e.g., cross-walks, customized results, demonstrating relevance at local levels).
- The data and indicators in the National Report are accepted by most people. However, there is a need for more pointed statements about sustainability, developed by stakeholders in the RSF and aimed at decision-makers and policymakers.

### **Concluding Remarks**

The RSF Co-chairs thanked participants for their candid feedback on the National Report as well as their advice about how to best utilize the National Report and leverage the RSF to help facilitate uptake of sustainable forest management amongst landowners. The Executive Leadership Team of the RSF will take the National Meeting feedback into consideration as it determines the best path forward for the RSF. The Co-chairs and the RSF leadership encouraged participants to continue their engagement and to help foster increased attention and adoption of sustainable forest management for America's forests.