

Restoring Georgia's Forests: A Vital Investment for Our Future

What difference do healthy forests make for Georgia communities?



Fishing, hunting, and wildlife-associated recreation, supported by healthy forest ecosystems, generate \$5.5 billion annually and sustain 40,000 jobs in the state.¹



Approximately 60.5% of watersheds supplying drinking water in Georgia are forested, playing a crucial role in water purification.¹



Home to approximately 4,440 species of plants and animals, Georgia ranks sixth in biodiversity among all states.¹ This rich biodiversity enhances the resilience of forest ecosystems, enabling them to better respond to new challenges.²



There are up to 6.73 million acres of opportunity in Georgia to restore forest cover, of which 6.6 million acres are privately owned.⁵ Reforesting these historically forested lands with approximately 4.1 billion trees could capture 29.98 million tons of CO₂ per year, equivalent to removing 5.88 million cars from the road.⁵

What can be done with more funding for forest restoration?



Support longleaf pine reforestation and restoration efforts

Longleaf pine forests help communities become more resilient to storms, drought, and accompanying wildfires as they are wind resistant, drought resistant, fire adapted, and pest resistant.⁷



Enhance forest health and resilience

Support programs to fight invasive species, promote healthy forest practices, and facilitate prescribed burning.¹



Provide landowner education and training

Educate and train landowners on responsible use of prescribed fire, supported by public relations and collaboration with state and federal agencies, NGOs, and private contractors.¹



Fund research on ecosystem services

Increase funding to study the impacts of fragmentation and urbanization, and accurately value key ecological services.¹

90%

of voters nationwide (85% GOP, 92% IND, 95% DEM) support “providing technical assistance and education to farmers and forest owners so they can learn how to incorporate climate-smart practices on their land.”⁶



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