

Restoring North Carolina's Forests: A Vital Investment for Our Future

What difference do healthy forests make for North Carolina communities?



Healthy forests attract tourists and outdoor enthusiasts, supporting local businesses and generating revenue. A 2024 survey focusing on Western North Carolina revealed that outdoor recreation activities, many of which occur in forested settings, generated an economic output of \$4.9 billion.⁴



Forested watersheds can reduce water treatment costs by up to 50%.⁵



Controlling sediment erosion in North Carolina's Catawba River Basin can reduce treatment costs for drinking water utilities and improve lake water clarity, benefiting recreators and lakeshore residents. Estimated benefits per conserved acre range from under \$1,000 to over \$10,000.⁷



Forest conservation efforts in North Carolina contribute significantly to carbon sequestration. As of 2021, the state's forest lands stored the equivalent of roughly 4.99 billion tonnes of CO₂, or the equivalent to the CO₂ emissions of over 1 billion homes' electricity use for one year.¹⁰

What can be done with more funding for sustainable forest management?



Increase Seedling Production

Expand nurseries to boost native seedling production, promoting a diverse and resilient forest ecosystem. The North Carolina Forest Service's Nursery Program produces 15 million seedlings annually, enough to plant 30,000 acres each year.¹²



Provide Incentives for Landowners

Offer financial incentives or tax breaks for private landowners in North Carolina to join reforestation projects. The state has about 5.37 million acres available for reforestation, with 98% privately owned⁹.



Improve Monitoring and Maintenance

Implement advanced monitoring systems to track the health of reforested areas and address issues like pests or diseases promptly.

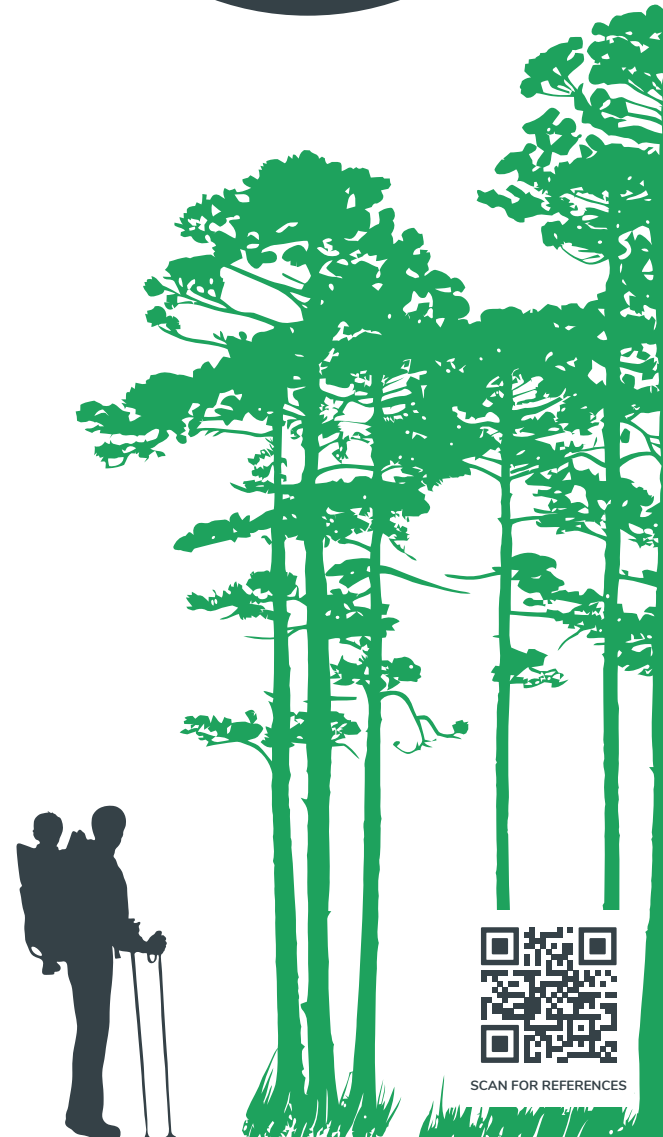


Increase Community Engagement and Education

Increase outreach and education programs to raise awareness about the importance of forests and sustainable practices. This could involve more workshops, school programs, and community events¹³.

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."¹¹



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