

Amendment Number:

Offered by Rep. DesJarlais

Amendment Description:

the amendment establishes the White Oak Restoration Initiative Coalition where Federal, state and private partners would work together to regenerate white oak across public lands in the US. The creation of the White Oak Restoration Fund is already included in the base text of the Farm Bill in Sec. 8302 "National Forest Foundation Act", and that does not request any new funding but allows public-private partnerships to fund regeneration efforts on public land.

AMENDMENT TO H.R. 8467
OFFERED BY MR. DESJARLAIS OF TENNESSEE

At the end of title VIII, add the following:

1 **Subtitle G—White Oak Resilience**

2 SEC. 8801. SHORT TITLE.

3This subtitle may be cited as the “White Oak Resil-
4 ience Act”.

5 SEC. 8802. WHITE OAK RESTORATION INITIATIVE COALI-
6 TION.

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—The White Oak Restoration Ini-
8 tiative Coalition shall be established—

9 (1) as a voluntary collaborative group of Fed-
10 eral, State, Tribal, and local governments and pri-
11 vate and non-governmental organizations to carry
12 out the duties described in subsection (b); and

13 (2) in accordance with the charter titled “White
14 Oak Initiative Coalition Charter” adopted by the
15 White Oak Initiative Board of Directors on March
16 21, 2023 (or a successor charter).

17 (b) DUTIES.—In addition to the duties specified in
18 the charter described in subsection (a)(2), the duties of
19 the White Oak Restoration Initiative Coalition are—

1 (1) to coordinate Federal, State, Tribal, local,
2 private, and non-governmental restoration of white
3 oak in the United States; and

4 (2) to make program and policy recommenda-
5 tions, consistent with applicable forest management
6 plans, with respect to—

7 (A) changes necessary to address Federal
8 and State policies that impede activities to im-
9 prove the health, resiliency, and natural regen-
10 eration of white oak;

11 (B) adopting or modifying Federal and
12 State policies to increase the pace and scale of
13 white oak regeneration and resiliency of white
14 oak;

15 (C) options to enhance communication, co-
16 ordination, and collaboration between forest
17 land owners, particularly for cross-boundary
18 projects, to improve the health, resiliency, and
19 natural regeneration of white oak;

20 (D) research gaps that should be ad-
21 dressed to improve the best available science on
22 white oak;

23 (E) outreach to forest landowners with
24 white oak or white oak regeneration potential;
25 and

1 (F) options and policies necessary to im-
2 prove the quality and quantity of white oak in
3 tree nurseries.

4 (c) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT, TECHNICAL SERV-
5 ICES, AND STAFF SUPPORT.—The Secretary shall make
6 such personnel available to the White Oak Restoration Ini-
7 tiative Coalition for administrative support, technical serv-
8 ices, and development and dissemination of educational
9 materials as the Secretary determines necessary to carry
10 out this section.

11 (d) NONAPPLICABILITY OF FEDERAL ADVISORY
12 COMMITTEE ACT.—Chapter 10 of title 5, United States
13 Code, shall not apply to the White Oak Restoration Initia-
14 tive Coalition.

15 (e) PRIVATE FUNDING OF WHITE OAK RESTORA-
16 TION PROJECTS.—The Secretary may make funds avail-
17 able to the White Oak Restoration Initiative Coalition to
18 carry out this section from the account established pursu-
19 ant to section 1241(f) of the Food Security Act of 1985
20 (16 U.S.C. 3841(f)).

21 **SEC. 8803. FOREST SERVICE PILOT PROGRAM.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the
23 Chief of the Forest Service, shall establish and carry out
24 5 pilot projects in national forests to restore white oak
25 in such forests through white oak restoration and natural

1 regeneration practices that are consistent with applicable
2 forest management plans.

3 (b) AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO COOPERATIVE
4 AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary may enter into cooperative
5 agreements to carry out the pilot projects required under
6 subsection (a).

7 (c) SUNSET.—The authority under this section shall
8 terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date of
9 enactment of this Act.

10 **SEC. 8804. WHITE OAK REGENERATION AND UPLAND OAK**
11 **HABITAT.**

12 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after
13 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall
14 establish a non-regulatory program to be known as the
15 “White Oak and Upland Oak Habitat Regeneration Pro-
16 gram” (in this section referred to as the “Program”).

17 (b) DUTIES.—In carrying out the Program, the Sec-
18 retary shall—

19 (1) draw upon the best available science and
20 management plans for species of white oak to iden-
21 tify, prioritize, and implement restoration and con-
22 servation activities that will improve the growth of
23 white oak within the United States;

1 (2) collaborate and coordinate with the White
2 Oak Restoration Initiative Coalition to prioritize
3 white oak restoration initiatives;

4 (3) adopt a white oak restoration strategy
5 that—

6 (A) supports the implementation of a
7 shared set of science-based restoration and con-
8 servation activities developed in accordance with
9 paragraph (1);

10 (B) targets cost effective projects with
11 measurable results; and

12 (C) maximizes restoration outcomes with
13 no net gain of Federal full-time equivalent em-
14 ployees; and

15 (4) establish the voluntary grant and technical
16 assistance programs in accordance with subsection
17 (e).

18 (c) COORDINATION.—In establishing the Program,
19 the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Serv-
20 ice, shall consult with—

21 (1) the heads of Federal agencies, including—

22 (A) the Director of the United States Fish
23 and Wildlife Service; and

24 (B) the Chief of the Natural Resources
25 Conservation Service; and

1 (2) the Governor of each State in which res-
2 toration efforts will be carried out pursuant to the
3 Program.

4 (d) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Program in-
5 clude—

6 (1) coordinating restoration and conservation
7 activities among Federal, State, Tribal, and local en-
8 tities and conservation partners to address white oak
9 restoration priorities;

10 (2) improving and regenerating white oak and
11 upland oak forests and the wildlife habitat such for-
12 ests provide;

13 (3) carrying out coordinated restoration and
14 conservation activities that lead to the increased
15 growth of species of white oak in native white oak
16 regions on Federal, State, Tribal, and private land;

17 (4) facilitating strategic planning to maximize
18 the resilience of white oak systems and habitats
19 under changing climate conditions;

20 (5) engaging the public through outreach, edu-
21 cation, and citizen involvement to increase capacity
22 and support for coordinated restoration and con-
23 servation activities for species of white oak; and

24 (6) increasing scientific capacity to support the
25 planning, monitoring, and research activities nec-

1 essary to carry out such coordinated restoration and
2 conservation activities.

3 (e) GRANTS AND ASSISTANCE.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—To the extent that funds are
5 available to carry out this section, the Secretary
6 shall establish a voluntary grant and technical as-
7 sistance program (in this section referred to as the
8 “grant program”) to achieve the purposes of the
9 Program, as described in subsection (d).

10 (2) ADMINISTRATION.—

11 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
12 enter into a cooperative agreement with the Na-
13 tional Fish and Wildlife Foundation (in this
14 subsection referred to as the “Foundation”) to
15 manage and administer the grant program.

16 (B) FUNDING.—After the Secretary enters
17 into a cooperative agreement with the Founda-
18 tion under subparagraph (A), the Foundation
19 shall—

20 (i) for each fiscal year, receive
21 amounts to carry out this subsection in an
22 advance payment of the entire amount on
23 October 1, or as soon as practicable there-
24 after, of that fiscal year;

1 (ii) invest and reinvest such amounts
2 for the benefit of the grant program; and
3 (iii) otherwise administer the grant
4 program to support partnerships between
5 the public and private sectors in accord-
6 ance with this section.

7 (3) APPLICATION OF NATIONAL FISH AND
8 WILDLIFE FOUNDATION ACT.—Amounts received by
9 the Foundation to carry out the grant program shall
10 be subject to the National Fish and Wildlife Foun-
11 dation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3701 et seq.),
12 excluding section 10(a) of that Act (16 U.S.C.
13 3709(a)).

14 (f) SUNSET.—The authority under this section shall
15 terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date of
16 the enactment of this Act.

17 **SEC. 8805. TREE NURSERY SHORTAGES.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
19 date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary, acting
20 through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall—

21 (1) develop and implement a national strategy
22 to increase the capacity of Federal, State, Tribal,
23 and private tree nurseries to address the nationwide
24 shortage of tree seedlings; and

25 (2) coordinate such strategy with—

1 (A) the national reforestation strategy of
2 the Forest Service; and

3 (B) each regional implementation plan for
4 national forests.

5 (b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required under sub-
6 section (a) shall—

7 (1) be based on the best available science and
8 data; and

9 (2) identify and address—

10 (A) regional seedling shortages of bareroot
11 and container tree seedlings;

12 (B) regional reforestation opportunities
13 and the seedling supply necessary to fulfill such
14 opportunities;

15 (C) opportunities to enhance seedling di-
16 versity and close gaps in seed inventories; and

17 (D) barriers to expanding, enhancing, or
18 creating new infrastructure to increase nursery
19 capacity.

20 **SEC. 8806. USDA FORMAL INITIATIVE.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the
22 Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and
23 in coordination with the Chief of the Forest Service, shall
24 establish a formal initiative on white oak to—

1 (1) re-establish white oak forests where appro-
2 priate;

3 (2) improve management of existing white oak
4 forests to foster natural regeneration of white oak;

5 (3) provide technical assistance to private land-
6 owners to re-establish, improve management of, and
7 naturally regenerate white oak;

8 (4) improve and expand white oak nursery
9 stock; and

10 (5) adapt and improve white oak seedlings.

11 (b) SUNSET.—The authority under this section shall
12 terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date of
13 the enactment of this Act.

14 **SEC. 8807. AUTHORITIES.**

15 To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary
16 shall use the authorities provided under this subtitle in
17 combination with other authorities to carry out projects,
18 including—

19 (1) good neighbor agreements entered into
20 under section 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014
21 (16 U.S.C. 2113a); and

22 (2) stewardship contracting projects entered
23 into under section 604 of the Healthy Forests Res-
24 toration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591c).

