

## **CHRISTOPHER TOPIK, PH.D. PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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### ***Current Position: The Nature Conservancy, Director, Restoring America's Forests, North America Region***

Chris began working at The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in 2011 as the senior conservation director for Restoring America's Forests, the Conservancy's priority effort to help restore forest health and improve ecological management of America's federal forests. Chris is responsible for directing and coordinating efforts of the Conservancy's chapters, leading a set of large-scale collaborative restoration projects around the Nation, and integrating TNC's Fire Learning Network and Forest Health Protection programs into this integrated effort. This involves program and policy leadership for 13 key projects that are collaborating with USDA Forest Service managers and many other partners in portions of 23 states. He provides communications and science-based program oversight, as well as policy and coalition building efforts. The TNC Restoring America's Forests program strives to enhance active forest management based on science and collaboration. This effort reduces wildfire risk, increases watershed and wildlife values, and enhances economic and social benefits of America's forests.

Previously, Chris worked for 15 years as professional staff for the US House of Representatives, Committee on Appropriations where he wrote appropriations law and provided oversight of several federal land management, science, and cultural agencies, including the USDA Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the US Geological Survey, the Smithsonian Institution, the Minerals Management Service and its successors, the National Endowments for the Arts and the Humanities, and others. During this period he worked for both Republican and Democratic majority chairmen. When he left the Committee staff in March, 2011, he was the Democratic staff director for Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee.

Prior to working on Capitol Hill, Chris worked for 16 years for the USDA Forest Service, including being the national plant ecologist for the range management staff, the national botany program director, and working as an area ecologist for 10 years on national forests in Oregon and Washington. As a forest ecologist he conducted administrative studies on forest management and plant ecology, provided internal training to forestry staff in ecological silviculture, and worked on forest plans and various forestry projects.

Chris received his Ph.D. in forest ecology from the University of Oregon and a BS in marine biology from the University of California, San Diego.