



THE WHITE OAK INITIATIVE

Working to enhance the future of America's white oak forests

AMERICAN WHITE OAK IS A CORNERSTONE SPECIES OF THE FORESTS OF THE EASTERN UNITED STATES.

Not only does it provide vital habitat and food for wildlife, it also plays an essential role in rural economies, and supports a wide variety of important and growing industries including furniture, flooring, cabinetry, barrels for spirits and wine, and more.



WHY ARE WE WORRIED ABOUT WHITE OAK?

Currently there are enough American white oak trees, but populations of young trees are significantly declining. White Oak challenges:

- **LACK OF ACTIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT**, leading to dense low-quality stands – blocking the growth of quality trees and the regeneration of new oak trees
- Widespread **INSECTS AND DISEASE**
- **CHANGING CLIMATE** conditions

WHAT IS THE WHITE OAK INITIATIVE?

The White Oak Initiative includes universities, state and federal agencies, private landowners, conservation organizations, trade associations, and forest industries including wine/spirits, flooring, cooperage, and timber. The group is committed to long-term sustainability of white oak forests – and their economic, social and environmental benefits – for centuries, not just decades.

To restore American white oak, we need to think, plan and act decades ahead in order to prevent a crisis situation. Today, we must actively manage our oak forests, remove competing tree species, treat insects and disease, and create openings for this sun-loving tree to flourish.

LANDSCAPE SCALE RESTORATION GRANTS:

The White Oak Initiative is working with the US Forest Service and 17 state conservation agencies on two coordinated landscape scale restoration (LSR) grants. These grants have brought significant private, federal and state resources together to collaboratively develop a white oak conservation assessment and plan for action. In addition to the plan, the LSR will support landowner surveys, oak regeneration demonstration sites, technical tools for foresters, regional workshops and state oak implementation projects.





WHAT WE DO:

The White Oak Initiative came together in 2017 to build the foundation of support needed to make meaningful, long-term change for white oak forests. In 2018, the Initiative hired a Director and received initial support to conduct a white oak assessment and build a regional conservation plan. A public launch of the Initiative to recruit more partners, and engage community, business and government leaders is being planned. Additionally, the Initiative plans to conduct:

- **RESEARCH** on health, population, age, diversity, harvest demand, economic and jobs impact, analysis of threats and white oak genetics
- **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE** via tools for both public and private landowners that encourage the growth of white oak; train foresters, loggers and others in the forest industry
- **ON THE GROUND IMPLEMENTATION** including family forest owner outreach and support, and assistance to public forest managers
- **COMMUNICATIONS** to better explain the issues around the white oak species and who they affect
- **POLICY** solutions to support state and federal programs for white oak sustainability

WHITE OAK INITIATIVE STEERING COMMITTEE:

Alex Alvarez

Chief Production Officer
Brown-Forman
Louisville, KY

Bob Bauer

Executive Director
Kentucky Forest Industries Association
Frankfort, KY

Paul DeLong

Senior Vice President for
Conservation
American Forest Foundation
Madison, WI

Candace Dinwiddie

Executive Director
Tennessee Forestry Association
Nashville, TN

Clint Evans

Senior Vice President
Operations
Independent Stave Company

Alex Finkral

Chief Forester
Forest Land Group
Chapel Hill, NC

Renee Hornsby

Director of Marketing Communications,
National Hardwood Lumber Association
Memphis, TN

Kevin Hudson

Senior Vice President Forest
Resources
Westrock
Atlanta, GA

Barbara Hurt

Executive Director,
DendriFund
Louisville, KY

Tom Inman

President,
Appalachian Hardwood
Manufacturers, Inc.
High Point, NC

Dwight Jensen

Log Procurement Manager,
Veneer Division
Columbia Forest Products
Southbury, CT

Martin Lowenfish

Team Leader, Conservation
Initiatives Team
NRCS
Washington, DC

Jason Lupardus

Conservation Field
Manager - Midwest
National Wild Turkey
Federation
Alvaton, KY

Garret Nowell

Director of Log Procurement
Independent Stave Company
Columbia, MO

Rick Oates

State Forester
Alabama Forestry Commission
Montgomery, AL

Rick Price

Director Global Environment,
Health and Safety
Beam Suntory
Clermont, KY

Kay Reed

Director of Coop. Forestry,
State and Private Forestry
US Forest Service
Atlanta, GA

Alex Richman

Chief Operating Officer
Cumberland Springs Land
Company
Lynchburg, TN

Eric Sprague

Director of Forest Conservation
American Forests
Washington, DC

Jeff Stringer

Professor and Chair
Department of Forestry and Natural
Resources
University of Kentucky
Lexington, KY

Chris Will

President
Central Kentucky Forest
Management, Inc
Danville, KY

Elizabeth Wise

Senior Vice President
Government Affairs
Sazerac Company
Washington, DC

CONTACT:

Melissa Moeller

White Oak Initiative Director
American Forest Foundation
Washington, DC
(202) 765 -3547
mmoeller@forestfoundation.org

WWW.WHITEOAKINITIATIVE.ORG