**Forested Conservation Challenges**
- Increasing land-use pressure and wildfire risk make it challenging to preserve and manage forests.
- Existing conservation easements have narrow and onerous restrictions, limiting their reach.
- Current incentives for forest conservation easements are not attractive enough for landowners.

**The Farm Bill Opportunity**
- Provide the financial incentives needed to keep forests as forests through improved conservation easements.
- Expand available options for forest conservation easements, similar to those available for agricultural land.
- Ensure that incentive structures can protect working forests long-term.

Absorb the Healthy Forest Reserve Program (HFRP) into a new Forest Conservation Easement Program (FCEP) to alleviate pressure to convert forests to non-forest land uses.¹

Voluntary conservation easements can ensure that private working forests remain intact long-term using sustainable management practices to sequester carbon, build resilience, and support ecosystem health. Existing programs already support these goals, but face a series of programmatic restrictions limiting their impact on US forestlands.
• Authorize $100 million per year in additional mandatory funds to prevent conversion of forests under FCEP, modeled after the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP).

• Absorb HFRP into the new FCEP subprogram, Forest Reserve Easements (FRE), modeled after the ACEP Wetlands Reserve Easements. FCEP-FRE should maintain HFRP language prioritizing carbon sequestration and supporting government-held easements with an emphasis on endangered species habitat and biodiversity.

• Establish a second FCEP subprogram, Forest Land Easements (FLE), modeled after the ACEP Agricultural Land Easements. FCEP-FLE should allow eligible entities like land trusts, state agencies, and other trusted actors to purchase easement titles from landowners with financial support from the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Working forestlands should be eligible for these entity-held easements.

• Provide federal cost-share splits over 60% for socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners under both subprograms.

¹ Land Trust Alliance 2023 Farm Bill Recommendations

For more information on Carbon180’s Farm Bill platform, please visit our web page and let us know what you think at policy@carbon180.org.