



HEARTWOOD

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH AND WELL BEING OF THE
NATIVE FORESTS OF THE CENTRAL HARDWOOD REGION

Dear Member of Congress,

We offer this letter of support for **the Act to Save America's Forests** on behalf of Heartwood, a cooperative regional network representing more than sixty grassroots forest protection organizations in the Eastern, Midwestern and Southern United States. Our network members in turn represent the many thousand concerned citizens who value the public forests for the benefits they provide our nation, including clean air and water, healthy and productive soils, wilderness, recreational opportunities, and wildlife habitat including habitat for rare, threatened and endangered species. Heartwood has worked on public land issues across the eastern U.S. since 1990, with a special focus on the national forests of the Central Hardwood Region which extends from Maryland to Missouri and from Michigan to Mississippi.

We believe that serious problems with Forest Service management of the national forests require the attention of Congress. Not only is the Forest Service ignoring the public's desire, clearly and repeatedly expressed through public comment and numerous polls, that our national forests be protected, but the agency's accounting methods have become so convoluted that it is virtually impossible to trace the agency's expenditures and hold individuals accountable for the billions of misspent federal dollars. We especially support the new provision in **the Act to Save America's Forests** that requires the National Park Service to study potential new national parks in underserved regions, including the Central Hardwood Region which features high population density and a limited public land base with few protected areas. This provision is a sensible first step that could lead to urgently needed protection for our region's last remaining wild areas, for recreation and wildlife habitat, climate moderation and water quality, and provide a living legacy for future generations of Americans.

For these and other reasons, we believe that fundamental changes need to be made in the management of our nation's federal public lands and we encourage you to support **the Act to Save America's Forests**. This bill is a good beginning to the changes that we believe are required. Heartwood has given its support to Save America's Forests for their efforts to pass this bill. We ask you to do the same.

Sincerely,

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