



## **Governors call for large-scale forest restoration, realigning federal funding**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 1, 2011

**DENVER** -- Western Governors are calling for large-scale restoration of Western forests that have millions of acres of dead trees that impact wildlife habitat, water quality and soil productivity, while placing human life and property in harm's way.

The Western Governors' Association has adopted a new [policy resolution](#) outlining actions that should be taken to improve forest health. The governors said they support federal agencies making significant investments in large-scale restoration treatments by realigning their existing resources to achieve maximum impact. In addition, they are recommending assistance be provided to collaborative groups in assessment and planning efforts.

WGA also released a [report](#) by its Forest Health Advisory Committee, which includes representatives from states, federal entities, the private sector and conservation groups.

"The time is now to address the problem," said Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter (Idaho), WGA's Chairman. "When WGA initiated this effort, we knew we needed innovative approaches for restoring our forests, and this report has helped lay the groundwork for moving forward."

The report notes that the need for forest restoration is larger than can be effectively addressed given current treatment sizes, rates of restoration treatments, and typical planning and implementation processes.

Gov. Jan Brewer (Ariz.) requested WGA convene experts from across the West last year to share community and state-level perspectives, experiences and expertise regarding landscape-scale forest restoration. The report released today is based in part on recommendations generated from that meeting held in September 2010.

"More than ever, we need healthy forests and the sustainable economic development opportunities their restoration affords," Brewer said. "Accelerating forest restoration, safeguarding communities, and creating a sustainable, restoration-based forest economy are high priority goals for our Western states."

The WGA policy resolution and the advisory committee's report can be found on WGA's Web site at [www.westgov.org](http://www.westgov.org).

**About the WGA:** The Western Governors' Association is an independent, nonprofit organization representing the governors of 19 states and three US-Flag Pacific islands. Through their Association, the governors identify and address key policy and governance issues, including those related to natural resources, the environment, human services, economic development, intergovernmental relations and international relations.