



SSAFE Advocacy Team Action Alert Instructions:

Numbers Count!

Our goal is to collect over 1000 signatures on a petition urging the Senate and House Agricultural Committees to Keep \$20 Billion in Forest Funding in the upcoming Farm Bill.

Note: All signatures are due to Michelle Goodwin by **May 1st, 2024**. Paper signatures must be scanned or photographed and emailed to: michelle@ssafe.org (Online signatures will be automatically collected and tallied.)

The instructions for this SSAFE Advocacy Action Alert Packet are as follows:

- 1)  **Please email this link to the online version of the petition:** <https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/forests/> with the fact sheet or copy facts from the fact sheet to your distribution lists, listservs, Google Groups, or any other group you could reach via email or digitally. I will *also* email this online petition link to all of our contacts (including non-members.) Do not worry about overlapping or duplicate signatures. It is far better to obtain the signature, risking duplication, than to under-communicate. When you send your email, you might include text like “If you haven’t already signed this petition...”
- 2)  **Create a schedule to collect signatures in person.** In-person signatures have a *higher success* rate than emails.
 - a. **Print multiple copies of the petition form to collect signatures.** It is useful to have a few copies of the fact sheet and letter for people to read on the table. If you want to edit the documents to use larger print, retain the SSAFE letterhead by saving a copy and then enlarging the print. Do not change the content of the letter or fact sheet.
 - b. Obtain permission from your campus to **set up a table near a busy area** to collect signatures. (Please see tips below for the best results.)
 - c. When you are finished collecting all of your signatures, **scan and email them to michelle@ssafe.org**. Photos of the signature forms using your



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smartphone are also acceptable as long as you take a flat, well-lit, clear shot so that names can be read.

Optional best practices and tips for in-person petitions!

- Residents in your community will be more apt to stop and sign your petition if it looks quick and easy.
- Use the attached color flyer or create a sign with, “Please Sign Our Petition” and stand it upright against support rather than flat on the table to better attract attention.
- Keep table clutter to a minimum (even clipboards can look like clutter).
- If you want to provide additional supporting documents, make sure it is:
 - is printed in large, easily read type
 - has a lot of white space
 - has main points emphasized
 - is not taped to the table
 - is available in several copies
 - is relevant to the petition
- Have several pens available.
- Have hand sanitizer and a waste basket available.
- Have a chair nearby if folks want to sit and read the petition information.
- If allowable, leave your petition table overnight for residents to stop by after hours.
- Invite a resident who is well-known in the community to sit at the table. Their “popularity” will draw more people to sign.
- Try taking a clipboard to the dining hall with the fact sheet, letter, and signature form. Pass it around from table to table.
- Get creative and have fun! 





SSAFE Advocacy Action Alert Forest Funding in The Farm Bill

FACT SHEET

What is the Farm Bill? It's authorized once every five years to fund programs for farmers, forests, food production, and related issues. This year Congress must pass a revised version for new and existing programs. *We want to ensure no cuts in funding.*

\$20 billion from the Inflation Reduction Act for **climate-smart conservation practices and healthy forests** has been allocated for the new version of the Farm Bill – we need to keep it that way since some members of Congress will move to strip or reallocate portions of these funds.

What is Agroforestry? Agroforestry integrates trees and shrubs with animal agriculture and farmed crops. That creates higher crop yields, improved soil health, carbon sequestration, reduced erosion, and more.

More trees mean more shade for livestock to provide some resilience against worsening heat. It's been practiced worldwide for centuries. It isn't as popular in the United States as it is in other countries, but the benefits of shade for animals are now better understood. With proper funding and attention, agroforestry fights climate change.

The \$20 billion over five years is for programs that help farmers and ranchers implement conservation practices that increase carbon storage through soil nurturance and trees. Some of these agroforestry programs, like forest management, need more than the limited funds they've received in the past to *preserve incentives crucial for expanding climate-smart practices.*

What are the Benefits of Agroforestry? Trees are nature's vacuum cleaner, pulling 12% of America's carbon pollution out of the air each year and reducing the impacts of climate change. By protecting, expanding, and managing our forests in a climate-smart way, they can do even more – up to 22% by 2030.

Yet the world loses [25 million acres of forests per year to deforestation](#). That's a lower rate than the 40 million acres annually lost in the 1990s, but we have to do much better, starting here at home.



Optional Extra Action – Individual Letter Writing and Letters to the Editor

Use the information below to write letters directly to your Members of Congress and letters to the editor to the publication of your choice.

PROTECT CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY!

Congress will likely pass a new Farm Bill by October 2024.

Its draft version contains \$20 billion allocated from the Inflation Reduction Act for **climate-smart conservation practices and healthy forests**. These programs help farmers and ranchers conserve soil and manage forest tracts to increase crop yields, improve soil health, sequester carbon, reduce erosion, and more.

We need to keep all these excellent programs in the new Farm Bill since **some members of Congress will move to strip** or reallocate portions to issues not related to agriculture or forestry.

If we don't make our voices heard, our members of Congress will be **pressured by self-interested corporate lobbyists instead**.

Yes, your voice will be heard! Congressional staffers take every call and voicemail, read every email their office receives, and pass these on to their members of Congress in regular briefings. Members *do* want to know what their constituents care about. You may receive a generic email in response, but your message is still received loud and clear. Even more so when you're combining your voice with hundreds of other SSAFE members and thousands of Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL) volunteers across the nation.

SSAFE and CCL will continue to mobilize for climate-smart measures in the new Farm Bill until it is enacted.

Email your members of Congress just once yourself. Then, share this page with friends, family, and coworkers who want to help get climate-smart forestry legislation passed in Congress!



Optional Educational Resources to Inspire Action

Video: Farm Bill 101: Forestry Title, 1.5 minutes, by Defenders of Wildlife, available for free on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXbbAC79IY8>

Video: Our Planet | Forests, 48 minutes, narrated by David Attenborough, available on Netflix (<https://www.netflix.com/title/80049832>) and free on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JkaxUblCGz0>)

Video: Our Planet “How to Restore Forests”, 8 minutes, watch for free at: <https://www.ourplanet.com/en/video/how-to-restore-our-forests/>

Video: TED Talk “How trees talk to each other”, 18 minutes, by Suzanne Simard, 2016, available to watch free at: https://www.ted.com/talks/suzanne_simard_how_trees_talk_to_each_other

Book: *The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate—Discoveries from A Secret World (The Mysteries of Nature, 1)* by Peter Wohlleben (Author), 2106, Greystone Books,

Book: *Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest* by Suzanne Simard, 2022, Knopf Doubleday





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Senior Stewards Acting for the Environment (SSAFE)

% Edward Wolner
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Oberlin, OH 44074

May 1st, 2024

Dear (House and Senate Agriculture Committee chairs and members):

We urge you to protect the twenty-billion-dollar investment in climate-smart forestry and agricultural practices already in the new Farm Bill.

Parts of that investment help farmers and ranchers implement conservation practices that increase carbon storage through trees and soil nurturance.

Trees are nature's vacuum cleaner, pulling 12% of America's carbon pollution out of the air each year and reducing the impacts of climate change. By protecting, expanding, and managing our forests in a climate-smart way, they can do even more – up to 22% by 2030.

Agroforestry integrates trees and shrubs with animal agriculture and farmed crops. That creates higher crop yields, improved soil health, carbon sequestration, reduced erosion, and more.

The forest management program needs more than the limited funds they've received in the past to preserve incentives crucial for expanding climate-smart practices.

Ted Wolner, SSAFE Advocacy Chair



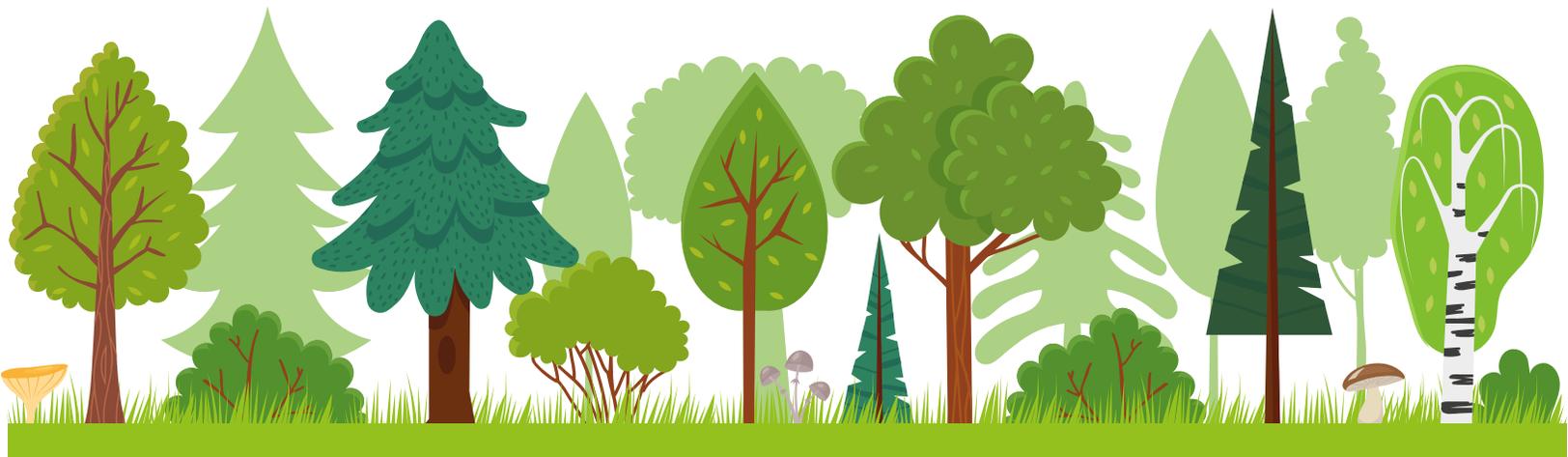
SSAFE Action Alert – Keep \$20 Billion Forest Funding in The Farm Bill Page # _____

These signatures are from (community): _____

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SSAFE Advocacy Action Alert

Keep Forest Funding in The Farm Bill



\$20 billion from the Inflation Reduction Act for **climate-smart conservation practices and healthy forests** has been allocated for the new version of the Farm Bill – we need to keep it that way since *some members of Congress will move to strip or reallocate portions of these funds.*

Sign the petition at your campus or go to www.SSAFE.org/action



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