



June 23, 2020

FRA's Statement on President Trump's Proclamation Suspending Entry of Legal Non-immigrant Labor that is Important to Improving Forest Health and Productivity

The Forest Resources Association (FRA) is concerned with President Trump's Proclamation that suspends the entry of H-2B visa guest workers until December 31, 2020. The forest products industry relies on forestry workers who legally enter the U.S. to perform important forestry work that renews our public and private forestlands through the planting of trees, improves forest health, and prevents and suppresses wildfire.

This decision contradicts the President's priority to support the rural economy. Trees are the raw material that rural economies depend on for jobs and economic development. H-2B forestry workers are critical in meeting the President's commitment and support of the World Economic Forum Trillion Trees Initiative.

Suspending H-2B visa guest worker's entry to the U.S. will delay important work on our nation's forestlands. Domestic workers have historically shown little interest in this critical work even during times of high unemployment. This scenario will have negative impacts on forest health, prevent forestland owners from meeting states' regulatory requirements or compliance with forest certification programs, and overall productivity for many years to come.

We hope that the President and the Administration promptly review the proclamation and lessen the impacts on the forest products industry and the essential and critical services H-2B forestry workers perform to improve public and private forest lands in America. This work is critical to maintaining a viable forest products industry in America. These workers play a vital role in the wood supply chain and are essential to the long-term economic recovery of the forest products industry in the U.S.

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