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DE LA GARZA COMMENDS CLINTON FOR SCHEDULING "FOREST CONFERENCE"

For immediate release, Wednesday, March 10, 1993

WASHINGTON -- Rep. Kika de la Garza, D-Texas, Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, issued the following statement after attending a White House briefing on President Clinton's "Forest Conference":

"I commend President Clinton for his decision to convene the Forest Conference with Vice President Gore and the relevant Federal agencies on April 2.

The President's desire to listen and work with all sides in resolving these controversies is in marked contrast to the actions of the previous Administration which allowed the Federal agencies in charge to fight among themselves. President Clinton has made clear that his Administration will seek to forge a single, scientifically-sound and responsible policy for dealing with the Northwest forest crisis. His leadership is welcome and sorely needed.

We in the Congress must stand ready to work with the Administration and help develop a resolution to old-growth forest issues.

Over the past two years the Committee on Agriculture led the effort to develop a science-based approach to these issues. The so-called "Gang of Four" scientific report commissioned by the House Agriculture Committee, in conjunction with the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, provided the framework for discussions between our Committee, the Natural Resources Committee, the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, and the Speaker of the House last year. This approach and the progress made by the three committees in the House last year should prove invaluable to the Administration's efforts to craft its own proposals.

Following the President's Forest Conference, I look forward to working with the Clinton Administration and with Chairman Miller of the Natural Resources Committee, Chairman Studds of the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee and the Speaker of the House to address these issues.

I am optimistic that Congress and the Administration, working together, can reach agreement on these issues and develop a balanced policy approach that truly deals with the human impact as well as the economic and environmental challenges faced in managing the Northwest's old-growth forests."

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