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The McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Research Program: The Driving Force of Sustainable Forestry

Steven H. Bullard

Stephen F. Austin State University, Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture, bullardsh@sfasu.edu

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Institutions eligible for McIntire-Stennis funds include land-grant colleges, experiment stations, and other state-supported colleges and universities that offer at least a Master of Science in Forestry or Master of Forestry. In 2008, legislation was passed that extended eligibility to 1890 land-grant institutions. There are now 13 historically black colleges and universities receiving funding for forestry research through this program.



THE DRIVING FORCE

OF SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY

The USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) provides fiscal and administrative oversight of the McIntire-Stennis program. Another important role of NIFA is to help ensure that research projects are not duplicated at various institutions across the states and territories receiving funding each year.

The National Association of University Forest Resources Programs (NAUFRP) represents 69 of our nation's most prestigious universities and their respective scientists, educators and extension specialists. For more information about NAUFRP and the McIntire-Stennis 50th anniversary, visit www.naufrp.org/mcstennis.asp.



THE DRIVING FORCE

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History

President Kennedy signed Public Law (PL) 87-788, now known as the “McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Research Program,” in October of 1962. Bipartisan sponsors Representative Clifford G. McIntire of Maine and Senator John C. Stennis of Mississippi intended the act to fund and promote forestry research, graduate training, and cooperation between state and federal agencies, universities, and other entities.

Rep. Clifford C. McIntire
Republican - Maine

Sen. John C. Stennis
Democrat - Mississippi

President John F. Kennedy

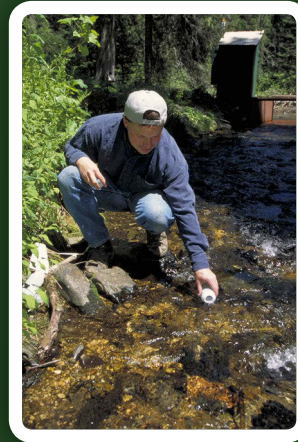
Funding

Funding for the program can be up to one-half the amount appropriated for forestry research within the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Currently, about \$30 million is distributed among almost 80 universities in 54 states and territories, which is less than 20% of the more than \$150 million authorized by law. McIntire-Stennis is formula funded. States receive funding based on how much nonfederal commercial forestland is in the state (40%), the annual volume of timber removed from growing stock in the state (40%), and the total each state spends from nonfederal sources on forestry research (20%). The law requires that states match the funding, which is part of the driving force created by the law.

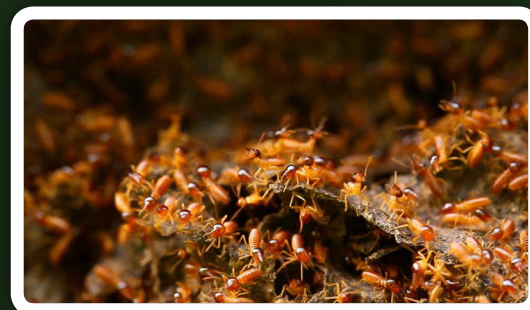


Research

The McIntire-Stennis program has supported thousands of research projects and contributed to the education of more than 2,000 doctoral students and 8,000 Master of Science students. Some examples of McIntire-Stennis projects include:



- Research in Hawaii has developed termite prevention and control approaches saving over \$30 million per year.
- Peregrine falcons have been successfully reestablished in cliff habitats in Kentucky, the first successful nesting pairs since 1939.
- Over 300,000 ac of bottomland hardwoods have been restored in the Mississippi Delta region using guidelines developed through McIntire-Stennis research.



Challenges

Our forests today face extreme challenges including:

- climate change
- invasive plants and animals
- disease and insects
- wildfire
- urban sprawl
- fragmentation of habitat

“Forestry research” is broadly defined in the McIntire-Stennis legislation. To help identify these challenges and provide a national agenda for forestry research and graduate education under the McIntire-Stennis program, the National Association of University Forest Resources Programs (NAUFRP) prepared and published a strategic plan titled, “Sustaining Healthy and Productive Forests: An Investment in America’s Competitive Position in the Global Marketplace.”

This plan presents a bold research agenda that includes two major components: “foundational areas of knowledge,” which calls for research on topics that are “still critical to our understanding of forests, watersheds, and global functions,” and “emerging and integrative areas of knowledge,” which reflects current issues in forestry and natural resources such as a new science of integration, ecosystem services, climate change, energy independence, and new technologies and products.

Vision

Researchers supported by McIntire-Stennis strive to work effectively with key partners like state and federal agencies, forest industries, forest landowners, and other key constituents to develop solutions, and deliver those solutions to millions of people across the nation through targeted extension and outreach programs. This helps landowners manage their land sustainably, responsibly, and can help feed the economy and produce jobs.

Sustainability means that we consider our economy, society, and environment together. Our economy and society are fully embedded in our environment. This strong vision of sustainability helps ensure that our work is focused on jobs, people, communities, wildlife and the many ecosystem services forests provide.

