

Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Proclamation 6944 of October 21, 1996

The President

National Forest Products Week, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

For much of our Nation's history, forests, like other natural resources, were considered inexhaustible. In this century, we began to recognize that forests are a precious birthright for all Americans—not only for us and for our children, but also for future generations. As part of this recognition, we observe National Forest Products Week.

Forests are an important source of fuel and building materials, and they provide many valuable jobs. They also offer us unmatched recreational environments, as well as a spiritual refuge from city life. They provide essential habitat for myriad species of plants and animals, including hundreds that are endangered or threatened. Increasingly, their trees, shrubs, herbs, fungi, and microorganisms are yielding new and wondrous medicinal products and foods. And thanks to better planning and resource management that replace harvested lands with new forests, thousands of Americans will continue to earn their livelihood from our Nation's forests, even as we protect them. Today, the same citizens who are reaping the forests' bounty are personally and professionally involved in efforts to preserve it for future generations.

Government, citizens, and the forestry industry now work hand-in-hand in a new cooperative stewardship that emphasizes healthy, diverse, and sustainable forests. Using the best available science and complying with all current environmental laws, we are examining past and present forest management practices to find the best mix of resource use, conservation, and recycling that will ensure continued productivity. America must promote environmental responsibility and observe the highest possible standards of conservation to lead the way for other nations.

One of our most important tools in this endeavor is investment in forest research. Forest research is developing new wood products that extend raw material supplies, new technologies to extract and process wood products with less waste and fewer harmful byproducts, and new ways of reducing demand for forest raw materials through recycling. It is also unlocking the potential of forests to provide new products that will benefit people. With proper care, these lands can remain healthy, diverse, and resilient, capable of sustaining the lives—human and animal—that are dependent on them.

In recognition of the central role forests play in the long-term welfare of our Nation, the Congress, by Public Law 86-753 (36 U.S.C. 163), has designated the week beginning on the third Sunday in October each year as "National Forest Products Week" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this commemoration.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 20 through October 26, 1996, as National Forest Products Week. I call upon the people of the United States to honor the vital role forests play in our national life and to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

William Clinton

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