

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1743

To amend the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 to modify the forest inventory and analysis program.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 18, 2023

Mr. OSSOFF (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

A BILL

To amend the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 to modify the forest inventory and analysis program.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Forest Data Mod-
5 ernization Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. FOREST INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3(e) of the Forest and
8 Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978
9 (16 U.S.C. 1642(e)) is amended—

1 (1) in paragraph (1)—

2 (A) by striking “their resources” and in-
3 serting “the resources of those forests, includ-
4 ing forest carbon,”;

5 (B) by striking “In compliance” and in-
6 serting the following:

7 “(A) IN GENERAL.—In compliance”; and

8 (C) by adding at the end the following:

9 “(B) ADDITIONAL METHODS.—Under the
10 program under this subsection, the Secretary
11 shall carry out, as a data collection method—

12 “(i) a timber products output study;

13 and

14 “(ii) a national woodland owner sur-
15 vey.”;

16 (2) in paragraph (3)(C), by inserting “including
17 with respect to available forest carbon data,” after
18 “2 decades,”;

19 (3) in paragraph (4)—

20 (A) in the second sentence, by striking
21 “The standards” and inserting the following:

22 “(B) INCLUSIONS.—The standards de-
23 scribed in subparagraph (A)”;

1 (B) by striking “(4) NATIONAL STAND-
2 ARDS AND DEFINITIONS.—To ensure” and in-
3 serting the following:

4 “(4) NATIONAL CONSISTENCY.—

5 “(A) STANDARDS AND DEFINITIONS.—To
6 ensure”; and

7 (C) by adding at the end the following:

8 “(C) TERMINOLOGY.—The Secretary shall
9 include a clear description of the definition of
10 ‘forest’ used for purposes of reporting data
11 from inventories and analyses of forests and the
12 resources of forests under this subsection
13 with—

14 “(i) any data or report provided under
15 the program under this subsection;

16 “(ii) Renewable Resource Assessments
17 prepared under section 3(a) of the Forest
18 and Rangeland Renewable Resources Plan-
19 ning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1601(a)); and

20 “(iii) any data or report provided to
21 an entity outside the United States.”;

22 (4) in paragraph (6)—

23 (A) in the matter preceding subparagraph
24 (A), by striking “Not later than 180 days after
25 the date of enactment of this subsection,” and

1 inserting “In accordance with paragraph (7),”;
2 and

3 (B) by striking subparagraphs (D) and (E)
4 and inserting the following:

5 “(D) the organization and procedures nec-
6 essary to understand and report on changes in
7 land cover and use;

8 “(E) the organization and procedures nec-
9 essary to evaluate carbon-related data variables,
10 including soil carbon, collected from forest in-
11 ventory and analysis plots, timber products out-
12 put studies, and national woodland owner sur-
13 veys to ensure that carbon accounting informa-
14 tion needs can be met; and”;

15 (5) by adding at the end the following:

16 “(7) UPDATES TO STRATEGIC PLAN.—

17 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180
18 days after the date of enactment of this para-
19 graph, the Secretary shall prepare an update to
20 the strategic plan under paragraph (6) to in-
21 clude—

22 “(i) a plan to implement nationally
23 consistent data collection protocols and
24 procedures to improve the statistical preci-
25 sion of base program estimates;

1 “(ii) pathways to integrate and report
2 on changes in forest carbon, including
3 below-ground carbon;

4 “(iii) plans, including the identifica-
5 tion of challenges, to collaborate with other
6 Federal agencies, non-Federal partners,
7 and the private sector to integrate existing
8 nationally available data sets and best
9 available commercial technologies, such as
10 remote sensing, spatial analysis techniques,
11 and other new technologies;

12 “(iv) a plan to increase transparency
13 and clarity in reporting in accordance with
14 paragraph (4)(C);

15 “(v) a plan to expand current data
16 collection, further integrate remote sensing
17 technology, or both, to include procedures
18 to improve the statistical precision of esti-
19 mates at the sub-State level;

20 “(vi) a plan to expand current data
21 collection, further integrate remote sensing
22 technology, or both, to include information
23 on renewable biomass supplies and carbon
24 stocks at the local, State, regional, and na-

1 tional levels, including by ownership type;
2 and

3 “(vii) such other matters as the Sec-
4 retary determines to be appropriate based
5 on recommendations of the Forest Inven-
6 tory and Analysis National User Group.

7 “(B) SUBMISSION.—Not later than 180
8 days after the date of enactment of this para-
9 graph, the Secretary shall submit to the Com-
10 mittee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
11 of the Senate and the Committee on Agri-
12 culture of the House of Representatives the up-
13 date to the strategic plan prepared under sub-
14 paragraph (A).

15 “(C) FURTHER UPDATES.—Not later than
16 5 years after the date on which the update is
17 submitted under subparagraph (B), and every 5
18 years thereafter, the Secretary shall—

19 “(i) prepare an additional update to
20 the strategic plan; and

21 “(ii) submit the additional update to
22 the committees described in subparagraph
23 (B).

24 “(8) ACCESSIBILITY.—The Secretary shall en-
25 sure that data collected under this subsection is—

1 “(A) easily accessible to all public- and pri-
2 vate-sector entities; and

3 “(B) collected using means that ensure the
4 confidentiality, in accordance with section 1770
5 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C.
6 2276), of—

7 “(i) plot locations;

8 “(ii) nonaggregated data of woodland
9 owners; and

10 “(iii) forest industry information.

11 “(9) BIENNIAL COMPILATIONS.—Biennially, the
12 Secretary shall prepare and make publicly available
13 a compilation of national forest inventory and anal-
14 ysis forest statistics, which shall be similar to the ta-
15 bles contained in the Renewable Resource Assess-
16 ments prepared under section 3(a) of the Forest and
17 Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of
18 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1601(a)).

19 “(10) EXTERNAL COMPLEX DATA REQUESTS.—

20 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
21 establish an office, a data platform, or both to
22 process and respond to complex data requests
23 submitted by external organizations relating to
24 the program under this subsection.

1 “(B) FEES.—To cover the costs of proc-
2 essing of and responding to complex data re-
3 quests described in subparagraph (A), the Sec-
4 retary may impose fees on the external organi-
5 zations submitting the requests.

6 “(11) REPORTS.—Each year, the Secretary
7 shall publish as part of the forest inventory and
8 analysis business report a detailed description of the
9 progress of the Secretary in implementing the pro-
10 grammatic elements of the strategic plan described
11 in paragraph (6), including—

12 “(A) the costs and priorities of the stra-
13 tegic plan; and

14 “(B) how the program under this sub-
15 section leverages new technology, improves and
16 standardizes collection protocols, and increases
17 workforce capacity.”.

18 (b) REMOTE SENSING TECHNOLOGIES.—Section
19 8632(1) of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (16
20 U.S.C. 1642 note; Public Law 115–334) is amended by
21 striking “technologies” and inserting “technologies, such
22 as microwave, LiDAR, hyperspectral, and high-resolution
23 remote sensing data for data collection, and machine
24 learning for improved modeling,”.

○