

ACTION ITEM FORM

Subject of Action Item: **State and Private Forestry Redesign Initiative** (2.2 Domestic Plant Pest & Disease Issues)



Submitted By: **National Plant Board**

Text:

Background. A joint initiative is underway between the USDA Forest Service and state foresters to review and determine how available agency resources might be more effectively prioritized and focused within the agency. This initiative, denoted as the State and Private Forestry (S&PF) Redesign, is recommending that state and regional assessments be conducted with an emphasis on competitive resource allocation as a means of ensuring that federal S&PF funds are invested in projects that meet this standard. The primary focus is to allocate funding such that meaningful outcomes are generated at the field level.

For FY 2008, a percentage of the S&PF allocation will be invested in projects that are selected through a competitive process. This competitive process is expected to be administered through USDA Forest Service and state forester leadership. In succeeding years, additional funds are to be assimilated into the competitive grant process with a target goal of 60% within five years.

To date, the National Plant Board, along with other cooperating partners, have not been fully engaged in the S&PF Redesign discussions and review process. As first level cooperating partners and agencies with mandated responsibilities for regulatory enforcement, there is a need to fully integrate concerns of this group into the decision-making process. This redesign, as currently outlined, has the potential to reduce allocations that are currently available to the regulatory agencies by placing these funds into the competitive process. A portion of these funds may eventually be returned to key regulatory programs, but not likely as part of a coordinated program response. With this redesign, federal and state programs are not expected to be able to respond as effectively to future emergency pest outbreaks without potentially seeking supplemental emergency funding or funding through CCC.

Action Requested. The membership of the National Plant Board requests that NASDA inform the USDA, Forest Service, along with its supportive partner, the National Association of State Foresters, of the value of working jointly with the NPB to ensure continued dialogue and input is obtained from the NPB membership as part of its implementation of the State and Private Forestry re-organization efforts. Continued discussion regarding the new funding policy is critical to ensure funding is readily available for regulatory, eradication, and suppression programs, along with funding for surveying/monitoring program for state agencies to respond to continued introduction of pests impacting our forestry resources.