Dear Colleague:

We would like to extend an invitation to you to join the newly created Working Forests Caucus, a bipartisan coalition of Members who seek to promote the economic, environmental and social benefits of private timberlands that represent 74 percent of all working forests in the United States.

The Working Forests Caucus will provide a forum for Members and their staffs to discuss the unique impacts that federal policies have on private working forests in the U.S. These working forests are a driver of the rural economies across our country. They support 2.4 million jobs, $87 billion in payroll and $223 billion in annual sales, and contribute 5.7 percent of total manufacturing toward a wide array of products that improve our quality of life. A strong marketplace for forest products has helped keep rural America employed and U.S. forests robust. In fact, the volume of growing trees in the U.S. has increased 50 percent since the 1950s.

Working forests also provide substantial environmental and social benefits to America’s communities and citizens. These forests filter more than 25% of U.S. drinking water, help protect 60% of America’s at-risk wildlife and are a significant sink for carbon emissions. These forests also provide beautiful landscapes and ideal destinations for outdoor recreation such as fishing, hunting and backpacking.

Working forests are unlike any other national resource, and federal policies must continue to support the underlying factors that make this one of America’s most important natural resource success stories. To this end, the Caucus plans to help facilitate discussions about the issues important to the sustainability of working forests, including the long-term economic investment required to maintain forests in a healthy and productive condition, the critical role of markets to keeping working forests from being converted to other economic uses, and the environmental and social benefits that working forests provide to citizens and communities across the country.

If you would like to become a member of the Working Forest Caucus or would like more information, please contact Jonathan Shuffield with Congressman Bruce Westerman’s office at Jonathan.Shuffield@mail.house.gov or Adam Durand with Congressman Collin Peterson’s office at Adam.Durand@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

Bruce Westerman
Member of Congress
Arkansas’ Fourth District

Collin C. Peterson
Member of Congress
Minnesota’s Seventh District

Jaime Herrera Beutler
Member of Congress
Washington’s Third District

Sanford Bishop
Member of Congress
Georgia’s Second District