



Proclamation

WHEREAS, trees and forests cover over one third of the earth's land base and about one-third or 747 million acres of the United States land base with Illinois forests comprising over 5 million acres of private, public and community forests; and,

WHEREAS, forests play an essential role in our livelihoods and subsistence; provide the roots of our traditions and cultures; provide the cornerstone for the whole living ecosystem, and provide habitat for over half of the earth's animal species and 80 percent of the terrestrial biodiversity; and,

WHEREAS, forests are the guardians of climate carbon sequestration; in addition, 300 million people live in forests and 1.6 billion people (1 in every four) are directly dependent upon the forests for their livelihood; and,

WHEREAS, all 7 billion humans rely on all the benefits the forests bestow for: the food we eat, the air we breathe, the freshness of the water we drink, the building products for our homes, the paper we use, for protection from the sun and cold winds, the shade we recreate and rest under, inspiration for our fine art and visual expressions; and half of the world's medications come from forests and trees. Subsequently, trees and forests improve the economic health of the nation and the state; and,

WHEREAS, in Illinois, there are over 170,000 private forest landowners and 100 sawmills that contribute to the Illinois forest-based economy, which exceeds \$4.5 billion annually, with 60 percent of the forestry related business producing lumber and wood products. Forest-based employment exceeds 68,000 workers and contributes nearly \$30 billion in annual sales volume to Illinois' economy; and,

WHEREAS, the Green industry, including Illinois urban and community forestry, has 9,500 businesses with about \$5 billion economic impact, and adds an average of \$315 million in state and local tax revenues. Additionally, the Christmas tree retail industry alone has an economic impact of \$9 million in Illinois; and,

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois has 720,000 acres of Illinois private forests with a professional forest management plan, the stewards of which actively engage in the conservation and sustainable management of their private forest lands with over 95,000 acres and 1,107 landowners also enrolled in the Certified American Tree Farmers program in Illinois; and,

WHEREAS, the Shawnee National Forest, six State Forests, Illinois Forest Preserve Districts, and local parks and tree-lined streets provide outdoor recreational opportunities for Illinois citizens; and,

WHEREAS, nearly 200 Illinois communities participate in the TREE CITY USA program and are actively managing and preserving Illinois' urban and community trees and forests to provide a safe and healthy forest where people live; and by their efforts have diversified the tree species within their community forests and have provided a richer habitat for a greater diversity of bird species; and,

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois is proud to join the United Nations and the rest of the world in celebrating the importance, value and benefits of trees and forests on earth, in our country, in our state and our communities, and in our own backyards:

THEREFORE, I, Pat Quinn, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim 2011 as the **INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE FOREST** in Illinois, in recognition of the importance of trees and forests to our state, our nation, and the global community.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Illinois to be affixed.



Done at the Capitol, in the City of Springfield,
this SIXTEENTH *day of* MAY, *in*
the Year of Our Lord two thousand and
ELEVEN, *and of the State of Illinois*
the one hundred and NINETY-THIRD

Dorcas White

SECRETARY OF STATE

Pat Quinn

GOVERNOR