

HOUSE No. 744

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Nine

An Act relative to the Forest Stewardship Incentive Program..

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 2A of Chapter 312 of the Acts of 2008, as so appearing, is hereby
2 amended by striking line item 2800-7022 in its entirety and inserting in place thereof the
3 following line item:--

4 “2800-7022.. For the purpose of protecting and conserving the ecological and economic
5 integrity of the commonwealth's privately held forestlands, including but not limited to
6 acquisition of interests in land including easements, agreements, rights of first refusal and
7 covenants; for a forestry conservation restriction program to acquire conservation restrictions
8 under section 31 of chapter 184 for private working forests actively devoted to sustainable
9 forestry, and classified as forest land under section 2 of chapter 61 of the General Laws, in order
10 to encourage sustainable forestry, protect prime forest land, and help the viability and
11 affordability of sustainable forestry; provided, that working forest conservation restrictions shall
12 be held by the department of agriculture or the department of conservation and recreation or the
13 municipality in which the land is located; provided further, that projects shall be rated based on
14 the suitability of land to grow forest products, the fair market value of the land as determined by

15 independent appraisers, proximity to other protected working forests, management history of the
16 project to serve as a model of sustainable forestry and the degree to which the conservation
17 restriction would serve to preserve and make affordable the practice of sustainable forestry in the
18 commonwealth; and for grants to public and non-public organizations and private landowners for
19 education, technical assistance, forest stewardship practices, enhancement of ecosystem services
20 and carbon sequestration, estate planning, interests in land or associated land acquisition costs;
21 grants to private forest landowners, forest businesses and non-profits for the forest viability
22 program for enhancing sustainable economic benefits of forests, including business plans and
23 implementation grants and no-development covenants to be held by the department of agriculture
24 or the department of conservation and recreation, including but not limited to forest
25 management plans for private landowners; provided, that projects and funding shall be approved
26 by the secretary of energy and environmental affairs; and provided further, that projects may be
27 carried out in cooperation with other governmental agencies, private landowners, and
28 conservation organizations according to management agreements approved by the secretary, and
29 provided further, that not less than \$500,000 shall be expended annually for new Chapter 61
30 Forest Management/Forest Stewardship Plans..... \$4,000,000”