

**Originating Committee:** Forest Resources and Management Committee

**Author(s):** Brian Schweiss

**Intended Recipient(s):** Missouri Department of Conservation, University Extension – Forestry, Missouri Forest Products Association

**Support for the White Oak Initiative**

**WHEREAS**, white oak is an iconic tree species on the Missouri landscape; and

**WHEREAS**, white oak is used for many products from flooring to wine barrels, Missouri’s mills are a leading producer of white oak staves in the U.S., and white oak is a significant part of a \$10-billion-dollar forest products industry that supports over 46,000 jobs; and

**WHEREAS**, white oak provides critical habitat and food source for numerous wildlife including deer, rabbit, turkey, racoon, northern bobwhite, ruffed grouse, squirrel, and many more; and

**WHEREAS**, numbers of white oak trees have been declining over the last 15 years; and

**WHEREAS**, white oak is still present in mature forests, but small diameter white oak trees are scarce in forest understories, causing great concern that large diameter white oak trees will not be present in sufficient number to support wildlife and industry needs in the future; and

**WHEREAS**, loss of white oak forests will have impacts on wildlife by reducing the diversity of food sources, and on the forest products industry in the state; and

**WHEREAS**, a combination of factors, including lack of active forest management, decline complexes like rapid white oak mortality, impacts from deer browse, changes in fire regimes, and the proliferation of invasive plants have led to dense stands shading and preventing the growth of white oak seedlings, and have led to this decline; and

**WHEREAS**, the White Oak Initiative was formed consisting of 17 state agencies, including the Missouri Department of Conservation, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and U.S.D.A. Forest Service, along with seven industry representatives, and 11 forest products and conservation organizations throughout the native white oak range working to ensure the long-term sustainability of America’s white oak; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Conservation Federation of Missouri, assembled this 6<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2021, calls for the Missouri Department of Conservation, Missouri Forest Products Association, and MU Forestry Extension to take action promoting the White Oak Initiative’s work and promote the active management of this iconic tree species for the use and enjoyment of generations to come.

Searchable Keywords: white oak, forest, forestry, forest management, staves, forest products, White Oak Initiative, WOI

Expires: March 6, 2026