

The Law and Ethics of Assisted Migration in the U.S.

Western Forestry & Conservation Association
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Source: Marc Roberts

Torreya taxifolia



Torreya Guardians

Torreya rewilded!

30 July 2008
Waynesville, North Carolina



Marbled White butterfly (*Melanargia galathea*)



Small Skipper butterfly (*Thymelicus sylvestris*)

Okanagan Valley, British Columbia



Greg O'Neill, British Columbia Ministry of Forests

Bob Marshall Wilderness, Montana



EcoAngler.com

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 - Limited success of past reintroductions
 - Uncertainty confounds risk assessment
 - Potential harm to receiving ecosystem

Invasive Introductions: Kudzu in Southeastern U.S.



Invasive Introductions: Cane Toad in Australia





Source: Nature

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Federal Lands & Assisted Migration

National Forests	Allowed if consistent with multiple use objectives, designated a desired species, and not invasive
BLM Lands	Allowed if consistent with multiple use objectives, ecologically sound, and not invasive
Wildlife Refugia	Allowed if endangered/threatened and essential for species survival
National Parks	Allowed if minimize risk of harm and species is: 1. closely related to an extirpated native species, or 2. an improved variety of native species where “the natural variety cannot survive current, human-altered environmental conditions”
Wilderness	Allowed only if consistent with preserving wilderness character and natural conditions

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Red Wolf (*Canis rufus*)



Guam Rail (*Gallirallus owstoni*)



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 - Leads to incongruous distinctions

Challenges to Conventional Resource Management Goals

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- Leaving wild nature undisturbed
- Restoration and preservation

Revisiting Natural Resource Law and Management

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- Natural systems are inextricably linked to human activity
- Preservation will be increasingly costly and even impossible under climate change

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- Provisional standard
 - Substantial data that:
 - Technically and economically feasible
 - Species is endangered, ecologically valuable, and compatible with the proposed site

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- *Management standards?*
 - Suitability for future conditions
- *Who decides?*

To find out more information, please visit the US Forest Service
Reforestation, Nurseries & Genetics Resources website at
<http://rngr.net>