

Alabama Forestry Strategic Plan

I. Identify measurable goals for forestry that will contribute to Alabama's economy and employment.

1. Achieve #1 ranking of forest products production across all southern states (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia) as measured by value of shipments. (*Currently, Alabama ranks 4th – NAICS codes 321, 322, 337.*)
2. Increase **direct** employment by forest industry firms by 10% by 2020. (*Direct employment in forest products companies in 2012 totaled 38,369 – NAICS 113, 321, 322, 337*)
3. Increase total harvest of timber by 5% by 2020. (*41 million tons in 2013*)
4. Increase third-party certified forest acres by 10% by 2020. (*5.5 million certified acres in 2014*)

II. Develop and implement a strategy to remove barriers to your success and foster success.

- Infrastructure
 - a. Roads Bridges
 - i. Develop a plan to repair or replace all weight-posted or functionally obsolete bridges in the state to ensure the free flow of forest products to markets.
 - b. Port Facilities
 - i. Develop a plan to remove draft restrictions or other barriers in the Port of Mobile for New Panamax ships.
- Supply Chain
 - a. Loggers
 - i. Weight/Inspection Targeting

- a. Develop “Green Light” program for use of onboard scales that allow drivers to avoid delays from weight stops and inspections.
 - ii. Access to Public Infrastructure
 - Weight Limits on Bridges and Roads
 - a. Research needed to develop minimum paving standards for roadways that will withstand anticipated traffic/loads.
 - b. Research needed to develop tractor/trailer designs that will allow loggers to optimize net weight and minimize maintenance costs.
 - iii. Access to Capital
 - Develop a program to provide loggers with access to capital for expansion of operations.
- Workforce Availability and Aging Workforce
 - a. Workforce Development
 - i. Develop and promote programs to prepare students for jobs in forest products companies.
 - ii. Develop program to recruit, train, and place workers in logging companies
- Limited/Mature Markets
 - a. New/Expanding Markets
 - i. Industry Recruitment
 - Shorten Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA) data collection cycle (currently 7 years) to 5 years.
 - Update and publish Primary Forest Industry Directory and Secondary Forest Industry Directory annually for use in promoting products of Alabama manufacturers.
 - ii. Bioenergy

- Research needed to develop cost-competitive biomass-derived liquid fuels technology.
 - iii. Expanding Markets
 - Develop education program for building professionals to promote use of wood as a primary building material in commercial structures.
 - iv. Identify and revise any building codes that prevent or discourage the use of wood and engineered wood products in commercial buildings.
- b. Export Markets
 - i. Develop a state-supported credit enhancement program to aid exporters of forest products.
 - ii. Provide procedural assistance for phytosanitary certification required for exported forest products.
- Public Perception
 - a. State Product Loyalty
 - i. Expand **Made in Alabama** marketing program for forest products to promote Alabama's business friendly climate.
 - ii. Absence of Public Relations
 - Expand education and outreach to students and teachers in order to promote contribution of forestry and forest industry to state.
 - Expand efforts to educate public about the abundance and sustainability of Alabama's forests.
- Disaster Management
 - a. Forest Protection
 - i. Evaluate status of existing forest protection assets (public and private)/programs/resources
 - ii. Develop strategy to ensure that forest resources are protected and adequate funding is available.
 - b. Natural Catastrophic Events

- i. Develop and document a Disaster Recovery Plan that will be available for use as needed.
 - o Obtain regulatory “preapproval” for network of wet storage sites across the state.
- ii. Update Disaster Recovery Plan every 5 years
- c. Invasive Species
 - i. Research needed to develop low-cost/effective strategies to minimize impacts of invasive species on forest land.

III. Identify public policy or regulatory changes needed to achieve your goals.
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- Regulatory/Legal Burdens
 - o Federal Regulatory Rulemakings (EPA, FWS, OSHA, INS)
 - o Legal – Worker Compensation
- Supply Chain
 - a. Loggers
 - i. Weight/Inspection Targeting
 - o Legislation needed to prohibit discrimination.
 - o Legislation/regulations needed to encourage compliance.
 - a. Develop Green Light program for use of onboard scales to allow drivers to avoid delays from weight stops and inspections.
 - iv. Access to Public Infrastructure
 - a. Legislation needed to require objective/scientific basis prior to posting weight limits.
 - b. Legislation needed to increase axle-weight limits on federal (noninterstate), state, and local roadways.
 - c. Research needed to develop minimum paving standards for roadways that will withstand anticipated traffic/loads.

- d. Research needed to develop tractor/trailer designs that will allow loggers to optimize net weight and minimize maintenance costs.

IV. Identify the research and Extension issues you need addressed to achieve your goals.

- Infrastructure
 - a. Roads and Bridges
 - i. Legislation to create dedicated funding for bridge replacement from reallocation of existing revenues.
- Supply Chain
 - a. Loggers
 - i. Weight/Inspection Targeting
 - Legislation needed to prohibit discrimination.
 - Legislation needed to prohibit multiple stops/inspections on one trip.
 - Legislation/regulations needed to encourage compliance.
 - ii. Access to Public Infrastructure
 - Restricted Access
 - a. Legislation needed to eliminate any restrictions of access to public roadways by logging operations.
 - b. Legislation needed to eliminate any bonding requirements for access to or use of public roadways.
 - Weight Limits on Bridges and Roads
 - a. Legislation needed to require objective/scientific basis prior to posting weight limits.
 - b. Legislation needed to increase axle-weight limits on federal (noninterstate), state, and local roadways.
- Regulatory/Legal Burdens
 - a. Federal Regulatory Rulemakings

- i. Legislation needed to create line item in Attorney General’s budget to support challenges to federal rule making.
 - b. Legal
 - i. Workers Compensation
 - o Legislation needed to enact comprehensive changes in state workers compensation statutes.
- Limited/Mature Markets
 - a. Building Standards and Codes
 - i. Legislation needed to prohibit state agencies and subdivisions from using green building standards that discriminate against Alabama forests and forest products.
 - b. Natural Catastrophic Events
 - i. Legislation needed to provide for automatic suspension of weight restrictions on roadways where necessary to recover timber damaged by natural disaster.

V. Identify the communications needed to achieve your goals.

- Workforce Availability and Aging Workforce
 - a. Workforce Development
 - i. Promote forestry and forestry-related job opportunities to school administrators, guidance counselors, teachers, and students.
- Public Perception
 - a. State Product Loyalty
 - i. Absence of Public Relations
 - o Expand education and outreach to students and teachers in order to promote contribution of forestry and forest industry to state.
 - o Expand efforts to educate public about the abundance and sustainability of Alabama’s forests.