The Future of Forestry

To ensure the success of our forest resources for future generations, we need to bolster and retain a strong and knowledgeable labor force. By identifying opportunities to develop and support a strong workforce, the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) strives to assist and stimulate forest industry at a local, regional, and statewide level. With forest industry being the third largest industry in Virginia, there are ample job openings but limited trained labor for many positions.

Employment Opportunities

Forestry jobs span a wide variety of knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Sawyers
- Forklift operators
- Welders
- Mechanics
- Computer, electronics, and technology
- Kiln operators
- Log and lumber graders
- Logging equipment operators
- Truck drivers

Workforce Development Efforts

To improve training and development opportunities in the skilled trades needed in forest industry, we are:

- Developing pilot community college forestry training programs
- Working with Virginia economic development partners to connect with community colleges in Virginia with programs adaptable to the forest sector
- Formation of Virginia Wood Council to network industry, educational institutions, and government agencies for common goals.

Audiences to Reach

- Veterans
- High school graduates
- 14-18 year olds
- Rehabbed offenders
- Those looking to switch career fields

Goals of Training Programs

- To increase the labor force in forest industry
- To establish more training programs for forest industry across Virginia
- To increase awareness of positions available in forest industry
- To work with community colleges and technical school programs statewide to implement targeted training and educational programs for forest industry
A Cooperative Effort

To be successful, we must work together to develop the necessary workforce to support forest industry into the future.

We Need Your Help!

We need input from forest industry, workforce development program staff, community colleges, vocational schools, and other educators.

- Workforce development contacts in various regions of the state
- Entities interested in offering scholarships or endorsing a training program in their area
- Input regarding the most critical staffing needs

Contact Us

Please reach out to provide input into this effort:

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