



FY25-27 Budget Brief Sustaining Wisconsin's Forests

The Wisconsin Council on Forestry is comprised of a diverse membership of representatives dedicated to **ensuring Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities and a Healthy Forest Products Industry**. Members include the state forester, elected officials and representatives of forest products industries, professional societies, education and non-governmental organizations.

The Council was **created by State Statute 26.02 in July 2002 to advise the Governor, Legislature, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Department of Commerce, and other state agencies on a host of forestry issues in the state including funding needs for forestry programs**, forest health, economic development, sustainable practices, legislation affecting forest management and the use of forest products to name a few. It is in this advisory capacity that the Council makes the following **FY25-27 Budget recommendations**.

Program Description	\$ Amount	Spend Description
Forest Industry-Wide Strategic Plan and Roadmap	\$1,000,000	One time from Forestry SEG Account
Forest Industry-Wide Strategic Plan and Roadmap Committee Position Support	\$300,000	Annually (\$100,000/yr) for duration of project anticipated to be approximately 3 years
Council on Forestry Support Position	\$71,000	Annual – Increase, DNR – Division of Forestry LTE salary line, 1 FTE
Wisconsin Forest Landowner Grant Program	\$500,000	Annual - Increase, DNR - Division of Forestry spending authority within the grant appropriation
UWSP LEAF and WI Forestry Center	\$616,000	Annual – Increase, DNR - Division of Forestry spending authority within the K-12 education appropriation
Division of Forestry Supplies and Services	\$675,000	Annual – Increase, (restore) DNR – Division of Forestry supplies and service line
WI County Forests Grants	\$630,000	Annual – Increase, DNR – Division of Forestry spending authority within the grant appropriation
WI County Forests DNR Support -Staff Hours Increase	\$350,000	Annual – Increase, DNR – Division of Forestry position authority and salary line, 3.5 FTE
Division of Forestry WisFIRS IT Support	\$400,000	Annual – Increase, DNR - Division of Forestry spending authority for contracting IT services

Forest products industry important statistics:

- The forest products industry provides over **58,000 direct full- and part-time jobs** with a total **economic contribution of \$24.5 billion**.
- It ranks **twelfth** in terms of the number of full- and part-time jobs, **eighth** in value-added, and **second in industry output** in the state.
- **Every 10 jobs** in the forest products industry **support an additional 12 jobs** in other state sectors.
- Combining direct, indirect and induced effects, the **industry contributes 130,000 jobs with an annual gross output of \$37.8 billion**.
- The forest products industry is the **number one employer in eight counties** and the **number one for industry output in 15 counties**.

Despite these substantial numbers, Wisconsin's forest industry faces several challenges that the Council believes will significantly limit these economic contributions in the future. Therefore, it is imperative the State of Wisconsin invests in our forests and forest products industry in the FY25-27 budget. We are asking you to dedicate the resources and funding to complete the needed research and develop a comprehensive strategic plan **to support, diversify, and further develop our forest industry**, and support the additional critical needs outlined above.

Contact Tom Hittle, WI Council on Forestry Chair at (715) 367-3966 or hittle.tomj@gmail.com with questions or for more information.