

Steering Committee Meeting

Wisconsin Forests **FIRST**
Industry Roadmap

[Forest Industry Roadmap and Strategies for Tomorrow]



April 2026

On today's agenda



Welcome and Purpose

Why we're here and what success looks like.



Project Snapshot

What we're building and what it includes.



Shaping the Discussion


Discussion and key questions.



What's Next

Next steps, resources, and site visit opportunities for our next meeting.

What we'll accomplish today



Build a shared understanding of the goals of Wisconsin Forests FIRST and the role of the Steering Committee in advancing the work.

Identify priority areas of exploration and critical questions shaping the future of the wood and forest products sector.

Establish how information will be shared and how Steering Committee members can provide input and questions throughout the process.



A full service economic development firm since 1999.

Expertise: industry analytics, project oversight, strategy development, lead generation, economic impact analysis



Innovative Natural Resource Solutions

Forest and natural resource consulting since 1994.

Expertise:
Renewable energy, carbon, forest certification, land protecting and forest management

Industry Analytics and Strategy Development

- Over 25 years of experience in economic development and industry analytics.
- Respected team with national experience handling multi-million dollar state contracts.
- Strong partnership with INRS with numerous collaborations in the industry.
- We provide our clients with the analysis and strategic foresight needed to make informed decisions.
- Camoin utilizes best-in-class data sources to determine market intelligence and market opportunities.
- Our team regularly contributes to national publications on industry trends, ensuring that we bring the latest insights to every engagement.



Jim Damicis

Technical support and industry intelligence

Technical Lead, subject matter expert: workforce, industry intelligence, benchmarking peer communities



Eric Kingsley

Industry Expert

Internationally recognized forest industry leader, Northeast Regional Consultant for the Forest Resources Association



Alex Tranmer, CEcD

Principal

Ensures strategic alignment, facilitates major decisions, coordinates engagement, and approves deliverables



Tori Conroy

Project Manager

Coordinates with the Project Team, manages schedules, facilitates meetings and engagement, tracks decisions and progress, and ensures on-budget/on-time performance



Eric Kingsley
Industry Expert

Internationally
recognized forest
industry leader,
Northeast Regional
Consultant for the
Forest Resources
Association

Role: Vice President of Innovative Natural Resource Solutions

Industry Focus: Includes the development of new markets for forest products, analysis of business opportunities, and financing of forest and forest industry projects

Current Projects:

- 1) The development and now operations of a biochar manufacturing facility,
- 2) development of biofuel facilities in Maine and Washington,
- 3) efforts to broaden species qualifications for mass timber products, and
- 4) production of new building materials from wood feedstocks

Affiliations: Maine Forest Products Council, Maine Technology Institute, Forest Resource Association

**What is the Wisconsin
Forest FIRST Industry
Roadmap?**

Budget Bill Language



FOREST-INDUSTRY-WIDE STRATEGIC PLAN. In the 2025-26 fiscal year, the department of natural resources shall award a grant of \$1,000,000 from the appropriation under s. 20.370 (2) (mq) jointly to the Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association and the Wisconsin Paper Council to research and develop a recommended forest-industry-wide strategic plan for this state. Upon completion, the Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association and the Wisconsin Paper Council shall provide this research and recommended plan to the council on forestry. No later than December 31, 2027, the council on forestry shall provide a report detailing the research outcomes and recommendations to the governor and the chief clerk of each house of the legislature, for distribution to the appropriate standing committees under s. 13.172 (3).

What this Means in Practice



A strategic plan and roadmap for the State of Wisconsin's forestry industry.

Data analytics

Graphics

Market Opportunities

Communication

Priorities & Partnerships

Actionable Strategies

Timeline: January 2026 –December 2027

Project Components



Methodology



Research Topics

What data is needed to develop a roadmap to grow Wisconsin's forest products industry?

- Industry overview & Wood supply assessment*
- Regulatory conditions
- Imports/Exports
- Workforce analysis
- Emerging markets
- Innovation, R&D, and entrepreneurship
- Supply chain expansion
- Real estate needs
- State comparisons

What to Expect on the Steering Committee

Under the direction of the Executive Committee, the Steering Committee will.....



Provide local context on the industry or related content at regularly scheduled meetings.



Share perspectives across different aspects of the industry.



Review materials, share feedback.

Guiding Principles for Steering Committee



This process is an opportunity to bring those different viewpoints together.



Asking questions is encouraged.



We recognize that perspectives and priorities will differ across the group.



There is no single “right” answer—diverse input is valuable and necessary.



Open, respectful dialogue will help strengthen the outcomes of this work.

Project Start-Up



Web content

Public-facing content published on Council's website.



Press Release

Published March 2, 2026.



Advancing the Wood Supply Assessment

Using USDA Forest Inventory & Analysis, state and regional data, also engaging landowners and other categories of stakeholders to evaluate the status of the state's wood supply.

Examples of Success in Pennsylvania and Maine

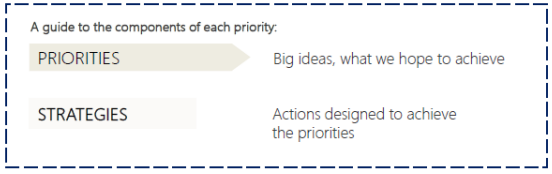
State of Pennsylvania



Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan outlines four key priorities designed to drive continued innovation in the forest and wood products industry, attract and grow businesses, and address the most pressing workforce challenges. These priorities build on existing collaborations and highlight critical areas for sustained investment and potential reallocation of resources. They identify opportunities to strengthen partnerships, inform the day-to-day operations of funding partners, and support funding requests by clearly demonstrating areas of need and impact.

- PRIORITY A** Capturing Emerging Market Opportunities
- PRIORITY B** Building the Talent Pipeline
- PRIORITY C** Expanding Trade Within the Forest and Wood Products Industry
- PRIORITY D** Addressing Weaknesses in the Supply Chain



PRIORITY A Capturing Emerging Market Opportunities

4) BIOCHAR

Biochar is produced by superheating wood or other biomass in the absence of oxygen. During the production process, wood develops a stable and carbon-rich porous structure. The characteristics of biochar depend on the feedstock, the processing temperature, and the time processed, so not all biochar is created equal or useful for the same purpose. Woody feedstocks for biochar can include sawmill residuals, whole tree chips, and chipped pulpwood.

Biochar has a range of applications, including an agricultural soil amendment to improve productivity and increase water retention, as an environmental remediation agent, as an additive to animal feed, and in landscaping applications. Biochar also serves to permanently sequester carbon, and as such, manufacturers of biochar that sell to non-combustion applications may be eligible to participate in the voluntary carbon credit marketplace.

Pennsylvania currently has one biochar manufacturer using wood as a feedstock: Metzler Biochar in Reedsville, Mifflin County.



Biochar is produced from sawmill residuals.

At this time, biochar is a relatively small market, but the growing number of applications coupled with additional revenue from the sale of carbon credits may make it ripe for expansion in the future.

State of Maine

Transforming Maine's Future Forest Workforce

February 2024



Overview

The following recommendations will support FOR/MAINE in promoting career pathways to advance talent development, recruitment, and retention for the Maine forest products sector.

1. Provide ongoing technical support through FOR/MAINE or another organization to advance collaboration on career pathways for in-demand occupations and coordinate resource sharing for the forest products sector.
2. Convene an annual FPS Summit to unite all partners around career pathways expansion.
3. Increase marketing efforts to distribute career profiles and pathways to all FPS education and training providers, community partners, and the workforce system.
4. Administer student, alumni, and workforce surveys on an annual basis, working with workforce, education and training providers, and community partners to deliver it.
5. Evaluate feasibility of expanding existing training programs and infrastructure to support the FPS industry talent pipeline.

These recommendations acknowledge the action that FOR/MAINE has already taken to support career pathways in the forest products sector, including outreach and marketing to adult job seekers in target populations (such as veterans, migrant workers, and workers from the re-entry community), career exploration programs for students, and efforts to expand access to jobs and credentials that propel workers into FPS careers. The following recommendations build on these efforts while also offering strategies for growing FPS partnerships and more closely engaging employers in talent pipeline development.

Strategy 3 in Action:

Career Pathways Information Distribution

3. Increase marketing efforts to distribute career profiles and pathways to all FPS education and training providers, community partners, and the workforce system.

Activities:

- a) Update website with revised career pathway information, allowing opportunities for jobseekers to interact with the information and find more details. Ensure that all updated information is connected to the Department of Labor's career pathway information.
- b) Promote materials among partners who provide career exploration or advising services, including schools, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, etc. All organizations will be able to share common information with their jobseekers, ensuring an accurate and common message about the industry.

Executive Summary



FORESTERS

Current Jobs
in Maine,
across all sectors
(2022)

61

Job Openings per
Year in Maine,
across all sectors
(average 2022 -32)

6

Median Hourly
Wages
across all sectors
(2022)

\$26.31

Typical Entry Points

A Bachelor's degree is typically required, though Associates degree programs are also available. Summer internships or cooperative learning is often required for graduation.

Career & Tech. Education

- Forestry
- Wood Harvesting
- Natural Resource Management
- Agriscience

Associate's or Bachelor's Degree

- Forestry
- Forest Ecology
- Forest Resources
- Applied Forest Management

Experience in

- #### Related Occupations
- Conservation Scientists
 - Forest & Conservation Workers/Technicians

Forester Tech / Intern

Depending on the entry point, workers will likely be able to bring value to the role right away, while gaining the education and experience required to move towards certification.

Licensed Forester & Career Progression

With 1 -2 years of field experience plus a Bachelor's degree, workers can become certified by the State of Maine as a Licensed forester. From there, career progression can take multiple forms depending on interests, prior experience, and skill attainment. To advance, workers need 5-7+ years within the role and to demonstrate leadership, experience, and capabilities in one or more of the following areas.

- #### Specialization
- Planning
 - Harvesting
 - Silviculture

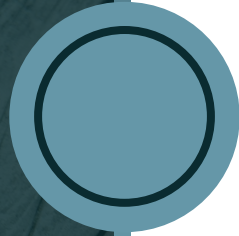
- #### Management
- Industrial
 - Road Forestry
 - Technical
 - Outreach
 - Team Lead
 - Supervisor
 - Manager
 - Area/District Manager

- #### Related Fields
- Sales
 - Procurement
 - Marketing

Next Meeting

- Expected agenda
 - Steering Committee Meeting
 - Goal: Review initial data, discuss what questions it brings up
- Down the road...
 - In-person interviews/conversations
 - Tour specific locations throughout the state
- Engaging with us in the meantime...

Next Steps



Progress Wood Supply Assessment.



Follow up with notes and the shared file system.



Determine other potential research needs.



Collect headshots and bios of Executive Committee and Steering Committee members