WHAT IS WISCONSIN FORESTS FIRST

Wisconsin Forests FIRST (Forest Industry Roadmap and Strategies for Tomorrow) is a statewide initiative focused on developing a strategic plan and long-term roadmap to ensure Wisconsin's forests remain healthy and productive, while strengthening the state's competitive and sustainable forest products industry.

The initiative brings together industry leaders, and subject matter experts to identify challenges and position Wisconsin's forest and wood products sector for long-term success. Over the course of two years, the effort will generate strategies, data-driven insights, and shared priorities that support forest health and overall economic vitality of different components of the sector across the state.

Wisconsin Forests FIRST is made possible through a $1 million State of Wisconsin grant awarded to the Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association and the Wisconsin Paper Council, in close collaboration with the Wisconsin Council on Forestry.

WHO IS INVOLVED

Executive Committee

An Executive Committee will provide strategic direction and oversight for Wisconsin Forests FIRST and includes representatives from:

- Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association
- Wisconsin Paper Council
- Wisconsin Council on Forestry
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Who is the project management team comprised of?

Camoin Associates was chosen to serve as the Project Manager for the full two-year initiative.

Camoin Associates brings extensive experience managing large, multi-partner strategic planning efforts and a deep understanding of the forest and wood products industry. The firm is a trusted national partner to state agencies, industry associations, workforce boards, and economic development organizations, with a strong track record of advancing forest-based economies in states such as Maine and Pennsylvania. Their multidisciplinary approach integrates industry analysis, workforce analytics, market intelligence, and stakeholder engagement to deliver roadmaps to guide industry activity.

Camoin Associates will partner with Eric Kingsley of Innovative Natural Resource Solutions LLC (INRS) as part of the project management team. Eric Kingsley is a nationally recognized expert in forest resources and wood fiber supply analysis. He serves as the Northeast Regional Consultant for the Forest Resources Association and has led more than 100 wood supply analyses for pulp and paper mills, biomass facilities, and sawmills across the country.

Steering Committee

A Steering Committee, made up of diverse forestry sector representatives, will support the project by providing subject-matter expertise, reviewing and vetting data, offering on-the-ground industry perspectives, and participating in periodic meetings. As approved by the Executive Committee, Steering Committee Members may also lead or contribute to ad hoc working groups focused on specific topics or priority issues as they emerge throughout the process.

WHAT WORK WILL BE CONDUCTED?

Over the course of the two-year initiative, Wisconsin Forests FIRST will undertake a series of research, analysis, and engagement activities to build a comprehensive understanding of Wisconsin's forest-based economy.

In addition to delivering a statewide strategic roadmap, the project will produce a suite of data tools and resources that partners can use to inform their own planning, policy, and investment decisions. Key components include:

- Data analytics and industry research

- Market and value-chain opportunity analysis

- Graphics and visualization tools

- Identification of shared priorities and partnerships

- Actionable, implementation-focused strategies

HOW WILL PROGRESS BE COMMUNICATED?

This initiative represents a two-year effort that will extend through the end of 2027. The project is currently in its startup phase, with foundational research activities scheduled to begin in March 2026. As the work advances, this page will be updated to reflect key milestones, major deliverables, and schedule refinements.