

# WOOD INDUSTRY

VISIONS  
NORTHWEST



GROW NORTH

## COLLABORATIVE

WORKING TOGETHER TO GROW OUR ECONOMY

STORY, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, AND CHALLENGES

**Council on Forestry Presentation**

**May 18th, 2022**



## WHERE IT BEGAN...



- In 2015, Visions Northwest identified the need to expand our wood products potential throughout the region through the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) process.
- Conversations began and in 2016, an informal partnership with stakeholders in the Grow North region grew. The Wood Industry Collaborative was formed to find ways to connect the wood products industry with economic development, workforce development, and public agencies to encourage growth in investments, training, and jobs throughout the region.

# STRATEGIC PLANNING



In 2017, a strategic planning process lead to a framework to engage with and support the industry.

- **Goal 1: Maintain, Grow & Replace the Wood Industry Workforce**
- **Goal 2: Expand the Collaborative & Develop Legislative Partnerships**
- **Goal 3: Develop Branding and Marketing for the Wood Industry**





**Economic & Workforce Development, Education, Industry, State Agencies**

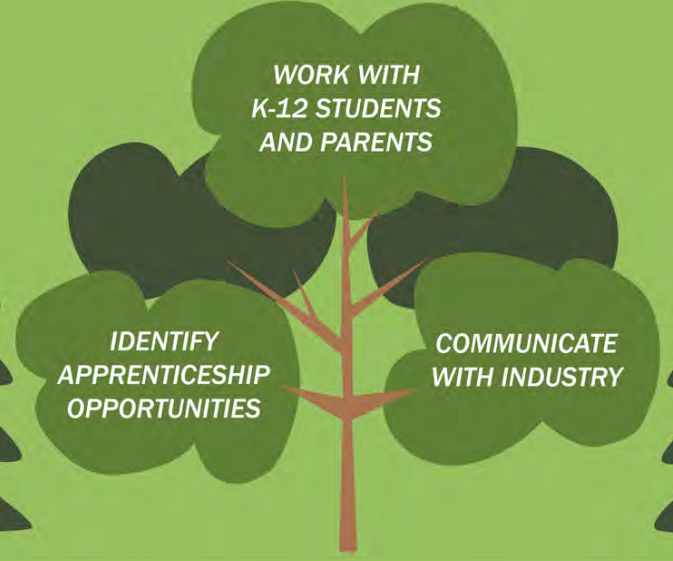
**OUR MISSION:**  
*The Wood Industry Collaborative will advocate and promote business growth through advancing existing and emerging markets in order to ensure the success of northern Wisconsin's largest industry.*

**OUR OBJECTIVES**

**Increase Awareness and Support of the Industry**



**Increase Workforce and Education**



**Establish Legislative Partnerships**



**WHO WE ARE:**  
 Visions Northwest, Grow North, DNR Wood Products Specialists, Renewable Resource Solutions, Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board, Governor's Northern Office, Northwest Regional Planning Commission, Wisconsin County Forests Association, Natural Resource Research Institute, Phillips Lionite Wood Products LLC, Kemp Natural Resource Center, Schoeneck Logging, Congressman Duffy's Office, Northcentral Technical College, Nicolet Area Technical College, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College, Gogebic Community College, Counties of Iron, Oneida, Ashland, Bayfield, Florence, Langlade, Oconto.

**For more information visit:**  
**VISIONS NORTHWEST**  
[www.visionsnorthwest.org](http://www.visionsnorthwest.org)  
**GROW NORTH**  
[www.grownorth.org](http://www.grownorth.org)



# ACCOMPLISHMENTS: WORKFORCE



In 2017, coordinated a forest products industry breakout session at the Governor's Summit - piggybacked a Cabinet on the Road Event with Northwood School District. Toured the Northwood FabLab, learned about the Forestry Technician Program in cooperation with WITC and Ericson Logging and Trucking and witnessed a demonstration of the logging equipment by the students in the program.





ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

LEGISLATIVE

PARTNERSHIPS



The Collaborative helped coordinate a “Timber Tour” in Rhineland with the Department of Financial Institution’s Secretary and Deputy Secretary in 2018 and the multiple leaders, legislators, as well as the Secretary-designee of the Department of Workforce Development in 2019.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS:  
MARKETING/  
AWARENESS

The Collaborative identified the need to create **simple** messaging about sustainably managed and harvested forests that had the power to change perceptions by addressing the real, tangible value that forests and forest products deliver to our everyday lives.

Developed a Social Media (Facebook) presence and began sharing information.

Proposed a partnership with Discover Mediaworks using the Know Your Wisconsin platform to develop simple communication in four easily-digestible videos that highlight positive stories and facts-based information about the forest products industry.







ACCOMPLISHMENTS:  
MARKETING/  
AWARENESS



# GREAT IDEA! HOW DO WE FUND IT?

WEDC expressed interest in potentially providing a Capacity Building Grant to fund up to \$15,000 for the \$30,000 project - this left the Collaborative with the \$15,000 match from other sources.

Extensive outreach and funding requests were sent to over 20 industry associations, agencies, and industry stakeholders. Began in early 2019, final commitments were secured by October and an application was submitted to WEDC.

The project was awarded in March of 2020 (right before the pandemic).





ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

MARKETING/

AWARENESS



## FUNDING PARTNERS

- WEDC - \$15,000 Capacity Building Grant
- Earl St. John Education Fund - \$6,000
- Wisconsin SFI Implementation Committee - \$5,000
- Northwest Regional Planning Commission - \$2,000
- Grow North Regional Economic Development - \$1,000
- Wisconsin County Forests Association - \$1,000





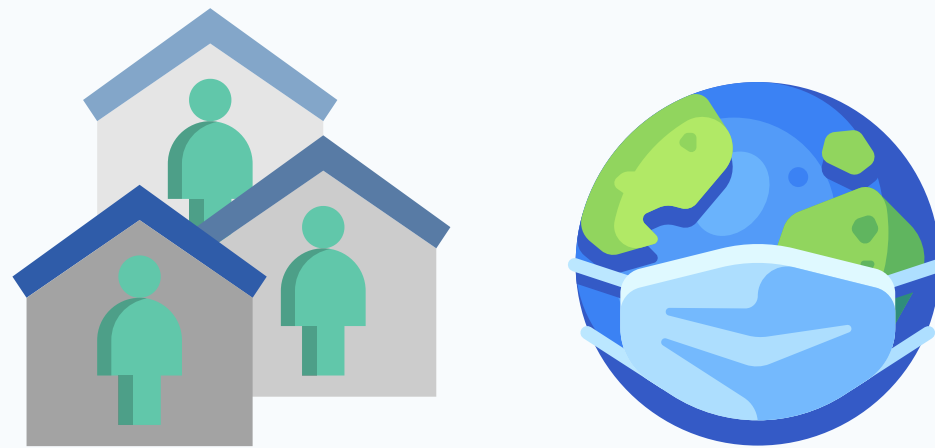


ACCOMPLISHMENTS:  
MARKETING/  
AWARENESS



## FOUR VIDEO SEGMENTS

Just as the project kicked off, the world stopped...



As things began to open up again, we were able to move forward and begin filming and developing the four segments.

- Did You Know? Cellulose Products
- Forest Habitat and Recreation
- Sustainable Forest Products
- Wood Technology Center: Antigo





ACCOMPLISHMENTS:  
MARKETING/  
AWARENESS



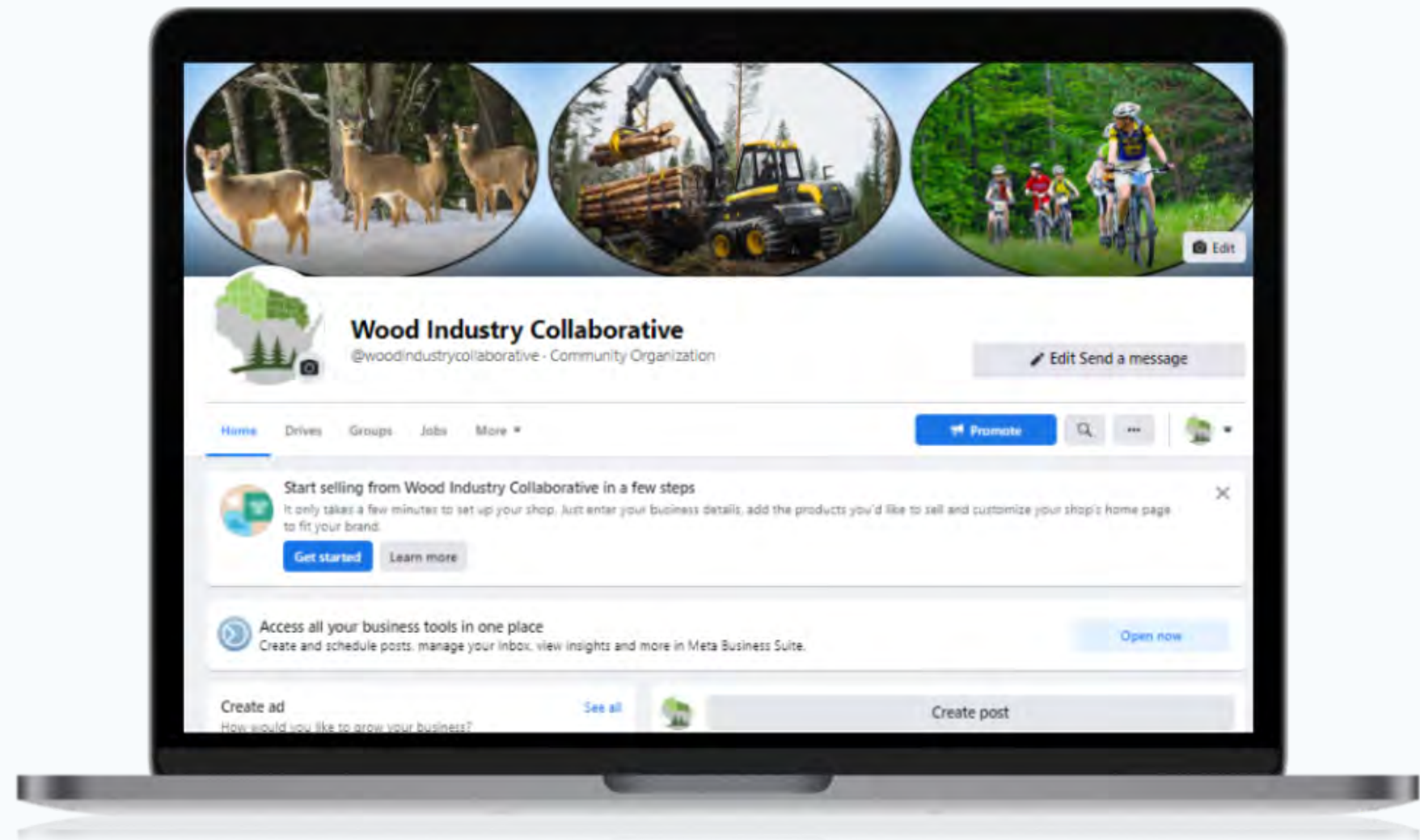
# FOREST HABITAT AND RECREATION



<https://youtu.be/8tmdFtp77mA>



ACCOMPLISHMENTS:  
MARKETING/  
AWARENESS



**FOREST PRODUCTS**  
*in Wisconsin*

Provide more than 63,000 full  
and part-time jobs

Total industry output of \$24.4 billion  
and value-added of \$6.7 billion

**FOREST PRODUCTS**  
*in Wisconsin*

**#1 Employer in 7 counties**

One of the Top Ten  
Employers in 29 Counties



# CHALLENGES AND THE FUTURE OF THE COLLABORATIVE



- In the past two years, focus and priorities have shifted due to increase pandemic-related resources and needs.
- There is very limited staff capacity to continue efforts
  - Without dedicated staff time, sustainability of the informal Collaborative is challenged
- It takes a lot of time and effort to raise the appropriate funds needed to support project ideas and implement them.
- The future of the Collaborative is unclear at this time as far as a project lead, but stands by ready to assist State efforts and potential EDA funded Build Back Better initiatives



# CONTACT INFORMATION



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Northwest Regional Planning Commission

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*keeping your future as our focus*

