

The Forestry Industry in Virginia

Virginia's Economy Grows Here

Forestry in Virginia: Key Facts

The forestry industry is one of Virginia's most significant natural resource sectors, providing thousands of jobs and contributing billions of dollars to the state's economy. Forests cover nearly 62% of Virginia's land area, supporting diverse wildlife and recreational opportunities while supplying raw materials for wood products, paper, and bioenergy.

Economic Impact

- Forestry is Virginia's third-largest private sector industry.
- Virginia's forestry sector contributes over \$21 billion annually to the state's economy.
- The industry supports more than 108,000 jobs, including logging, milling, manufacturing, and transportation.
- Exports of lumber, wood chips, and paper products are vital to Virginia's global trade.

Environmental Stewardship

- Forests help protect Virginia's watersheds, reduce soil erosion, and improve air quality.
- Sustainable forestry practices are promoted through state and federal programs to ensure long-term health and productivity of forest resources.
- Virginia has over 16 million acres of forests, with private landowners managing about 80% of this area.

Major Products & Uses

- **Lumber:** Used in construction, furniture, and flooring.
- **Pulp & Paper:** Essential for packaging, printing, and hygiene products.
- **Biomass:** Renewable energy source for power generation.

Key Issues

- **Markets:** Vibrant markets are critical for our industry and for forest health, but Virginia has lost at least four major southern yellow pine mills to North and South Carolina in the past twelve years. According to press releases, these four facilities were scheduled to create **over 1,300 direct jobs** at the mills, representing over **\$1 billion** in facilities investment. We need your support!
- **Biomass:** Biomass from woody and manufacturing residuals provides a critical market, powers our industry, supports Virginia's clean energy goals, and leads to net reductions in atmospheric CO₂. Virginia's energy policy should continue to support biomass.
- **Keeping land in healthy forests:** Wildfire prevention, invasive species, and land conversion threaten forest health. Virginia's policies should support keeping land in forest, and keeping forests healthy.