

Working forests create a better today and tomorrow for us all.

Washington's Working Forests Newsletter March 2020

What are "Working Forests?"

A Working Forest is professionally managed to provide a continuous supply of renewable, sustainable wood products for building materials -- with a focus on protecting fish, water and wildlife. Using scientific practices and adhering to comprehensive state forestry laws, Washington's working forests work to give back to our entire state. Growing working forests absorb carbon, wood products store carbon, and the forest sector taken as a whole currently operates with a negative carbon footprint that supports greenhouse gas reduction goals and rural economies across Washington, a fact that is recognized in state law.

The Good News from the Woods Homeland Security: Forest sector is a part of critical infrastructure

The impact of the coronavirus epidemic response on Washington's working forestry community is small in comparison to the weight that people and businesses in Washington state and the nation are bearing to see this through.

This week, the US government issued new guidance about the role of forestry affirming that yearround efforts to maintain healthy forests for today and tomorrow are also must continue during the current crisis.

In a March 19 <u>memorandum</u>, the US Department of Homeland Security identified sustainable working forests and the entire forest sector as part of the nation's essential infrastructure, a distinction that goes far beyond keeping the manufacture of paper towels and toilet paper humming at 100%, as it currently is doing.

The DHS letter specifically identifies, "Workers who support the manufacture and distribution of forest products, including, but not limited to timber, paper, and other wood products" as part of the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce.

Representatives of the forestry industry delivered a <u>letter</u> to Washington State Gov. Jay Inslee echoing the DHS' affirmation.

In response to DHS' announcement, the Washington Forest Protection Association (WFPA) and the American Forest Resource Council (AFRC) submitted a joint letter to Gov. Jay Inslee urging him to make a similar declaration to promote both forest and economic health. ...

The letter pointed out that wood building products are the "principal building material used across a myriad of infrastructure projects, including emergency medical and lodging structures, temporary buildings, as well as timely refurbishing or repurposing of existing facilities for immediate use."

And, because the forestry industry is one where social distancing is not a "new normal," but has been a part of the routine, the workforce is well-suited to safely bear the load and maintain a strong link in the chain, tending to the health of forests and keeping the supply of wood moving.

... WFPA Executive Director Mark Doumit and AFPA President Travis Joseph pointed out that the forestry industry's track record of safety complements the new guidelines and restrictions on large gatherings and promotes social distancing.

Working in a forest setting "naturally occurs with little interpersonal interaction and close contact with others" and modern-day lumber mills operate in an open environment with workers well spread out. And in keeping with the latest coronavirus-related guidelines to reduce community spread of the COVID-19, mill managers have instituted practices to minimize contact, like "focusing on limiting interactions in break rooms and sanitizing equipment during shift changes." ...

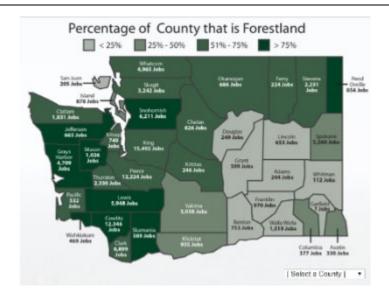
Read more <u>here</u> on our website.

Have You Signed?

The petition drive is still moving forward for the creation of this special Washington state vehicle license plate supporting working forests. Your help is still needed. Share <u>our petition</u> with your friends. Make sure our voices are heard.



SIGN THE PETITION TODAY!



How much do working forestry and wood products mean to Washington state? An awful lot.

Our interactive map tells the whole story. <u>Click</u> to learn more.

Did You Know?

March 21st is the International Day of Forests

Since 2013, member countries of the United Nations have recognized March 21st as the <u>International Day of</u> <u>Forests</u> for the purpose of raising awareness of the importance of every type of forest -- including sustainably managed working forests which support ecosystems and supply renewable, carbon friendly timber -- in supporting the needs of future generations.

The theme for International Day of Forests 2020 is 'Forests and Biodiversity,' an emphasis designed to draw attention in part to the ways that science-driven forest management is being used to support wildlife and to curb incentives for mass deforestation.

Check out the hashtag #InternationalDayOfForests2020 on <u>social media</u> for more information and discussion.

