



News Release

For more information, contact:
Nathan McClure
478-951-4548
nmcclure@gfc.state.ga.us
GaTrees.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE...OCTOBER 19, 2009

GEORGIA FORESTRY VALUES NOTED THIS WEEK

As Americans mark National Forest Products Week from October 18-24, a new report shows Georgia's forest products industry has a significant impact on the state's economy.

"The forest industry generates an estimated \$540 million dollars in revenues for the state budget every year," said Nathan McClure, Forest Energy and Development Director with the Georgia Forestry Commission. Citing a recent study by the Georgia Institute of Technology, McClure said, "Forestry creates more than 128,000 jobs statewide and has a \$28.7 billion impact on Georgia. This amazing, renewable resource provides tangible, critical benefits to every Georgian."

National Forest Products Week was established by Congress in 1960 as a time to recognize the many products that come from our forests, the people who work in and manage our forests, the people who make the products, and how they all contribute to our lives.

"Forest products are changing and the recognition of Forests Products Week helps communicate that," said McClure. "In addition, Americans' awareness of the "green" benefits of forestry is increasing. Forests provide clean air, clean water, wildlife habitat, aesthetics and recreation space, and those are critical services we must protect."

As a national leader in traditional forest products including lumber and wood pulp, Georgia also is making strides in new bio-energy development, including cellulosic ethanol, wood pellets and biomass-to- electricity. The Georgia Forestry Commission provides assistance to this growing industry by directing the energy development focus to areas of the state where timber growth is abundant and where new markets are needed to boost rural economies. The Georgia Tech report, authored by Dr. William Riall and commissioned by the Georgia Forestry Commission, showed 49 Georgia counties are currently considered to be dependent upon forestry industries to keep their local economies healthy.

For more than 50 years, Georgia has maintained a stable forest land base of 24 million acres while the forests remain productive and sustainable, according to McClure. Of the state's commercial forests, net annual growth exceeds harvests by 39% every year.

The Georgia Forestry Commission is a dynamic state agency responsible for providing leadership, service, and education in the protection and conservation of Georgia's forest resources. For more information on Georgia's forests, visit the GFC website at GaTrees.org.

#