

A YEAR IN REVIEW

NCFA'S 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

The North Carolina Forestry Association enjoyed a successful year thanks to the leadership and participation of its membership, ending the year with about 4,000 members segmented into 20 membership categories.

We cannot forget the power of positive partnerships. As we continue to nurture our partnerships with like-minded organizations, our rural economies benefit as we collectively raise the profile of forest conservation and the role the forest products industry plays in supporting NC agriculture.

WE THANK ALL OF OUR PARTNERS FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT. WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

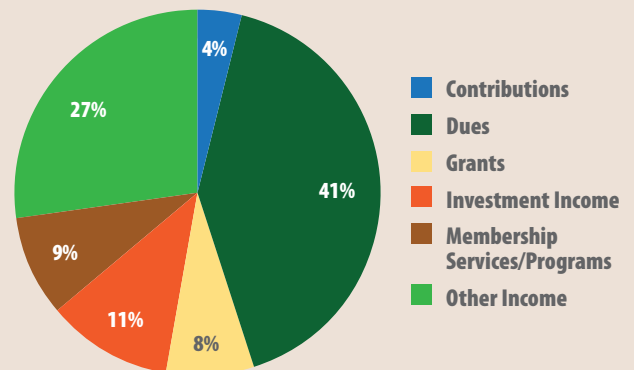
This annual report captures the highlights of 2025 and the progress the NCFA and its members have made toward addressing the priorities of our industry. We'll walk you through our fiscal year, insurance programs, collective legislative activity and outcomes, the great strides being made by our education and ProLogger programs, and the best ways to stay informed as a member of the NCFA.

FISCAL YEAR

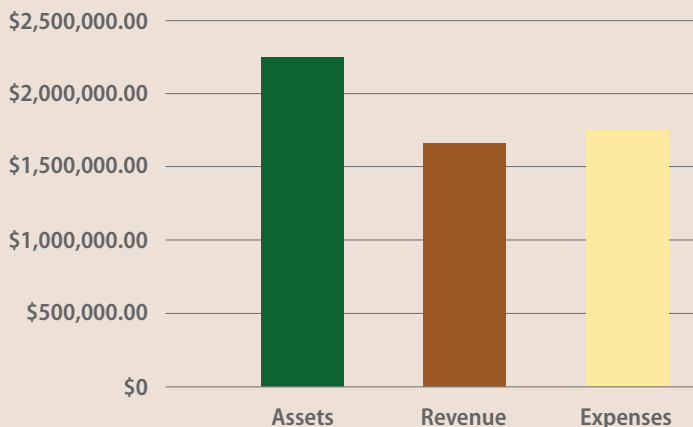
The NCFA and the Forest Education and Conservation Foundation (FECF) remain proactive in navigating industry challenges while delivering high-caliber programming and service to our members. Thanks to your continued support, both dues revenue and member contributions to support education programs saw significant growth in 2025.

Over the past two years, our staff and Board of Directors have prioritized financial stability while simultaneously expanding our reach through advocacy and education. Despite rising operational costs, we remain committed to exploring new revenue streams and investing deeply in the strategic initiatives that drive our industry forward.

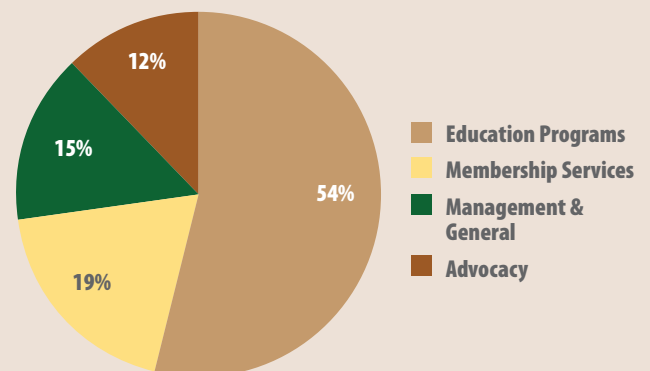
2025 NCFA Revenue



2025 NCFA Financials



2025 NCFA Expenses



INSURANCE UPDATES

Health & Wellness Trust

In 2025, the NCFA teamed up with Cobbs Allen insurance agency and Blue Cross Blue Shield NC to offer exclusive health plans to our members who operate a forestry-related business and have one common law employee. To date, over 270 NCFA members are insured! Any active NCFA member can review the benefits options online.



Hunt Club and Timberland Liability Insurance

The NCFA's hunting lease liability insurance program remains one of the top choices among hunt clubs. To participate in this program, the hunt club and the landowner must be NCFA members in good standing.

In 2025, the association provided coverage for more than 400 hunt clubs and landowners combined. The total acreage represented by the program spans more than 300,000 acres.

The policy typically runs from August 1 – August 1. Hunt clubs may enroll at any time throughout the year since hunting season start times vary by species.

For more information and to sign up, visit the Gallagher (formerly Assured Partners) website.



2025 LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

The NCFA was presented with multiple opportunities to engage with our elected officials at the federal and state levels. In addition, the NCFA continued its work with the International Market Access Coalition (IMAC) to advocate for the acceptance of sulfur dioxide as an approved treatment for the export of pine wood chips to the European Union. IMAC has made great progress over the last couple of years, and we hope to have a successful outcome to report on in 2026.

The NCFA also continued its engagement on the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) that would require burdensome traceability requirements on all forest products going into EU markets. Towards the end of 2025, the EU voted to delay implementation of the rule until the end of this year. We look forward to future opportunities to engage with the NC Congressional delegation on issues that affect our members.

At the state level, the 2025 Legislative Long Session gave the NCFA opportunities to engage with members of the North Carolina General Assembly on several bills of interest to our members.

The NCFA was instrumental in drafting and supporting the timber casualty loss provisions in **Senate Bill 595 - Various Revenue Law Changes**. We were also able to work with members of the Senate on a favorable amendment to **Senate Bill 394 - Prohibit Foreign Ownership of NC Land**.

Finally, the NCFA was also successful in our advocacy efforts in opposing **House Bill 184 and Senate Bill 95 - Promote NC Sawmills**. Both measures sought to circumvent the long-standing lumber grading standards that all pine sawmills comply with to ensure the health and safety of the consumer.

As we enter the 2026 Legislative Short Session, the NCFA will continue to work with our elected officials on policies that will enable the forest products industry to thrive.

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EDUCATION

Sustainable Forestry Teachers Experience

- **Forty-three educators participated in the 2025 Sustainable Forestry Teachers Experience (SFTE) program.** Two workshops took place: July 21-25, based out of Greensboro, and July 28-August 1, based out of Asheville.
- We extended the program to five days in 2025 to allow the addition of content; this was a huge success, and we will continue this structure in 2026.
- The 43 educators who attended the 2025 SFTE program **reach an estimated 10,046 students/program participants annually.**
- Upon completing the program, 100% of participants agree or strongly agree that the forest products industry in North Carolina operates in a sustainable manner.

Looking ahead to 2026:

- We received 183 applications for the 2026 SFTE program! We are looking forward to hosting 50 educators at the two sessions: July 20-24, based out of Greensboro, and July 27-31, based out of Asheville.
- We are grateful to our industry partners for supporting the SFTE program. Thank you to the North Carolina Sustainable Forestry Initiative State Implementation Committee for funding the program, as well as the Weyerhaeuser Giving Fund, the International Paper Foundation, and the Canfor Good Things Come From Trees Foundation for awarding grants to support the program.

WHAT TEACHERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THE 2025 SFTE PROGRAM:

"[I was inspired by] the appreciation shown for what we teachers do, along with the passion demonstrated by people at the sites. This [motivates] me to go beyond my job requirements to teach kids and families about [sustainable forestry]."

"I want to include spotlights on careers in my classroom using the people I met this week. I also want to use [forest] management as a case study for teaching about sustainability in environmental science."

"Thank you and thank you to the partners that supported this amazing, informative opportunity to tour, experience, and ask questions about [sustainable forestry in North Carolina]."



From top: SFTE 2025 Asheville participants on the last day of the program; participants tour the Columbia Forest Products plywood mill in Old Fort; SFTE 2025 Greensboro participants on the last day of the program; participants learn about forest management and conservation easements with Three Rivers Land Trust.

AN53 Natural Resources II-Forestry Course and Credential

IN 2025, the AN53 Natural Resources II-Forestry course and Certified Forest Worker credential were officially launched as a course offering within the Agricultural Education Career and Technical Education Program.

- For the 2024-25 school year, **nine schools offered the course, and 67 students received the credential.**
- For the 2025-26 school year:
 - › In the fall 2025 semester, **five schools offered the course, and 21 students received the credential.**
 - › For the spring 2026 semester, **four schools are offering the course, with 45 students enrolled.**
- The course has been **approved for the high school-to-community college Career and Technical Education Articulation Agreement** by the NC State Board of Community Colleges.
- The **Certified Forest Worker Credential has been designated as a Tier III credential by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction**, meaning the credential has both high academic rigor and employment value.
- We hosted a teacher certification workshop at the Career and Technical Education summer conference; **10 new teachers were certified to teach the course and credential.**

WHAT TEACHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE COURSE AND CREDENTIAL:



"This semester, students had an exciting chance to explore the forestry industry beyond the classroom. During field trips, they engaged in learning about sustainable practices, tree identification, and the vital role of conservation."

- Candace Grimsley, Lumberton High School, Robeson County



📷 Jessica Ireland, Tara Dickson (Weyerhaeuser), and Abigail Ridge exhibited at the 2025 NC FFA Career Show and Expo.

Outreach

The NCFA was proud to exhibit and present at 20 events statewide in 2025. These events included field days for youth, conferences, career fairs, school programming, and more.

We reached over 18,500 youth, students, parents, and community members through participation in these events.

USDA Forest Service Landscape Scale Restoration Program Grant Award

The Forest Education and Conservation Foundation was awarded a second round of funding through the USDA Forest Service's Landscape Scale Restoration Program. This \$200,000 grant will fund the continued support and expansion of the high school forestry course and credential over the next three years.

Forest Education and Conservation Scholarship Program

The FECF awarded four scholarships as follows (pictured from top):

- › **Skylar Deaton**
NC State
- › **Beckett London**
NC State
- › **David Scott**
Wayne CC
- › **Grayson Smith**
Haywood CC



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Wayne Community College Base Class



LOGGER & COMMUNITY EDUCATION EVENTS

ProLogger Training

What started in 1994 as a call to action to address safety concerns in the woods has become one of the nation's top logger training opportunities and has been accredited as the approved logger training course for the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). Holding true to its foundation, the ProLogger program has continued to promote the three pillars of success: Safety, Business, and Environmental Awareness. The program is made possible by industrywide support from FMIC Insurance Company, the North Carolina Department of Labor, the North Carolina State Highway Patrol, and the North Carolina Forest Service.

By the end of 2025, the NCFE had 1,160 active ProLoggers on record. Our three 2025 base classes trained 71 new ProLoggers. We thank Wayne Community College, Montgomery Community College, and McDowell Tech Community College for hosting these trainings year after year.

Here are the 2026 ProLogger continuing education (Module 26) training topics, which are approved for 2.5 Category 1 CFE hours:

- **Pre-Harvest Planning BMPs** – Jordan Lumber and Timber Stand Improvements' Bruce Evans and Duane Truslow (NC Forest Service) discuss Pre-Harvest Planning Best Management Practices (BMPs) and demonstrate the NC Forest Service's new Pre-Harvest Planning Tool.



McDowell Tech Community College Base Class

- **Business of Logging: Cash Flow** – A concise overview of how cash flow management directly impacts the daily operations and sustainability of a logging business.
- **Storm Damage Clean-Up: Hurricane Helene Recovery** – Forestry Mutual Insurance Company's Greg Helton and Shawn Faulks assess post-hurricane recovery and provide guidance on how to safely operate during storm clean-up.
- **Business of Logging: Workforce Development and Succession Planning** – The fourth installment in the Logging and Forestry Business series. This video, featuring Stacy Reel, CLA Board Chair, and Samuel Reel, J&S Reel Logging, covers strategies for improving employee retention, workforce development, and long-term succession planning for forest products businesses.
- **Trucking Liability and Exposure** – A sit-down with Ben Greenberg (NC Trucking Association) and Catherine Ezzell (Ezell Trucking) regarding the business of trucking and how to insulate your company from liability and exposure.
- **Right-of-Ways and Transmission Lines** – A collaborative guide with Duke Energy on the safety protocols required when conducting logging operations around powerline easements.
- **Temporary Access Permits: Rules and Regulations** – An overview of North Carolina laws and regulations regarding the requirements for Logging Temporary Access Permits.



Montgomery Community College Base Class



Videographer Tres Bruce films various segments for Module 26.

Bridgemat Program Grant

Grant Funding Awarded: \$500,000 has been secured through the North Carolina Forest Service (NCFS) to fund the Bridgemat "Rent-to-Own" Program.

Administration: While the program follows the structure of the **2024 NCFS Bridgemat Program**, the **NCFA** will now lead the administration.

Projected Impact: The program is expected to award between **25 and 35 sets of bridges** to participants.

Timeline: Administrative details are currently being finalized between the NCFA and NCFS. The program is officially scheduled for launch in **2026**.




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Forestry young professionals gather for an event hosted by NCFCA member Troy Lumber Company.

LOGGER & COMMUNITY EDUCATION EVENTS *CONTINUED*

Logging Cost Analysis Workshop

The **North Carolina Forestry Association (NCFA)**, in partnership with the **North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund**, hosted its third **Logging Cost Analysis Workshop** at Montgomery Community College in Troy, NC last December.

The event saw an excellent turnout, with **35 participants** — including loggers, foresters, bookkeepers, and industry representatives — gathering to sharpen their business skill sets. Key sessions focused on production estimation, cash flow analysis, logging systems evaluation, and more.

We would like to extend a sincere thank you to **Dr. Chad Bolding** and **Dr. Joe Conrad** from the **University of Georgia's Warnell College of Natural Resources** for traveling to North Carolina to share their expertise and provide such valuable insights to our forest products community.



Dr. Chad Bolding and Dr. Joe Conrad of the University of Georgia's Warnell College of Natural Resources lead the NCFA's third annual Logging Cost Analysis Workshop at Montgomery Community College.

Young Professionals

New Young Professional Leadership Committee Established

We are pleased to announce the formation of the Young Professional Leadership Committee, dedicated to guiding the next generation of forestry leaders.

Committee Chair:
Andrew Stewart, Funga

Western Representative:
Canaan Silver, Parton Lumber

Piedmont Representative:
John Smith, Culp Lumber

Eastern Representative:
Robbie Evans, Resource Management Service (RMS)

Student Representative:
Benjamin Pierce, NC State University

2025 Event Recaps

Our regional socials saw fantastic engagement throughout the year, fostering networking and community across the state:

Western Region Trivia & Social (April 24)

LOCATION: Asheville, NC

SPONSOR: Wildwood Consulting

IMPACT: 15 attendees gathered for a night of networking and friendly competition.

Piedmont Region Clay Shoot & Social (May 8)

LOCATION: Refuge Farm, New London, NC

SPONSORS: Troy Lumber, Culp Lumber, and Jordan Lumber

IMPACT: Our largest regional turnout, with 34 attendees enjoying the shoot and social.

Inaugural Young Professionals Summit (October 16)

LOCATION: Aberdeen, NC

SPONSOR: Claybourne Walters

IMPACT: With 27 attendees participating, the event marked a significant milestone in our efforts to provide specialized professional development and networking for the industry's rising talent. A post-event feedback survey showed that attendees all agreed that:

- › The program's speakers were knowledgeable about forestry and the forest products industry.
- › The program's agenda included well-rounded content and activities.
- › The program taught them new things that will be helpful in their careers.

Eastern Region Oyster Roast & Social (November 19)

LOCATION: Hofmann Forest, NCSU

SPONSORS: RMS, ArborGen, and NC State

IMPACT: 16 attendees enjoyed a traditional oyster roast in the historic Hofmann Forest.

2025 Committee Meeting Summaries

Forest Management: Conservation Easement Panel

Howell Woods (April 9)

MODERATOR: Mike Powell (NCFA)

ATTENDANCE: 25 committee members

OVERVIEW: A comprehensive panel discussion, featuring state and nonprofit leaders, on the future of land preservation and conservation easements.

PANELISTS:

- › **Evan Davis:** Director, Farmland Preservation Division (NCDA&CS)
- › **Emily Calicutt:** Director of Conservation, Three Rivers Land Trust
- › **Jesica Blake:** Associate Director, Coastal Land Trust
- › **Misty Franklin:** Deputy Director, NC Natural Heritage Program
- › **Jeff Marcus:** Longleaf Pine Restoration Director, The Nature Conservancy

SLTC: Right-of-Way Easements

Allen Brothers Preserve (July 24)

ATTENDANCE: 20 Committee Members

PARTNER: Duke Energy

FOCUS: Best practices and safety protocols for logging operations within utility and powerline easements.

Forest Management: Cost Share and Silviculture Panel

Forest History Society (August 27)

MODERATOR: Dr. John Hatcher (NCFA)

ATTENDANCE: 11 committee members

OVERVIEW: A specialized panel covering industry-wide silvicultural practices and cost-share opportunities.

PANELISTS:

- › **Tim Foley:** Southern Group of State Foresters
- › **Travis Howell:** WSP USA
- › **Austin Heine:** ArborGen
- › **Hayden Henson:** Superior Forestry Service
- › **Chris White:** Azelis A&ES

Western SLTC Meeting

Tryon Equestrian Center (November 14)

ATTENDANCE: 11 committee members

KEY TOPIC: Discussion and updates regarding the Bridgemat Grant Program.

Federal OSHA Training: Logging Safety and Health

In March 2025, the **NCFA** partnered with a coalition of industry leaders — including the **OSH Logging SEP Committee**, the **Federal OSHA Training**

Institute (OTI), **FMIC Insurance Company**, **NC State Cooperative Extension**, and **Tim Penland Logging, LLC** to host the **OTI #3073: Safety and Health in Logging Operations** course.

Held at **McDowell Technical Community College** in Marion, NC, the program was honored by the **NC Commissioner of Labor Luke Farley**.

Program Highlights:

OBJECTIVE: A three-day intensive continuing education course designed to train Compliance Safety and Health Officers on the rigorous standards for conducting and documenting logging inspections.

FORMAT: The curriculum balanced 2.5 days of classroom instruction with a half-day field session at an active logging site, providing practical, real-world context.

PARTICIPATION: 33 attendees successfully completed the training, strengthening the safety and compliance framework across the state.

LOG A LOAD FOR KIDS
Last year's Log a Load for Kids events in October and November successfully raised **\$24,633.79!**

THANK YOU, SPONSORS!

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COMMUNICATIONS

In 2025, the NCFCA communications function has taken an active role in setting the organization and its members up for continued success in 2026 and beyond. Last year's Q1 was dedicated to setting up foundational elements our organization continues to use today, including:

- **A strategic plan progress tracker** focused on **five key areas**:
 - 1] Membership
 - 2] Public Awareness
 - 3] Organizational Growth & Development
 - 4] Governance & Management
 - 5] Advocacy
- A collective **cloud-based server** for easily sharing files and providing feedback
- A **modernized email platform** for streamlined member communications
- **Social media ads** to further promote the NCFCA's programs
- A more effective system for keeping the NCFCA's **website updated**
- A revamped approach to the sustainability of the NCFCA's **internship program**

All strategies surrounding these items have been successful so far, and we will continue to utilize these platforms and systems for continued success.

Ongoing Communications

- **Weekly Zipline Newsletter:**

This newsletter is sent every Wednesday at 8 a.m. and covers legislative updates, industry news, events, forestry program information, and more. In 2025, the Zipline received an average open rate of 56% and a 4% click-through rate among its readers, both of which are much higher than the industry average. Members benefited from a simplified, "less is more" model, sharing the following feedback:

- › "I like the new format. Simple and to the point in all categories."
- › "I like it. I like the fact that you summarize the bills and legislation and really nail down the facts, why it is important to support, and what the consequences (good or bad) might be to the industry."
- › "Good information!"
- › "Yes, I like the new format of the Zipline!"

Step into a Career in Forestry



The Montgomery Community College campus in Troy, NC comprises approximately 134 acres of timber land, divided into a variety of forest stands, managed in sections to provide our Forest Management Technology students with a broad spectrum of learning experiences. Additional certifications are available in GIS, recreation, wildland fire suppression and pesticide application.



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• **Quarterly *TreeLine* Magazine:**

The magazine continues to share a mix of content, from career profiles to member stories, industry hot topics, and more. All magazine issues can be accessed through your NCFA member portal. Scan to read past issues.



• **Annual NCFA Member Directory & Resource Guide:**

Each year, the NCFA publishes a comprehensive member directory that is distributed to all members, serving as an invaluable tool to connect people in the forestry and forest products industry. Members should have received their copy last month. A digital version is also available upon request.

• **Daily Social Media Content:** The NCFA has an active social media presence on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and X. Social media is a regular communications tactic that is used as part of a larger communications strategy to further promote the association’s mission across its programs and advocacy efforts. If you are not already following and engaging with us on these platforms, please do!

› In 2025, we deployed a handful of paid social media ads as part of our strategic plan to promote applications for the Sustainable Forestry Teachers Experience, the introduction of the forestry course being offered at the Volt Center at Craven Community College, and registrations for our Logging Cost Analysis Workshop. All ads resulted in increased awareness for NCFA’s educational programs, driving up attendance year over year.

Earned Media

In 2025, the NCFA focused its media relations efforts on our industry expertise surrounding topics emerging from the aftermath of Hurricane Helene and its impact on the forestry sector, the promotion of the AN53 Natural Resource II–Forestry class, and the launch of a new Forest Worker Training Program with Craven Community College. Communications led media trainings to prepare our team and members for successful interviews. Top media hits are below:

• Dr. John Hatcher was interviewed by a correspondent for **National Public Radio (NPR)**.



• We also coordinated an in-depth story opportunity with an E&E News reporter from **POLITICO** to feature the devastating effects of Hurricane Helene on western NC’s timberlands. The article is titled: *Loggers rush to clear Helene-ravaged forests amid wildfire risks*. Scan for a PDF.



• NCFA and the high school forestry course were featured in **NC Field and Family** magazine.

The publication was delivered to **600,000 households**. Most notably, this article has opened doors for us to explore a new market — private educational institutions. If it hadn’t been for this article, private schools like **Pamlico Christian Academy** wouldn’t have known about this course. They plan to adopt the curriculum in August 2026 and make it a year-long course.



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COMMUNICATIONS CONTINUED

2025 Events

- 1 Western Regional Meeting:**
 March 13, Lake Logan, Canton, NC
 - The focus was on disaster recovery and the event featured speakers from Congressman Chuck Edwards' office, The Governor's Recovery Office for Western NC, Land of Sky Regional Council, Southern Group of State Foresters, NC Forest Service, Farm Service Agency, and Gilkey Lumber Company.
- 2 Forestry Day in the Legislature:**
 May 13, Raleigh, NC
 - The 2025 reception had slightly more attendees than last year.
 - We received positive feedback from members, and many visited their elected officials the next day.
- 3 Annual Meeting:**
 September 17 & 18, Greensboro, NC
 - The event was a huge success, garnering positive feedback from members through the distribution of a post-event survey.

The communications team also worked to amplify all ProLogger base classes, Young Professionals events, Module 25 classes, the Logging Cost Analysis Workshop, and more. Communication also plays a critical role in leading briefing calls for all speakers and panelists participating in any NCFCA event, which ensures success for all involved. All NCFCA events were effectively promoted across our organization by sending targeted emails, including them in our ongoing communications, and featuring them on our social media platforms.

2026 Outlook

The communications function at NCFCA is engrained in all facets of the association. We look forward to continuing our partnership with CBS 17 as we explore paid media opportunities to further amplify our educational messages about our industry. You can read more about this partnership in the "Communications Corner" section of this issue.

The NCFCA continues to focus on relationship-building, enhancing our content across platforms, identifying new ways to engage our partners, and elevating our forestry voice across NC and beyond. ■



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