Mission Statement: The North Carolina Forestry Association actively promotes healthy, productive forests by supporting the efforts of landowners and forestry-related businesses and organizations that responsibly manage or use forest.
THE YEAR IN REVIEW

The North Carolina Forestry Association, the state’s oldest forest conservation group, enjoyed another successful year thanks to the leadership and participation of its membership. The NCFA ended the year with over 4,000 members comprised in 17 membership categories.

In addition, positive partnerships with like-minded organizations continue to give our rural economies a boost as we collectively raise the profile of forest conservation and role the forest products industry plays in supporting agriculture in North Carolina. Partners include the North Carolina Farm Bureau, North Carolina Tree Farm Program, North Carolina Department of Agriculture, North Carolina Forest Service and Carolina Loggers Association.

On the legislative front, the NCFA and its partners worked diligently with the North Carolina General Assembly on a few legislative initiatives that would have been detrimental to the goal of healthy and productive forests for North Carolina. We appreciate our membership’s willingness to engage in the political process by contacting their elected official. The association also supported increased funding for the North Carolina Forest Service to upgrade its fire fighting equipment both on the ground and in the air.

The NCFA’s Forestry Day in the Legislature remains a popular event and last year was no different. It was the stage for a major announcement as the North Carolina Department of Agriculture was awarded a $9.2 million grant from the Department of Agriculture. This legislation provides protection for forest landowners to continue to manage their forest in an urbanizing North Carolina.

In addition to its education efforts, the NCFA trains the best loggers in the state through its ProLogger program. These ProLoggers earn continuing education credits each year to remain in good standing. The courses focus on safety, environmental issues and strong business practices.

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Resolute Forest Products
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W.M. Cramer Lumber Company
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N.C. State University
Weyerhaeuser Company
Troy Lumber
Weyerhaeuser

WHO WE ARE

The North Carolina Forestry Association, the state’s oldest forest conservation organization, was established in 1911. While the NCFA’s role has evolved over its history, its membership remains committed to sustaining the long-term health and productivity of the state’s forests through the promotion of positive public policies and education programs that address important environmental issues.

The NCFA is a private non-profit organization of 4,000 members with ties to forestry and the forest products industry. Throughout the year, the NCFA offers a variety of programs and services to forest landowners, educators and school age children, the general public and forestry professionals that promote responsible use and management of our state’s forest resources.

The NCFA successfully supported “The Right To Practice Forestry” legislation in 2005 in the North Carolina General Assembly. This legislation provides protection for forest landowners to continue to manage their forest in an urbanizing North Carolina.

In addition to its education efforts, the NCFA trains the best loggers in the state through its ProLogger program. These ProLoggers earn continuing education credits each year to remain in good standing. The courses focus on safety, environmental issues and strong business practices.

In terms of forestry education, Amy Juliana joined the NCFA as its new Education Programs Manager. The Sustainable Forestry Teachers Experience (SFTE) eclipsed the century mark in attendees for the first time ever with stops in New Bern, Southern Pines and Asheville. The Forestry & Environmental Camps, designed for fifth/ sixth grade students, added an event in Charlotte to augment camps already held in Greensboro, Raleigh and Wilmington.

The NCFA continues to be expertly directed by its Executive Committee and governed by its Board of Directors. We appreciate all our members who serve in these important roles. Financially, the NCFA and the Forestry and Education Conservation Foundation (FECF) met budget goals again this year.
HUNTING LEASE LIABILITY INSURANCE PROGRAM REMAINS POPULAR OPTION

In recent years, the competition to provide hunt club insurance has become more competitive as different agencies have entered the marketplace. However, the NCFA’s Hunting Lease Liability Insurance program remains one of the top choices among clubs. To participate, the hunt club and landowner must be NCFA members.

In 2017, the association provided coverage for over 530 hunt clubs and over 620 landowners. The total acreage in the program spanned more than 307,550 acres.

The NCFA’s Business Manager, Ann Harper, coordinates the hunt lease insurance program. The policy runs annually from August 1 to August 1. Since hunting season start times vary by species, hunt clubs sign up continuously during a given year.

ANOTHER ON TARGET FISCAL YEAR IN THE BOOKS

The overall budget of the association is actually distributed into two distinct accounts in order to comply with federal tax codes - the North Carolina Forestry Association (NC Forestry Association) and the Forest Education and Conservation Foundation (FECF). The FECF is the vehicle in which the association can collect and distribute grant funds for education and training programs. The association is the entity that actually plans and executes the programming.

Within this framework, the NC Forestry Association projected its 2017 revenues and expenses to equal out at $1,320,000 dollars. The FECF projected its 2017 revenues ($289,000) to exceed its expenses ($212,900) by $76,000. While the books are currently being finalized and closed for the year, early projects point to a positive year where the association will be able to add the 2017 surplus to its reserve funds. The overall budget for both accounts is under the supervision of the NC Forestry Association’s Executive Committee and approved annually by the NC Forestry Association’s Board of Directors at the first meeting of a new year. The NC Forestry Association and FECF are audited annually by a third-party. These reports are completed for the May/June board meeting.

It’s worth noting that the association has successfully operated within its budget over the past 20 years. In many of those years, the association realized a budget surplus at the end of the fiscal year due to a combination of fiscal efficiencies within the daily operations of the NC Forestry Association, staff turnover and an improving economy. These monies have been distributed into a working reserve fund and another long-term security fund. The working reserve fund holds enough funds to successfully run the association for three months in the case of an emergency. The security investment fund is invested long-term in a conservative manner.

The FECF is the owner of the office building on Glenwood Avenue in Raleigh. It rents space to the NC Forestry Association and Adams & Howell Law Firm, which resides on the first floor of the two-story office.

LOG A LOAD

The forest products industry continued to raise funds for the Children’s Miracle Network through the Log A Load for Kids program in 2017. Separate events are held throughout the state on an annual basis.

LEGENgISLATIVE REVIEW

The 2017 North Carolina General Assembly session was noteworthy, and rather unusual, since it actually ended before the July 4th holiday. It marks the first time in recent history where the state actually started the fiscal year with a budget in place. The House and Senate operated as Republican super-majorities and worked closely on shared goals on the budget and other important issues.

From start to finish, the NCFA directly monitored 35 different legislative bills during the session. Staff sought to engage members on a daily basis to have them reach out to their elected officials in support or opposition to legislation.

This year was also unique in that a few bills emerged that were directly harmful practicing forestry and the forest products industry. The best examples were the efforts to dismantle the Forester Registration Board and House Bill 80.

The NCFA and partners successfully reinforced the Forester Board back into the list of 33 boards that the General Assembly deemed essential. This legislation, however, was dropped and replaced with language that became the bill that repealed North Carolina’s somewhat infamous bathroom law. Since no further action took place on license board reform, the Forester Registration Board is still alive and well.

House Bill 80 grew out of a landowner dispute over property lines. Without going into details, the provisions of the bill would required a formal survey before any timber harvesting activities took place. This would have been extremely cost prohibitive proposition for landowners in addition to being a threat to their private property rights. The NCFA membership did an outstanding job of reaching out to their elected officials with e-mails and phone calls to explain the reality of the burden this bill would create. Thankfully, the bill successfully stalled in committee in 2017.

The NCFA also supported important legislation regarding workers compensation insurance in House Bill 26 - Workers Compensation/Approval of Disputed Legal Fees. This bill provide clarity and predictability for insurance providers when dealing with workers compensation claims in light of a June 2017 court ruling by the North Carolina Supreme Court. In the case, Wilkes v. City of Greenville, the North Carolina Supreme Court affirmed a lower court’s decision that a plaintiff was entitled to additional treatment for injuries not originally documented in the initial claim. This ruling essentially expanded liability for defendants in a case to include all immediate and subsequent medical treatment for injuries once a claim is admitted as “compensable” in official paperwork - forms 60 or 63 - even if the specific medical condition is not listed on the form originally. Forestry Mutual Insurance Company was one of the top contributors to creating the language and successfully supporting the movement of the bill to law status.

In terms of budget items, the North Carolina Forest Service received funds for equipment to combat wildfires with two new fire fighting aircraft. These planes have twice the cargo room and flight range of the planes being replaced. The Mountain Island Education Center received funding of 3.1 million. Also of note, the long-time 1% sales tax with an $80 cap on manufacturing equipment was eliminated so there now is no sale tax on the purchase of manufacturing equipment.

The end of 2017 concluded with an ongoing argument between Republicans and Democrats on district lines for state elections. The goal is to have a resolution to the district maps early enough for the primary elections of 2018. ■
OSHNC officers met at Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center to gain a better understanding of the logging profession through a five-day training program. It marked a revival of training partnership started back in the late 1990’s and continued until 2010 when budget cuts forced the program into hibernation.

Forestry Mutual’s Bryan Wagner led the field sessions, demonstrating proper felling technique and pointing out what a felled tree will look like at the stump if it was taken down correctly. Compliance officers took the time to gather around each stump to see how hinge-wood looked on the stump. Wagner also took the liberty of “miscutting” one tree to show how improper cuts do not provide the same stability during the tree’s decent as the hinge-wood cut. Officers were later challenged in the class to examine staged accident scenes and piece together what could have been the cause of the tragedy based on the stumps and overhead hazards.

On Friday, the group visited an active logging job to get a close up view. No one can ever say that ProLogger Tony Teague isn’t a brave man! Teague graciously opened up his logging job to the group. During the conversations, one of the compliance officers asked Teague what they personally could do to make an OSHA inspection a pleasant experience.

“Not sure about that one,” stated Teague with a chuckle. “I have been inspected a few times over the years, and they have always been professional and helpful. That’s all I can ask for. We try to do things the right way. We always try to be professional.”

NCFA’S PROLOGGER PROGRAM GROWS IN QUALITY AND QUANTITY

Recent surveys by the North Carolina Forest Service have demonstrated that ProLoggers are performing at a higher level in terms of compliance with Best Management Practices and adherence to Forest Practice Guidelines than loggers without the training. This is great news! We congratulate our ProLoggers for their willingness to take the extra steps to ensure a harvest activity is completed to the satisfaction of our regulatory agencies and just as importantly, the landowners.

Three base ProLogger courses were held in Williamston, Troy and Marion, totaling 145 new ProLoggers in 2017. The base class brings together program training partners the North Carolina Department of Labor, Forestry Mutual Insurance Company, the North Carolina Highway Patrol, and the North Carolina Forest Service. After a day and a half in the classroom, the group moves to the field for log deck and in-woods safety training.

While the base course provides a path into the program, the annual module classes keep ProLoggers up-to-date and certified to the SFI training standard. Thanks to our member companies hosting module classes throughout the year, there are over 1,550 ProLoggers in good standing.

The topics for each module are developed through discussions with training partners and the NC SFI Implementation Committee and the Safety, Logging and Transportation Committee. The topics highlighted for this year’s module include Oil Spill Prevention, OSHNC Consultative Services, Boundary Lines, Power Line Safety, and SFI update.

The NCFA will be featuring the ProLogger program in a brand story advertisement in the upcoming issue of North Carolina Agriculture Magazine. It will highlight the program, our partnerships, and the SFI program. •

OSHNC TRAINING RETURNED IN 2017

WILMINGTON ANNUAL MEETING

The NCFA’s Annual Meeting in Wilmington employed a new format with as the speaking program was split over two days. On Wednesday, the meeting kicked off at 1:00 p.m. with an afternoon of speakers and was followed by a evening reception at the IronClad Brewery. While the brewery had an array of flavors on hand, volunteers from Canal Wood, LLC, prepared a tremendous low country boil. Thursday morning featured another round of speakers before attendees then broke for various activities such as golf, shooting, shopping and a water tour of Wilmington. Frank Rackley was awarded the NCFA’s Distinguished Service Award. Scott Smearman was named the NCFA’s Educator of the Year during the Awards Dinner on Thursday night. The 2018 Annual Meeting will be in Raleigh on October 10-12, 2018.
REPI AWARD ANNOUNCED AT NCF A’S FORESTRY DAY

Forestry Day in the Legislature provided the ideal venue for Commissioner Steve Troxler to announce that the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) secured $9.2 million in federal funding to protect land from development and maintain agricultural, forestry and military uses. The funding was awarded through a biennial competition known as the REPI Challenge, which is operated by the Department of Defense’s Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program.

The funding will support conservation efforts by North Carolina Sentinel Landscape Partnership, which includes the NCDA&CS, the Army, Marine Corps, Air Force, other federal and state agencies, and nonprofit organizations. “When you marry forestry, agriculture and the military together, and we can protect our military bases, that’s as good as it gets,” stated Troxler. “We are so proud to be able to obtain these funds.”

EDUCATION PROGRAMS POINTED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Volunteers continue to the source of power for the NCFA’s expanding education programs for educators and students. In 2017, those volunteers answered the call to take time out of their busy schedules and make an educational moment for the next generation of citizens.

Amy Juliana, an environmental educator, was named the NCFA’s Education Programs Manager in March of 2017. Juliana had a productive first year!

The NCFA’s Sustainable Forestry Teachers Experience educated 102 teachers from across the state on how the forest products industry operates, how forests are conserved and received Project Learning Tree training. The program was run in New Bern, Southern Pines and Asheville. Several mill tours, field tours, and lectures are rolled into four days of educating and training. On the final day, teachers are given materials and lessons plans to take back to the classroom. The SFTE is staffed and funded through a partnership with North Carolina State University, North Carolina Forest Service, the North Carolina SFI Implementation Committee and the NCFA. Thanks to the generous donations from NCFA member companies along the SFTE route, the program completed the year under budget for the second straight year!

Forestry & Environmental Camps were hosted in Charlotte, Greensboro, Raleigh and Wilmington. The Charlotte camp is the newest in the lineup of programs that educate fifth/sixth grade students about forestry through lesson plans on Dendrology, Land Measurement, Tree Measurement, Silviculture, Wildlife, and Forest Products History. Thanks to our over 60 volunteers who made these camps a reality!

The NCFA joined with the NC SFI Implementation Committee and the North Carolina Forest Service to coordinate a National Wood Products Week Essay Contest in which one essay was selected among elementary, middle and high school students. In its first year, the association received over 1,000 essays! The winners were Lily Greene from Green Ridge Elementary in Troy, NC; Quinn Hennessey from Margaret Pollard Middle in Chapel Hill, NC; and Anthony Villena from Pine Forest High in Fayetteville, NC.

The NCFA also continued its participation in the North Carolina Science Teachers Convention where staff distributed education materials while promoting next year’s SFTE.

The NCFA continues to reach out to its membership through a printed monthly newsletter, TreeLine, and our e-mail update, ZipLine. Both publications highlight upcoming events as well as updates on issues important to forestry and the forest products industry at the state and federal level.

You can sign up for the weekly newsletter by going online at www.ncforestry.org and typing in your e-mail address.

The association’s website is home to calendar of events, updates on programs and an electronic archive for TreeLine newsletters. By selecting the members only section, members can update their profile and/or pay dues once they have successfully signed in. If you need help with signing in, please contact Chris Brown at cbrown@ncforestry.org or (800) 231-7723 ext. 3.

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**NC SFI IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE FUNDS FORESTRY PROJECTS**

The North Carolina Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Implementation Committee (NC SFI) approved a list of grants submitted to the committee as part of its grant program. The grant cycle runs annually from July 1 to July 1. All grant submissions are then evaluated by a grant subcommittee of the NC SFI. This group then forwards its recommendations to the entire committee. Amy Phillips with Weyerhaeuser directed the grant process in her role as the committee’s vice chair. The committee unanimously approved the grant recommendations and the following projects will be funded in 2018.

Roanoke Economic Development - $10,000 for Sustaining Forestry & African American Land Retention and Youth Steam Summit
Appalachian State University - $5,000 for Carbon Offset Project
Institute of Art, Landscape & Sustainable Spaces - $15,000 for Community Youth Program Focused on Forestry and Natural Resource Education
Forest Education and Conservation Fund - $4,000 for Wildlife Station
Forest Education and Conservation Fund - $7,500 for ProLogger Segment on Soil Productivity and Reforestation
North Carolina Tree Farm Program - $13,750 for Re-Inspection of Tree Farms
North Carolina Tree Farm Program - $7,500 for Forest Landowner Outreach Summit

The NC SFI approved direct line item funding for the NCFA’s top education initiatives, including $10,000 for the production of Goods from the Woods Boxes, $10,000 for the Forest & Environmental Camps, and $40,000 for the Sustainable Forestry Teachers Experience.

“We appreciate the financial support from the NC SFI committee for our education outreach programs,” stated Chris Brown, the NCFA Senior Director of Communications. “These funds allow us to reach more with better, allowing us to create attractive and informative materials and workshops for our kids and educators.”

All totaled, the NC SFI will award $122,750 this year in grants. This marks a high-water mark for the grant program and demonstrates the SFI program’s commitment to sustainable forestry and forestry education.

**FM COMMITTEE PROVIDES GUIDANCE**

The NCFA’s Forest Management Committee is entrusted with providing guidance to the association on forestry issues, both environmental and regulatory. The committee is chaired by Tony Doster with Resource Management Services.

The committee provided input to the North Carolina Forest Service when it was making some changes to the Forest Development Program (FDP). The program now works on a batch system, meaning applications are received and approved for a given year. There is no longer a waiting list. If a project is not funded, it must go forward without FDP funds or reapply next year. In terms of budget, the FDP program expects to receive close to 1.9 million from the severance tax on the forest products industry. The Forest Management Committee supports the FDP program.

(l-r) Doug Campbell, Aubrey Gay, Bill Tucker, Zane Webster and John Eide led the SFTE tour of Weyerhaeuser’s lands.

**SLTC TACKLING TRUCK SAFETY**

The NCFA’s Safety, Logging and Transportation Committee (SLTC) is led by chair Chuck Daniels of Domtar. The goal of the committee is to provide guidance on the NCFA’s ProLogger training program as well as any other safety initiatives it pertains to the forest products industry. The committee has a diverse makeup from within the NCFA membership, including sawmills, paper mills, wood pellets, wood dealers, loggers and several representatives from partners such as the NC Department of Labor, the NCFS, the Carolina Loggers Association, and the NC Highway Patrol.

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The top issue facing the SLTC and the forest products industry is log truck accidents. There has been a sharp climb in the amount of accidents involving log trucks and consequently, insurance premiums are also rising. The SLTC supports the efforts of a new formed group, Team Safe Trucking (TST), which is developing new training materials specifically for log truck drivers in addition to raising the awareness on the issue.

The SLTC weighed in on topics for Module 18 - the required training for ProLoggers to remain active. The segments address Minimizing Oil Spills, Boundary Lines, Working within Power Lines, and an Overview of OSHNC Consultative Services.

Members of the SLTC typically staff the Mid-Atlantic Logging and Biomass Expo as well, but the Expo was canceled due to Hurricane Irma. It will return in 2019.

**FRIENDS OF FORESTRY PAC LOOKING TOWARDS 2018 GENERAL ELECTION**

The Friends of Forestry Political Action Committee (FFPAC) supports candidates for state offices that demonstrate a commitment to forestry, private property rights and the forest products industry.

The FFPAC collects funds from individuals through fund-raising events and direct donations and then distributes those funds to candidates.

In 2017, the FFPAC raised over $30,000 in its reverse raffle event that took place the evening of Forestry Day. Five lucky winners split a jackpot of $5,000. Heading into 2018, the FFPAC will be looking to add to its available funds of $35,000 with another reverse raffle. In the 2016 election, the FFPAC distributed $50,000 to 43 different candidates. In addition to direct financial support, the committee presents a Friend of Forestry Award annually to a member of the House and Senate.

The committee is chaired by NCFA members Ashley Faircloth and John Gray. The committee meets quarterly to discuss issues impacting forestry and the forest products industry. In election years, the FFPAC will make contributions prior to the primary elections and then again before the general election to deserving candidates. If you would like to learn more about the FFPAC, please contact the NCFA’s Chris Brown at (800) 231-7723 ext. 3 or cbrown@ncforestry.org.

(l-r) Sue and David Raynor, Representative David Lewis, FFPAC member and NCFA Executive Committee Member Allen Whitesell presented Representative David Lewis with the Friend of Forestry Award at a holiday event.

(l-r) Tony Doster and Robbie Evans are great foresters, but they are even better cooks! The duo prepared the Low Country Boil for the Wilmington Forestry & Environmental camp volunteers and teachers.