

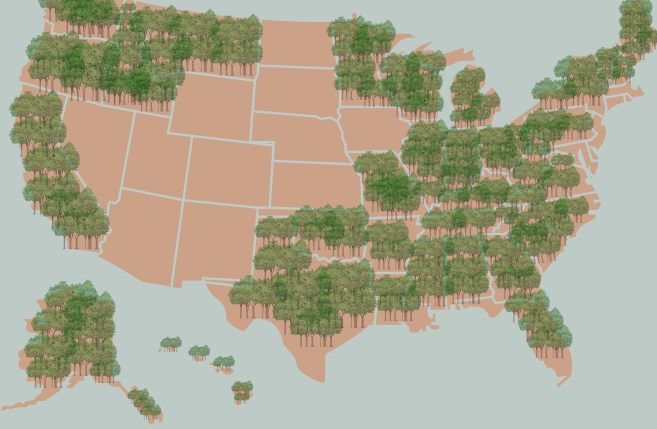


# WORKFORCE NEEDS & CHALLENGES IN THE U.S. FOREST AND WOOD PRODUCTS SECTOR

*and the Value of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*

## THE US FOREST AND WOOD PRODUCTS SECTOR IS A **SIGNIFICANT** EMPLOYER AND CONTRIBUTOR TO THE ECONOMY:

In 32 major forested states, the forest and wood products sector:



\* supports a workforce of nearly **three million people** (~\$128 billion in payroll)



\* represents **6% to as high as 20%** of GDP across these states

## WORKFORCE CHANGES AND CHALLENGES:

Employment in the forest sector has been declining for more than a decade due to mill closures, economic conditions, changes in technology and automation

\* Women make up **47%** of the total US workforce but only **17%** of wood products manufacturing jobs

\* Potential annual employment need for the forest and wood products sector is projected to be **>50k people annually over the next five years**



\* median age in the forests and wood products sector is up to **19% higher** than the average in the total US workforce

\* Near-term and future growth opportunities in the sector (innovation and product development): **mass timber, biochar, bioenergy, and ecosystem services markets**

## THE VALUE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION:

Analysis of companies reveals a statistically significant connection between diversity and financial performance:

\* Companies that ranked in the top 25% for racial/ethnic diversity are **30% more likely** to have financial returns above their respective national industry median.



\* Companies that ranked in the top 25% for gender diversity are **15% more likely** to have financial returns above their respective national industry median.

## EFFECTIVE WORKFORCE STRATEGIES IN THE FOREST AND WOOD PRODUCTS SECTOR:

### FOR RECRUITMENT:

Create greater forestry career awareness through a range of initiatives that reach wide-ranging audiences (scholarships, awards, internships, social media storytelling, community engagement, teaching opportunities at middle and high schools, job fairs and educational events).



### FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:

Commit to creating and maintaining an equitable work environment, providing each employee with the necessary education, tools, and opportunities to thrive and succeed.

"A thriving forest and wood products sector is dependent on a wide array of talent, and the sector needs to have the ability to recruit, retain, and develop leadership across all workforce segments."

### FOR RETENTION:

Embrace and encourage individuality where all employees feel included and comfortable sharing their ideas and perspectives.