

Benefits of Belonging

The Association is always at work for our members...

- Advocating on local, state and national levels to protect members' ability to grow, harvest and use forest resources by **reducing taxes, opposing unnecessary regulations and supporting favorable programs and funding**;
- Defending the **Greenbelt** ad valorem classification for agricultural lands and protecting **private property rights**;
- Promoting **healthy markets for wood** by maintaining a strong industrial base of wood consuming mills;
- Serving as the **voice of the forest industry** through opinion pieces, awareness campaigns, advertising and other outreach programs to promote the benefits of working forests;
- Supporting the **election** of officials that understand the importance of Florida's forests and **increasing the engagement and visibility** of the forest industry in campaigns;
- Aggressively **supporting forestry best management practices (BMPs)** as the best approach to water quality in lieu of regulations;
- Keeping wood moving to the mills by working to pass legislation allowing for **increased truck weights** and an **expanded travel radius** for trucks with forestry tags as well as a streamlined process for coordinating with the governor to **lift truck weights during times of natural disaster**;
- **Alerting members** to available government programs, pending legislation and regulations and other issues of interest to the forest industry;
- Partnering with the Florida Forest Service (FFS) and others to **educate Florida teachers** on the many public benefits of our working forests so this knowledge is shared with thousands of young minds in their classrooms and to **develop educational programming** for the Forest Discovery Center at the Florida State Fair;
- **Training loggers** in sustainable business, safety and forestry practices;
- Providing valuable **networking opportunities** at regional membership events and the Association Annual Meeting, the largest gathering in Florida of forest business owners and managers, landowners and professional foresters;
- Promoting government **reforestation programs** that provide maximum flexibility to landowners in establishing commercial pine plantations and helping **identify incentives** essential for landowner cooperation in government habitat conservation cost-share programs;
- **Opposing the "listing" of wildlife species as *Endangered or Threatened*** as the best way to provide for their protection and participating in the development of voluntary wildlife BMPs for forestry as a means for avoiding the need for "incidental take" permits for a set of 16 wildlife species;
- Providing important input on the FFS's statewide forest inventory project and updates to **provide the most current and detailed information on Florida's forest resources**;
- Providing **leadership development** through the Forestry Forward program;
- Sponsoring an **insurance program** providing low-cost hunting lease, timberland liability, wildfire and prescribed burn liability insurance to members; and
- Working with the Governor's Office to **appoint Association members** to boards and commissions of importance.