

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



The Florida legislature began its annual session on Tuesday, March 4. While the Association is tracking a wide variety of issues that impact the forest community, below are summaries of our state legislative priorities:

### SAVING MEMBERS MONEY

#### Sales Tax Exemptions

The Association has helped save our members hundreds of thousands of dollars through sales tax exemptions on power farm equipment, replacement parts, fencing, machinery, and more. This year, we are asking lawmakers to **expand the current sales tax exemption on trailers used by farmers to include trailers used in logging and forestry, too.**

#### Tangible Personal Property Taxes

Florida businesses pay taxes on physical property like equipment and supplies. Forestry and ag businesses do enjoy a small exemption, but they still pay high taxes. We are asking lawmakers to **increase their current exemption or remove the tax altogether.**

#### Tort Reform

The threat of frivolous lawsuits makes running a business more expensive and more difficult. They increase insurance costs, slow down job growth, and make it harder to predict business costs. We support tort reform efforts to **discourage abuse of our legal system.**

### RECOVERING AFTER DISASTERS

#### State Hurricane Assistance

After Hurricane Idalia, Ag Commissioner Wilton Simpson worked with the legislature to create programs to help timber producers and farmers quickly get back on their feet. The Timber Disaster Assistance Program provided grants for cleaning up and replanting full timber stands damaged by the storm. We support the Commissioner's efforts to **make this program permanent and more flexible.** This would offer more help to landowners, including those with partially damaged stands.

### OPENING NEW MARKETS

#### Mass Timber

Mass timber is a growing new building material that is strong, fire-resistant, and cost-effective. It's already allowed in other parts of the U.S. for construction but hasn't yet been approved for use in Florida. We support legislation directing the Florida Building Commission to **include mass timber as an approved material in the state building code.**

### PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

#### Critical Wetlands

Florida's new water laws require a database of wetlands to help with conservation. But some landowners with wetlands on their property are automatically added to this database and have to take steps to remove themselves. We are asking legislators to **give landowners the option to "opt in" to the database, instead of being forced to "opt out."**

#### Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

PFAS - also known as "forever chemicals" - are found in many everyday products. Some of these chemicals have been found in places like airports and military bases. While the state and federal governments are considering new rules for PFAS, there's still a lot of debate about how to regulate them. We support **creating sensible and scientifically proven rules for PFAS, making sure they are practical and achievable.**

### MAKING IT EASIER TO DO BUSINESS

#### Farm TEAM Card

Florida now offers a special card for farmers, the Florida Farm Tax Exempt Agricultural Materials (TEAM) card. This card helps farmers skip paperwork and automatically get sales tax exemptions when buying farm materials. We support **creating a similar card for forestry businesses so they can easily access tax exemptions, too.**

#### Immigration Reform

Currently Florida requires businesses with 25 or more employees to use the federal E-verify system to confirm the eligibility of potential new hires. A bill has been filed this session that would expand that requirement to all

employers, regardless of the number of employees. We believe **immigration issues should be handled at the federal level, not state by state.**

### STAYING VIGILANT

The sustainability of Florida forestry depends on existing laws protecting private property rights, the Greenbelt tax assessment, Right to Farm, and Ag Lands and Practices, among others. While advancing new legislation, we will also continue to **safeguard these foundational statutes.**

### SUPPORTING OUR PARTNERS

#### Florida Forest Service

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| Rural & Family Lands Program             | \$200 M  |
| Wildfire Equipment Replacement           | \$13.2 M |
| FL's Future Forest Reforestation Program | \$4 M    |
| Facility Maintenance                     | \$4.1 M  |
| Land Management                          | \$32 M   |

#### UF/IFAS

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Workload                                 | \$6.4 M |
| 4H Camp Cherry Lake Facility             | \$5.6 M |
| Center for Artificial Intelligence in Ag | \$4.5 M |

#### Department of Environmental Protection

|                            |         |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Springs Protection Funding | \$50 M  |
| Florida Forever Funding    | \$100 M |



*Forestry Day at the Capitol: Association leaders made the rounds at the capitol on March 19 advocating on issues important to Florida forestry.*

## EUROPEAN UNION DEFORESTATION REGULATIONS (EUDR)



The EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) is a law from the European Union that aims to stop products linked to deforestation from being sold in Europe. It affects goods like wood, beef, soy, palm oil, and rubber.

Even though EUDR is an EU law, it affects U.S. businesses that sell forest products to Europe. Companies must meet strict reporting and compliance rules or risk losing access to the EU market. If you export timber, paper, or other forest products to the EU, you must prove your products didn't come from deforested land after December 31, 2020. This requires detailed traceability, often using geolocation data, to show exactly where the wood was harvested. EUDR is currently scheduled to be enacted December 31, 2025.

EUDR presents several challenges to forestry throughout Florida and the United States. Commissioner Wilton Simpson invited the Florida Forestry Association and the Florida Farm Bureau to work with him in outlining the difficulties and proposing solutions. The end result was a letter signed by Commissioner Simpson and his counterparts in 18 states, urging U.S. Senators and members of the Trump Administration to address these concerns:

*"We ask that you express strong opposition to the EUDR rule to protect private property rights, seek clarity and guidance on how land use conversion will be defined and enforced, advocate for exemptions for low risk designated countries with sustainability managed properties, including but not limited to incentivizing conservation practices and programs, and demand an economic impact analysis to evaluate how this regulation will affect agriculture globally."*

The full letter can be found at [bit.ly/EUDRCommissionersLetter](https://bit.ly/EUDRCommissionersLetter)

Many thanks to Commissioner Simpson for his leadership on this pivotal issue and for elevating forestry's relevance on the federal level and to the American Forest & Paper Association and the Forest Resources Association for their continuing diligence.

### ASSOCIATION ADDRESS

The Association has phased out the use of its P.O. Box. Please use our street address instead:

**402 East Jefferson Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32301**



## MASTER LOGGER TRAINING SCHEDULE

### Core Training

May 6 – Gateway College  
October 16 – Virtual

### CLE Training Workshops

July 10 – Virtual  
October 2 – Virtual  
December 11 – Virtual



For more information and to register, go to [bit.ly/LoggerTraining](https://bit.ly/LoggerTraining)

## FLORIDA FORESTRY TEACHERS TOUR



You can make it possible for a teacher to hear the forestry story! This year's tour is scheduled for June 17-20. Sponsorships are \$500 and make it possible for educators to take part in the tour at no cost to themselves beyond transportation to and from Fernandina Beach. Smaller donations are also welcomed.

You can pay online at [bit.ly/SponsorFFTT](https://bit.ly/SponsorFFTT)

Many thanks to our current sponsors (as of 4.4.25):

*Ann Hutchinson Duff  
Carlton Jones  
David Norton  
Doug Long  
Florida Forest Service  
Four Rivers Land & Timber Company LLC  
Greg & Martina Driskell  
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Philip Allan  
Rayonier Inc.  
Register Family Partnership  
Rex Lumber  
Robbins Manufacturing  
Southern Forestry Consultants  
Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Inc. (SFI)  
The Roberts Companies  
Travis McCoy*

Reach out to Krista Harvard for more information about sponsorships - [Krista@FLForestry.org](mailto:Krista@FLForestry.org) or 850.222.5646.

## 2024 MEMBERSHIP CONTEST WINNER ANNOUNCED



Congratulations to President Avery Roberts of The Roberts Companies for accruing the most points for the 2024 membership contest! For his efforts, Avery received a \$250 gift card from **Hello Credit Union** ... as well as the satisfaction of helping to make the Association even stronger!

See below for information about the 2025 membership contest.



## 2025 MEMBERSHIP CONTEST

Prize: \$250 Visa Gift card compliments of



Every \$1 in dues generated = 1 point  
Example: Friend of Forestry member @ \$70 = 70 points

The recruiter with the most points (250 minimum) on 12.31.25 wins!

Contact Whitney Hough ([Whitney@FLForestry.org](mailto:Whitney@FLForestry.org)) for details.



## MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Fun was had by all at our first Membership Meeting of 2025! The meeting was held at Bradford Sportsmen's Farm in Graham, FL. The event brought together over 85 members and guests from around Florida.



**Top Shooter:**  
President Avery Roberts with top shooter Lyn Williams

After networking, lunch, and an update from our Executive Vice President Alan Shelby and Director of Forestry & Regulatory Affairs Brittany Varn, the group took to the course for a fun clay shoot. The top shooters were awarded gift cards donated by Farm Credit of Florida.

A big THANK YOU to Farm Credit of Florida and ArborGen, Inc. for sponsoring the meeting.



**Top Team:** From left, Association President Avery Roberts, James Rhue, Damon Whitley, Lyn Williams, Dox Cox and Association Executive Vice President Alan Shelby.

## GET INVOLVED!



The success of any organization depends on an engaged membership. An easy and effective way to be active in the Association is through our committees: Government Relations, TREEPAC, Environmental, Steering and Communications.

To join a committee, go to [bit.ly/FLForestryCommittees](http://bit.ly/FLForestryCommittees)

## HUNTING FOR WAYS TO SAVE?



Did you know Association members receive special reduced rates for liability insurance for hunting leases and timberland from Outdoor Underwriters? For more information, please contact Brittany Varn (850.222.5646) or [Brittany@FLForestry.org](mailto:Brittany@FLForestry.org).

## WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

Many thanks to our new members and to the people who recruited them!



|   |   |                                      |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| ABACO Properties of Florida, LLC        | Fort McCoy Ranch LLC                        | Osteen, Gail                         |
| ADC Development & Investment Group, LLC | Fulbright, Christopher                      | Parrish, Lowell                      |
| Alachua Brown LLC                       | Gentiana Bakaj                              | Piironen, Eino                       |
| Allen, John                             | George Franklin Floyd III Irrevocable Trust | Pinkoson, Charles                    |
| Alto Farms                              | Gonzales, Tom                               | Preisser, Alexis                     |
| Aurelia Farms LLC                       | Gospel Acres Hunt Club                      | Premier Cru Farms LLC                |
| Ball, Frank                             | Hale Marjorie Life Est.                     | Puckett, Bill                        |
| Barnhill, Robert                        | Hall, John                                  | R.C. Peeples, Inc.                   |
| Bass Farms Inc.                         | Hanhikoski, Niko                            | Raulerson, Patrick                   |
| Batey, Frank                            | Hargus, Greg                                | RCM Farms, Inc.                      |
| Bear Bay Timber Company, LLC            | Hatchet Creek Tree Farm LLC                 | Reliable Site Solutions              |
| Bernardi John P-EH Life Estate          | Hawley Farms LLC                            | Rembert, Ken                         |
| Beverley, Jason                         | Hayes, Calvin & Vicki                       | Roberts, Karen & James               |
| R.C. Peeples, Inc.                      | Hebert, David                               | Robertson, Chester                   |
| Black, Clanton                          | Hines, Renotia                              | Rocky Creek Pines, LLC               |
| Bonjean, Clayton                        | Holcomb, Danny                              | Roof, Chester                        |
| Broadway North LLC                      | Independence Acres Ranch LLC                | Rowell, William                      |
| Bryan, Glenn                            | Jackass Lounge, LLC                         | Sappenfield, Joshua                  |
| Burket, John                            | Johns, Kenneth                              | Schluter, Ernest                     |
| Burns, Walter                           | Coleman & Johns & Johns Life Estate         | Schommer, Charles                    |
| Campen Properties LLC                   | Jones, Thomas                               | Shadburn, Jan                        |
| Carter, Sara                            | Kanavy, Lawrence                            | Shadburn, Jan                        |
| Citrus Assorted LLC                     | Kenneth M Roesch II Trust Et Al             | Shermyen, John                       |
| Conner, Craig                           | Kingry, Loretta                             | Smith Family Farm of NW Florida, LLC |
| Conomos, Zachary                        | Kunz, Joyce                                 | Southeast Perimeter Solutions        |
| Cornerstone 418, LLC                    | Lee, Karin                                  | Spivey, Jim & Denise                 |
| Crimson Swamp LLC                       | Little Pine Ranch, LLC                      | Sumner, Donnie & Marva               |
| Crosby, Nicolas                         | Liveoak WDEL, LLC                           | Swartzel, Mark                       |
| Davidson Contracting                    | Lomax, Carolyn                              | Swingle, Patricia                    |
| De La Torre, Helio                      | Lott, John                                  | The Pidgeon Family Trust             |
| De La Torre Helio Pedro - Trustee       | M3BLT, LLC                                  | Tillis, Melba                        |
| Dean, Wilbur                            | Malphurs, Steve                             | Timberlake Preserve LLC              |
| Decatur County Hunting Club             | Markham Farms                               | Titshaw, Aaron                       |
| Dickinson, Lonna                        | Massias, Michelle                           | Travers, Kellie                      |
| Dixon, Bobby                            | Massicot, Duncan                            | Trident Timber and Land, LLC         |
| Dugas, Robert                           | Mathews, Wilson                             | Triple D Ranch Hunt Club             |
| Economy Dynamics LTD                    | McAdoo, Larry                               | Twenty Two Farms LLC                 |
| Emeralda Marsh Hunting Lease            | Mcarthur Obrecht Racing Stable LLC          | Vanhorn, David                       |
| Emmel Family Partners LTD               | McEnany Roofing Inc.                        | Vinzant, Sandra                      |
| Evans, Michael                          | McMillan, Joshua                            | Wasdin, Brittany                     |
| Faircloth Family Revocable Trust        | Molina, Miguel                              | Watson, Janet                        |
| Fields, Steve & Diane                   | Newberry Plaza LLC                          | Webb-Schwartz, Melinda               |
| Fink, Richard                           | OBI Materials                               | Williams, Goss "Bear"                |
| FinnHarvest Inc.                        | Ocala Manufacturing Co LTD                  |                                      |

|   |   |  |   |   |                               |                              |                            |                           |                          |                              |                        |  |  |   |
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|  <p><b>SOUTHERN FORESTRY CONSULTANTS</b></p> <p>WIREGRASS ECOLOGICAL ASSOCIATES SOUTHERN FORESTRY REALTY</p> <p>229.246.5785 soforest.com</p>  |  <p><b>BEARD EQUIPMENT CO.</b> JOHN DEERE</p> <p>Your Local John Deere Forestry Equipment Dealer</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Mobile, AL 251.456.1993</td> <td>Perry, FL 850.584.9200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pensacola, FL 850.476.0277</td> <td>Jacksonville, FL 904.296.5000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Panama City, FL 850.769.4844</td> <td>Lake City, FL 386.752.9544</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Freeport, FL 850.835.3337</td> <td>Palatka, FL 386.325.6268</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tallahassee, FL 850.575.5600</td> <td>Ocala, FL 352.732.4646</td> </tr> </table> <p>beardequipment.com</p> | Mobile, AL 251.456.1993  | Perry, FL 850.584.9200  | Pensacola, FL 850.476.0277  | Jacksonville, FL 904.296.5000 | Panama City, FL 850.769.4844 | Lake City, FL 386.752.9544 | Freeport, FL 850.835.3337 | Palatka, FL 386.325.6268 | Tallahassee, FL 850.575.5600 | Ocala, FL 352.732.4646 | <p><b>FORESTRY LOANS</b></p>  <p><b>FARM CREDIT</b></p> <p>866.824.5626 farmcreditflorida.com</p> |  <p><b>HELLO CREDIT UNION</b></p> <p>The Sunnyside of Money.</p> <p>CHECKING. AUTO LOANS. CREDIT CARDS.</p> <p>HelloCU.com   (850) 488-6781   FEDERALLY INSURED BY NCUA</p> |  <p><b>IFCO SEEDLINGS</b></p> <p>LET'S GROW TOGETHER</p> <p>1-800-633-4506 IFCOSEEDLINGS.COM</p> |
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|  <p><b>Nutrien Solutions</b></p> <p>Jeremy Miller Randy Rilling<br/>Branford, FL Brewton, AL<br/>(386) 623-0754 (251) 363-2173<br/>jeremy.miller@nutrien.com randy.rilling@nutrien.com</p>   |  <p><b>Great South Timber and Lumber, LLC</b></p> <p>Phone: 386-755-3046<br/>Fax: 386-755-3048<br/>PO Box 2249<br/>Lake City FL 32056</p>  |  <p><b>NATURAL RESOURCE Planning Services</b></p> <p>LEGACY ARBORIST SERVICES LEGACY WILDLIFE SERVICES</p> <p>Creating a Legacy, Growing Your Future Since 1974</p> <p>Tallahassee, FL San Antonio, FL Lake City, FL</p>   |  <p><b>SOUTHERN PINE PLANTATIONS</b></p> <p>Pat Duane</p> <p>Timberland Investment • Timberland Acquisition • Timberland Sales</p> <p>P.O. Box 5700 Phone: 352-867-8018<br/>Ocala, Florida 34478-5700 Fax: 352-867-5311</p>  |  <p><b>MEEKS' FARMS &amp; NURSERY, Inc.</b></p> <p>187 Flanders Rd. • Kite, GA 31049</p> <p>Deep Plug Container Pine Seedlings<br/>Improved Longleaf, Advanced Generation Slash &amp; Loblolly<br/>Hardwoods &amp; Seedlings Grown on Contract</p> <p>MICKEY PARKER Office 850-476-4815<br/>Pensacola, Florida Cell 850-572-3932<br/>Longleafmickey@bellsouth.net</p>                          |                               |                              |                            |                           |                          |                              |                        |  |  |   |
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|  <p><b>SAUNDERS LAND</b></p> <p>877-518-5263<br/>SaundersRealEstate.com</p> <p>TIMBERLAND REAL ESTATE • LAND MANAGEMENT SERVICES</p>   | <p><b>SUPERIOR TREES, INC.</b></p> <p>Phone (850) 971-5159 P.O. Drawer 9400<br/>Fax (850) 971-5416 Lee, FL 32059</p> <p>BAREROOT SEEDLINGS for reforestation, mitigation, wind-breaks, wildlife management &amp; Christmas tree stock.</p> <p>Genetically &amp; Morphologically improved pine seedlings, Rust Resistant Slash &amp; Loblolly pine seed sources. Longleaf pine bareroot &amp; tublings. Redcedar, Cypress, many native shrubs &amp; hardwood species.</p> <p>LARGER PLANTS available in 1-30g containers. Native trees, shrubs, palms, wildflowers, vines &amp; native grasses.</p> <p>CONTRACT GROWING SERVICES AVAILABLE.</p>                      |  <p><b>TimberMart-South</b></p> <p>Timber Price Reporting Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hardwood &amp; Pine</li> <li>• Stumpage &amp; Delivered</li> <li>• Logging Rates &amp; Biomass</li> <li>• Quarterly Reports</li> <li>• Historical Data</li> </ul> <p>www.timbermart-south.com<br/>tmart@timbermart-south.com<br/>phone: 706-247-7660<br/>fax: 706-389-9196</p> <p>1860 Barnett Shoals Road, PMB 103-598<br/>Athens GA 30605 USA</p> |  <p><b>FARM BUREAU INSURANCE</b></p>   |  <p><b>BEASLEY GROUP</b></p> <p>Sawmills - Logistics - Specialized Logging<br/>We buy hardwood, cypress and natural pine timber</p> <p>770 Uvalda Hwy, Hazlehurst GA 31539<br/>912-375-5174 • www.beasleygroup.com</p>   |                               |                              |                            |                           |                          |                              |                        |  |  |   |
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