Both committees expressed their support for recovery impact zone. the damages to the forest industry in the hurricane and Natural Resources Committee on the severity of economy. State Forester Jim Karels also testified before the Senate Agriculture Association members John Alter and Caroline Dauzat testified as part of a panel before the Senate Agriculture Committee on January 7. Alter, a landowner, shared about the catastrophic damage to his working forests as well as to the industry as a whole. Dauzat, owner of Rex Lumber Company, explained the current and future challenges the overall hurricane damage created for their mills and their potential effect to the local economy.

State Forester Jim Karels also testified before the Senate Agriculture Committee and the Senate Environmental and Natural Resources Committee on the severity of the damages to the forest industry in the hurricane impact zone.

Both committees expressed their support for recovery and rebuilding efforts.

### 2019 LEGISLATIVE POSITION STATEMENTS

While the Association is tracking a wide variety of issues that impact the forest industry, below are summaries of our legislative priorities as designated by the Governmental Relations Committee and approved by the Executive Committee:

#### Federal Hurricane Disaster Assistance

Recent hurricane seasons have caused significant damage to forestry and other agricultural industries in Florida. As a result, there has been a renewed interest in providing federal relief to those areas impacted by natural disasters.

### Florida Forestry Association Position:
The Florida Forestry Association supports the provision of federal funds for meaningful assistance to the forest industry in the case of natural disasters, including but not limited to financial assistance with compensation for timber crop loss, debris removal, reforestation, and wildfire protection as well as pest and invasive species detection and mitigation.

#### Protecting Florida Resources

Maintaining healthy and sustainable working forests is vital to Florida’s environment and natural resources. While forests help provide jobs for more than 100,000 Floridians, one often unrecognized benefit of healthy forests is their significant environmental contributions to both water quality and quantity, as well as to the flora and fauna which make their homes there.

As Florida’s urban and coastal areas continue to expand, the pressure on inland forests continues to increase. We already see the impacts with a rise in land conversion and a drop in the reforestation rates over the last 30 years. In 2008, reforestation rates hit a historic low with only 48,000 acres of forestland planted. In 2015, 126,000 acres were planted, which, while a significant upsurge, still remains far shy of the almost 300,000 planted in 1986.

The Protecting Florida Resources program would allow the Florida Forest Service (FFS) to provide Best Management Practices (BMP) cost-share opportunities to timberland owners. This program, which is similar in nature to BMP cost-share programs for other agricultural commodities, would authorize FFS to provide a 50% cost-share match for BMP activities which mitigate erosions, improve aquifer recharge, remove invasive species and reduce fuel loads.

This program could also initially be used to provide assistance for forestland owners impacted by Hurricane Michael to help with debris removal and reforestation expenses necessitated by the storm.

### Florida Forestry Association Position:
The Florida Forestry Association supports the use of Amendment 1 funding to achieve land acquisition goals, while placing a priority on less than fee acquisitions that support healthy and vibrant working forests and allow the land to remain in production.

### Sales Tax Exemptions

The 2015 legislature expanded the sales tax exemptions for forestry and ag to include parts and repairs of power farm equipment used in ag production and a partial exemption of specific trailers owned by farmers. Sales tax on trailers used in the production of forestry and agriculture, but not owned by the farmer, was not part of the 2015 exemption, thereby excluding loggers and other forest service providers from the benefit.

### Florida Forestry Association Position:
The Association supports legislation that repeals the state sales tax on trailers used in logging and other forest service industries.

### Priority Budget Issues

#### Florida Forest Service –

- Firefighting Equipment Replacement $6.0 M
- Protecting Florida Resources Program $50M/yr./7yrs
- Florida Forest Service Helicopter $9.9 M
- Protecting Florida Resources Program $15.0 M
- Rural and Family Lands Program $75.0 M

#### UF/IFAS –

- Geomatics, Aquaculture and Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology $2.96 M

#### Department of Environmental Protection –

- Springs Protection Funding $50.0 M
- Florida Forever Funding $100.0 M

### Amendment 1 Funding

In 2014 Florida voters approved the "Florida’s Land and Water Legacy” amendment, also known as “Amendment 1,” to Florida’s Constitution. This initiative requires 33% of documentary stamp revenues collected by the state to be used specifically for the conservation, preservation and protection of Florida’s land and water resources. Forestry operations are low intensity land uses which encourage aquifer recharge and provide a natural buffer and filtration system for storm water runoff. Healthy working forests also provide essential habitat for many wildlife species.

### Florida Forestry Association Position:
The Florida Forestry Association supports the provision of Amendment 1 funding to achieve land acquisition goals, while placing a priority on less than fee acquisitions that support healthy and vibrant working forests and allow the land to remain in production.

### Immigration Reform

Over the past few years, there have been legislative proposals requiring employers to use the federal E-Verify system to verify the legal status of its workers.

### Florida Forestry Association Position:
The Association believes immigration reform is a national issue and should be dealt with at the federal level, rather than on a state-by-state basis.

### Florida Forest Service –

- Firefighting Equipment Replacement $6.0 M
- Protecting Florida Resources Program $50M/yr./7yrs
- Florida Forest Service Helicopter $9.9 M
- Protecting Florida Resources Program $15.0 M
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#### Department of Environmental Protection –

- Springs Protection Funding $50.0 M
- Florida Forever Funding $100.0 M
**AG COMMISSIONER NIKKI FRIED**

Agriculture Commissioner Nikki Fried met with representatives of the forest industry at the Association office in Tallahassee as she prepared to take leadership of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

The group shared the economic and environmental benefits of working forests, discussed the impacts of Hurricane Michael on the industry and updated the Commissioner-elect about state and federal relief requests. They also talked about the importance of a continued partnership with the Florida Forest Service and the programs they provide, such as prescribed fire, wildfire protection, Rural and Family Lands and a proposed Healthy Forests reforestation cost-share program to help with hurricane recovery efforts.

“The Commissioner expressed an interest in doing work days, so we are looking forward to being able to give her a hands-on experience of the forest industry,” shared Executive Vice President Alan Shelby. “We are committed to doing everything in our power to help make her time as Commissioner as successful as possible.”

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**RIGHT TO FARM ACT UPHENDED IN ALACHUA**

Longtime Association member Jib Davidson recently called on the Association to help with some unexpected regulatory challenges he was encountering with a harvesting operation he had been asked to undertake for landowners in the city of Alachua, FL.

Association Director of Operations and Regulatory Affairs Mike Branch worked with Jib to clarify to city officials that the operation fell under the Right to Farm Act and was therefore not subject to the rules and regulations the city was trying to impose. After reviewing the Act, the city officials agreed and the operation was able to proceed.

Many thanks to everyone involved for their diligence in creating a positive outcome and following established laws and regulations.

*Should you encounter any regulatory roadblocks for silvicultural activities, remember your Forestry Association is here to help!*

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**2019 ANNUAL MEETING MOVED TO SANDESTIN**

Due to damage incurred by the Sheraton Bay Point in Panama City, FL during Hurricane Michael, the Association’s 2019 Annual Meeting will now be held at the Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort in Sandestin, FL. The dates will remain the same: **August 20-22, 2019**.

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**ASSOCIATION STAFF CHANGES**

Membership Director Debbie Bryant is retiring after 36 years on the job, effective March 1.

“Debbie has always given her heart and soul to the Association,” said Executive Vice President Alan Shelby. “Her contributions to our continuing success are remarkable. She is leaving behind a long list of accomplishments and an even longer list of friends.”

He noted that while Debbie is leaving big shoes to fill, he is confident that her chosen successor, Whitney Hough, will continue her tradition of excellence.

Additionally, Christina Sabo has joined the Association team to fill Whitney’s previous role managing the office.

“I am excited to have Christina on our team,” said Shelby. “With her skill set and experience, I am sure she will prove to be a valuable asset to the Association.”

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**TEACHERS’ TOUR: SPONSORS NEEDED**

The Florida Forestry Teachers’ Tour (FFTT) is an annual event that gives the Florida Forest Service and the forest industry the opportunity to share forestry’s story with educators from around the state. Teachers take back the information and insights they learn in this four-day hands-on experience and incorporate them into their curriculum during the school year. This year’s tour will be held June 18-21, based in Fernandina Beach, FL.

Sponsors are vital to the success of this program! Each $500 sponsorship allows one teacher to participate at no cost to him/her beyond travel to and from Fernandina Beach. To become a sponsor, contact Christina Sabo (Christina@ForestFla.org or 850.222.5646) or simply send your check, payable to the Florida Forestry Foundation, to P.O. Box 1696, Tallahassee, FL 32302.

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**MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

Thanks to the enthusiastic response, membership meetings are now a mainstay on the Association’s calendar. See below for the 2019 dates and locations. Please reserve your spot by contacting Whitney Hough (Whitney@ForestFla.org or 850.222.5646). Look for your invitation in the mail soon!

**Thursday, March 21**

11:30 AM-1:30 PM (EST) Lunch/meeting
Nutrien - White Springs

**Monday, March 25**

11:30 AM-1:30 PM (EST) Lunch/meeting
Coastal Plywood Company’s Magnolia Lodge - Quincy

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**SHERMAN’S FOX SQUIRREL NO LONGER LISTED AS IMPERILED**

With much work by the Association’s Environmental Committee and others reporting sightings of the Sherman’s fox squirrel, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has announced that the squirrel and three other species will no longer be listed as imperiled. The other species include the harlequin darter, Homosassa shrew and Monroe County osprey population.

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**SAVE SOME BUCKS**

Partnering with Outdoor Underwriters, Inc., the Association offers members reduced insurance rates for hunting leases.

Liability insurance for timberland and prescribed burns is also available.

Contact Mike Branch (Mike@ForestFla.org or 850.222.5646) for more information.

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**MEMBERSHIP MATTERS!**

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

To learn more about the Association’s committees and their missions, please visit the Association’s website at FloridaForest.org/Programs/Committees.
NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to all our new members who have joined the Association in the past year!

301 Capital Partners, LLC
Anne Adams
Tyger Adams, Choctaw Land & Timber
Justin Adkins, Usher Land & Timber Inc.
Tim Adkins
Erin Albury, Florida Forest Service
Wesley Aldrich, Aldrich Timber, Inc.
Mary Anderson
Daniel Atkins, Weyerhaeuser
B&C Tree Farm, LLC
Shayn Baggett, North Florida Woodlands
Anthony Barfuss, Harley Forest Products, LLC
Dustin Baumgardner, John A. Cruce Jr., Inc.
Beasley Timber Management
Jorge Benitez
BHK Capital
Kristen Brannon, School of Forest Resources & Conservation, UF/IFAS
Brays Pasture
Boyles Tree Farm, LLC
William Brown
C&N Moore Inc.
Campbell Construction & Development, Inc.
Dalton Christie, Carter Logging, Inc.
Lloyd Cole, BITCO Insurance Companies
David Combs, Pritchett, Inc.
Conrad Tree Service
Stephen Coody
Cooley Island Lodge LLC
Crosby Farms LLC
James Dahl
Justin Daugherty, Choctaw Land & Timber
Courtney DeViney, School of Forest Resources & Conservation, UF/IFAS
Morris Edwards, Walden Woods, LMC.
Ellis Evans LLC
Clarence Feagle
Justin Forehand
Forestate Growers LLC
Fort Pleasant Farms
Thomas Fox, Rayonier
David Combs, Pritchett, Inc.
Conrad Tree Service
Stephen Coody
Cooley Island Lodge LLC
Crosby Farms LLC
James Dahl
Justin Daugherty, Choctaw Land & Timber
Courtney DeViney, School of Forest Resources & Conservation, UF/IFAS
Morris Edwards, Walden Woods, LMC.
Ellis Evans LLC
Clarence Feagle
Justin Forehand
Forestate Growers LLC
Fort Pleasant Farms
Thomas Fox, Rayonier
David Combs, Pritchett, Inc.
Conrad Tree Service
Stephen Coody
Cooley Island Lodge LLC
Crosby Farms LLC
James Dahl
Justin Daugherty, Choctaw Land & Timber
Courtney DeViney, School of Forest Resources & Conservation, UF/IFAS
Morris Edwards, Walden Woods, LMC.
Ellis Evans LLC
Clarence Feagle
Justin Forehand
Forestate Growers LLC
Fort Pleasant Farms
Thomas Fox, Rayonier
David Combs, Pritchett, Inc.
Conrad Tree Service
Stephen Coody
Cooley Island Lodge LLC
Crosby Farms LLC
James Dahl
Justin Daugherty, Choctaw Land & Timber
Courtney DeViney, School of Forest Resources & Conservation, UF/IFAS
Morris Edwards, Walden Woods, LMC.
Ellis Evans LLC
Clarence Feagle
Justin Forehand
Land West Holdings, LLC
Michael Lipford, Sapp’s Land & Excavating, Inc.
Longwood Logging, LLC
Maverick Timber & Cattle, LLC
MCC Investments/Lynn Kimmel
John McLean
William McLeod
McQuagge Logging
Jacob Mercer, Mickey Johnson Logging, LLC
Mildred R Beggs Trustee
Miller 5
Anthony Mixon, Sapp’s Land & Excavating, Inc.
Israel Monreal, Longwood Logging, LLC
Lane Montes, College of Central Florida
Mosquito Creek
Tommy North, College of Central Florida
John Bell, Northwest Hilliard Hunt Club
Oustee Corporation
Dickie Padgett, Carter Logging, Inc.
Carlton Pass, Longleaf Timber Products, Inc.
George Percifield, School of Forest Resources & Conservation, UF/IFAS
John Wesley Dalton Philman, College of Central Florida
Richard Piercy, Coastal Forestry Services, Inc.
Joe Pitcherall, WestRock
Seth Plank, School of Forest Resources & Conservation, UF/IFAS
Jacob Rhoden, Riverland Logging, Inc.
Rich Bay Farms, LLC
Robert Asbell Trucking LLC
Roberts Capital Ventures, LLC
William Roberts
Cindy Rochette, South Timber Inc.
Rocky Creek Pines, LLC
Kristjan Rounds, Coastal Forestry Services, Inc.
Stuart Rowan
SEMCO
Aaron Smith, School of Forest Resources & Conservation, UF/IFAS
Michael Smith, Morris Timber Products, Inc.
South Timber Inc.
Taylor Stewart
Eugene & Lynda Stokes
Richard Sullivan
Talquin Creek Hunt Club
Todd Tarchalski, Crystal River Hunt Club
Todd Tarchalski, Crystal River Hunt Club
Timber Investment Advisors
Trammell Land and Timber, L.L.C.
Tramble Logging
Truffle Hill Farm
Twin Rivers Land & Timber, Inc.
Wade Feagle Enterprises, LLC
Walden Woods, LMC.
Hunter Wells
Travis Whatley, WestRock
Williams Family Trust
Jay Williams
Wood Hunting Club
Tommy Wynn, Wynn Farms LLC
Angga Yadaputra, School of Forest Resources & Conservation, UF/IFAS

PLANNED GIVING, BEQUESTS & CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

Consider making a gift of a lifetime to support the future of Florida’s working forests by naming the Florida Forestry Association or Florida Forestry Foundation as a beneficiary in your will, charitable trust, life insurance policy, estate plan or retirement plan. Please contact Alan Shelby at 850.222.5646 for more information.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 16, 2019
8 AM (EST)
Master Logger CLE Training
Branford, FL

February 20, 2019
3 PM (EST)
Debbie Bryant’s Retirement Party
Tallahassee, FL

March 3, 2019
7 AM (EST)
Ride for Miracles ATV Trail Ride
Amsterdam, GA

March 7, 2019
Board Meeting/Forestry Day at the Capitol
Tallahassee, FL

March 21, 2019
11:30 AM (EST)
Membership Meeting
Nutrien-White Springs
White Springs, FL

March 25, 2019
11:30 AM (EST)
Membership Meeting
Coastal Plywood Company's Magnolia Lodge
Quincy, FL

April 30, 2019
10 AM (EST)
Executive Committee Meeting
Location TBD

June 5-6, 2019
8 AM (EST)
Master Logger 2-Day Training
Lake City, FL

July 18, 2019
8 AM (CST)
Master Logger CLE Training
DeFuniak Springs, FL

August 20-22, 2019
Annual Meeting
Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort
Sandestin, FL