

# FACT SHEET

No. 33

## Timber & Timber Harvesting in West Virginia

### How Logging Helps the Economy

The state's forest products industry is vital to West Virginia's economy. The industry supports over 29,000 employees (West Virginia University Bureau of Economic Research [WVBER]) including about 12,000 jobs from the indirect circulation of funds. The WVBER found that \$1.9 billion out of a total \$3.2 billion total business volume impact was due to the forest products industry. In 2001, the forest products industry including forestry, logging, lumber, wood and other allied products manufacturing, accounted for 13,800 employees and \$338,929,040 in total wages (West Virginia Bureau of Employment Programs and others). In the state manufacturing sector alone, forest products, including logging, accounted for 16.6% of the total employment and 10.8% of the total wages (WVBEP).

The forest products sector of West Virginia's manufacturing industry has increased in recent years. Forest products employment (including logging) increased at an average rate of 3.6% per year while the total West Virginia manufacturing industry declined by 0.37% annually. The state average annual increases in total wages for all forest products, logging only, and total manufacturing during this same period were: 8.6, 5.6 and 2.6 percent respectively.

State industries such as trucking and construction directly support logging and forest products manufacturing activities by transporting logs from the woods to the mill, and the many manufactured products to markets. This need also supports construction contractors that build and maintain roads. The logging industry accounts for up to 5,000 jobs in West Virginia's economy through purchases, equipment dealers, suppliers and shops that service their industry. This direct support component is estimated to account for up to 5,000 jobs in West Virginia's economy.

Loggers harvest trees in responsible and sustainable ways to supply West Virginia's forest products manufacturing industry. The West Virginia Logging Sediment Control Act ensures that loggers operate using practices that protect our waters and lands. The state's forest products industry, the West Virginia Forestry Association, loggers, the WVU Appalachian Hardwood Center, WV Division of Forestry and many other organizations are working together to promote and use sustainable practices. Utilization of these sustainable practices by West Virginia's forest industry preserves and promotes locally sustainable community economies. Today, most loggers are well trained and

highly skilled in their profession. They are businessmen that keep many dollars in local circulation (see Fact Sheet No. 7). Loggers use highly complex, technical and expensive machines for harvesting. Loggers rely on local dealerships and shops for service and support. They pay federal, state and local taxes and contribute to community vitality through many charities and activities such as “Log-A-Load for Kids.” Consumers of West Virginia’s forest products can have confidence that the products they purchase are from an environmentally sustainable forest-based economy.

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