

For Release October 21-27, 2018

For more information, please contact:

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## **Option 1**

### ***May the Forest Be With You***

A playoff on the famous line from the Star Wars cinematic series, the phrase “May the forest be with you” is surprisingly relevant in Florida. While some may think of forests only as the pretty green spaces lining the roadways between one place and another, our state’s working forests have an amazing impact on all areas of our lives.

Florida’s forests are with you on an economic level. A recent study by the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences places the forest industry’s economic impact upwards of \$25 billion. In addition to helping create a strong and stable economy, revenues from working forests also contribute \$880 million in state and local taxes.

Running neck and neck with horticulture as the state’s top agricultural commodity, the forest industry provides jobs for more than 124,000 people. Those jobs are not limited to North Florida as one might assume. A list of the top ten counties in regards to industry employment includes Miami-Dade, Polk, Hillsborough and Broward Counties, illustrating forestry’s statewide importance.

Forests are, of course, also with you on an environmental level. Forests filter our air and water and aid with carbon sequestration. They provide both habitat for our state’s astounding array of flora and fauna and beautiful places for people to play and relax.

Forests are also with us in their role in the manufacturing of more than 5,000 items that are part of our daily lives. Forest resources are used to make everything from the obvious (paper, furniture, tissues) to the unexpected (cancer treatments, cell phone screens, ice cream, cosmetics).

The forests are with you today, but whether they are with you in the future is in your hands. Healthy markets for forest resources are vital to the sustainability of Florida’s forests. Without the ability to continue the cycle of planting and harvesting, few landowners can afford to keep their woodlands forested.

So print your emails (and everything else). Request paper bags at the grocery store. Replace that cracked cell phone screen. Proudly support the sustainable use of forest products in every way that you can.

And may the forest be with you always.

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## **Option 2**

### ***Working Forests Week***

In recognition of the importance of working forests to the state, the week of October 21-27, 2018, is being celebrated across Florida as “Working Forests Week.”

The week recognizes the importance of Florida’s forests and forest-related industries to our state’s environment and economy.

According to a recent study by the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS), forestry and forest products are ranked as the state’s top agricultural commodity and the leading agricultural export.

The UF/IFAS study reports that forestry has a \$25 billion impact on the state’s economy. Statewide, the forest industry helps to provide jobs for more than 124,000 people.

Working forests also play a critical role in the state’s environment.

“Florida’s forestlands have a tremendous positive environmental impact,” said Florida Forestry Association Executive Vice President Alan Shelby. “They provide a natural filtration system which can and should be an integral part of the solution to our state’s looming water quality and quantity issues.”

Shelby noted that in a state experiencing constant development, forests also offer much-needed green spaces for recreation and habitat to an amazing diversity of wildlife.

At last count, more than 5,000 items contained forest products. The assortment of “Goods from the Woods” is very diverse and continues to grow. For example, the materials working forests provide are used to build homes, print newspapers, landscape yards and manufacture furniture. Forests products are also found in the screens on cell phones, televisions and computers; in shampoos and other cosmetics; and in medicines, sports equipment, food and much more.

For more information about Working Forests Week and our state’s working forests, visit <http://www.FloridaForest.org>.

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## **Option 3**

### ***Forest Industry Helps Keep (insert name) County in the Green***

A recent study by the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) shows that Columbia County has a number of reasons to join in the statewide celebration of Working Forests Week October 21-27, 2018:

**###** – the number of acres of privately owned forestland in (insert name) County.

**###** – the number of jobs made possible by the forest industry in (insert name) County.

**###** – the number of dollars the forest industry contributes to (insert name) County’s economy.

“The forest industry helps keep (insert name) County in the green environmentally and economically,” said Alan Shelby, Executive Vice President of the Florida Forestry Association. “Working forests keep people working, too. Planting trees, harvesting the resources, taking them to market and processing them ... each step in the chain provides vital jobs. And then those jobs make even more jobs possible.”

“There’s a definite tie between the economic and environmental benefits of the forest industry,” Shelby explained. “Strong markets for forest resources make it possible for forest owners to keep their forests growing. Those forests provide a host of environmental benefits such as filtering the air and water and creating habitat for wildlife and plants. Green for the economy and green for the environment – (insert name) County’s working forests do it all!”

The study also reveals that the forest industry statewide economic impact exceeds \$25 billion and helps provide jobs for more than 124,000 people.

For more information about Working Forests Week and our state’s working forests, visit <http://www.FloridaForest.org>.

\*\*\* Numbers for your county can be found in the Working Forests Week Toolbox on our website or directly at <https://bit.ly/2RhBdYi>.

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#### **Option 4**

##### ***Celebrate Working Forests Week With Your Favorite “Goods from the Woods”***

Did you know that more than 5000 items that are part of our daily lives are made using resources from working forests?

Some are obvious, such as paper, boxes, furniture and lumber. Others are mind-blowing, such as cancer treatments.

Some help keep you looking good: hairspray, lipstick and other cosmetics. Others help keep you feeling good: aspirin, cough syrup, and other medicines.

Some help keep you clean: shampoo, toothpaste and soap. Others help clean things around you: laundry detergent, pine cleaners and dish washing liquid.

Some help you work: ink, computer casings and cell phone screens. Others help you play: sports equipment, musical instruments and fireworks.

Some you eat: ice cream, spices, hot chocolate, Twinkies®, salad dressings and fat-free foods. Others you wear: rayon, fragrances and eyeglass frames.

Some help get you down the road: tires, steering wheels and asphalt. Others help you around the house: carpet, paint and mulch.

Florida is celebrating Working Forests Week October 21-27, 2018. Be sure to join in the fun by using all your favorite “Goods from the Woods!”

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