

# Illinois Forestry Development Council

## Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Report

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

From the Director	1
Accomplishments	2
Recommendation	3
IFDC Members	4

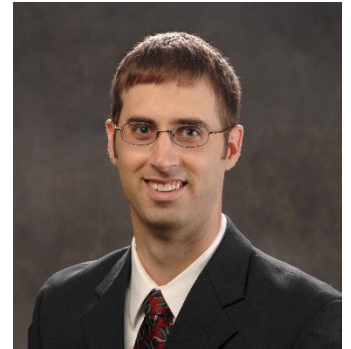


July 2021

IFDC Website  
<http://ifdc.nres.illinois.edu/>

## From the Director

A 2020 publication, *Forest Products Industries' Economic Contributions: Illinois*, funded by the US Department of Agriculture Forest Service, reported that the Forest Products Industry in Illinois provides 38,554 jobs and contributes nearly \$22 billion annually to the state economy. For comparison, this is more direct labor, income, and output than commercial fishing, hunting, and trapping, and mining and oil and gas combined! It is nearly 75% of the agricultural production output (plant crop and animal) in Illinois.



However, it could be even better. Indiana, a state with a similar number of forested acres, employs nearly 18,000 more people in the Logging, Wood Products, and Wood Furniture industries compared to Illinois. This translates into a 33% greater direct output (over \$4 billion more!) in those categories. Why is this so? A primary reason is that many of the logs harvested in Illinois are sent across state lines to be manufactured into higher value wood products because of lower manufacturing costs, e.g. lower taxes, workman compensation rates, etc. Given that annual forest growth in Illinois exceeds volume losses from harvest, landuse change, and mortality, the State is poised to capitalize on the resources available. This can only happen though from improved policies developed by the Illinois General Assembly that foster manufacturing development and encourage Illinois landowners to reinvest in their forests.

The Illinois Forestry Development Council looks forward to continuing conversations with members of the Illinois General Assembly, State Officials, and other Forestry Partners to improve Illinois forestry in FY22 and beyond.

Sincerely,

Eric Holzmueller, Director  
Illinois Forestry Development Council

# IFDC Accomplishments

## **SMALL PROJECTS PROGRAM**

The IFDC provided funding to seven partners for the following small projects. These projects helped address forestry issues defined by the Council and included actions to mitigate these issues as outlined in the updated Illinois Forest Action Plan.

- The Association of Illinois Soil and Water District established an outdoor classroom in Pulaski County that serves as a forestry resource for schools across the region.
- Chicago Region Trees Initiative developed and distributed tree-tag kits to 22 communities across the Chicago region that promote the benefits of trees in urban areas.
- Touch of Nature at Southern Illinois University developed educational displays demonstrating invasive control techniques in heavily infested areas.
- Shawnee RC & D produced a three-part video series on oak forest management in southern Illinois and revamped the *Let the Sun Shine In* website - [www.letthesunshinein.life](http://www.letthesunshinein.life).
- Heartland Conservancy created a demonstration site for invasive plant management practices in forested areas.
- The Illinois Forestry Association obtained funding to provide landowner education through a series of field days and developed an invasive species and management guide designed specifically for private landowners.
- Naturalist Chris Benda obtained funding to host two Illinois Natural Areas Inventory workshops. He is also worked on the recertification and verification campaign for the Illinois Big Tree Register.

## **REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM**

The IFDC project "Improving Oak-Hickory forest type" with the USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service was completed this past year. This project brought over \$2,000,000 in funding to Illinois to implement management practices that benefit Illinois forests. Now that this project is completed, it highlights the need for the State to step up and invest in management practices that improve forest productivity and health for the benefit of all Illinoisans. Illinois timber harvest fees (i.e., yield tax) generate nearly \$1,750,000 annually. The Council hereby recommends a significant portion of these yield taxes should go directly back to landowners to improve forest health on their properties as the original IL FDA law (525 ILCS 15) intended.

## **IFDC MEETINGS**

The IFDC met (remotely) six times over the course of FY-2021. The Council meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the odd months. Locations are varied across the State and a remote option is always available. All meetings are open to the public. If you are interested in attending, check out the Council website for more information: <http://www.ifdc.nres.illinois.edu/>. Minutes of previous meetings are also available on the website.

## Recommendation to the IL General Assembly

### **ILLINOIS TIMBER BUYERS LICENSING ACT - (225 ILCS 735/)**

The Illinois Timber Buyers Licensing Act (TBLA) provides guidelines for timber harvesters who buy timber from timber growers in the state of Illinois for commercial purposes. Most of the timber growers are private landowners. Typically these landowners own tracts less than 100 acres and may only harvest timber on their property one or two times in their lifetimes. Any individual who buys timber in Illinois must obtain a license from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and is subject to fines, penalties, and possible license revocation for violations of the Act. The other primary provision of the TBLA is the collection of a 4% fee from all timber growers based on the purchase price of the timber. Timber Buyers are responsible for collecting the 4% fee and forwarding to the DNR. This money was originally intended to be returned to landowners to be used as cost share for management practices that improve forest health and productivity on their forests, but since 2015 all of this money is used for Departmental salaries.

This past spring the DNR attempted to update the TBLA via shell bill SB1075. The primary goals of the update were to increase timber buyer fees, adjust penalties, improve collection compliance of the 4% fee, and improve landowner education through outreach. While these goals had noble intentions, the process was carried out hastily without adequate input from the Council, landowners, or timber buyers, and the proposed changes fell short on many fronts.

Based on feedback from our stakeholders, the Council voiced their disapproval of the proposed changes and the DNR decided to postpone pursuing such changes until all stakeholders have an opportunity to provide input. This upcoming year the Council will work with the DNR to adjust the updates to the TBLA so that all involved parties are satisfied with the outcome. The Council looks forward to working collaboratively with DNR and the Illinois General Assembly to improve forestry in Illinois in a more transparent manner.



# Illinois Forestry Development Council

The Illinois Forestry Development Council was created in 1983 upon passage of the Illinois Forestry Development Act (525 ILCS 15). The Council's charge is to identify and evaluate the social, economic, scientific, and educational value of Illinois' forest lands and forest products industries. The 29 members of the Council represent the following interests or groups:

<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>REPRESENTING</b>	<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>REPRESENTING</b>
Vacant	Landowner Engaged in Farming	Ms. Lydia Scott	Environmental Issues
Vacant	Landowner Engaged in Farming	Dr. Robert Schooley Mr. Jay Hayek**	University of Illinois/Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences
Mr. Roy Bailey	Private Timber Grower	Dr. John Groninger	Southern Illinois University, Forestry Program
Mr. Steve Graves	Private Timber Grower	Mr. Jerry Costello II Mr. Elliot Legacy**	Illinois Department of Agriculture
Mr. Joel Pisoni	Wood Products/Primary Forest Industry	Ms. Collen Callahan Mr. Paul Deizman	Illinois Department of Natural Resources IDNR State Forester
Mr. Scott Swisher	Wood Products/Primary Forest Industry	Ms. Sylvia Garcia	Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
Mr. Stephen Felt	Illinois Tree Farm Committee	Mr. Chris B. Meister	Illinois Finance Authority
Mr. Mike McMahan Mr. Dave Gillespie**	Illinois Forestry Association	Dr. Christopher Merrett	Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs
Mr. Casey Calvert	Illinois Walnut Council	Vacant	IL Speaker of the House
Ms. Jenny Lesko	Illinois Chapter of the Society of American Foresters	Mr. Patrick Windhorst (R)	IL House Minority Leader
Dr. T.J. Benson	Illinois Chapter of the Wildlife Society	Vacant	IL Senate President
Vacant	Urban Forestry Representative	Mr. Jason Barickman (R)	IL Senate Minority Leader
Mr. Robert Sproule	Illinois Arborist Association	Mr. Ivan Dozier* Mr. Wade Conn**	USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service Illinois
Mr. Steve Stierwalt Mr. Dale Shumaker**	Association of Illinois Soil & Water Conservation Districts	Mr. Michael Chaveas*	U.S. Forest Service Shawnee National Forest

*\*Ex-officio Members*

*\*\*Designee or Alternate*

For more information on the Illinois Forestry Development Council go to:

[ifdc.nres.illinois.edu/](http://ifdc.nres.illinois.edu/)