

GEORGIA FORESTRY  
COMMISSION



# News Release

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## **REPORT CARD FOR GEORGIA'S FORESTLAND RELEASED**

A new report shows Georgia's forests are healthy today and are ready to meet the needs of tomorrow, if we're mindful of some emerging trends. The 2019 "Sustainability Report for Georgia's Forests" details the condition of the state's 24-million acres of forestland. It outlines the numerous economic, environmental, and social benefits of Georgia's forests and details specific challenges to the resource that provided more than 147,000 jobs and generated nearly \$36 billion in economic value to the state in 2017.

"Georgia is the top forestry state in the nation and our trees are an economic powerhouse," said Georgia Forestry Commission Director Chuck Williams. "As they silently filter our water and clean our air, they're working hard to give us thousands of everyday products and support private landowners who care deeply about this valuable resource."

The report states that Georgia's forest acreage has remained stable over the past 50 years, while forest inventory volumes are at an all-time high. Forest growth exceeds removals by 41 percent annually and is available to supply global and local markets. Ecological services that help supply our state with clean water, clean air, wildlife habitat, and recreation opportunities are valued at \$37 billion annually.

According to the report, one of the greatest emerging threats to the sustainability of Georgia's forests is urbanization. Land ownership patterns are changing, parcels are getting smaller, and land valuations for tax purposes have been inconsistent across the state. The majority of Georgia's forestland is privately owned, and responding to the many pressures faced by landowners is key to long-term forest sustainability. The report cites a number of strategies for accomplishing meeting those challenges.

"Georgia's population is increasing at record rates," said Williams, "and we need to pay special attention to the effect that has on the state's water, air, and wildlife. Forests are the critical link that impact the health of each of these resources. By acknowledging conditions and challenges today, we can work toward keeping forests productive and sustainable for the generations of tomorrow."

To read the "2019 Sustainability Report for Georgia's Forests," and to learn more about services of the Georgia Forestry Commission, visit [GaTrees.org](http://GaTrees.org).

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