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FOREST INDUSTRY CONTINUES TO POWER STATE’S ECONOMY

For the second consecutive year, Georgia's forest industry has provided more jobs for Georgians and more fuel for the state's economy than the previous year. According to a new Georgia Forestry Commission report done by the Georgia Institute of Technology, total economic activity generated by Georgia's forest industry as measured by output, employment and compensation, reached $28.94 billion in 2012, which is a 15.88 percent increase from 2011 and the highest level since 2001.

"Our state's national standing as a forestry leader benefits every Georgian," said Governor Nathan Deal. "Georgia's 24 million acres of sustainable forestland is supporting the world's supply of wood, pulp and paper products, while generating millions of dollars in revenue for the state and employing thousands of people. Plus, forests give us valuable economic services in the form of clean air, clean water, and spectacular havens for wildlife and recreation."

Highlights of the "Economic Benefits of the Forest Industry in Georgia: 2012" study show numerous gains between 2011 and 2012, including:

- Revenue generated directly by all forestry sectors combined rose 9% to $16.35 billion.
- Employment in the forest industry rose 7% to 49,497 jobs.
- Forest industry workers earned $3.1 billion in wages and salaries, up 4%.
- The forest industry generated $603 million for state revenue, an increase of 24%.

There are 179 primary wood-using industries located in Georgia that convert logs into primary wood products such as lumber, veneer or sheathing, poles and posts, wood pulp and energy products such as wood pellets. Georgia's wood pellet portfolio has grown from zero to nine wood pellet mills from 2007 to 2013, with several additional mills under development. Nearly all of the wood pellets produced in Georgia are exported to electric utilities in the United Kingdom and other European countries where the pellets are burned in electricity power generating plants.

In addition, there are approximately 1,100 secondary manufacturers that further convert primary wood products into value-added products, such as manufactured homes and buildings, furniture, molding, paper products and more.

A recent study by the University of Georgia School of Forestry and Natural Resources quantified $37 billion in economic services provided by Georgia's forests.

“The Georgia Forestry Commission’s mission is to provide sustainable forests for present and future generations,” said Director of the Georgia Forestry Commission Robert Farris. “These positive indicators show that strategy is working.”

To read the 2012 report and learn more about the services of the Georgia Forestry Commission, visit GaTrees.org.