



FRA 2022-2024 Strategic Plan

MISSION: Forest Resources Association will proactively lead a world-class wood supply chain.

We Will: Provide an effective member voice in Washington, DC:

- Defend against threatening legislation and regulation
- Advance public policies that support industry sustainability

Communicate relevant and timely information to create opportunities for company and employee success:

- Promote safety
- Improve skills
- Elevate technical and operational expertise
- Identify workforce issues and define proactive solutions
- Establish leadership development programs

Maintain a thriving regional structure:

- Address regional policy and operational issues
- Identify regional research priorities
- Build and grow a strong grassroots advocacy network

FRA supports your ongoing commitment to Environmental Performance and Socially Responsible Governance through employee development and training, safety awareness and accident prevention, policy development and government interaction, and education about the sustainability of well-managed forests and the role of forests in mitigating climate change.

FRA National Committee Goals

Public Policy / Advocacy Committee Goals:

Provide an effective member voice in Washington, DC. Successfully influence public policy to defend and enhance the wood supply chain's operating environment and sustainability.

Supplier / Consumer Relations Committee Goals:

Promote the development of a competitive framework within which members may implement supply chain efficiency improvements and identify workforce issues and define proactive solutions throughout the supply chain.

Operations Committee Goals:

Share/promote technical best practices, promote safety, improve skills and elevate technical and operational expertise, and encourage process improvements, operational excellence, promote industry development and technology transfer.

This document was updated in January 2023 to reflect our advocacy efforts for the 118th Congress.

NATIONAL PUBLIC POLICY/ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

Proposed Projects and Tactics: **High and Medium Priority**

Defend Use of Guestworkers in Forestry

Improve forest-related services' access to foreign, non-immigrant workers and improve practicality and economic feasibility.

- Lead H-2B Workforce Coalition's forestry-related management activities.
- Oppose or support the Department of Labor or other agency initiatives that propose changes to the H-2B visa program.
- Advocate for the enactment of legislative language that directs the Departments of Labor and Homeland Security authorization to release supplemental. H-2B visas.
- Seek meaningful and permanent H-2B cap relief through legislation.

Advance Endangered Species Act (ESA) Reform

Continue to engage Congress and the judicial branch on ESA listings that threaten to impede the practice of sustainable forestry.

- Monitor and provide comments on proposed species listings and work with our allies to ensure the most recent research is used in the determination of a species' ESA status.
- Continue to work with USFWS and public land managers to develop reasonable conservation strategies and Habitat Conservation Plans for bat species listed as endangered under the ESA.
- Work with members of Congress to draft and introduce legislation to reform the Endangered Species Act providing more flexibility to the USFWS with landowners when they are not the primary cause for a species listed as endangered under the ESA.

Reform Truck Weight Rules

- Inform members of congress on the safety and efficiency benefits of allowing log trucks access to interstates at legal state vehicle weights and configurations.
- Support research that advances FRA's transportation positions..
- Support and advance the DRIVE Safe Act.
- Monitor and comment on rulemaking that may affect the wood supply chain.

Defend Independent Contractor Status

Preserve the "safe harbor" establishing independent contractor status under IRS jurisdiction and oppose DOL attempts to encumber Wage & Hour status determinations.

- Continued leadership role in Coalition of Independent Entrepreneurs.
- Oppose regulatory or legislative proposals to place further burdens on Department of Labor determinations of independence.

Proposed Projects and Tactics: **High and Medium Priority** (cont.)

Defend Concept of Biomass Carbon Neutrality in Federal Policy

- Defend FRA-supported legislation and work to fully enact administrative rules directing EPA, USDA, and DOE to recognize the carbon-neutral nature of forest-based biomass fuels from attack by anti-forestry groups.
- Ensure federal carbon-management incentives and mandates affecting forest resources maintain the inclusion of scientifically substantiated carbon neutrality and avoid imposing impractical and prohibitive accounting procedures.

Farm Bill

- FRA will engage in helping shape the next Farm Bill, as the current authorizing statute expires in 2023.
- Our focus will be on establishing forestry workforce programs and programs affecting forest management, wood products, and forest biomass renewable energy.
- FRA will collaborate with the Forests in the Farm Bill Coalition—a large coalition of the forestry and forest products sectors, in addition to environmental NGOs.

Proposed Projects and Tactics: **Monitoring**

Improve Small Business Access to Credit

Support public policy initiatives, such as credit union reform that show promise of enhancing competitive options for small forestry-related businesses in need of credit.

- Build strategic alliances with like-minded sectors.
- Assemble and promote recommendations for small forestry-related businesses to improve their credit profiles (Operations Committee).

Increase Use of Wood Building Products in Tall Buildings

- Improved technologies in the development of cross-laminated timber have the potential to provide expanded markets for the solid wood product sector. FRA will provide support and monitor policies and regulations that provide a pathway for market growth in this area.

Climate Change Legislation

- FRA will monitor climate change legislation and outline potential impacts on the wood supply chain.

NATIONAL SUPPLIER/CONSUMER RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Proposed Projects and Tactics: **High Priority**

Relieve Logging, Trucking, and Mill Workforce Shortage

Identify, foster, and promote means to increase available logging and forest products trucking workforce:

- Through alliances with organizations with access to likely entry-level workers.
- By publicizing logging, trucking, and mill career opportunities to broad sectors of the public.
- By connecting with organizations that help veterans and separating military personnel transition to the civilian workforce, and find opportunities to promote career opportunities in the forest industry.
- By supporting legislative initiatives to lower the legal age for entry-level logging and trucking workers, under suitable conditions (Public Policy / Advocacy Committee).
- By building and encouraging the development of relevant training resources.
- By finding ways to access and recruit immigrant and refugee communities, which may bring previously unexplored opportunities to our industry.

Proposed Projects and Tactics: **Medium Priority**

Raise Awareness of Current and Emerging Demand Trends

Create opportunities for market observers to report on wood and forest biomass market and demand trends.

- Summarize and link to published articles in relevant communication channels.
- Invite analysis of emerging demand trends, and technical responses in utilization and merchandising in FRA meetings and Technical Releases.

Promote New Options for Improving the Quality of Communications among Supply Chain Members (Including Use of New Technologies)

Identify techniques and technologies, emerging and in use, for improving communication.

- Identify and publish reviews of tested systems as FRA Technical Releases.
- Identify opportunities for field demonstrations at FRA meeting field trips.
- Stage forums at FRA meetings for discussion of emerging communications techniques or technologies.

Proposed Projects and Tactics: **Low Priority**

Facilitate Interactive Workshops Between Mill and Supplier Personnel

Promote availability of FRA's Consumer-Supplier Relationships Workshop

- Make workshops available to members on an as-requested basis.

NATIONAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Proposed Projects and Tactics: **High Priority**

Improve Trucking Efficiency

Identify and promote effective systems for optimizing trucking assets and wood transport costs.

- Encourage members to identify and notify FRA staff about systems to increase trucking efficiency.
- Educate members on innovations through publications and at meetings.
- Provide a forum for both loggers and truck manufacturers to share knowledge of local innovations and barriers to trucking improvement across regions.

Minimize Mill and In-Woods Truck Turnaround Times and Streamline Woodyard Processes

Identify best practices in reducing truck turnaround both at the woodyard and at the landing.

- Explore the development of a customizable cost analysis model to accurately predict how changing economic variables impact overall transportation costs for hauling forest products (logs, chips, by-products, etc.)
- Identify innovations and educate members through FRA publications and meetings.
- Encourage collection, presentation, and interpretation of turn-time data available via new technologies, such as in-cab GPS units, turn-time phone apps, etc.

Enhance Long- and Short-Term Operations Planning and Communication

Identify and promote technical innovations and management systems that enhance timely and effective communication within individual organizations and throughout the wood supply chain.

- Promote innovations identified in the field through FRA publications and by offering innovators presentation spots at meetings.
- Explore technology solutions to enhance communications.
- Create a conduit for a technology supplier/supply chain interface, an idea bank, promoting input from the supply chain on emerging needs.

Increase Awareness highlighting FRA's work to support the ongoing commitment to Environmental Performance and Socially Responsible Governance

- FRA will continue to produce and increase awareness of its Safety Alerts, Carbon Reports, Webinars, CFE offerings, FRA Research, and content that supports Equal Access to Work/ Education opportunities.

Proposed Projects and Tactics: **High Priority** (cont)

Address Industry-wide Safety and Insurance Challenges

Identify and promote efforts to meet the current log trucking challenges of high insurance costs & declining insurance availability; shortage of qualified, insurable drivers; and log trucking safety and loss control issues.

- Publish trucking safety-related FRA Technical Releases and Safety Alerts.
- Include trucking safety and insurance-related presentations at FRA regional and national meetings to share successes and possible solutions.
- Support and promote the efforts of TEAM Safe Trucking to develop and implement nationwide truck driver safety training and continuing education.
- Monitor and assess emerging driver certification programs. (ex. – Carolina Loggers Assn. Pilot).
- Coordinate with other organizations (logging associations, state implementation committees, etc.) to promote disseminating trucking safety training throughout the trucking workforce.
- Monitor tort reform efforts.
- Collaborate with stakeholders (TEAM Safe Trucking, Community Colleges, etc.) to address insurability challenges for inexperienced forest product drivers by substituting the 2 or 3-year experience requirement with an approved training curriculum.

Proposed Projects and Tactics: **Medium Priority**

Encourage and Facilitate Operational Efficiency Improvements

Identify, evaluate, and promote innovative practices in equipment operational efficiency through new equipment design & investment, refurbishment of older equipment, available software programs, telematics, etc; identify, evaluate, and promote operational improvement through downtime analysis, various maintenance programs, and schedules, use of shifts, and other means.

- Promote innovations identified in the field through FRA publications (such as Technical Releases), by offering innovators presentation spots at meetings, and through field visits.
- Provide networking opportunities at FRA meetings among equipment representatives and FRA members for the exchange of operational efficiency ideas.

Address Emerging Forest and Supply-Chain Security Issues

Inform members of emerging supply-chain and woodland security exposures and of best practices in loss prevention and assisting law enforcement.

- Maintain regional Security Group meetings as forums for networking and information sharing on best practices.
- Communicate Security Group recommendations to the membership at large through reports to the Operations Committee, appropriate Regional Policy Committees, and through Security Alerts.
- Provide continued cyber security guidance to members through webinars, Woods to Mill articles, and other methods of outreach and correspondence.

Proposed Projects and Tactics: **Low Priority**

Enable Improved Fuel Efficiency and Reduced Consumable Spending

Identify and promote technical innovations and management systems that effectively conserve fuel and other consumables or reduce their per-unit cost in wood supply chain management.

- Identify best practices in fuel conservation and cost control and promote them through publications and meeting presentations.
- Publish evaluations of distribution systems such as the Southern Loggers Cooperative in controlling per-unit fuel costs.

Facilitate International Exchange of Efficiency Methods

Build liaisons with individuals knowledgeable about non-U.S. silviculture, harvesting, trucking, and wood supply chain management systems, and provide opportunities for members to evaluate unfamiliar technologies and practices.

- Provide presentation opportunities at Operations Committee meetings and through webinars.
- Encourage Technical Releases on relevant topics authored by experienced individuals.