

SHARED PRINCIPLES FOR STRENGTHENING LOGGING AND HAULING CAPACITY

Logging and hauling capacity is a vital linchpin in the supply chain connecting forest owners and forest product manufacturers. Forest owners rely on independent loggers and haulers to help them optimize the value of their forest resources by safely harvesting and transporting timber to mills consistent with sustainable forestry practices. Product manufacturers depend on independent loggers and haulers to supply a steady and reliable supply of timber, enabling them to sustainably provide over 5,000 different products used by consumers every day. A strong supply chain and healthy forest products economy supports local communities and overall rural prosperity.

Forest owners and product manufacturers view their logging and hauling contractors as important long-term service providers whose contributions are vital to the entire sector. Increasing the capacity of these service providers over time

is fundamental to sustaining private working forests, forest products, and the many public benefits they provide to rural communities, our nation, and the world. Equally important is preserving the independence and entrepreneurial spirit of logging and hauling businesses as vital participants in the wood supply chain.

Several factors threaten the sustainability and continuity of logging and hauling capacity. Workflow uncertainty, seasonality, wood supply system inefficiencies, escalating operating costs, regulatory burdens, inaccurate perceptions about the profession, and training gaps impact recruitment, retention, and overall profitability. These factors, coupled with an aging workforce, increase the urgency of finding solutions to maintain and build capacity over time. Sector-wide leadership and communication is required to advance a common vision and practical solutions for the future.

As sector leaders, we recognize logging and hauling capacity as a vital part of the supply chain, and we are united in a common vision for securing logging and hauling workforce capacity for the future, including:

- Recognizing logging and hauling contractors as important independent service providers.
- Facilitating better communication among forest landowners, loggers and haulers, and forest products manufacturers on efforts to stabilize workflows, manage risk, increase efficiencies, and reduce operating costs.
- Supporting investments in equipment, tools, and technology across the supply chain to increase productivity and efficiency.
- Improving safety through support of safety certifications, standards improvements, equipment maintenance and repair, and other measures to support safety awareness and well-being.
- Supporting efforts to update and improve vocational and career technical education to attract new entrants into the logging and hauling profession, develop transferrable skills supporting off-season employment, and provide opportunities for career transition into the logging and hauling industry.
- Jointly identifying and pursuing federal policies that provide the legal frameworks, programs, investments, and regulatory environments to advance these principles while maintaining the independence and entrepreneurial spirit of logging and hauling businesses.

