

# Is a Forestry Career Right for You?

What makes the Great Outdoors great? While nature plays the leading role, it sometimes needs the help of forestry professionals from the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF).

But who are these 285 men and women of the VDOF whose mission it is to protect and develop healthy sustainable forest resources for Virginians? How did they prepare themselves to become professional foresters or forestry technicians?

Typically, foresters and technicians have had a lifelong love of the outdoors, a passion for the role the environment plays in our lives, and a desire to serve the citizens of the Commonwealth. They are good stewards of our forests, ensuring this vital resource is available today and in the future. They protect more than 15 million acres of forestland from the ravages of wildfire. They grow and replant more than 33 million tree seedlings each year. They ensure the health and vitality of our trees by keeping detrimental insects and invasive tree species out of our forests. They provide places for contemplation and recreation. They protect the quality of our water and our air. And they establish and maintain natural habitats for thousands of species of wildlife.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

### Abingdon Region Office:

Phone: (276) 676-5488 ; FAX: (276) 676-5581  
Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Grayson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise and Wythe counties

### Salem Region Office:

Phone: (540) 387-5461 ; FAX: (540) 387-5445  
Alleghany, Bath, Bedford, Botetourt, Craig, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Henry, Highland, Montgomery, Patrick, Pittsylvania, Pulaski, Roanoke and Rockbridge counties

### Farmville Region Office:

Phone: (434) 392-4159 ; FAX: (434) 392-1550  
Amelia, Appomattox, Buckingham, Campbell, Charlotte, Cumberland, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Powhatan and Prince Edward counties

### Charlottesville Region Office:

Phone: (434) 977-5193 ; FAX: (434) 296-3290  
Albemarle, Amherst, Arlington, Augusta, Clarke, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, Fluvanna, Frederick, Goochland, Greene, Loudoun, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, Orange, Page, Prince William, Rappahannock, Rockingham, Shenandoah and Warren counties

### Tappahannock Region Office:

Phone: (804) 443-2211 ; FAX: (804) 443-3164  
Caroline, Charles City, Chesterfield, Essex, Gloucester, Hanover, Henrico, James City, King & Queen, King George, King William, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, New Kent, Northumberland, Richmond, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Westmoreland and York counties

### Waverly Region Office:

Phone: (804) 834-2300 ; FAX: (804) 834-3232  
Accomack, Brunswick, Dinwiddie, Greensville, Isle of Wight, Northampton, Prince George, Southampton, Surry and Sussex counties, and cities of Chesapeake, Suffolk and Virginia Beach



### Virginia Department of Forestry

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# CAREERS IN FORESTRY

*Protecting and developing  
healthy sustainable forest  
resources for Virginians*



Virginia Department of Forestry  
[www.dof.virginia.gov](http://www.dof.virginia.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

# Becoming a Forestry Professional

So, how do you become a forester? For most, the path is through a college or university, such as Virginia Tech, that offers a 4-year, SAF-accredited, degree in forestry. Students take courses in a variety of subjects, such as forest biology, woodland management, outdoor recreation, timber procurement, hydrology, computer applications and spatial analysis. Through their coursework, field studies and internships, they learn the critical skills that will help them help forest landowners and Virginia's forestlands.

The path to becoming a forest technician is a little different. Many technicians have earned a 2-year degree from a community college, such as Dabney Lancaster. Students take such diverse courses as forest measurements, forest & wildlife ecology, dendrology, forest fire control, timber harvesting, sawmilling, wildlife and fisheries management, forest products and urban forestry.



# Working as a Forestry Professional

One of the best aspects of forestry work is the diversity of the duties. The range of tasks is wide, and no two days are exactly alike. You might begin one day helping a landowner decide how to best meet his or her goals through the development of a forest stewardship management plan, and end the day helping extinguish a forest fire. You could be out in the field helping a logger implement best management practices in order to protect the quality of our water, or you might be working with a planting crew involved in reforestation efforts. You could be conducting research to ensure that we don't experience an outbreak of bark beetle

infestation, or you might be helping Smokey Bear teach children about forest fire prevention. In times of crises, you could be delivering food and water to victims of hurricanes or helping people rebuild their lives and their homes after a flood. Regardless of the task, you will be helping people everyday.

# The Future of Forestry

Forestry is big business in Virginia. Forestry and related activities contribute more than \$30 Billion in benefits to the state's economy each year. And more than 248,000 Virginians are employed in the forest industry. But each year, fewer young people enroll in college-level forestry courses. That means not as many people are available to fill these

jobs. For those who are planning to become forestry professionals, this is good news as it indicates a higher demand for their talents. As demand increases and supply decreases, the best students will likely receive multiple job offers along with very competitive salaries.

# 50 Careers in Trees

Accountant • Appraiser • Arborist • Botanical Farmer • Broker • Christmas Tree Farmer • Community Educator • Community Project Manager • Cooperative Extension Specialist • Ecologist • Elementary School Teacher • Executive Director • Forest Pathologist • Forester • Fund Raiser or Resource Developer • GIS Professional • Grant Administrator • Grant Writer • Groundskeeper • High School Teacher • Landscape Architect • Landscape Contractor • Landscape Designer or Garden Consultant • Lawyer • Legislator • Lumber Harvester • Lumber Miller • Nature Photographer • Nursery Owner or Manager • Park Planner • Park Supervisor • Professor • Researcher • Salesperson • Silviculturist • Social Forester • Soil Scientist • Special Forest Products Entrepreneur • Transportation Engineer • Tree Inventory Technician • Tree Rentals • Tree Service • Tree Technician • Urban Forester • Urban Planner • Utility Arborist or Forester • Volunteer • Wildland Fire Manager • Wildland Restoration • Writer

# Forestry Internships

Paid internships may be available each summer. Contact the Virginia Department of Forestry Office of Human Resources at (434) 977-6555 to learn more.

# For More Information

To learn more about forestry and forestry-related careers, talk to your local VDOF forester and technician or visit [www.dof.virginia.gov](http://www.dof.virginia.gov) for more information.