



GEORGIA FORESTS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

24 million acres of forests in Georgia protect and provide for over 10 million residents.

These forests provide critical ecosystem services like cleaning our drinking water, providing habitat for rare species, and protecting our communities from dangerous floods. Yet, these forests are under threat from climate change and from poor industrial forestry practices.



We are clearcutting away one of our best solutions to climate change.

Over 279,000 acres of Georgia forests are clear cut every year—that's nearly 600 football fields per day. This leaves a black hole on the landscape that can take decades to regenerate.

According to the Forest Service, Georgia lost around 264,000 acres of forest from 2010 to 2018.

Logging is the third highest emitter of greenhouse gases in Georgia, according to the last known emissions report.

KEEPING OUR FORESTS STANDING WILL HELP ALL GEORGIANS THRIVE

- Over a third of the solution to climate change will come from protecting and restoring natural forests.
- Natural forests provide flood protection and water filtration for much lower cost than man-made solutions - critical in low-lying, low-income rural areas.
- Natural forests promote health, protect cultural identity, and store more carbon than other landscape types, including industrial pine plantations

Industrial forest practices are part of the problem.

High concentrations of extractive logging negatively affects income, education and poverty rates in rural communities.

The wood products industry in Georgia produces \$15.5 billion dollars of value in industry shipments, yet only pays \$213 million in taxes, an effective tax rate of just 1.4%.

The largest biomass facility in Georgia, soon to be acquired by Enviva, is located in an Environmental Justice community, which is a community with more than 25% nonwhite citizens and above-the-median poverty level.

Wood products facilities are a major source of pollution; they decrease the quality of life for residents with constant noise, dust, and road traffic.

TOP PREDICTOR OF A STRONG RURAL ECONOMY? THE PRESENCE OF NATURAL AMENITIES

- There are attractive and growing job markets in outdoor recreation, clean-tech, and small business -- which all thrive in a healthy natural environment
- Recreation in Georgia generates 2.4 times more value than forest products, has created over 190,000 more jobs, and contributes over a billion (1.59B) more dollars in annual tax revenue.
- Standing natural forests provide more to local government through reducing infrastructure needs(e.g., natural water filtration, storm protection) than they require in services.
- Wetland forests in Georgia are worth \$67 billion in ecosystem services, including natural flood protection. Investing in wetland forests could increase value by \$3 billion.



OUR FORESTS. OUR STRENGTH.