



FOREST  
LANDOWNERS  
FOUNDATION

# STATUS REPORT

August 2024



# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

As a multi-generational forest landowner, I am honored to serve as Chair of the Board of Trustees for the Forest Landowners Foundation. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, the Foundation today is in a better position than ever to serve forest landowners as we face the challenges and opportunities the future will bring.

No other organization has the central purpose of sustaining the forest landowner, not just the forest. The Foundation strategically addresses the issues faced by America's forest landowners. I believe in the work the Foundation is doing every day to help private forest landowners remain economically viable and continue their legacy through future generations.

This report highlights how much the Foundation has grown its impact over the past five years. You will connect with our focus areas, learn about our recent accomplishments, and see our shared vision for the future.

If you want to learn more about how you can engage in the Foundation's critical work, please contact me or the Foundation's President, Dr. Lauren O'Shea, and we'd be happy to set up a meeting or phone call to discuss the great work of the Forest Landowners Foundation.

Sincerely,



Robert H. Crosby III

Chair of the Board of Trustees, Forest Landowners Foundation  
President, Crosby Land & Resources, L.L.C.

## Who We Are

We are the only foundation dedicated to America's forest landowners, the lifelong stewards of over half of the country's forests.



## Creating a thriving future for forests and the landowners who sustain them

## Where We Focus

- Telling the Story of America's Private Forest Landowners
- Providing the Tools for Forest Landowners' Success
- Preparing the Next Generation of Future Forestry Leaders

## What We Do

We support sustainable forests and the landowners who cultivate them to meet America's economic, social, and ecological needs.



# LOOK HOW FAR WE'VE COME

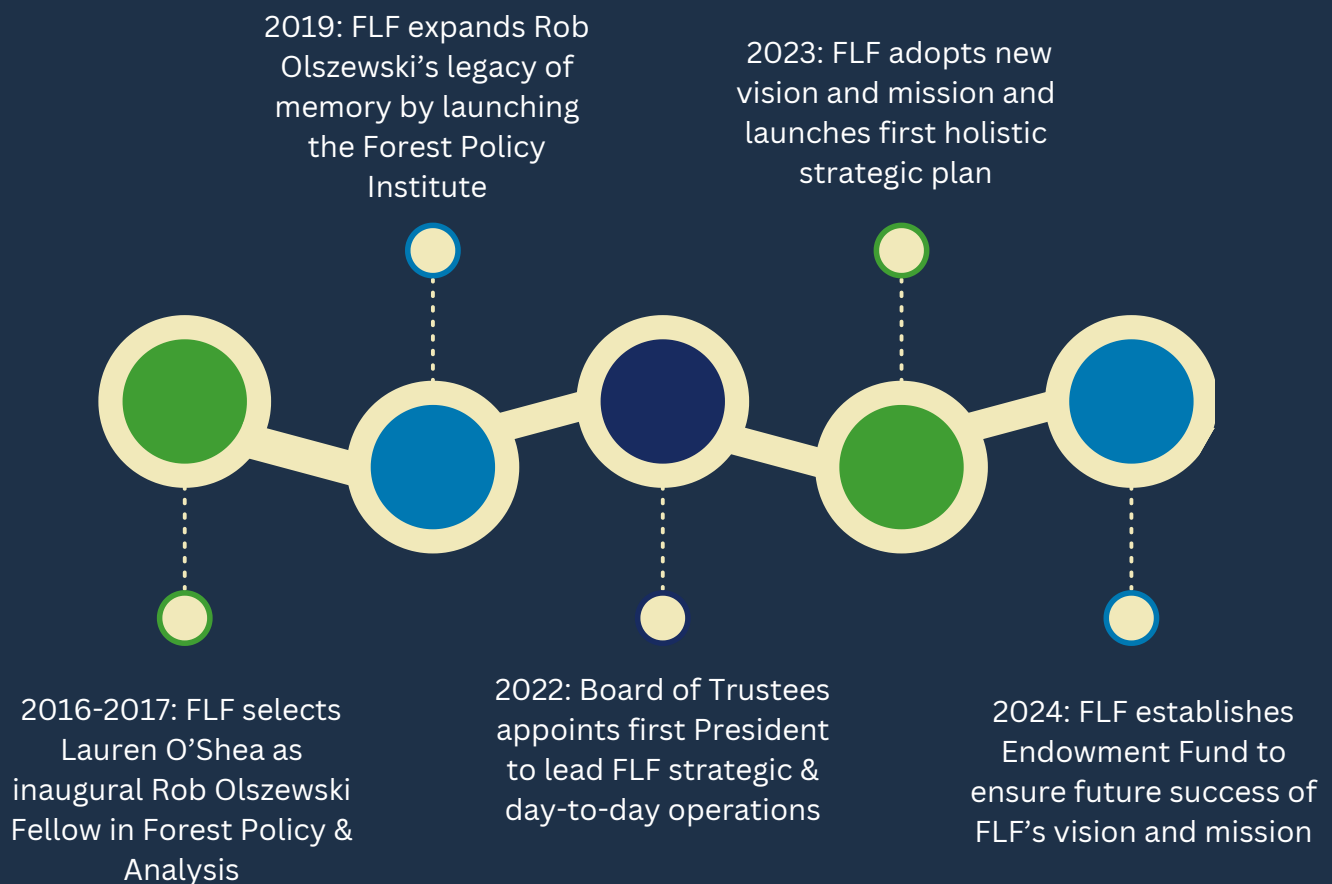
The Forest Landowners Foundation was founded in 1986 as a tax-friendly way for the forest industry and community to make charitable donations supporting research and education to enhance forestland ownership.

The Foundation has grown from administering scholarships for college students and one-time projects to a much broader strategic vision. This was achieved through a suite of programs focusing on supporting America's private forests and the landowners who sustain them. An important part of the Foundation's initial work was the Woodlands Management Course where FLF partnered with University Extension agents nationwide to help landowners become more successful with their ownership. Chuck Leavell often refers to this course as one he studied on the tour bus with the Rolling Stones.

It is thanks to the vision and hard work of the Foundation's past leadership, such as Phil Harden (Chair 2003-2007), Mary Clapp (Chair 2007-2008) Rob Olszewski (Chair 2009-2016), and Joe Hopkins (Chair 2016-2023), that FLF is poised for success today and in the years to come.

Through steady growth across the Foundation's grassroots support, major contributions, and grant funding, FLF has evolved into a powerful strategic organization.

## RECENT FOUNDATION MILESTONES



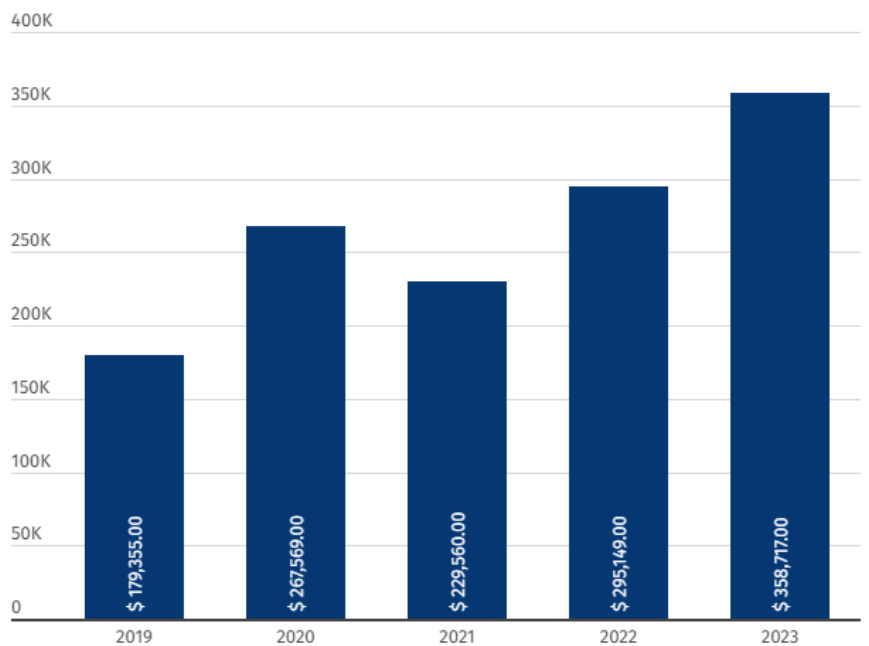
# FOUNDATION ENDOWMENT

The Foundation recently established an Endowment Fund to ensure ongoing financial support for its mission and vision. With seed funding reaching \$500,000, the immediate goal is to grow the fund to \$2 million. The Endowment Fund is managed according to the Foundation's Investment Policy, which outlines the investment objectives, distribution policies, and guidelines for managing these funds.

## GROWTH IN CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

Support for the Foundation continues to grow as demonstrated by the chart to the right. This growth allowed FLF to establish an Endowment in 2024.

### Total Contributions Over Time



## MEET FLF'S PRESIDENT

Dr. Lauren O'Shea joined FLF as its President in October 2023. Lauren is an interdisciplinary leader in forestry, natural resources, and collaborative conservation with a proven track record working on behalf of private forest landowners to build innovative, real-world solutions to challenges landowners face both today and into the future. Learn more on the back cover.

# FOUNDATION PROGRAMS

The Forest Landowners Foundation is creating a thriving future for forests and the landowners who cultivate them to meet America's economic, social, and ecological needs. This is done by focusing on three key areas: telling the story of America's forest landowners, providing the tools for landowners' success, and preparing the next generation of future forestry leaders.

## TELLING THE STORY OF AMERICA'S FOREST LANDOWNERS



FLF is sharing sustainability stories of the unseen stewards of over half of America's forests spreading the word to the audiences who need to hear it the most.

The Foundation is working with the U.S. Forest Service on two grants to highlight the work of America's private forest landowners by combining scientific data with landowners' stories. As private forest owners face increasing demands for the need to access markets that are requiring greater transparency into our practices, the Foundation is sharing their stories with key audiences and decision-makers to help ensure their success. Both projects will be complete in 2025 and are highlighted below.

- Strategic media and communications campaign engaging key sustainability stakeholders
- Data-driven online explorer mapping forest sustainability across the U.S. to create confidence in the marketplace for wood grown on private forestland



# PROVIDING THE TOOLS FOR LANDOWNERS' SUCCESS

FLF is working to equip forest landowners with the tools they need to sustain their long-term economic, social, and ecological viability for generations to come.



## SUCCESSION PLANNING WORKSHOPS

Each year during the National Conference of Private Forest Landowners, the Foundation hosts a workshop for families seeking resources and support in the important work of succession planning to ensure family forest businesses are successfully passed on to the next generation.

## COSTS & TRENDS OF SOUTHERN FORESTRY PRACTICES

Partnering with the U.S. Forest Service and Auburn University, the Costs and Trends of Southern Forestry Practices program, dating back to 1952, now offers a free, online database. This online tool enables landowners to assess costs and long-term trends in various forestry practices, enhancing their decision-making and bottom line. By expanding this program to other regions, FLF aims to replicate its success. Direct input from landowners is crucial for its effectiveness. The next survey will go out to landowners and forestry professionals in 2025.



## FOREST CARBON UNIVERSITY

The Foundation offers a range of resources for forest landowners and advisors on the forest carbon market. These include webinars and materials on carbon market basics, types, providers, processes, and landowner experiences, helping them assess if the carbon market aligns with their land management and economic goals.

**FOREST CARBON**  
**UNIVERSITY**



# PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION OF FUTURE FORESTRY LEADERS

FLF is offering essential opportunities for the next generation of visionary forestry professionals to help develop their leadership and communication skills, ensuring they are well-equipped to continue the proud tradition of America's private forest legacy.

## FOREST POLICY INSTITUTE

Each year, the Foundation invites students from forestry schools across the country to engage in a real-world, hands-on learning experience in Washington, DC, including meetings with top federal officials, trade associations, conservation and sustainability partners, and members of Congress.



*More info*



“ We can teach students in class, but much like forestry, you don't really understand and learn until you get in there and participate in the sausage being made. This is an opportunity for our students to get a jump on their education and the Foundation is making it happen.

-Red Baker, FLA Board Member and Director of University of Florida's School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences



12 STUDENTS *from* 6 UNIVERSITIES

2024





# CELEBRATING NATIONAL FOREST PRODUCTS WEEK ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

The Foundation is also partnering with forestry schools and industry partners across the country to celebrate National Forest Products Week on college campuses. FLF provides the tools and resources for forestry students to host a tabling day to educate their campus community about why wood is good. Additionally, the Foundation works with students to plan, promote, and execute an evening event at the forestry school featuring food, activities, and a curated panel of speakers from the forest products world. By the end of the week, students have gained communication and leadership skills as they teach their campus peers and learn from industry experts about the importance of wood products to American society.



We hosted an amazing panel of industry professionals to talk about their background, share insights, and answer questions from students studying wood science, forestry, and architecture. Thank you to Forest Landowners Foundation for your support.  
-Forest Products Society/Society for Wood Science and Technology Student Chapter of Mississippi State University



# LOOKING FORWARD

## Telling the Sustainability Story of America's Forest Landowners

Sustainability in forest management has long been a topic of concern, with many questioning landowners' practices. While third-party certification programs have been helpful, they don't always meet every need or answer every question from wood and fiber purchasers. The Foundation is exploring innovative ways to demonstrate sustainability beyond existing certification programs.



In 2025, the Foundation will be launching two complementary initiatives—a highly focused strategic communications plan and an interactive online mapping explorer. These initiatives will highlight the sustainability of wood sourced from America's private forests, showcasing to key decision-makers that it is both low-risk and responsibly harvested.

*Photo: Julia Grant, Katie Fernholz, Jeremy Poirier and Dr. Lauren O'Shea talk forest sustainability at the 2024 National Conference of Private Forest Landowners.*

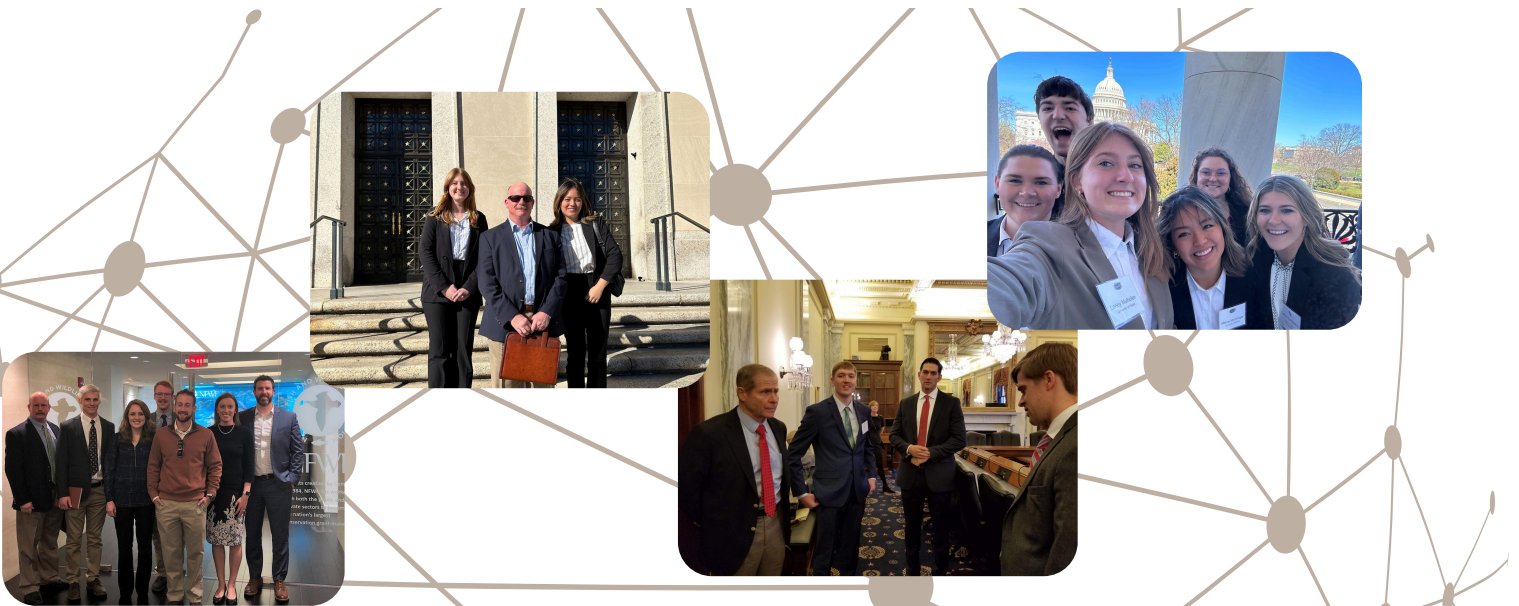
FLF's approach combines science-based data with personal narratives to effectively communicate the efforts of forest landowners. Through these initiatives, the Foundation aims to enhance understanding of the sustainability of private forests by appealing to key stakeholders and decision-makers who directly impact wood and fiber markets for landowners.

Robust markets allow landowners to sell their wood, supporting their ability to replant and maintain healthy forests. This, in turn, provides enduring economic, ecological, and social benefits to society. To that end, the initiatives FLF is preparing to launch in 2025 will address the needs of wood and fiber purchasers, investors, developers, regulators, and private sector interests, both in the U.S. and internationally. By informing these critical audiences, the Foundation aims to foster confidence in the sustainability of wood and fiber sources, thereby strengthening global market access for American forest landowners.

# CREATING A NETWORK OF FUTURE FORESTRY LEADERS

For nearly four decades, the Forest Landowners Foundation has been dedicated to nurturing the next generation of forestry leaders. Since awarding its first scholarships to forestry students in 1987, the Foundation has continuously supported emerging talent. From the Rob Olszewski Fellowship established in 2016 to this year's exceptional class of 12 Forest Policy Institute students who traveled with FLF to Washington, DC, the Foundation has empowered over 100 rising stars in the field of forestry.

In 2025, FLF will unite this community by launching the Forestry Leadership Alumni Network. By reconnecting alumni with those in the early stages of their careers, the Foundation aims to enhance mentorship, networking, and communication opportunities. FLF looks forward to celebrating the success stories of this remarkable group of leaders in 2025.



## Beyond 2025

The Forest Landowners Foundation aims to champion sustainable forestry and support the landowners who steward these vital resources to address America's economic, social, and ecological needs. As FLF looks beyond 2025, the Foundation remains steadfast in anticipating the future challenges and opportunities that will impact private forest landowners and the natural resources they manage for generations to come. With a commitment to continuous growth, proactive strategies, and innovative thinking, the Foundation is poised to lead and partner with others in shaping a sustainable future for America's forests and their caretakers.

# FOUNDATION LEADERSHIP

Lauren O’Shea joined the Forest Landowners Foundation as President in October 2023. She previously served the Foundation’s partner organization, Forest Landowners Association, as Director of Stewardship Initiatives, Director of Regulatory Affairs, and General Counsel. Throughout her career, she has leveraged her interdisciplinary expertise in law, forestry, and wildlife to create innovative and collaborative solutions for the challenges and opportunities facing private forest landowners.

Lauren holds an undergraduate degree from Georgetown University and three degrees from the University of Georgia: a law degree and both a master’s and doctorate from the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources. Lauren’s dissertation assessed private forest landowners’ perceptions of the Endangered Species Act and its influence on their forest management decisions. The groundbreaking study involved more than 1,100 forest landowners and was published in the Journal of Forestry.

## 2024 FOUNDATION TRUSTEES

Foundation Trustees (left to right): Wayne Alexander, Joe Hopkins, Lauren O’Shea, Barrett McCall, Robert Crosby, Hayes Browne, Michael Crowell, David Hall, and Lee Wright.



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