



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Governor Wolf Announces Task Force to Maximize Job Creation in Pennsylvania Forest Products Industry

Harrisburg, PA – Acting on recommendations of Governor Tom Wolf, a panel of forestry experts from private, public and academic sectors today kicked off a series of meetings to analyze current limitations to forest conservation and job growth, and to develop an action plan to address both objectives.

“One of Pennsylvania’s greatest strengths is our natural resources,” said Governor Tom Wolf. “Over 57 percent of Pennsylvania is forested and prioritizing conservation and job growth related to this field is vital to creating a sustainable, dynamic industry.”

The Green Ribbon Task Force was called together following extended discussion between Gov. Wolf and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn on how Pennsylvania’s nearly 17 million acres of forestland could best play an active role in his call for statewide job creation.

“We envision the Green Ribbon Task Force as a catalyst to create new ideas, approaches and momentum for an industry and a landscape that need additional measures of protection and assistance,” Dunn said. “This short-term infusion of multi-disciplinary expertise can help shape new directions and provide an example of government that works and jobs that pay. The temporary nature of the task force ensures that long-term growth and progress will be the product of an energized industry and conservation community.”

Meeting at the Governor’s invitation at his Harrisburg residence, at least 30 participants had been selected by DCNR and the state departments of Agriculture and Community and Economic Development. They were addressed by Dunn and other key speakers, including:

Daniel Devlin, state forester and director of DCNR’s Bureau of Forestry; Russell Redding, Secretary of Agriculture; Dr. Jim Finley, director of the Center for Private Forests and Pennsylvania Extension Forester; Paul Lyskava, executive director, Pennsylvania Forest Products Association; and Wayne Bender, acting executive director, Hardwoods Development Council.

Individual workgroups then were formed, introduced and assigned study and discussion areas that included: conservation; workforce development and jobs; economic development and products. Each workgroup’s responsibilities include:

Address the current state of the forest and forest products industry; define the scope of the

workgroup; identify issues to address; develop recommendations to bring to the larger group; and work with other workgroups to integrate and forge recommendations into a final set.

The task force will hold monthly meetings for six months; in between these meetings, the workgroups will meet to discuss issues in greater detail and formulate recommended action items. Workgroup chairs will report out on their groups' progress to the larger task force, in order to stimulate broader discussion.

Details on the Green Ribbon Task Force can be found at
<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/councils/Greenribbontaskforce/index.htm>.

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