

Our public forests are one of the greatest resources this country has. Sound and sustainable management is the only way to ensure that the amenities wanted and demanded by the various publics that use these forests will be maintained. Unfortunately our federal government has greatly expanded its role in issues affecting forest management and the impacts to the forest products industry. Beginning with a few threatened species like the spotted owl and several salmon runs, moving to stream management and land use, the federal government exercises powers previously delegated to state and local governments. This unprecedented move requires the forest industry to maintain a response team to keep up with changes confronting our industry.

To address these challenges, AFRC provides a coordinated and unified message that reflects the views of a large cross-section of the industry. By working with other national and regional associations, AFRC can leverage the clout of the nation's forest industry in the advancement of our regional interests.

Because of the coordinated approach AFRC uses in developing positions on critical public forest issues, our western Congressional delegation knows that when AFRC raises an issue, it reflects the views of a majority of their industry constituents. The same is also true for AFRC's interactions with the public land management and federal regulatory agencies.

The ultimate goal of AFRC's programs and initiatives is to advance our members' ability to practice socially and scientifically responsible forestry on both public and private forest lands.

I hope you will take a minute to learn more about AFRC and the issues we represent and values we promote. I also encourage you to look at our mission of sustained management and encourage you to join our organization to help in ensuring healthy public forests into the future.