



**MISSISSIPPI STATE**  
UNIVERSITY™

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COLLEGE OF  
FOREST RESOURCES

FOREST AND WILDLIFE  
RESEARCH CENTER

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2028

## MISSION

To foster the **management, conservation, and sustainable use** of **forest, wildlife, and aquatic resources** to benefit the people of Mississippi, the nation, and the world. Through transformative **teaching** and learning, **research** and discovery, **outreach**, and engagement, we **prepare future leaders**, enhance the restoration and sustainable use of renewable natural resources, and transfer technology into application **to solve the grand challenges** in forestry, forest products, and wildlife conservation.

## VISION

We aspire to be a **national leader in exemplary stewardship of ecological systems**. Through **hands-on learning experiences, leading research, and unmatched innovation**, we're solving the world's most pressing challenges. We produce natural resource professionals with technical knowledge, critical thinking skills, and confidence to lead in the 21st century. We conduct **relevant, timely, and impactful science** that informs conservation, restoration, and wise use of renewable natural resources. We communicate science to stakeholders in ways that **change knowledge, actions, and outcomes** to make our communities more productive, prosperous, and sustainable. In the College of Forest Resources, we're taking care of what matters.

## CORE VALUES

<b>Personal and Institutional Integrity</b>	We embrace our role in scientific discovery, student development, and technology transfer. We will conduct credible science, be accountable to the stakeholders we serve, and be responsible stewards of the resources, human capital, and relationships entrusted to us.
<b>Exemplary Stewardship</b>	We affirm the intrinsic value of ecological systems and renewable natural resources. We commit to their conservation, restoration, and wise use for current and future generations.
<b>Conservation Ethic</b>	Our teaching, research, and outreach will be informed by a conservation ethic based on sustainable use, best science, and recognition of the tangible and intangible values of ecological systems and the natural resources they produce.
<b>Transformative Education</b>	We believe that knowledge and education transform individual lives, empower communities, and support societal, economic, and environmental sustainability.
<b>Inclusive Excellence</b>	We strive to create a culture where all are treated with dignity and respect and feel a sense of belonging and purpose.

## DIFFERENTIATORS



As the only R1 land grant institution in the state we embrace the comprehensive mission of learning, research, and service.



Experiential learning is central to our pedagogy. Through our applied, practical degree programs, we produce society-ready natural resource professionals who are highly sought after by employers in the public and private sectors.



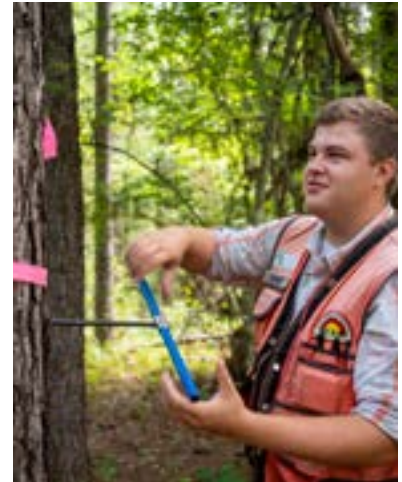
We are committed to changing lives and economic trajectories for families and communities by enhancing educational attainment that leads to satisfying, well-paid careers that make a difference for society and the environment.



We excel at user-inspired applied research that uses the best science to discover practical solutions to real-world problems.



We are a trusted source of science-based information that informs conservation, management, and utilization of natural resources by our agency, industry, and public stakeholders.



As the only college within MSU whose research, teaching, and outreach missions are exclusively focused on natural resource conservation and utilization we will be a model in sustainability and lead by example.

Strategic Objective

## SERVE THE WHOLE STUDENT



- We will provide a **transformative educational experience** that produces natural resource professionals with the technical knowledge, critical thinking skills, and confidence to lead in the 21st century on a global stage.
- We will provide **excellent holistic advising** to ensure that students fully attain their educational goals in a timely and cost-effective manner while maintaining a sense of personal well-being.
- We will use **evidence-based pedagogies, experiential learning, and high impact instructional practices** to ensure that students meet the education's requirements and standards for their respective professional fields.
- We will implement **research-based, stakeholder-informed curriculum** review and revision across all departments and undergraduate degree programs.
- We will **Increase enrollment by 3% per year** over the next 5 years with an emphasis on high-demand career fields.
- We will **increase retention and graduation rates** to maximize students' opportunities for success in their careers and lives.
- We will **recruit, equip, and retain exceptional faculty** by expecting, recognizing, and rewarding instructional excellence for all students.
- We will **diversify our student body, staff, faculty, and administration** to more fully represent the populations we serve.

Strategic Objective

## **STRENGTHEN OUR BONDS**

- We will **foster a culture of inclusive excellence** in which all students, staff and faculty experience a sense of community and belonging.
- We will develop a **national model for inclusive excellence** in natural resources education.
- We will **create collaborative opportunities and leverage relationships** to magnify the impact of our teaching, research, and outreach activities.
- We will **enhance industry partnerships** and build upon successful relationships with federal and state partners.
- We will **engage stakeholders in curriculum development and revision** to ensure relevant degree programs that meet employer needs and position CFR as the preferred provider for natural resources professionals.
- We will **cultivate donors** who value the knowledge, products, and people produced by CFR teaching, research, and outreach programs and create opportunities for philanthropic investment.



Strategic Objective

## IGNITE INNOVATION

- We will **recruit, equip, and retain exceptional faculty** by expecting, recognizing, and rewarding innovative research excellence.
- We will **support new faculty success** by investing in strategic training and research infrastructure.
- We will develop and implement a systematic approach to **enhance mid-career faculty success** and job satisfaction.
- We will **grow CFR/FWRC research portfolio** by 5% per year over the next 5 years, attaining \$20 million per year by 2028.
- We will **enhance the relevance and impact of research programs** by increasing effort and success in large, multidisciplinary projects that address grand challenges in natural resource management, conservation, and utilization.
- We will **cultivate future leaders** among mid and senior faculty, broadening the leadership talent pool and ensuring institutional continuity.
- We will **facilitate, recognize, and cultivate entrepreneurship** opportunities among faculty, professional staff, and graduate students.
- We will continue to **develop the John W. Starr and Bulldog Forest landholdings** as strong assets for effective experiential learning, research, and outreach programs.





Strategic Objective

## ELEVATE OUR COMMUNITY

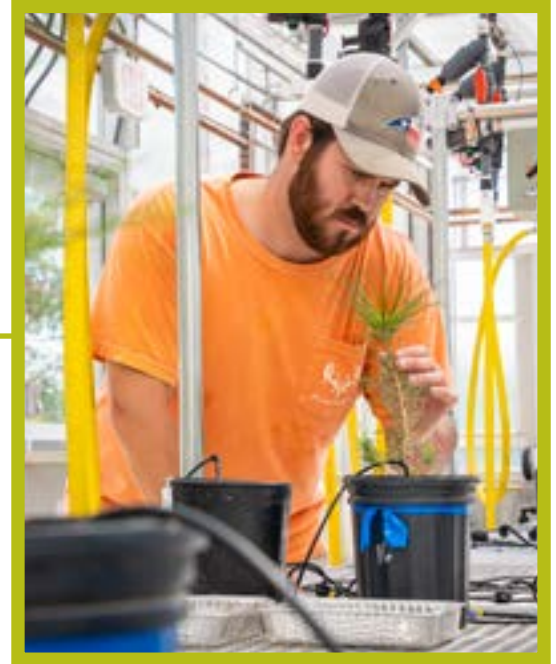
- We will **increase natural resources career awareness** and environmental literacy through engagement with K-12 students, families, and educators.
- We will **grow our network of internships** with strategic industry and agency partners to create experiential learning opportunities that prepare society-ready natural resource professionals.
- We will **embrace our role as economic catalyst** in the state and region, advancing development and sustainability of forest products industries through research, education, and outreach.
- We will **cultivate alternative markets and economic enterprises** that help landowners monetize ecological services and support land ownership goals.



Strategic Objective

## TELL OUR STORY

- We will develop an intentional, targeted, and strategic approach to **communicate our message** through modern communication tools, platforms, and media.
- We will **build capacity** within the CFR/FWRC marketing and communication unit to support highly effective and consistent messaging.
- We will **train and equip our graduate students and faculty** to effectively communicate science to the public using consistent voice, creative storytelling, and diverse digital platforms, amplifying the impact of our research and educational programs.
- We will **effectively communicate the relevant, timely, and impactful science** conducted by FWRC scientists so as to inform conservation and wise use of renewable natural resources within the state, nation, and globally.
- We will **recruit, retain, and support faculty** who are recognized as national and international leaders in their disciplines and this professional stature will further enhance the credibility of our research and teaching programs.



## JOIN US IN OUR QUEST

We invite you to join us in reaching our strategic goals for the betterment of natural resources and the environment. Please contact our administrative team to share how we can partner together to make a difference in our world.



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