

CAREER FACT SHEET: FORESTER

Do you care about wildlife, the environment, and forests? Do you feel most comfortable in the outdoors, getting your hands dirty? If so, have you considered becoming a forester? Every day, thousands of foresters across the U.S. lace up their boots, don high-visibility vests, and venture into the wild. Their goal for the day? To manage the health of our forests so that the communities and wildlife that depend on them can thrive!

Foresters are problem solvers. They ask themselves what future problems might be encountered and create plans that tackle these challenges and reflect long-term forest management goals. For example, foresters use scientific information and research to help make decisions that ensure the long-term health of a forest. They also monitor the impacts of the decisions they make, using what they learned to make better choices for the future.

Foresters are great communicators and must share plans with communities, businesses, and state and federal governments. They must include public voices before, during, and after project planning. Foresters are equipped with scientific and ecological knowledge. They collect and analyze field data, using these findings to create a plan for how to best work with forests from multiple perspectives.

PUT YOURSELF IN A FORESTER'S BOOTS: HOW DO YOU THINK CLIMATE CHANGE WILL AFFECT FORESTS?



If excitement is something you value in your everyday life, forestry could be a great fit for you. Some days can be spent creating maps and writing reports, other days can be consumed supervising forestry operations in areas only accessible by helicopter.



A PART OF THE BIGGER PICTURE

Forests can be thought of as a community's lungs, water filter, supermarket, and gathering place. The work done by foresters goes beyond the coordinates of a forest plot or the boundaries of a local park. As a forester, you are part of a global movement.

HOW?

- Follow laws and regulations that help manage our forests.
- Contribute to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, supporting global sustainable forest management.
- Plan reforestation operations that help remove CO₂ and mitigate the effects of climate change.
- Collaborate with Indigenous communities to ensure their values are heard and respected.

MOVING FORWARD



In order to become a forester, a bachelor's degree is often required.

HIGH SCHOOL: In high school, plan to study Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics, and Pre-calculus.

COLLEGE: In college, plan to complete a four-year Bachelor of Science program with a major in forestry. See www.forestryusa.com/universities-colleges.html for a list of U.S. colleges and universities that offer forestry degrees. Check your state's public universities for the most cost-effective options.

DID YOU KNOW?

When you graduate from an accredited college program, you can register as a Registered Professional Forester (RPF). RPFs follow a code of ethics to ensure forest health and sustainability.

For more career fact sheets, see www.plt.org.

SALARY

A forester's annual salary can vary by state, employer, and type of work, but average amounts center around \$70,000.

WHERE CAN YOU GROW?

The field of forestry offers many opportunities for personal and professional growth. You might grow your skills as a woodland manager, biodiversity specialist, or environmental consultant. Your knowledge and experience could also land you a job as a forest economist, or maybe you'll find yourself offering forest expertise at the international level.

A forester's skills are desirable to:

- Government agencies (state and federal)
- Forest industry
- Forestry and non-profit organizations
- Consulting firms
- Forest certification auditors

