

# Mission and Principles

## Our Vision

Establish "excellent forestry"—forestry that is ecologically, economically, and socially responsible—as the standard for professional forest management, from coast to coast. Our Mission The Forest Guild practices and promotes ecologically, economically, and socially responsible forestry—"excellent forestry"—as a means of sustaining the integrity of forest ecosystems and the human communities dependent upon them. The Guild engages in education, training, policy analysis, research, and advocacy to foster excellence in stewardship, support practicing foresters and allied professionals, and engage a broader community in the challenges of forest conservation and management.

Excellent forestry goes beyond meeting minimum best management practices and places the long-term viability of the forest above all other considerations. It uses nature as a model and embraces the forest's many values and dynamic processes. Excellent forestry is different in each ecoregion, but is always guided by science, place-based experience, and continuous learning and discovery. Wherever it is practiced, excellent forestry recognizes the forest's intrinsic value as well as human dependence on forest products and services.

Excellent forestry balances human and natural components as part of a larger whole. Some management approaches focus on aspects of excellent forestry without neglecting that larger whole. For instance, ecological forestry is the set of practices that emphasizes the maintenance or enhancement of the full suite of ecological values, doing so while allowing for human use. Community forestry is the management of forests with the express intent of benefiting neighboring communities and engaging them in management decisions, while utilizing forestry practices that are ecologically sound.

Thus, ecological forestry and community forestry are two related pathways to and components of excellent forestry.

Simply put, Ecological Forestry + Community Forestry = Excellent Forestry

- Our Principles
- The well-being of human society is dependent on responsible forest management that places the highest priority on the maintenance and enhancement of the entire forest ecosystem.
  - The natural forest provides a model for sustainable resource management; therefore, responsible forest management imitates nature's dynamic processes and minimizes impacts when harvesting trees and other products.
  - The forest has value in its own right, independent of human intentions and needs.
  - Human knowledge of forest ecosystems is limited. Responsible management that sustains the forest requires a humble approach and continuous learning.
  - The practice of forestry must be grounded in field observation and experience as well as in the biological sciences. This practical knowledge should be developed and shared with both traditional and non-traditional educational institutions and programs.
  - A forester's or natural resource professional's first duty is to the forest and its future. When the management directives of clients or supervisors conflict with the Mission and Principles of the Guild, and cannot be modified through dialogue and education, a forester or natural resource professional should disassociate.