



# WORKFORCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREASING RECRUITMENT, RETENTION & ADVANCEMENT

## Why Is This Important?

**A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats.** The lack of female perspective leaves a void in the sector, limiting professional participation by more women and limiting opportunities to think about forests in new ways. While forestry can bring up images in the public's mind of lumberjacks in red flannel or a male forest ranger in uniform, the reality is that women have been and will continue to step into roles across the forest sector from "lumberjills" to leadership positions. Often women are attracted to this space from an initial interest in conservation or their own personal land ethic. There is great value in ensuring all women are exposed to and have access to all avenues of the forestry sector: from forest cruising and inventory to carbon modeling; from managing forest investments to urban forestry; from remote sensing to silviculture. Gender parity, including intersectional parity, leads to a more sustainable forest community, industry, and climate.

**WFC seeks to foster workforce opportunities for women in the forest sector**, through whatever path brought them to the door, through the door, or to break down the door. We seek to highlight the many facets of the sector, from conservation to working forests, to preserve our nation's most sustainable and renewable resource, benefiting people, nature, and climate. We also seek to promote the variety of working environments in the sector, whether field, lab, or office-based, whether in solo adventures or on big teams.

Unfortunately, as with many previously male-dominated industries, there are looming issues of equal access, discrimination, sexual harassment and assault, microaggressions, lack of support and mentorship opportunities, and sometimes just an unintentionally uncomfortable or unwelcome work environment stemming from outdated perspectives and practices. **WFC seeks to influence systematic change** to overcome these issues.

## How Will We Do This?

**We are building awareness, enhancing capacity, and stimulating action.** Positive reinforcement is powerful. If we can provide a space to be vulnerable and learn about what we don't yet know, we can also communicate with others what we have learned to magnify and share our strengths.

We plan to showcase:

- Women in all levels and positions of the forest sector
- Success stories for retaining and advancing female employees in welcoming work environments
- The role of mentorship and networking in retention and advancement
- Women who have influenced positive change in exclusionary or discriminatory work environments
- Employers who have led the field in advancing diversity
- Unique challenges for women in prioritizing a work-life balance
- Successful efforts to introduce women to forestry and open more eyes to the opportunities, especially related to retaining women in education programs
- Innovative ideas for investment opportunities to increase recruitment, retention, and advancement



**WOMEN'S FOREST  
CONGRESS**