MISSION
Research, teaching, and outreach programs of the Department of Forestry at the University of Kentucky will effectively enhance sustainable economic, ecological, and social benefits of forests and related natural resources in Kentucky and beyond. Our programs will elevate the quality of life by:

- enhancing the integrity, stability, and health of forests and related biotic communities; and
- increasing the long-term value-added, sustainable income, and sustainable flow of services from forests and natural resources.

VISION
The University of Kentucky Department of Forestry will be widely recognized for improving the lives of people and for improving the condition of human and biotic communities through learning, discovery, and outreach activities relating to forests and natural resources.

PREAMBLE
Major forces of change are transforming forests and natural resources in Kentucky, the nation, and the world. Transformational forces of particular interest and concern in Kentucky today include:

- globalization of forest industry capital and forest products trade;
- increasing loss, fragmentation and degradation of forests and parcelization of ownerships;
- urban sprawl and the expanding wildland-urban interface;
- significant threats from exotic invasive plants, pathogens, insects, and other animals; and
- changing technologies of communication, analysis, and utilization.

To thrive in today’s environment of change, university-based programs of forestry research, teaching, and outreach must be of high quality in terms of scientific and academic rigor, productive in terms of measured outputs, and innovative in the use of new scientific, teaching, and communications technologies. Increasingly today, state-supported university forestry programs are held closely accountable for their use of funds, and are expected to generate an increasing share of their financial support from extramural sources. To operate effectively, these programs must be highly leveraged in
terms of funding beyond traditional revenue sources such as tuition, state funds, and federal “formula” funds.

To be truly successful in the 21st century university-based forestry research, teaching, and outreach programs must be more than highly rigorous, productive, innovative, and financially leveraged – they must be recognized as effectively meeting important societal needs. That is, such programs must be widely recognized for effectively addressing important challenges facing the people and communities they serve. The Department of Forestry’s research, teaching, and outreach programs must therefore be highly relevant, and their relevance must be widely recognized by potential students, forest landowners, forest industry, policy makers, conservationists, and many other important constituents in Kentucky and beyond.

The overall purpose of the Department of Forestry’s planning process is to help ensure a high level of quality, effectiveness, and relevance in our research, teaching, and outreach programs. To accomplish this, the planning process is designed to guide the Department in:

- establishing and communicating a clear, Department-level core ideology, as well as overall vision and specific mission statements for our research, teaching, and outreach activities; and
- developing, communicating, and measuring progress toward broad goals and specific objectives and action steps for the Department’s research, teaching, and outreach programs.

An important goal of the planning process is therefore to produce and continuously update a Strategic Plan that clearly states the Department’s core ideology, vision, mission, goals, objectives, and action steps. The Plan’s purpose is to serve as a compass to orient the Department in broad terms, and also to serve as a map to guide the Department in achieving our vision and accomplishing our tri-partite mission and related goals and objectives through specific routes or actions over time. For the Strategic Plan to be effective, it should help guide the Department with many diverse issues and decisions – from macro-level, relatively long-term issues such as setting priorities among broad areas of research, to micro-level, relatively short-term decisions such as determining appropriate content for specific undergraduate courses in a particular semester.

The Strategic Plan is an important goal or end-product of the planning process, but it is not the only goal of planning and program directioning. If designed and implemented properly, the Department-level planning process will be just as important as the Plan produced. The process must be on going and dynamic, with the Plan being continuously updated as progress is reported and assessed, as issues, challenges, and opportunities
change, and as goals, objectives, and specific strategies in research, teaching, and outreach evolve over time.

Finally, for faculty, staff, administrators, and other important stakeholders to view the planning process as meaningful and the Strategic Plan as useful, they must be involved in the process of developing the Plan and in revising its content, as well as in assessing progress toward goals and objectives over time. Therefore, a very important goal of the planning process is that it result in shared ownership through appropriate involvement of key stakeholders within the Department, College, and University, as well as important constituents who are external to the University.

Department of Forestry Goal 1

GOAL 1. Prepare Students for Leading Roles in an Innovation-driven Economy and Global Society

Educating students is a fundamental means by which the University of Kentucky Department of Forestry enhances the future of the Commonwealth. The Department expects graduates to become leaders in forestry and natural resource professions, and also expects that graduates will become leaders in their communities. Forestry graduates will serve the Commonwealth, region, and nation by helping enhance sustainable economic, ecological, and social benefits of forests in Kentucky and beyond.

Objective 1.1 Recruit and retain students with high academic and professional potential.

Strategy 1.1.1 Scholarship funding will be enhanced to recruit and retain students with high academic and professional potential (see also Goal 1, Objective 1.3).

Strategy 1.1.2 To recruit graduate students with high potential, financial support will be competitive with peer institutions.

Strategy 1.1.3 The Department’s laboratory facilities and equipment, computers, and other teaching-related resources will be consistent with offering nationally competitive degree programs at undergraduate and graduate levels.

Strategy 1.1.4 Graduate course offerings will be continuously reviewed for meeting the needs of current and potential students.

Strategy 1.1.5 We will effectively publicize undergraduate and graduate teaching programs.
Strategy 1.1.6 Job announcements will be effectively communicated.

Strategy 1.1.7 The Department will support student organizations in their efforts to enhance professionalism, and will support student involvement in professional and scientific activities and organizations.

Strategy 1.1.8 Mechanisms will be developed to maintain contact with Forestry alumni, to engage them in our recruiting, teaching, and placement programs, and to track the employment and job responsibilities of our graduates.

Objective 1.2 The learning environment in the Department of Forestry will be rigorous and will also be highly relevant to career opportunities for our graduates. The teaching program will be focused and structured to prepare graduates for success in achieving the Department's overall mission of enhancing the sustainable economic, ecological, and social benefits of forests and related natural resources.

Strategy 1.2.1 Society of American Foresters (SAF) accreditation of the B.S. degree in Forestry will be maintained. Input and guidance from the SAF Committee on Accreditation will be obtained between accreditation periods.

Strategy 1.2.2 The curriculum of the B.S. degree in Forestry will be revised with emphasis on producing B.S. graduates who are 'society-ready,' i.e., capable of dealing effectively with the complex economic, ecological, and social issues involving forest resources today.

Strategy 1.2.3 Department of Forestry graduate students will be well prepared for further scientific study, and/or for successful careers as practitioners, scientists, educators, and/or Extension professionals.

Strategy 1.2.4 Opportunities for students to participate in cooperative education and student internship programs will be increased; we will also increase other teaching-related cooperation and interaction with federal and state agencies, landowners, non-governmental organizations, and private industry.

Strategy 1.2.5 We will increase the use of University facilities (i.e., Robinson Forest, Wood Utilization Center, UK Herbarium, greenhouses), and other teaching-related facilities and resources to enhance student learning.

Strategy 1.2.6 As presented under Goal 3 (Objective 3.2), an Advisory Committee of external stakeholders will be created. The Committee will include employers of our graduates, and an important objective
of the Advisory Committee will be to help orient the Department’s teaching program in both content and delivery.

**Strategy 1.2.7** Learner-centered, experiential activities will be emphasized in our courses where possible and practical. In these activities, students will be engaged in service learning and other important issues where they can help provide solutions to current forest resource challenges – while learning through ‘hands on’ experiences.

**Strategy 1.2.8** The faculty will be involved in scholarly activities relating to teaching, and will actively pursue opportunities for professional development that lead to more effective and innovative teaching.

**Strategy 1.2.9** The values, vision, mission, goals, objectives, and actions in the Department’s Strategic Plan that relate to teaching will be effectively communicated to Advisory Committee members, faculty, students, and other stakeholders each year; these groups will be appropriately involved in implementing the Strategic Plan and in updating it over time.

**Objective 1.3** Increase support for teaching-related activities.

**Strategy 1.3.1** Funding and other needs for support relating to teaching will be effectively communicated within the College and University, as well as with key partners and constituents with an interest in our undergraduate and graduate teaching programs.

**Strategy 1.3.2** Excellence in undergraduate and graduate teaching and advising will be recognized and rewarded.

**Strategy 1.3.3** We will work with the Development Office on a continuing basis to increase the endowment funding relating to teaching in the Department of Forestry, and will communicate with faculty and others regarding development funding targets and progress that are teaching related.

**Strategy 1.3.4** Following Department, College, and University guidelines, we will continue to develop high quality adjunct faculty, and will encourage their participation in appropriate teaching and advising activities at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

**Department of Forestry Goal 1 Metrics**

By 2014, the Department of Forestry will demonstrate achievement of Goal 1 as indicated by the following metrics:

**Metric 1-1.** Maintain a retention/graduation rate for forestry students (sophomore to graduation) in excess of 90%.
Metric 1-2. Maintain a graduating student placement rate (employment in forestry or related professions or graduate school) in excess of 75%.

Metric 1-3. Maintain an operating budget for teaching equipment purchase, upkeep, and repair.

Department of Forestry Goal 2

GOAL 2. Promote Research and Creative Work to Increase the Intellectual, Social, and Economic Capital of Kentucky and the World Beyond its Borders

The land-grant mission of the University, College, and Department encourages research activities that result in the discovery of new knowledge. Discovery is an essential part of the Department’s vision of being widely recognized for improving the lives of people and for improving the condition of human and biotic communities. Research in the Department of Forestry will therefore help provide insight and solutions to important challenges relating to sustaining long-term economic, ecological, and social benefits provided by forests and natural resources in Kentucky and beyond.

Objective 2.1 Continuously improve the quality, relevance, and effectiveness of the Department’s research program.

Strategy 2.1.1 National review processes will be used on a periodic basis to orient the research program of the Department.

Strategy 2.1.2 The values, mission, goals, objectives, and actions in the Department’s Strategic Plan that relate to research will be effectively communicated to Advisory Committee members, faculty, students, research partners, and other stakeholders; these groups will be appropriately involved in implementing the Strategic Plan and in updating it over time.

Strategy 2.1.3 We will develop and sustain highly collaborative relationships with individuals, institutions, agencies, and organizations that enhance the quality, capacity, and relevance of our research and scholarly activities.

Strategy 2.1.4 We will increase the use of University facilities (i.e., Robinson Forest, Wood Utilization Center, UK Herbarium, Griffith Woods), and other physical resources and facilities in research and scholarly activities.

Strategy 2.1.5 We will adhere to College of Agriculture and Human Environmental Sciences guidelines for McIntire-Stennis research project proposals.
Strategy 2.1.6 We will continue to seek innovative and effective means of sharing and applying research developments and results.

Objective 2.2 Obtain additional support for research.

Strategy 2.2.1 Research accomplishments, benefits, needs, and opportunities will be effectively communicated; we will involve important constituents in this process.

Strategy 2.2.2 Assistance will be provided in proposal preparation as well as in other aspects of obtaining extramural support for research and scholarly activity.

Strategy 2.2.3 We will work with the Development Office on a continuing basis to increase endowment funding supporting research in the Department of Forestry, and will communicate with faculty and others regarding development funding targets and progress that are research related.

Strategy 2.2.4 Federal funding for research to help develop and sustain forestry and natural resources in Kentucky will be sought.

Strategy 2.2.5 Department of Forestry scientists will participate in federal special grants where appropriate.

Department of Forestry Goal 2 Metrics

By 2014, the Department of Forestry will demonstrate achievement of Goal 2 as indicated by the following metrics:

Metric 2-1. Maintain extramural funding at no less than $100,000 per year per research faculty FTE.

Metric 2-2. Maintain refereed publications at no fewer than three per year per research faculty FTE.

Metric 2-3. All research faculty with 25% or higher research DOE will have a formula funded project.

Metric 2-4. Maintain Master’s degrees awarded at five per year for a three year running average.

Metric 2-5. Double the number of departmental assistantships.
Department of Forestry Goal 3

GOAL 3. Develop the Human and Physical Resources of the University to Achieve the Institution's Top 20 Goals

As a unit within the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture and Human Environmental Sciences, the Department of Forestry offers access to knowledge and learning for citizens and students throughout the Commonwealth. Forests and related natural resources are vital components of Kentucky’s economic future, and they are equally critical elements of long-term environmental and quality of life challenges in the Commonwealth, the region, and the nation. The Department of Forestry has a prominent role in ensuring that forests and related natural resources provide sustainable economic, ecological, and social benefits in Kentucky and beyond. While effectively addressing this important mission, the Department seeks to be recognized as one of the preeminent forestry research, teaching, and outreach programs in the nation.

Objective 3.1 Enhance the Department’s national and regional prominence and the impact of its research, teaching, and outreach programs.

Strategy 3.1.1 The Department will be an active member of the National Association of University Forest Resources Programs (NAUFRP) and the National Association of University Fisheries and Wildlife Programs (NAUFWP). The Department Chair will represent the Department in NAUFRP and NAUFWP meetings, as well as in other activities at national and regional levels.

Strategy 3.1.2 Faculty and professional staff will take leadership roles in appropriate professional and scientific organizations and activities at national and regional levels; examples include serving as officers, associate editors, committee leaders, peer review panelists, and serving as planners and participants in nationally and regionally prominent conferences.

Strategy 3.1.3 Where appropriate, faculty and professional staff will be involved in multi-state, multi-agency, and multi-institutional projects and activities that leverage our capabilities and increase the regional and national visibility of our programs.

Strategy 3.1.4 Faculty, professional staff, and students will publish research, teaching, and Extension articles in appropriate outlets including refereed journals and non-refereed journals, books, book chapters, and national and regional conference proceedings. Where appropriate, they will also embrace electronic and other new publication media to effectively reach audiences for research, teaching, and outreach materials.
Strategy 3.1.5 Faculty, professional staff, and students will be competitive in acquiring extramural funding at the national level.

Strategy 3.1.6 Faculty, professional staff, and students will be recognized nationally and regionally for excellence.

Strategy 3.1.7 The website maintained by the Department will be continuously updated and enhanced, and will accurately reflect the stature and impact of our programs.

Strategy 3.1.8 The Department’s accomplishments and benefits will be effectively communicated at College, University, and Commonwealth levels, as well as at regional and national levels.

Objective 3.2 Continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, and relevance of the Department’s research, teaching, and outreach programs.

Strategy 3.2.1 National review processes will be used on a periodic basis to orient the research, teaching, and outreach programs of the Department.

Strategy 3.2.2 A standing Advisory Committee will be created to help ensure the Department is effectively addressing nationally, regionally, and locally significant issues and challenges. The Committee will meet at least once each year to discuss progress toward objectives, and to help revise objectives and actions over time.

Strategy 3.2.3 The resources, infrastructure, facilities, and equipment operated by or made available to Departmental faculty and staff will be improved on a continuing basis.

Strategy 3.2.4 Nationally prominent individuals will be brought to the Department as seminar speakers and guest lecturers – to heighten the awareness of nationally significant issues, and to increase the interaction of faculty, staff, and students with national leaders, agencies, and organizations. (In accordance with UK Administrative Regulations II-1.0-2)

Objective 3.3 Maintain a distinguished faculty committed to the Department’s core purpose and values, and dedicated to achieving the Department’s mission through high quality research, teaching, and outreach activities.

Strategy 3.3.1 Faculty positions will be filled with the most highly qualified individuals identified through nationwide search processes.

Strategy 3.3.2 We will ensure effective mentoring and professional development of all faculty. Professional development of the faculty will be encouraged and supported through sabbatical and other leave programs, through appropriate consulting activities, by
encouraging faculty coursework on and off campus, and by encouraging faculty attendance at professional development conferences, workshops, and seminars. We will seek additional funding to support faculty development, including activities that expose faculty to international issues and opportunities. A handbook will be developed for new faculty hires.

**Strategy 3.3.3** On a continuing basis, the values, vision, mission, goals, objectives, and actions in the Department’s Strategic Plan will be communicated to faculty; faculty will be appropriately engaged in implementing the Strategic Plan and in updating it over time.

**Strategy 3.3.4** Superior faculty achievement and scholarship will be recognized and rewarded.

**Strategy 3.3.5** Faculty salary goals will be set that are consistent with maintaining excellence; increased funding will be obtained for endowed chairs and professorships, and other policies and incentives that help retain superior faculty will be developed.

**Strategy 3.3.6** Performance evaluation of faculty at the Department level will be an objective, meaningful, and productive process.

**Strategy 3.3.7** Following Departmental, College, and University guidelines, a strong cadre of adjunct faculty members will be developed to leverage our capacity in research, teaching, and outreach programs.

**Objective 3.4** Improve recruitment, retention, and remuneration of technical, clerical, and professional staff to help ensure the highest quality of support for all programs.

**Strategy 3.4.1** Staff positions will be filled with highly qualified individuals identified through competitive search processes.

**Strategy 3.4.2** Staff development will be encouraged by providing mentoring where appropriate, and by encouraging participation in appropriate conferences, courses, workshops, seminars, and other professional development activities.

**Strategy 3.4.3** On a continuing basis, the values, vision, mission, goals, objectives, and actions in the Department’s Strategic Plan will be communicated to staff members; staff will be appropriately involved in implementing the Strategic Plan and in updating it over time.

**Strategy 3.4.4** Superior staff achievement and performance will be recognized and rewarded.

**Strategy 3.4.5** Performance evaluation of staff at the Department level will be an objective, meaningful, and productive process.
**Department of Forestry Goal 3 Metrics**

By 2014, the Department of Forestry will demonstrate achievement of Goal 3 as indicated by the following metrics:

**Metric 3-1.** Hire faculty to fill all vacant positions.

**Metric 3-2.** Fund faculty salaries at all levels, particularly full professor, to at least 90% of benchmark institutions.

**Metric 3-3.** Create and increase annually a permanent endowment for the department.

**Metric 3-4.** Find, use and purchase/access significant forest acreage close to Lexington for Teaching/Research/Extension Activities.

**Metric 3-5.** Create and update annually a faculty mentoring handbook.

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**Department of Forestry Goal 4**

**GOAL 4. Promote Diversity and Inclusion**

The Department is committed to creating and maintaining an environment where diversity is valued and all individuals can achieve their highest potential. Our actions and programs in research, teaching, and extension are based on respect for diversity of thought, culture, and human differences. The Department must be aware of and responsive to the diverse needs of all communities in the Commonwealth.

**Objective 4.1** Develop and implement actions that will result in a more diverse student body, faculty, and staff.

**Strategy 4.1.1** We will work with the College’s Assistant Dean for Diversity, the Office of University Engagement and Multicultural Affairs, and others to develop an action plan for fostering the Department’s diversity; we will ensure that the process of developing an action plan involves faculty, staff, students, and external constituents.

**Strategy 4.1.2** Our actions and progress in developing a more diverse student body, faculty, and staff will be reported, and recruitment and retention strategies will be modified for best results.
Department of Forestry Goal 4 Metrics

By 2014, the Department of Forestry will demonstrate achievement of Goal 4 as indicated by the following metrics:

**Metric 4-1.** Maintain or increase undergraduate female enrollment at a minimum of 15%.

**Metric 4-2.** Maintain and enhance diversity of gender, ethnicity/racial/county of origin) among our graduate student population.

**Metric 4-3.** Maintain and enhance the gender/ethnic diversity among our faculty.

**Metric 4-4.** Maintain and enhance the gender/ethnic diversity among our departmental staff.

Department of Forestry Goal 5

**GOAL 5.**

**Improve the Quality of Life of Kentuckians through Engagement, Outreach and Service**

In recent years, many forest-related changes have occurred that have great potential to impact the quality of life of Kentuckians. These include increased globalization of forest products markets, increasing urban sprawl, forest ownership fragmentation, and very significant forest threats from exotic invasive plants, insects, and pathogens. These and other changes represent significant challenges to environmental and economic quality of life for Kentuckians. For the future of Kentucky’s citizens, the research, teaching, extension and other outreach programs of the University of Kentucky’s Department of Forestry must actively develop and deliver significant insight and solutions to these important challenges.

**Objective 5.1** Ensure that our research, teaching, and outreach programs are highly relevant to important environmental and economic issues involving the forests and related natural resources of Kentucky.

**Strategy 5.1.1** The Department of Forestry’s standing Advisory Committee will help ensure that our research, teaching, and outreach programs are effectively addressing significant issues and challenges in Kentucky. The Committee will include representatives from key partnering agencies and organizations within the Commonwealth, as specified under Goal 3 (Objective 3.2). The Advisory Committee will meet with the Department’s faculty and professional staff at least once each year to discuss progress toward objectives, and to help revise objectives and actions over time. A significant part of
the discussion each year will relate to our plans and actions that elevate the quality of life for Kentuckians.

**Strategy 5.1.2** In our research, teaching, and outreach programs and activities, we will sustain and enhance productive collaborations focusing on forest-related issues in the Commonwealth.

**Objective 5.2** Our Cooperative Extension Service faculty and staff will effectively deliver knowledge, insight, and solutions that address forest-related challenges affecting the quality of life of Kentuckians.

**Strategy 5.2.1** As stated under the previous objective, the Department’s Advisory Committee will be used to help ensure that our Extension programs are effectively addressing significant issues and challenges in Kentucky.

**Strategy 5.2.2** The Department will participate in the Kentucky Agriculture Advisory Council.

**Strategy 5.2.3** We will work with the Kentucky Woodland Owners Association, Kentucky Division of Forestry, county agent network, and others to establish county-level forestry organizations; one of the primary purposes of these organizations will be to more effectively disseminate up-to-date knowledge and information affecting Kentuckians and their forest resources.

**Strategy 5.2.4** Departmental Extension publications and related information will be made easily available electronically, through our website and other online outlets.

**Strategy 5.2.5** We will be innovative in our use of electronic and other media in Extension outreach, as well as in developing new mechanisms for reaching Kentuckians with information relating to forests and related natural resources.

**Strategy 5.2.6** We will provide Extension education and training programs and materials for diverse audiences in Kentucky, including: teachers and youth; the general public; woodland owners; county agents; professionals in timber harvesting and wood-based industries; and foresters and natural resource professionals.

**Objective 5.3** Our graduates will be well-prepared for dealing effectively with forest-related issues affecting the quality of life of Kentuckians.

**Strategy 5.3.1** As stated under Goal 1 (Objective 1.2) and Goal 5 (Objective 5.1), the Department’s Advisory Committee will be used to help ensure that our teaching program is preparing UK Forestry graduates for significant issues and challenges affecting the quality of life in Kentucky.
**Strategy 5.3.2**  Forestry alumni contacts will be established and maintained. Input will be obtained from alumni in Kentucky on job-related responsibilities, and how we may better prepare our graduates for success in dealing with forest-related resource challenges in the Commonwealth.

**Strategy 5.3.3**  The curriculum of the B.S. degree in forestry will be revised with emphasis on producing B.S. graduates who are 'society-ready,' i.e., capable of dealing effectively with the complex economic, ecological, and social issues involving forest resources today.

**Department of Forestry Goal 5 Metrics**

By 2014, the Department of Forestry will demonstrate achievement of Goal 5 as indicated by the following metrics:

**Metric 5-1.**  Total sustained direct and indirect contacts over 10,000 per extension faculty, associates, and specialists FTE.

**Metric 5-2.**  Programs that will sustain or increase dollars saved/earned by forest industry (including logging) and woodland owners.

**Metric 5-3.**  Programs that result in sustainable impacts to forests, open lands, and forest resources and the habitats and wildlife that they sustain.

**Metric 5-4.**  On-going production and distribution of education, awareness, and training resources including electronic, video, and hardcopy materials.

**Metric 5-5.**  Educational, awareness, and training programs/presentations developed and conducted for woodland owners, natural resource professionals, forest industry, youth, and the general public.