



5 May 2020



SENT TO LSU AGCENTER/LOUISIANA FOREST PRODUCTS DEVELOPMENT CENTER - FOREST SECTOR / FORESTY PRODUCTS INTEREST GROUP

Congratulations to our colleagues at Mississippi State University!



Woodworking Network

Forest Service awards Mississippi \$500,000 in wood innovation grants

Posted by [Robert Dalheim](#) May 04, 2020 | 12:06 pm EDT

JACKSON, Miss. – The USDA Forest Service announced that it awarded \$500,000 in grants to two Mississippi projects that will advance innovations in wood products, create jobs, help revitalize local economies and support sustainable forest land management.

Through its Wood Innovations Grant program, the Forest Service awarded a \$250,000 grant to the *Mississippi Forestry Foundation* for the construction of a Forestry Educational and Utilization Center that will showcase mass timber and other innovative wood building materials.

The Forest Service also awarded a \$250,000 grant to *Mississippi State University* for a project to develop the preservative-treatment procedures for industrial cross-laminated timber mats composed of southern yellow pine lumber.

“Markets for wood products are key to supporting sustainable management and restoration of our nation’s forested lands,” said Forest Service Chief Vicki Christiansen. “We can keep both public and private forests healthy and resilient by fostering economic opportunities around wood products.”

This year the Forest Service received 103 proposals, demonstrating the expanding interest in using wood in traditional and innovative ways as a building material and a renewable energy source. Of the 35 projects selected, 27 focus on expanding markets for wood products and eight seek to increase markets for renewable wood energy.

The Forestry Educational and Utilization Center, located on the Fannye Cook Natural Area, will be one of the first mass timber buildings in Mississippi and will demonstrate the flexibility and design options available when building with wood. The center will be built adjacent to a working forest and will offer numerous educational opportunities to show the forestry process from seedling to building product.

“We are very excited about being awarded a Wood Innovations Grant from the Forest Service. We look forward to showcasing the many benefits of building with mass timber and other wood building materials,” said Tedrick Ratcliff, executive vice president of the Mississippi Forestry Association. “We have worked with MSU architecture students for the past six years to introduce them to mass timber as a



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building material, so this building will provide a tangible space for architects, engineers, and others to view the possibilities first-hand.”

The Mississippi State University project will develop pre- and post-treatment methods for cross-laminated timber panels using a commercial environmentally friendly preservative system. Cross-laminated timber, an engineered wood product, is attractive for residential and industrial use because of its outstanding mechanical properties, low environmental impact, and lightweight. This project can improve the value and demand of matting made from southern yellow pine lumber, and it can also open new opportunities for cross-laminated timber in other exterior applications.

“Mississippi State University is proud that this project will help further our stewardship of forest resources by both increasing the longevity of wood products in-service and by creating new markets for pine timber. In the case of mats, this work allows us to use a portion of smaller, younger, and more plentiful pine trees in place of larger more coveted mature hardwoods. By increasing this product’s longevity, we improve our overall sustainability,” said Rubin Shmulsky, professor and head of the Mississippi State University Department of Sustainable Bioproducts.

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