

Michigan Forest Products Council: New Council Aims to Promote and Protect The Forest Products Industry in Michigan

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The Michigan Forest Products Council begins operations today. With a mission to promote, protect, and sustain a globally competitive forest products industry in Michigan, the Council maintains offices in Lansing.

"The Michigan Forest Products Council represents its members in public affairs and public relations matters, serves as a center for the exchange of ideas, and disseminates information concerning the industry," said Steve Hicks, Acting Chairman of the Council's Board of Directors and President & CEO of JM Longyear, LLC.

Michigan has a long and successful relationship with the forest products industry. The forest products industry, and related tourism and recreation, contributes over 200,000 jobs and \$12 billion into the state's economy each year. In addition, Michigan's forest base encompasses nearly 19 million acres, of which 7 million acres are in public ownership. The forest products industry, working with resource professionals in government and the private sector, is the greatest steward of this renewable resource.

"Because the forest products industry has such a significant impact on the state's economy, we should look at policies to improve the competitive business climate and to increase economic expansion in Michigan," added Hicks.

Kevin Korpi has been selected to serve as the Executive Director of the Michigan Forest Products Council. In his new role, Korpi will be the chief executive overseeing all aspects of business operations, public affairs, legislative and regulatory matters. In addition, he will be responsible for promoting and protecting the forest products industry in Michigan and will report to the Michigan Forest Products Council's Board of Directors and the Michigan Chamber of Commerce President.

Korpi most recently served as Director of Environmental & Regulatory Affairs for the Michigan Chamber of Commerce. Prior to joining the Michigan Chamber in 1997, Korpi served as Vice President for Government & Community Affairs for the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce. He holds a bachelor's degree from Western Michigan University.

"We are very pleased to have Kevin join the Michigan Forest Products Council," said Hicks. "His knowledge and experience will strengthen and improve our organization."

The Michigan Forest Products Council is a statewide organization representing the industry, which owns over 1.7 million acres of timberland and employs over 200,000 men and women in Michigan. The Michigan Chamber of Commerce will serve as a strategic incubator for the Council.

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SOURCE: Michigan Forest Products Council

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