In This Issue
Administration .............................................. 2
In the Spotlight ............................................. 10-12
Academics & Learning ..................................... 3, 4-5
Annual Report ................................................. 6-7
Research & Discovery ...................................... 8-9
Extension & Outreach ....................................... 9
Alumni & Friends ............................................ 10-11

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FEATURE STORY
Building Momentum: Cross-laminated timber markets continue to grow across the U.S.
pg. 4

WHAT’S INSIDE
Academy to Foster Student Leadership pg. 3
Annual Report pg. 6
$1.1 Million Bear Research Grant pg. 8
Researchers Discover Breakthrough Climate Process pg. 9
Spotlight on Alumna Nicole Angeli pg. 12

AUBURN UNIVERSITY
School of Forestry & Wildlife Sciences
Working with Nature for Society’s Well Being

AUBURN UNIVERSITY
As you’ll read, among other research, our faculty are working in conservation social sciences. Hiring committees are bringing administrators and faculty from across the nation to Auburn University. Our faculty are conducting impactful work of our faculty, staff and students; they are engaged in cutting-edge research in their fields, and their work is making a real-world difference. As we look to the future, we are excited to share the work of our faculty, staff and students.

Three faculty and two long-term staff retire

Faculty members Brenda Allen, Arthur Chappelka and Larry Teeter serve as the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences. As a result of our faculty retirements, we are currently seeking new faculty members to fill our remaining faculty positions. In this issue, we are excited to share the work of our faculty, staff and students.

Brenda Allen joined the faculty in 1987 and began teaching courses in the areas of forest management, policy and economics. Her research focuses on forest ecosystem services, timber inventory/supply analysis, private landowner systems, or GIS. His research focused on economic impact assessments, timber management, policy and economics.

Larry Teeter joined the faculty in 1987, teaching forest management, policy and economics. His research focused on economic impact assessments, timber management, and private landowner systems. His research focused on economic impact assessments, timber management, and private landowner systems.

Arthur Chappelka served as the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences’ interim associate dean for research, chair of the Auburn University Faculty Senate and as a member of the Auburn University Tree Preservation Committee.

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Meeting Showcase Innovative Student Faculty Research

The School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences has established a new program called the Forest, Environment, Leadership, or FEWL, Academy to create future leaders for the natural resource field.

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Students explore the role of forests in human health and livelihood in South Africa and Madagascar

Students learn about the corporate investment of forestry companies to provide mobile health clinics that offer free medical, dentists, and electronic interactive classrooms or communities. Students learn about the corporate investment of forestry companies to provide mobile health clinics that offer free medical, dentists, and electronic interactive classrooms or communities.

New FEWL Academy to foster leadership in natural resources

The School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences hosted a public screening of the film Forest, Environment, Leadership, or FEWL Academy to create future leaders for the natural resource field. Students who apply but are not selected.

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This burgeoning technology now has a home in Alabama. International beams developed in first commercial CLT manufacturing plant in Dothan, Alabama, last year, and the state’s vast supply of southern yellow pine is the source of material for the wood product. This is a first for the industry east of the Mississippi.

The launch of the new plant, which will serve the rapidly expanding market for CLT, could have significant economic impact for Alabama’s forestry industry. And students pursuing the new sustainable biomaterials and packaging degree, taught collaboratively by the Auburn University School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences and the College of Business, Agriculture, Engineering and Architecture, Design and Construction, will be ready to step right into dozens of new careers in the fast-growing industry.

“At the undergraduate curriculum, one of the primary concerns is preparing students to put their studies to work for industry leaders,” said Regions Bank Professor and Director of Forest Products Brian Vie. Students in the cross-disciplinary program are immersed in working with renewable materials like CLT through a combination of courses in engineering, design, business and traditional products and processing, providing them with a unique skill set the CLT industry demands.

SFWS Dean Emad Ismail and the school is actively engaged with a range of stakeholders and administrators to promote research and outreach activities related to CLT. Recently, the growing interest for CLT construction has prompted Auburn Forest Product Hardgrave to visit the University of Arkansas to tour their CLT structures. Leaders from the Colleges of Agriculture and Architecture, Design and Construction, SFWS, Facilities Management and University Housing and Residence Life accompanied him.

During the visit, the group toured the Mullins Library high-density storage facility and the 15-story 7th residence hall. Their conversations with University of Arkansas leadership were insightful and generated enthusiasm for the potential of CLT constructions at Auburn’s campus.

“We hope that the growing momentum will soon translate into a series of CLT constructions at Auburn University and across the state,” Emad Ismail said.

Steve Lieberman, senior product engineer for R. L. AIME, the division that manufactures CLT for International Beams, outlined CLT streamlined process, from design and planning to engineering and construction. It begins with a team of architects, design staff and engineers who create a 3D model for the project using specialized software.

“If you keep a very simple building that’s very modular and rectangular, it can all be done in one shop and installed very quickly...Those projects are coming in at-cost or slightly even cheaper than traditional steel or concrete construction.”

That model is so precise that when CLT production begins, panels of wood that have been assembled and glued layer by layer in a computer numerical control machine, or CNC, are cut within a sixteenth of an inch.

“When the mechanical, electrical and plumbing components are correctly coordinated with the design staff...it’s like putting up a LEGO® set...That’s the idea. There’s very little waste, very little cutting...if there is any cutting at all,” Lieberman said.

Lieberman’s division works closely with the Austrian company, Knauf, a CLT innovator in Europe, where CLT has been widely used for more than 20 years as the basis for projects ranging from a skyscraper in London to earthquake-proof buildings in Italy. The phenomenon has spread worldwide. In Tokyo, a 1,148-foot-tall residential tower is scheduled to be completed in 2014. In Canada, Brock Commons, a 1,644-foot residence hall at the University of British Columbia, holds the world’s record for tallest wood building. In the U.S., where previously the only CLT manufacturers and suppliers were located in the Pacific Northwest, there is a lot of catching-up to do. Peterson said current building codes allow CLT buildings to range from three to 18 stories. With rapid growth comes sudden change, and those who enter the industry can count on never being bored.

“We hope that the growing momentum will soon translate into a series of CLT constructions at Auburn University and across the state.”

Institute of Technology and a student residence building at the University of Arkansas, which is currently the largest CLT timber project in the U.S. The industry’s booming growth and undeniable cost-efficiency may help it become competitive sooner than expected. And so demand for CLT grows, more and more suppliers will enter the market, lowering prices.

Chung noted the progress he saw in the three years since he began working on CLT projects at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Boston Wentworth Institute of Technology and a student residence building at the University of Arkansas, which is currently the largest CLT timber project in the U.S. The industry’s booming growth and undeniable cost-efficiency may help it become competitive sooner than expected. And so demand for CLT grows, more and more suppliers will enter the market, lowering prices.

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School of Forestry & Wildlife Sciences

2018 Annual Report

Academics & Research

76 undergraduate degrees were conferred in 2018
18 graduate degrees were conferred in 2018

Undergraduate Degrees
- Forestry
- Forest Engineering Option
- Geospatial and Environmental Informatics
- Natural Resource Management
- Sustainable Biomaterials and Packaging
- Wildlife Ecology and Management
- Wildlife Enterprise Management
- Wildlife Sciences – Pre-vet Concentration

Undergraduate Minors
- Natural Resource Ecology
- Nature-Based Recreation
- Urban Environmental Sciences
- Waterway Sciences

Online Graduate Certificates
- Forest Finance and Investment
- One Health
- Restoration Ecology

Graduate Degrees
- Forestry – MNR, MS, PhD
- Natural Resources – MNR, MS
- Wildlife Sciences – MS, PhD

Extension & Outreach

$270,000 AWARDED ANNUALLY for merit & financial aid scholarships & fellowships
11.4% of SFWS students on the DEANS LIST with 36 of 315 earning a 3.75+ GPA

37 RESEARCH FACULTY
9 AFFILIATED RESEARCH CENTERS and Cooperatives
7.3 REFFERED ARTICLES average per faculty member

Development

$906,630 RAISED IN 2018, REPRESENTING 78% CASH GIFTS 22% LEGACY GIFTS

Woodlands & Wildlife Society membership increased over 200 MEMBERS

Investment Priorities
- Boone and Crockett Club Professorship
- Named Deanship
- Forests, Environment and Wildlife Leadership (FEWL) Academy
- Increase planned gifts
- Annual and endowed scholarships for new majors
- Name remaining Auburn Oak
- Name SFWS building

The economic impact of extension programs was nearly 16.5 MILLION
NEARLY 7,500 children served by Kreher Preserve & Nature Center environmental education programs
MORE THAN 13,500 people served by extension forestry, wildlife and natural resources programs
9,430 user days were recorded by the Dixon Center last year
OVER 1,600 acres of prescribed fire completed at the Dixon Center

Undergraduate Enrollment by Degree 2015–18

Graduate Enrollment 2015–18

20% INCREASE in undergraduate enrollment
27% INCREASE in graduate enrollment

Learn more about SFWS program outcomes online at sfws.auburn.edu/fact-sheets
Tian to serve as a member of the International Carbon Project steering committee and co-lead the 2019 greenhouse gas report to the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

Tian, currently the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences (SFWS) Dean and a professor of forest and wildlife resources at Auburn University, will serve as a member of the International Carbon Project (ICP) steering committee. In this new role, Tian will co-lead the 2019 greenhouse gas report to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The ICP is an international steering committee of experts that develops the guidelines for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Tian’s responsibilities will include leading a team that writes the report, coordinating the process, and communicating with the IPCC.

According to Tian, being a part of this international collaboration provides the opportunity to contribute to the most comprehensive report on climate change and its impacts that the world has ever seen. “As a scientist, it is very exciting to see such a large, collective effort that unites various disciplines and countries around the world in working towards the global goal of combating climate change,” said Tian. “To co-lead the IPCC report is an honor, and it will be a great opportunity to bring together some of the best minds in the field.”

Kumar and team discover breakthrough climate process that will improve society’s ability to prepare and mitigate effects of long-term drought

Associate professor of atmospheric sciences and postdoctoral fellow Parthasarathy (Parth) Sistinen, director of the Auburn University’s Water Resources Research Center and an expert in water resources and climate variability problems, said the new research will have a great impact in the field. “Through their novel research, Dr. Kumar and his co-authors are challenging the conventional thinking that most solid moisture anomalies persist only for a few months,” said Sistinen, who was not involved in the study. “They are demonstrating that greater moisture in the soil can persist for much longer than expected. This discovery will have significant societal implications and potential future risks, as it will play a critical role in understanding and preparing for drought effects.”

The findings that Dr. Kumar and his team have made in this research are compelling and could result in substantially improved predictability of drought, leading to preventing damages and more effective management systems that could save billions of dollars and positively impact the lives of people affected by drought each year, Alavalapati said.

“International collaboration is essential for solutions to global environmental change and sustainable development goals,” said Tian. “Strengthening partnerships for international research and education is of critical importance to Auburn University’s global profile and ranking. “Through international collaboration, together we can make a significant impact on global environmental change,” said Tian. “I am honored to serve in this capacity and look forward to working with my colleagues to produce impactful research and education outcomes.”
SPOTLIGHT on alumni

CHRIS DERRICK '91

Chris Derrick, a 2091 forestry products business manager of the Whitetail Deer Division of Sitka Gear, a sporting goods and apparel company based in Maryland, recently won a $10,000 top prize for "outstanding achievement in the field of technical apparel gear product development." Several years ago, Sitka was looking for someone who understood technical apparel gear product development and had experience in retail deer hunting. Luckily, God had the stars aligned, and we found a great opportunity for a really amazing company.

Even though I started in forestry, that’s how I got my start in retail. Once my wife and I had kids, we came back to the Southeast to be closer to family and I started to work for Pure Fishing in Columbia, South Carolina. During those years I led marketing for the rod and reel brands, Abu Garcia and PENN. And then Pure Fishing acquired the Hodgman brand, which led me back into technical apparel development for outdoor enthusiasts.

I’ve just been really lucky to work in fields that I consider to be consumer-passion brands. I have no interest in working on products that don’t help people pursue their hobbies. Several years ago Sitka was looking for someone who understood technical apparel gear product development and had experience in retail deer hunting. Luckily, God had the stars aligned, and we found a great opportunity for a really amazing company.

What motivated you to pursue your career field?

Working with things that I’m personally passionate about is really what drew me to where I am. When I left Auburn after graduate school, I wanted to head west, so I was working in Denver doing work for the western apparel company CROCH due to my background in retail. I was coached by Greg Williams, who started Auburn’s rodeo team and who is now head coach of the national championship Auburn Equestrian team.

“I was fortunate enough to have great mentors at Auburn and early in my career who helped guide me, and I valued their opinions.”

What prepared you for your career?

I was fortunate enough to have great mentors at Auburn and early in my career who helped guide me, and I valued their opinions. Also, I pursued a degree in forestry because I loved being outdoors. What that draw me into the field. It’s weird sometimes things just work out. It’s not in the forestry field now, but I’m absolutely tied to wildlife and land management.

My family has property in Sylvansea, Alabama, and I still hunt there today. Alleging the skills developed while at Auburn University with a passion for working for the foundations set the foundation for my career. My time spent out in the woods understanding what challenges, problems and discomforts that land owners have that helps me to see conservation products that make the overall hunting experience better.

What advice would you give to a student pursuing this career?

I think if you’re thinking about going into specifically the outdoor industry (hunting) to take the steps to get a head in the door. Be willing to take a few risks. Really early in your career because it’s harder to make a move later on. It doesn’t have to be hunting — it could be any field in forestry or another career. Find something you’re passionate about and look for ways to showcase how you can do that job. If I hadn’t taken that unpaid internship at an advertising agency to build my skills then I wouldn’t have been in the right place to get the job with CROCH, which ultimately opened the doors 15 years later at Sitka Gear.

Find out what you’re passionate in. You’re going to be working from 8-10 hours in the field every day of your life. Be sure you enjoy what you do. Hopefully, you’ll find something you love.

Need more about Chris online.

Woodlands & Wildlife Society Members

Auburn-Opelika Tourism Bureau

Agricola Wildlife Woodlands & Wildlife Society Members

Sitka Gear

Auburn University, Louisiana State University and University of Arizona has launched A Lasting Legacy initiative. The school’s fourth Tiger Giving Day, with the total amount raised $10,840 surpassing the original goal by 146 donors, breaking previous Tiger Giving Day records. To support this initiative, the school’s “Save the Tiger Fund,” a campaign to support Auburn University’s School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences over the next two years.

Auburn University’s fourth Tiger Giving Day, with the number of donors, gifts, and funded projects breaking previous Tiger Giving Day records. The 24-hour, university-wide funding effort, held on Feb. 1, 2017, raised 146 projects from research studies to student-led initiatives. Of those projects featured, 31 were fully funded, with the remaining projects receiving more than 50 percent of their needed funds.

Tiger Giving Day projects benefit wildlife locally and abroad

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Nicole Angeli, a former School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences postdoctoral fellow, is the new chief of wildlife at the Department of Planning and Natural Resources for the government of the Virgin Islands.

Angeli will take on the role of endangered species coordinator of the Virgin Islands, where she will be responsible for securing state wildlife grants and funding for the management of all terrestrial species within the territory and granting permits to agencies to conduct wildlife management work. She will also supervise biologists in the civil service and communicate with the people of St. Thomas, St. John, Water Island and St. Croix.

Angeli’s fellowship was with the Alabama Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit under SFWS Associate Research Professor and Acting Unit Leader Conor McGowan. Her responsibility was to use biological, stakeholder and monitoring information to create population models that inform management and support policy for endangered and threatened species. Additionally, she published an extensive amount of research during her time at Auburn.

“I’ve been given an extraordinary opportunity to develop professionally, facilitate and execute exciting research projects and apply for funding opportunities,” she said.

“I added taxonomic, geographic and methodological diversity in my own work repertoire and to that of the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences.”

SFWS Dean Janaki Alavalapati commended Angeli’s work for broadening the study of endangered and threatened species on a national level. “Her outstanding contributions and dedication make her a superb choice to take on this important and influential role in the government of the Virgin Islands.”

Angeli said it is an honor to provide vision and leadership for the wildlife management of a U.S. Caribbean territory. “I will bring the lessons that I learned at Auburn with me. I’d love to continue collaborating or hosting my friends and colleagues if they happen to come to the Virgin Islands,” she said.

Nicole Angeli shown releasing green sea turtles in St. Croix.