In 2008, the South Carolina Forestry Commission took the lead in conducting an economic impact study of forestry in South Carolina based on 2006 data. This study revealed a strong industry with $17.4 billion in total economic impact; it also confirmed that forestry was the state’s leading manufacturing industry in terms of employment (90,000 total jobs) and labor income ($4.1 billion).

**20x15 Project**

Recognition of the industry’s even greater potential economic impact led the Commission to initiate the 20x15 Project in cooperation with the SC Forestry Association and other allies. The project was designed as a way to help the forest industry grow out of recession and expand its already important role in improving South Carolina’s economic and environmental health. The goal of the 20x15 Project was to increase forestry’s economic impact from $17.4 billion to $20 billion by 2015 and increase job numbers by about 14,000.

**Progress confirmed**

In August 2015, on the heels of a follow-up analysis, SCFC officials announced the forest products sector’s contribution to the state’s economy in grand fashion, unveiling a large wooden sign representing the industry’s $18.6 billion contribution to the state’s economy.

The new economic impact figure was revealed at a statewide meeting of forestry professionals organized by the SCFC, the South Carolina Forestry Association and forest industry allies. The Commission will conduct another economic impact study at the end of 2016 to validate the project’s efforts at achieving a $20 billion impact.