The College has a number of initiatives underway to advance the five strategic goals of the University.

**Goal 1: Enhance the success of our students through educational innovation.** Working with our Academic Affairs team, the College’s two student leadership groups—the Ambassadors and the Engaging Leaders (for first-time, first-year and transfer students)—continue to increase student engagement across all of our undergraduate programs by planning and hosting a variety of educational, career development and social events throughout the school year. Natural Resources undergraduates are among the most environmentally and socially conscious on campus—this year, they won first place in the annual Shack-A-Thon fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity of Wake County, NC, building an impressive log cabin and raising over $12,000, a new campus record.

In 2014, Forestry and Environmental Resources launched its CONNECT program to make an NC State degree in Forest Management or Natural Resources more accessible to community college students seeking to transfer. The program provides transition support through summer enrollment and personalized mentoring with the goal of increasing student success. Six students are enrolled in the program this summer.

A College Task Force on the Transfer Student Experience developed a series of recommendations to improve advising and integration of these students into our College community. We have a large and growing population of both internal and external transfer students, and we are committed to providing them with the best educational experiences possible. The College also hosted an on-campus Transfer Counselor Workshop for community college advisors; 42 advisors attended from 21 different community colleges around the state.

To create synergy among departments and increase yield of high-achieving students, the College hosted a two-day Scholarship Weekend for all incoming scholarship applicants across the College. The event was extremely successful, with 19 of 27 attendees enrolling, or 71% (up from about 50% overall).

**Goal 2: Enhance scholarship and research by investing in faculty and infrastructure, and Goal 3: Enhance interdisciplinary scholarship to address the grand challenges of society.** Like the University as a whole, our College’s initiatives to address these two goals are intertwined. The College of Natural Resources is working aggressively to become the go-to place for solutions to natural resource challenges. We are especially focused on
building extraordinary expertise and impactful programs in three transdisciplinary thematic areas—Sustainability Solutions, Land and Water, and Urban Ecosystems.

This year, the successful team in our inaugural “Building Interdisciplinary Strengths in Thematic Areas” competition began its project, “Socio-Ecological Solutions to the Salinization of Albemarle-Pamlico Peninsula: An Interdisciplinary Assessment of Land and Water Resources and Community Climate Readiness,” with a team of six faculty members, six graduate students (five funded by the initiative), and one post-doc. The team, which spans all three of our departments, will work together for three years with internal funding of about $280K/year. The faculty also developed and taught an interdisciplinary seminar, NR 610 – Land, Water & People: Salinization Issues and Responses, in Spring 2015. We hope to have resources to conduct another competition in 2015-2016.

Our College collaborated with CALS for a second round of our Cross-College Enrichment Grants Program, a jointly funded internal RFP to build interdisciplinary partnerships across our colleges. In our second year, we again funded two projects with a commitment of $150,000 by each college over two years.

This fall, our College celebrated its 85th Anniversary with a semester-long program that highlighted our historical successes and inspired a new focus on transdisciplinary approaches to solving the grand challenges of society. A highly successful student-led event (Think Globally, Have Fun Locally) built community by bringing faculty, staff and students together in a casual setting.

**Goal 4: Enhance organizational excellence by creating a culture of constant improvement.** Our College is a campus-wide leader in implementing the NC State brand, along with our own updated brand, which builds on our core strengths and unique abilities. We completely revised the College’s web site to reflect this new branding. The new web site launched in October 2014, and it continues to receive increased hits and positive comments. The College’s brand is being implemented across all media on the same schedule as the implementation of the University’s new brand.

A committee of faculty and staff convened to examine business processes across the College and recommend a business operations structure that would provide the highest level of business, financial, human resources and related services to all units in the College. In a survey asking faculty and staff to rate the delivery of current services, about 50% rated services as “pretty good” or better, indicating that while there is room for improvement, the task is to clarify and improve services, not completely reconstruct them. Some of the key recommendations from the committee include (1) creating a central College Human Resources Office, (2) adopting an on-line...
service ticket system to create a smooth workflow and track requests, (3) providing back-up capacity for all services and on-going training for all, and (4) realigning the College IT office. Implementation teams are being formed to take next steps.

**Goal 5: Enhance local and global engagement through focused strategic partnerships.** The College’s international reach now extends to six continents, with 185 active collaborations around the world, including faculty-led study abroad courses, international exchanges of faculty and graduate students, and research and extension collaborations.

Our Industry Research Programs in Forestry (IRPF) Center, an umbrella over our forestry research cooperatives, has over 125 industry and agency members representing 21 countries and five continents. This year, the Center generated about $2.4 million in membership dues, which was leveraged for over $1.5 million in external grants.

**CHANGES IN THE SERVICE ENVIRONMENT**

While interest in the environment and challenges around natural resource issues remains very high, both the NC State legislature and the US Congress continue to scale back environmental regulations and funding for research in these areas, challenging our faculty to find new sources of grant funding. Nationally, interest in forestry as a profession—and thus enrollments in forest management undergraduate degree programs—continues to decline. At the same time, there is high demand for new foresters to replace an aging workforce. We are working aggressively to build new interest in our forest management program through partnerships with practitioners and outreach to high school students.

**DIVERSITY**

The Department of Forestry and Environmental Resources was selected to administer the Doris Duke Conservation Scholars Program (DDSCP) starting in 2016. NC State is one of only five universities in the US to have this prestigious program. The DDCSP provides financial support, professional mentoring and research experiences for four to five new underrepresented minority students per year, as well as ongoing activities throughout their undergraduate programs.

To build a pipeline of students of color into natural resource professions, the College, in partnership with the Center for Human-Earth Restoration, NC State Parks, City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation, the National Park
Service and others, created the “Neighborhood Ecology Corps,” an afterschool program designed to reconnect urban youth from SE Raleigh with the natural world and to introduce them to NC State and natural resource professions. Sixteen of 20 middle school students completed the 10-month program and will now work on community service projects in their neighborhoods. We are actively seeking funding to continue the program, and we expect it will be fully funded with external dollars within a year.

To build cultural competency and cross-college interaction among our undergraduates and to explore how diversity challenges, including institutional racism, affect US society and natural resource management (while also meeting the US Diversity General Education requirement), College faculty created a new course in US Diversity (IPUS 295 Diversity and Environmental Justice). The course was fully enrolled, received favorable course evaluations, and will be taught every semester going forward.

**INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM ADVANCES**

The Department of Forest Biomaterials continued to grow its new Sustainable Materials and Technology program, doubling enrollments to 76 in just one year. The new program also underwent accreditation review by the Society of Wood Science and Technology. The accreditation team delivered a very positive preliminary report, noting the quality of the program, the commitment of the faculty, and how highly the graduates were valued by the wood products industry in North Carolina and across the southeastern US. We expect notification of re-accreditation this fall.

The Department of Forestry and Environmental Resources also underwent accreditation review by the Society of American Foresters (SAF) in late April. The review included the B.S. in Forest Management, the B.S. in Natural Resources, and the Master of Forestry degrees. In the SAF process, a review team visits campus and reports to the SAF Accreditation Committee. This committee then meets at the SAF Annual Meeting, this year in Baton Rouge, LA, in November. The Committee will issue its accreditation decisions after that meeting.

The Masters in Geospatial Information Sciences and Technology (MGIST) program—the first nationally accredited professional science masters of GIS—reached a milestone of 100+ alumni since inception of the program in 2010. With 40 new graduates in 2014-15, the young program now has 114 active alumni and experienced a record year of almost 150 applications.
We continue to work toward a new PhD in Geospatial Analytics. UNC GA vetted Appendix A and scheduled a “permission to plan” presentation to the UNC Graduate Council on August 5, 2015. The anticipated start date for the program is Fall 2016.

A recently established partnership with ProStar Inc. is supporting a new Industry Experience Program in Geospatial Analytics by providing competitive, paid, long-term traineeships for graduate students to work while also completing their degrees. ProStar Inc. recently re-located their Eastern Regional Office to Raleigh to partner with CGA (http://www.prweb.com/releases/2015/05/prweb12738870.htm).

**RESEARCH**

Reflecting the College’s growing research successes, annual contract and grant research expenditures have increased steadily over the last 10 years, exceeding $11 million this year. College faculty submitted $35 million in sponsored research proposals, including an ~$6.5 million interdepartmental, interdisciplinary proposal to DOE’s Landscape Design For Sustainable Bioenergy Systems solicitation. Awards this year totaled about $9.5 million.

Our College’s Tree Improvement and Forest Productivity Cooperatives are two of eight southeastern forestry research cooperative collaborators in the Pine Integrated Network: Education, Mitigation and Adaptation project (PINEMAP), a Coordinated Agricultural Project awarded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) in 2011 ($3.6 million funding-to-date). PINEMAP focuses on the 20 million acres of planted pine forests managed by private landowners in the southeast from Virginia to Texas, plus Arkansas and Oklahoma. PINEMAP integrates research, extension and education to help southern pine landowners manage forests to increase carbon sequestration and the efficiency of nitrogen and other fertilizer inputs, and to adapt forest management techniques to increase forest resilience and sustainability under variable climates.

Our College is also a collaborator in the Southeast Partnership for Integrated Biomass Supply Systems (IBSS - www.se-ibss.org), which studies real-world solutions toward economically and environmentally sustainable production and conversion of biomass-to-biofuel. This Partnership is helping to meet the USDA goal of producing about 50% of the next generation of biofuels in the SE US, while supporting robust and innovative research, education and extension activities. Total funding over the last five years exceeds $4 million and has supported 22 graduate students.
Research conducted by Parks Recreation and Tourism Management faculty on shared use of public school property was a significant driver for NC Senate Bill 315, School Playgrounds Available to Public, which was ratified by the General Assembly on June 4, 2015, and signed by Governor McCrory on June 11, 2015.

EXTENSION

In our commitment to transferring the knowledge of the University to benefit the citizens of North Carolina and the world, several major programs in Extension were developed or expanded this past year.

**Linking Conservation, Working Lands and National Defense** - Extension Forestry, working through three major partnerships, is actively seeking economic models that keep working lands in production, meet the needs of the military, and advance critical conservation goals like the restoration of the longleaf pine ecosystem. Since 2013, Extension Forestry has obtained over $4M in grant funding to support these projects and has educated over 3,000 natural resource professionals, provided technical assistance to over 20,000 private landowners, and improved the management of over 1 million acres of working forest land in North Carolina, Alabama and Texas.

**Christmas Tree Production and Management** - NC State Forestry Extension assists the NC Christmas Tree Growers Association—the largest single organization in the US that produces Christmas trees. Our programs in Christmas tree breeding, management and production have made North Carolina the second largest producer of Christmas trees in the US (behind Oregon).

**NC Birding Trail Partnership and People-First Tourism** - Tourism Extension faculty completed a study of the benefits of agritourism in North Carolina and initiated a new “North Carolina Birding Trail Partnership,” collecting data about birder travel decisions to help support and improve the NC Wildlife Resources Commission/NC Sea Grant Birder Friendly Business (BFB) Program. They also continue to expand the People-First Tourism participatory action research project, which is focused on improving livelihoods through tourism micro-entrepreneurship. Over 90 micro-entrepreneurs are in business because of the project, and more than 150 micro-entrepreneurs have received coaching by the project team. To date, 26 undergraduate students and eight graduate students have been involved in this high impact learning opportunity.

**An Economic Impact Analysis of the U.S. Biobased Products Industry** - Wood Products Extension partnered with Duke University’s Center for Sustainability and Commerce and NC State’s Poole College of Management to prepare “An Economic Impact Analysis of the U.S. Biobased Products Industry.” This report was mandated in the
Agricultural Act of 2014 (aka the Farm Bill) under USDA’s BioPreferred Program and will be delivered to the Congress of the United States later this summer. A workshop for industry leaders is being planned for the summer.

FACULTY AND STAFF HONORS, AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

• Hugh Devine (CGA Director and PRTM Professor Emeritus) awarded the Alexander Quarles Holladay Medal for Excellence and the Order of the Long Leaf Pine
• Aram Attarian (PRTM Associate Professor, retired Jan 2015) awarded the Order of the Long Leaf Pine
• Jason Bocarro (PRTM) received the Alumni Distinguished Undergraduate Professor Award
• Roland Kays and Renee Strnad (FER) received Outstanding Extension Service Awards; and Dr. Kays was inducted into NC State University’s Academy of Outstanding Faculty Engaged in Extension and Engagement
• Ross Meentemeyer (CGA), was elected President-Elect of US-International Association of Landscape Ecology
• Med Byrd (FB) was elected to the TAPPI Board of Directors
• Rick Lemaster, Richard Venditti and Joel Pawlak (FB) received US patents
• Tiffany McLean (College Recruiting and Retention) received the first Outstanding Undergraduate Student Organization Advisor Award given by the Student Leadership, Engagement and Development program and also received a 2015 Equity for Women Award

STUDENT NUMBERS, HONORS AND AWARDS

College enrollments are down slightly at the undergraduate and Masters levels, but significantly higher at the PhD for the 3rd year in a row. The number of degrees awarded has also continued to increase, as higher numbers of our students successfully complete their degrees. Our first year retention rates remained high, at 92%.

Cumulative List of Major College Student Awards

• Dean’s list: 343 Fall, 366 Spring; 7 Valedictorians
• Three Caldwell Scholars, four Park Scholars, and one Hollings Scholar
• Three Forest Biomaterials graduate students received Eastman Graduate Student Awards—a first place, second place and third place in the competition
• Two graduate students received nationally competitive federal awards: Warren Edwards (FB)—a DOE Fellowship to study at NRE—and Jenny Holder (MGIST)—a position in the NASA DEVELOP Program for Summer 2015
• Six Paper Science and Engineering students received national TAPPI scholarships, more than any other university in the country, and 10 other students received professional society recognitions or awards across the College
• Anna Petrasova (FER PhD student) was elected an OSGeo charter member in recognition of her substantial contributions to free and open source geospatial software and active participation in the open source geospatial community

FUNDRAISING

A current NC State Natural Resources Foundation Board member and Paper Science and Technology alumnus, who wishes to remain anonymous at this time, donated $1 million to support leadership programs in the College of Natural Resources.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACHIEVEMENTS AND STAFF CHANGES

Over the last year, the College has recruited two new department heads, a new Associate Dean for Research, and a new Director of Marketing and Communications:

• Myron Floyd, Department Head, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management
• Stith (Tom) Gower, Department Head, Forestry and Environmental Resources
• Marian McCord, Associate Dean for Research
• Sarah Corica, Director of Marketing and Communications

New Faculty Hires

• Dr. Thomas McConnell – Assistant Professor & Extension Specialist, Forest Biomaterials
• Dr. Ronalds Gonzalez – Assistant Professor, Forest Biomaterials
• Dr. Kyle Bunds - Assistant Professor, Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management
• Dr. Lokendra Pal – Associate Professor, Forest Biomaterials (starts August 20, 2015)
• Dr. Jodi Forrester – Assistant Professor, Forestry and Environmental Resources (starts Jan 1, 2016)
• Dr. James Hipp – Associate Professor, Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management (starts August 1, 2015)
CONCERNS FOR THE FUTURE

Hofmann Forest – The ongoing effort to monetize this asset and resolve the various regulatory issues that have emerged around water management on the property remain major challenges for the College. Our new long-term plan and conservation partner/agent agreement with The Conservation Fund and Sutherland, Asbill, & Brennan Attorneys has resonated well with constituents, and there are new opportunities that will enhance our strategic direction and the reputation of the College and University. However, the process will likely not yield significant new income for a year or more. Cash flow management is a major concern with significant financial obligations and limited income for the coming year.

Budget – We have conducted a complete analysis of our budget, with a special focus on our state appropriated budgets (1603, 16031, and 16032). Over the last eight years, we have lost over $2 million in recurring dollars from these accounts. The result is a structural deficit in our EPA non-teaching and SPA salary lines and almost no operating budget. We have used lapsed dollars from vacant positions to pay for staff and continue day-to-day operations. This model is not sustainable.

Space – over the last two years, the College conducted a full space utilization inventory and needs assessment, and in the process, identified several spaces in Jordan I and II that were showing in the NC State master inventory as CNR/FER, but have in actuality always been assigned to COS/MEAS. The University Architect’s office has now corrected their numbers, which only makes our space deficit relative to University standards more acute. Space limitations are a major challenge to recruiting new faculty and meeting the needs of a growing research and education endeavor. We cannot achieve the goals of our strategic plan without significant investments in both new space and renovation of much of our existing space.