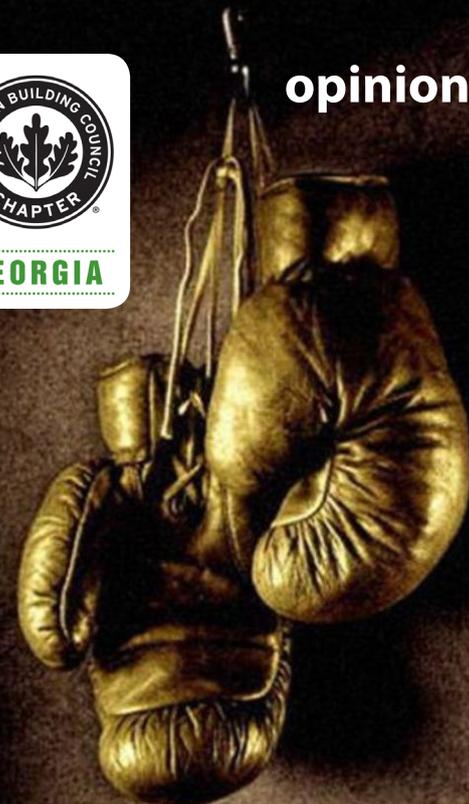


DAVID FREEDMAN

DavidF@Freedmanengineering.com

David Freedman, PE, LEED AP-BD&C is the Principal at Freedman Engineering Group and the Executive Director of the U.S. Green Building Council, Georgia Chapter



The Forestry Industry vs. The Green Building Industry

Can the forestry industry and the green building industry coexist in the southeast? Most people would think the answer to this question is 'Yes.' Both industries support protecting natural resources, clean water and clean air; both favor preserving green space, utilizing local building materials, and creating jobs. However, recent Governor Executive Orders and state legislation initiated by the forestry industry are an attempt by that industry to inhibit the growth and popularity of the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) green building rating system. While the forestry industry has never embraced LEED, or its recognition of lumber certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the LEED rating system has significantly contributed to a better environment and quality of life.



SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE

Good for you. Good for our forests.

LEED Rating System, has directly increased demand for a sustainable goods produced in Georgia. Because of LEED, many other local and regional companies producing brick, concrete, floor covering, and aluminum use recycled product content, reducing the demand for virgin materials. The architecture, engineering and construction

communities have also benefitted from the green building movement in terms of increased need for professional services.



The Executive Orders signed by the governors of Georgia and Maine prohibit their respective state agencies from using the LEED rating system until it gives equal recognition to the American Tree Farm System, the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and the FSC. Using the state of Georgia as an example, the state owns 29 LEED certified buildings. Notably, Georgia was among the first users of the LEED rating system for state buildings and has received

national recognition for its green building initiative. Of those 29 buildings, only two included certified wood, which cost roughly \$200,000. It is hard to imagine that a \$200,000 loss in revenue had a significant impact on Georgia's \$23.6 billion forest products industry. These 29 buildings used an average of 25% less energy than a code compliant building, 29% less water than a code compliant building, diverted 67% of generated construction waste from Georgia landfills through recycling and alternative uses, and 19% of the total building materials were manufactured and extracted, harvested and/or recovered within 500 miles of the site.

The Benefits Are Widespread

One of the goals of the U.S. Green Building Council and its LEED rating system is to transform the marketplace and promote the use of more environmentally friendly materials, which has benefitted many regional industries. For example, the Carpet and Rug Institute's Green Label Plus carpet program, recognized by the



The LEED rating system is intended to set a high standard for the buildings certified through its process. It currently recognizes only the FSC lumber designation because LEED believes it to be the standard of highest environmental rigor. Representatives of the forest industry disagree with this decision. However, abandoning the whole LEED certification program solely because of its acceptance of FSC lumber does not improve the environment nor protect jobs.



Both the green building industry and forestry industry share the common goals of protecting our environment and natural resources and supporting the state's economy. The Georgia Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council is proud of the over 1,500 LEED certified buildings in Georgia. We are committed to working in a collaborative fashion with the forestry industry and other business sectors in Georgia and the southeast to promote the design, construction, renovation, and operation of buildings to minimize the adverse impact to the environment and building occupants. We are all responsible for improving the quality of life for future generations.

