



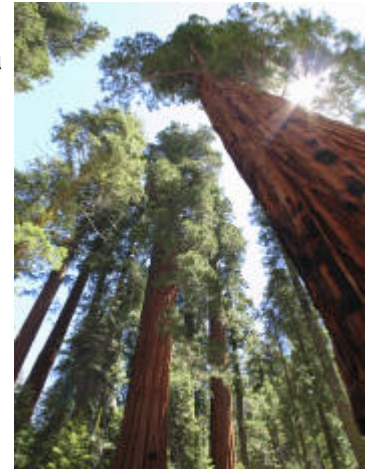
## Forest and Conservation Technician Overview

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Employment - Career Path Forecast - Professional Organizations

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### The Field

Forest and conservation technicians compile data on the size, content, and condition of forest land. These workers usually work in a forest under the supervision of a forester, doing specific tasks such as measuring timber, supervising harvesting operations, assisting in road building operations, and locating property lines and features. They also may gather basic information, such as data on populations of trees, disease and insect damage, tree seedling mortality, and conditions that may pose a fire hazard. In addition, forest and conservation technicians train and lead forest and conservation workers in seasonal activities, such as planting tree seedlings, and maintaining recreational facilities. Increasing numbers of forest and conservation technicians work in urban forestry -- the study of individual trees in cities -- and other nontraditional specialties, rather than in forests or rural areas.



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### Preparation

Most science technicians need an associate degree or a certificate in applied science or science-related technology. Many employers prefer applicants who have at least 2 years of specialized training or an associate degree in applied science or science-related technology.

#### ► Accredited Programs

Many technical and community colleges offer associate degrees in a specific technology or more general education in science and mathematics. A number of associate degree programs are designed to provide easy transfer to bachelor's degree programs at colleges or universities.



The Society of American Foresters grants recognition to educational programs leading to a two-year Associate's degree in forest technology or the equivalent.

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Note: Some resources in this section are provided by the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## Accredited Forest and Conservation Technology Programs (Associate's Degrees)

<p><b>California</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Reedley College</u></a></li> </ul> <p><b>Georgia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Abraham Baldwin Agriculture College</u></a></li> </ul> <p><b>Maine</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>University of Maine-Fort Kent</u></a></li> </ul> <p><b>Maryland</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Allegany College of Maryland</u></a></li> </ul> <p><b>Minnesota</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Itasca Community College</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Vermilion Community College</u></a></li> </ul> <p><b>New Hampshire</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>University of New Hampshire</u></a></li> </ul> <p><b>New York</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Paul Smith's College of Arts and Sciences</u></a></li> </ul> <p><b>North Carolina</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Haywood Community College</u></a></li> </ul>	<p><b>Ohio</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Hocking College</u></a></li> </ul> <p><b>Oklahoma</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Eastern Oklahoma State College</u></a></li> </ul> <p><b>Oregon</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Central Oregon Community College</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Mt. Hood Community College</u></a></li> </ul> <p><b>Pennsylvania</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Pennsylvania College of Technology</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Pennsylvania State University-Mont Alto</u></a></li> </ul> <p><b>South Carolina</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Horry-Georgetown Technical College</u></a></li> </ul> <p><b>Virginia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Dabney S. Lancaster Community College</u></a></li> </ul> <p><b>Washington</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Green River Community College</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Spokane Community College</u></a></li> </ul> <p><b>West Virginia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Glennville State College</u></a></li> </ul>
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### Precollege Prep

People interested in careers as science technicians should take as many high school science and math courses as possible. Science courses taken beyond high school, in an associate or bachelor's degree program, should be laboratory oriented, with an emphasis on bench skills. A solid background in applied chemistry, physics, and math is vital.

### Other Skills

Communication skills are important because technicians are often required to report their findings both orally and in writing. In addition, technicians should be able to work well with others. Because computers often are used in research and development laboratories, technicians should also have strong computer skills, especially in computer modeling. Organizational ability, an eye for detail, and skill in interpreting scientific results are important as well, as are a high mechanical aptitude, attention to detail, and analytical thinking.



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## Day in the Life

Science technicians work under a wide variety of conditions. Some occasionally work irregular hours to monitor experiments that cannot be completed during regular working hours. Forest and conservation technicians perform much of their work outdoors, sometimes in remote locations.

Advances in automation and information technology require technicians to operate more sophisticated laboratory equipment. Science technicians make extensive use of computers, electronic measuring equipment, and traditional experimental apparatus.



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## Earnings

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median hourly earnings of forest and conservation technicians are about \$14.84 per hour. In 2007, the average annual salary in the Federal Government was \$40,534 for forestry technicians.

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## Employment

Forest and conservation technicians hold about 34,000 jobs in the United States. About 76 percent of forest and conservation technicians hold jobs in the Federal Government, mostly in the Forest Service; another 17 percent work for State governments.

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## Career Path Forecast

An expected decline in employment of forest and conservation technicians within the Federal Government will lead to little or no change in employment in this specialty, due to budgetary constraints and continued reductions in demand for timber management on Federal lands. However, opportunities at State and local governments within specialties such as urban forestry may provide some new jobs. In addition, an increased emphasis on specific conservation issues, such as environmental protection, preservation of water resources, and control of exotic and invasive pests, may provide some employment opportunities.



In addition to job openings created by growth, many openings should arise from the need to replace technicians who retire or leave the labor force for other reasons. Job opportunities are expected to be best for graduates of applied science technology programs who are well trained on equipment used in laboratories or production facilities. As the instrumentation and techniques used in industrial research, development, and production become increasingly more complex, employers will seek individuals with highly developed technical skills. Good communication skills are also increasingly sought by employers.



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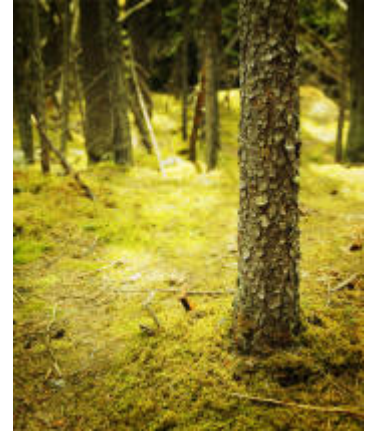
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## Professional Organizations

Professional societies provide an excellent means of keeping current and in touch with other professionals in the field. These groups can play a key role in your development and keep you abreast of what is happening in your field. Associations promote the interests of their members and provide a network of contacts that can help you find jobs and move your career forward. They can offer a variety of services including job referral services, continuing education courses, insurance, travel benefits, periodicals, and meeting and conference opportunities. The following is a partial list of professional associations serving forest and conservation technicians.

► **Society of American Foresters ([www.safnet.org](http://www.safnet.org))**

The Society of American Foresters (SAF) is the national scientific and educational organization representing the forestry profession in the United States.



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