

↑ CAREER LAUNCHER

Forestry and Conservation Technician



“Have you ever thought about how many things are made from timber and pulp products? Paper, pencils, toothpicks, baseball bats, and furniture are just a few. Without someone like me to grow new trees to replace those that are harvested, our nation’s woodlands would be destroyed.”



- **Education needed:** Technical certificate or associate’s degree in wildlife conservation, general forestry, or forest harvesting
- **Salary range:** \$24,490 – \$53,080 annually
- **Related jobs:** Conservation worker, faller, log grader, logging tractor operator

Forestry and Conservation Technician

➤ What I do every day

A professional forester supervises my work as I develop, maintain, and protect the nation's forests. My main jobs are to gather information about the size, content, and condition of forest tracts and to identify which trees in a certain area of the forest are ready to be harvested. As I walk through sections of forest, I collect data about the species and population of trees, seedling mortality, and insect and disease damage. I'm always on the lookout for conditions that present a fire danger. I also train and supervise conservation workers who plant seedlings, put out forest fires, and clean up and repair public campgrounds and picnic areas.

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➤ The best part of my job

I'm outdoors every day enjoying the sights, smells, and sounds of the forest. I like walking long miles through the woods each day. It clears my head and gives me a peaceful feeling.

➤ The worst part of my job

Although it's great working outdoors, I'm sometimes surrounded by falling trees and buzzing chainsaws. It can be dangerous if I don't take safety precautions.

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➤ **What I need to know and be able to do**

Forestry and conservation technicians must know about trees, forest harvesting, and logging operations. They should be mature, self-motivated, and able to work independently. They should have good judgment and be able to make quick decisions in hazardous situations. They need good communication skills in order to teach and direct other conservation workers.

➤ **How I prepared to be a forestry and conservation technician**

I earned my associate's degree in general forestry. During summer vacations, I worked as a forest and conservation worker, removing diseased

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trees and planting saplings to replenish timberland areas. Although it's possible to get a job as a forestry and conservation technician without a postsecondary degree, the competition is tough because many people want jobs that give them the chance to work outdoors.

➤ How I could have prepared better

Taking more math classes in high school would help me now when I calculate land size and estimate the number of trees to be harvested. I should also have paid more attention in my science classes so I would know more about nature.

NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT, AND AGRICULTURE

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Math
Skill Check

► Skill Check 1

As a forestry and conservation technician, you participate in a field count to determine the number of trees in a forest stand. Complete the table below by calculating the number of walnut and maple trees when the following conditions exist:

- There are 50% fewer maple trees than pin oaks
- There are 20% more walnut trees than maple trees

Tree	Number
Pin oak	90
Pine	354
Walnut	_____
Maple	_____

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Math
Skill Check

► Skill Check 2

You are part of a forestry team that replants a forestry stand with 2,795 new seedlings. If only 2,157 seedlings are alive after one month, what is the seedling mortality rate (the percentage of seedlings that died) for this stand? Round your answer to the nearest percent.

Answer: _____

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Science
Skill Check

► Skill Check 1

As a forestry and conservation technician, you have special vocabulary to describe trees and their growth. A list of some of these terms appears below. Match the letter for each term with the term's definition. You may use the Internet or a dictionary if you wish.

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| _____ conifer | a. The branches and leaves of a tree |
| _____ deciduous | b. A young tree |
| _____ propagation | c. Trees that periodically shed all their leaves |
| _____ seedling | d. The process of growing more trees |
| _____ crown | e. A tree that produces cones |

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Science
Skill Check

► Skill Check 2

You know the important role that trees play in the environment by putting oxygen into the air we breathe and by absorbing another chemical out of the air. What is this chemical? You may get help from the Internet or your science textbook if you wish.

Answer: _____