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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 13, 2022

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JOEL CATHEY RECOGNIZED WITH VFA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Richmond, VA – The Virginia Forestry Association (VFA) recognized Joel Cathey with its 2022 Distinguished Service Award during the 2022 Virginia Forestry Summit in Blacksburg, Virginia. VFA’s Distinguished Service Award gives public recognition to individuals, groups, associations, and/or companies and corporations who make a significant, continuing, and lasting contribution to the conservation of Virginia’s forest resources and/or the enhancement of Virginia’s forest-based community.

Mr. Cathey began his forestry career with Chesapeake Corporation in 1980, moving to Keysville, VA after earning his degree in forestry from NC State. In 2000, he began work as a forester for Ontario Hardwood, a hardwood sawmill in Keysville. Mr. Cathey served for several years on the VFA Board of Directors, becoming President of the organization in 2007. He served two terms on the Virginia Board of Forestry from 2012-2019, and currently serves on the Board of the Forestry Mutual Insurance Company.

For many years, Mr. Cathey has continued to support youth forestry education. Prior to the COVID pandemic, he regularly hosted local school groups from St. Catherine and St. Christopher to teach them about the importance of the forest resource to the Commonwealth. From 2012 through 2020, students would visit a timber harvesting site, a sawmill, and see a dry kiln in operation. Additionally, he organized tours of a local Tree Farm for students from the Fuqua School to educate them on the benefits of forestry.

Mr. Cathey’s efforts to educate extend to forest stakeholders of all ages. He was integral to the development of the award-winning Generation Next program, a collaboration between Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Virginia Department of Forestry that is designed to help family forestland owners make informed and intentional decisions regarding passing their land forward to the next generation. Mr. Cathey also led a workshop for 140 participants in conjunction with the SHARP Logger certification program, which provides training for loggers and foresters on the principles of sustainable forestry, environmental protection, and workplace safety.

In presenting the award, Ken Morgan of Morgan Lumber in Red Oak, VA shared of Mr. Cathey, “[Joel] has accomplished much and positively impacted many aspects of our forestry community over the past four decades.”

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About Virginia Forestry Association:

Founded in 1943, the Virginia Forestry Association (VFA) is a not-for-profit organization that represents Virginia’s diverse forestry community and promotes the sustainable use and conservation of forest resources to ensure their long-term benefits for all Virginians. VFA’s membership of more than 1,000 companies and individuals includes landowners, foresters, forest products businesses, loggers, forestry consultants, and stakeholders who value the conservation and sustainable use of forest resources as a driver of ecological, economic, and social prosperity in Virginia. Learn more at www.veforestry.org.

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