



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Woodland Park Zoo's New Forest Trailhead Exhibit Highlights Mass Ply**

*Oregon-made Mass Ply transports zoo visitors to the forest*

**SEATTLE, Wash., April 30, 2026** – On Friday, May 1, [Woodland Park Zoo](#) officially opens its new [Forest Trailhead](#) exhibit to the public, featuring Freres Engineered Wood's Mass Ply products. Forest Trailhead will guide guests along an elevated treetop path and through a 12,000-square-foot mass-timber pavilion, blending sustainable architecture with natural habitats. [LMN Architects](#) used Mass Ply for many of the building's structural and aesthetic elements, including beams, columns and most notably the pavilion's eye-catching roof.

"We chose Mass Ply for the project because it evokes the feeling of being in a tree canopy — perfect for an exhibit on forests and sustainable forest management," said Mark La Venture, Associate (PA) at LMN Architects. "We loved how the contrast between the layers and the flat surfaces added depth and interest to the design. The sustainability story was also a big draw, since Mass Ply uses more of the tree than conventional products, aligning perfectly with the [exhibit's] conservation message."

From start to finish, Forest Trailhead exhibit is dedicated to the global movement of forest conservation. Guests enter the exhibit on an elevated canopy path and encounter Matschie's tree kangaroos from Papua New Guinea, marking their return to the zoo for the first time in a decade. Later, visitors descend to the forest floor and learn about its role in healthy ecosystems.

The Mass Ply pavilion reinforces the building's message. Exposed wood and round skylights overhead filter light like gaps in a forest canopy, bringing biophilic design principles to life. The material behind it all carries its own conservation story. Mass Ply requires less energy to manufacture and emits less carbon than other structural materials, and is produced primarily from small-diameter trees to help reduce overstocking in Northwest forests.

"Mass Ply was made for projects like this, where it can both perform structurally and contribute to the larger story of conservation," says Tyler Freres, Vice President of Sales at Freres Engineered Wood. "Mass Ply products are grown and manufactured in the Pacific Northwest, and it's only fitting that they're now featured in a building dedicated to teaching people why forests are worth protecting."

The exhibit also incorporated multiple strategies to reduce embodied carbon, such as managing on-site stormwater and installing bird-safe windows and solar panels. Forest Trailhead exhibit is targeting LEED Gold (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) by the U.S. Green Building Council.

For more information about Freres Engineered Wood, call 503-859-2121 or visit [www.frereswood.com](http://www.frereswood.com).

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### **About Freres Engineered Wood Products**

Freres Lumber Co., Inc., DBA [Freres Engineered Wood](http://www.frereswood.com), has a 100-year history of innovation in the wood products industry, beginning in 1922 when T.G. Freres started a small sawmill in Oregon's Santiam Canyon. Today, Freres' operations include finished plywood, lumber, veneer and structural composite lumber, Mass Ply products, biochar, and a cogeneration facility that supplies renewable power for the local area. Known for being traditionally innovative, Freres is deeply committed to its community and to sustainable forest management practices. The company uses 100 percent of the wood it processes throughout its three operations—Freres Engineered Wood Products, Freres Timber and Evergreen BioPower LLC—and six wood products facilities. Freres provides family wage jobs to nearly 500 employees. For more information, visit [www.frereswood.com](http://www.frereswood.com) or call 503-859-2121.