



THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND  
NORTHERN FOREST CENTER  
SUSTAINABLE FOREST FUTURES  
QUEBEC-LABRADOR FOUNDATION

# COMMUNITY FORESTS

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*Needs & Resources for Creating & Managing Community Forests*



# MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY FOREST COLLABORATIVE

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The Quebec-Labrador Foundation (QLF) exists to support the rural communities and environment of eastern Canada and New England and to create models for stewardship of natural resources and cultural heritage that can be applied worldwide. QLF's Community Forest Program works to provide assistance to communities that want to acquire, own and manage forestland as a community asset.

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A Report by the Community Forest Collaborative  
March 2011

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## AVAILABLE ONLINE

This report is available online at:

- [www.foresteconomy.org](http://www.foresteconomy.org)
- [www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org) (use the search function)
- [www.northernforest.org/resources](http://www.northernforest.org/resources).

We encourage you to share it with others who are interested in creating or supporting Community Forests.

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# ABOUT COMMUNITY FORESTS

Community Forests serve a unique role and offer untapped potential in conserving productive forestland, while also providing community and economic development opportunities for forest-based communities. Community Forests have demonstrated multiple values as an asset that provides support for communities including recreation and open space, revenue from timber management, protection of water supplies and avoided costs of water treatment, wildlife habitat, growth management and education.

## THIS REPORT

In order to achieve the full potential of Community Forests, however, a strong infrastructure of support is needed for communities that want to own and manage forestland. This report offers an assessment of community needs, the needs of supporting institutions, the state of the current infrastructure and recommendations on what is required to coordinate and strengthen existing capacities and build new support where it is needed.

## THE COMMUNITY FOREST MODEL

The Community Forest Collaborative has developed a Community Forest Model that consists of the following components:

- ☞ Community Forests are owned and managed by a municipal entity or by another group (e.g. land trust) on behalf of a community.
- ☞ The proposed acquisition and management structure ensures community participation in and responsibility for management decisions.
- ☞ The community has secure access to the value and benefits of the forest, both monetary and nonmonetary, that can support and reinforce community priorities and economic development objectives.
- ☞ The conservation values of the forestland are permanently protected.

# INTRODUCTION

The Community Forest Collaborative (The Collaborative) seeks to expand community ownership and management of forestland in northern New England. The Collaborative builds on the tradition in New England of town-owned forests by describing a Community Forest Model, working to create new Community Forests that are consistent with that Model, and creating case studies of Community Forest projects that can be found in its 2007 report *Community Forests: A Community Investment Strategy*.<sup>1</sup>

The Collaborative's Community Forest Model serves as a community and economic development strategy as well as a component of local and regional landscape conservation efforts. As important, however, is the role that Community Forest projects play in engaging people in their own community—providing opportunities for direct, tangible and personal experiences that are the foundation of civic engagement and building a shared stewardship ethic.

The Collaborative has done considerable analysis of what it takes to create a Community Forest. First and foremost, Community Forest projects require significant commitments on the part of a community. It literally “takes a village” to create a Community Forest. There needs to be a strong movement within the community that appreciates the value of the forestland—and within a community there will be many different “values” expressed. Most projects are initiated and managed by volunteers. The community must also make some level of financial commitment and must be willing to accept responsibility for the long-term stewardship of the resource. This requires readiness and interest on the part of the community. This may be reflected through the action of an individual or a group that has either the foresight to protect local resources or has been stimulated to act based on a threat. In either case there needs to be leadership and vision provided by an individual or group within the community. One of the jobs of the leaders is to build a shared vision from diverse groups within the town and show them how the various reasons for wanting to conserve forestland can be mutually supportive and expressed within the management and stewardship of a Community Forest. Often the seeds of this are already expressed in local economic development initiatives, town master plans, language in town regulations, or in popular conservation-related activities undertaken by the town.

With that in place, however, it is clear that there is a range of resources that communities need and a suite of organizations that they look to for support. In its 2007 report *Community Forests: A Community Investment Strategy*, the Collaborative recommended two principle actions:

- ☞ Expand funding for acquisition and stewardship of Community Forests
- ☞ Expand, formalize and institutionalize technical assistance to communities

In order to better understand existing and potential resources and move toward these goals, the Collaborative implemented several projects:

- 1) A feasibility study for a regional Community Forest Fund (completed Spring 2008)

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<sup>1</sup> See “Community Forests: A Community Investment Strategy,” The Community Forest Collaborative, 2007. Available at [www.tpl.org/publications](http://www.tpl.org/publications) or [www.foresteconomy.org/programs/community-forests/reports](http://www.foresteconomy.org/programs/community-forests/reports).



- 2) An Inventory of community needs and technical assistance (completed Spring 2009)
- 3) Meetings in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont of community members and technical assistance providers (Held during the Winter 2010)
- 4) Creation and ongoing implementation by the Open Space Institute, in partnership with the Community Forest Collaborative, of a regional Community Forest Fund with an initial capitalization of \$1.4 million that will provide grants and capital for the various stages of Community Forest projects, including pre-acquisition coordination and facilitation, acquisition and stewardship. (fund launched Summer 2010)

The Collaborative began a process to determine the current state of the infrastructure of support in the region for Community Forests. Community needs were identified from information gathered in preparation of five case studies of Community Forest projects, in a series of follow up phone interviews with individuals involved in the five projects, as well as with staff members from support organizations, institutions and agencies.<sup>2</sup> The objective was to identify categories of technical assistance to be covered in the inventory, as well as to provide a basis for assessing their sufficiency.

During interviews, community members described where they seek advice, information and technical assistance, what resources have proven most valuable, and where they require further support. Based on experience working with communities, technical assistance providers described what services and information are most frequently requested and what needs they perceive to be most important or underserved.

**Community needs fell into six categories:**

- 1) Community Capacity Building and Facilitation**
- 2) Acquisition and Financing**
- 3) Economic Development**
- 4) Conservation Planning**
- 5) Stewardship**
- 6) Funding**

The Collaborative then prepared and circulated a draft report to community members and individuals from agencies and organizations that provide technical assistance. The Collaborative also organized meetings in each of the three states to discuss technical assistance and support for Community Forests in the region. This, the final report, is an assessment of the current state of the infrastructure of support for communities and provides recommendations on how to ensure that services and support are available and accessible to communities that want to acquire and manage forestland.

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<sup>2</sup> See Interview List on pages 25 – 27.

# SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Community Forests offer an important and underutilized conservation, community and economic development strategy. The Collaborative finds that in order to realize the full potential of the Community Forest Model, there needs to be a concerted effort to develop an *accessible, reliable* and *sustained infrastructure of support* for communities that want to embark on a Community Forest project. Communities need to know that if they want to own and manage forestland that there are resources to help and they know where to find them.

## **The Collaborative’s assessment of the current state of the infrastructure of support for Community Forests is that:**

- ☞ There is significant opportunity to work with towns that own forestland to create Community Forests. Town-owned forests have been a feature of New England’s municipal landscape since the early colonial settlements. Since that time, forestland has come into town ownership in a variety of ways: as a result of tax lien foreclosures, gifts from residents, or purchase for watershed management or open space. While some town-owned forests are actively managed and used by the community, many are not and provide few or no benefits to the people of the community that own them, and most are not permanently protected. As town-owned properties, however, they all have one thing in common: the residents have a voice in the decisions made about them. There are some 450 town-owned forests<sup>3</sup> that account for over 175,000 acres of forestland in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. These town-owned forests could provide a broad platform from which to expand the Community Forest Model by assisting towns with management and stewardship planning, engaging community participation in management and use of the forestland, identifying and creating benefits and value for the community from the forest and securing permanent conservation of the natural resource values of the forest that will ensure that the forest and its stream of benefits will be available to the community forever.
  
- ☞ Funding and “patient” capital<sup>4</sup> is a limiting factor in realizing the full potential of the Community Forest Model in the region. Existing federal programs such as the U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy Program, the New Markets Tax Credit Program<sup>5</sup>, the Land and Water Conservation Fund; state land conservation funding programs such as Land for Maine’s Future, New Hampshire’s Land and Community Investment Program and Vermont’s Housing and Conservation Program; and new programs such as the U.S. Forest Service Community Forest

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<sup>3</sup> The numbers reflected in this report for town-owned forests and acreage are estimates only. Comprehensive updates of inventories are needed in all three states. A partial one is underway in Vermont and there is a proposal in New Hampshire to update a 1980 inventory and gather new data on acreage, management, conservation and stewardship activity.

<sup>4</sup> Patient capital is a term used to describe long-term capital. Flexible and patient capital are required for Community Forest Projects to meet a variety of needs including: securing the land until the community has the capacity to own/manage the land; covering acquisition/management costs until a revenue stream can be created (e.g. if a piece of land was acquired after being heavily cut-over); and covering gaps in financing.

<sup>5</sup> Footnote appears on next page.

Program and the Open Space Institute’s Community Forest Fund provide important resources and are critical to building a regional capacity to fund acquisition and technical assistance, and to leverage capacity to engage private philanthropy, municipal bonding and the private banking sector.

- ☞ Most, if not all, of the funding and technical assistance currently available is through the conservation and forestry sector. Further work can and needs to be done to attract funding and technical assistance from the community and economic development sector.
- ☞ There is a complex suite of public and private institutions, organizations and agencies that currently do or could provide many forms of relevant technical assistance and support, but the existing infrastructure is decentralized, uncoordinated and inconsistently available across the northern New England region.
- ☞ Many conservation organizations and land trusts currently work with private landowners to secure donations for land for conservation purposes. Land donations for Community Forests offer a potential mechanism for creating new Community Forests.
- ☞ Gaps in infrastructure include:
  - Assistance to communities to ensure that on-the-ground implementation of forest management and stewardship plans is consistent with the terms of conservation easements;
  - Some landowner assistance programs currently provide assistance only to private landowners and not to public land stewards (including municipalities);
  - Cross-border or multi-town coordination on issues related to forestland conservation and management, wildlife habitat and water resource management;
  - Business planning including information on and support for value-added activities related to forest management;
  - Coordination with local and regional land and economic development planning.

Many, if not all, of the gaps could be filled with existing institutional capacity.

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<sup>5</sup> The New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) Program seeks to encourage and provide a vehicle for investment in low-income communities throughout the country. The program can be used for a broad range of projects that meet its eligibility requirements, including working forestland projects. The New Markets Tax Credit enables financial institutions and other corporate investors to make an equity investment in a qualifying Community Development Entity (CDE) in exchange for receiving tax credits against the investor’s federal income tax liability over a seven-year period. Since the investor is getting substantial economic benefits from the tax credit, this reduces the amount of cash return the investor needs on its equity investment. In turn, this capital is used by the CDE to make a subsidized loan to a qualifying project. The NMTC is administered by the United States Treasury, which allocates available tax credits to qualifying CDEs for use in individual projects. For more information, visit <http://www.foresteconomy.org/programs/nmtc>.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

The Community Forest Collaborative has developed the following set of recommendations based on its assessment of the infrastructure of support for Community Forests:

- ☞ **Secure full funding for new programs that support Community Forest projects** such as the US Forest Service’s Community Forest Program and the Open Space Institute’s Community Forest Fund. The goal for the Community Forest Fund, currently capitalized at \$1.4 million is \$5 Million. The goal for full funding of the Community Forest Program, currently funded at \$500,000, is \$10 Million.
- ☞ **Create or strengthen partnerships with agencies and organizations in the community and economic development sector targeting such programs as:** the Community Development Block Grant Program for investments in “green infrastructure,” revolving loan funds administered through local and regional economic development councils, financing and other technical assistance from community development finance institutions, and business planning and job training assistance from local and regional rural development institutions.
- ☞ **Coordinate capacities among public and private institutions promoting interdisciplinary collaborations between conservation, forestry, planning, community and economic development organizations.** Develop interdisciplinary resource teams for assistance in conservation, community and economic development and planning.
- ☞ **Recruit existing federal and state programs in the conservation, forestry, community and economic development sectors** that offer relevant capacity, but are not actively involved in providing technical assistance, support or funding. Current programs such as USDA’s Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) that are designed to help landowners plan and implement stewardship practices are no longer available to municipalities should be broadened to include support for Community Forests.
- ☞ **Secure full funding for state agencies and programs so that states can fulfill their statutory obligations for support and assistance to Community Forest projects.**
- ☞ **Update and complete inventories of existing town-owned forests in all three northern New England states and target opportunities for advancing town-owned forests to Community Forests.** Expand awareness about differences between town-owned forests and Community Forests.

- ☞ **Promote the Community Forest Model as a strategy for local and regional land planning and growth management.** Provide training to planners and work to integrate the Community Forest Model into planning initiatives related to forestland conservation, land use, growth, wildlife habitat and water resources management.
- ☞ **Engage conservation organizations and land trusts to work on behalf of Community Forests.** Work with private landowners to consider donations of forestland to communities. Encourage local and regional land trusts to provide communities with expertise in land acquisition and stewardship.
- ☞ **Create a centralized repository of information and forum for Community Forest work that includes accurate and timely data for the New England region and is accessible both to communities and supporting institutions.**
- ☞ **Conduct research on the economic value of Community Forests and create demonstration Community Forests that expand awareness about their community and economic development values.**
- ☞ **Create or expand programs for shared learning through exchanges and other peer-to-peer learning.**

# SUMMARY OF NEEDS

## COMMUNITY NEEDS

Communities need recognized, accessible, reliable sources of technical assistance and support. This support doesn't need to come in the form of centralized, one-stop shopping, but communities need to know where to go for various stages in the project and, once the Community Forest has been created, for on-going management and stewardship. In addition, the kinds of support may differ between more rural northern communities and those in the more densely populated southern parts of the states due to development pressures, parcel sizes and acquisition costs.

The following were the most frequently cited needs of communities interested in creating Community Forests:

### **Community Capacity Building and Facilitation:**

- convening, facilitation and coordination
- information and resource people
- administration and management
- reconciling conflicts
- communication strategies
- time

These resources were considered to be some of the most difficult to fund.

### **Acquisition and Financing**

- advice and expertise on identifying different financing options
- access to capital
- access to legal, accounting and technical expertise for complicated real estate transactions
- assistance working through the financing process
- access to grants and technical assistance for management and stewardship plans

### **Economic Development**

- rationale for investing in natural capital and the associated concerns about loss of tax revenue
- role of the land in local economic development planning
- the capacity to manage a valuable asset
- business plans which address how to create value from the forest as well as the traditional concerns of job development and training

### **Conservation Planning**

- forest management plan
- easements
- wildlife management planning
- coordinating a community process to create the plan and easement
- technical assistance of a forester for the management plan
- legal and technical assistance in drafting the easement

### **Conservation Planning (continued)**

- conducting natural resource inventories
- integrating the Community Forest into other master planning and land use planning work in the town

### **Stewardship**

- implementation of conservation and forest management plans
- advice related to governance and oversight of the asset
- development of community programs
- long-term ecological monitoring
- development of new revenue from the forest that might include managing for ecological services (water supplies and quality, biomass, carbon sequestration)
- access to information and technical assistance to steward land for ecological services

### **Funding**

- grants for pre-acquisition activities such as facilitation, convening, coordination, mapping, legal services, survey work, and inventories
- flexible, “patient” capital for acquisition
- grants for forest management, program development, monitoring and long-term stewardship

## **NEEDS OF SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS**

Organizations from the private non-profit sector and public agencies that provide technical assistance and other programs require a variety of resources that allow them to help communities at different stages of Community Forest projects. The following were the most frequently cited needs of institutions that provide support for Community Forests:

- local leadership
- time
- operating funds
- access to technical expertise
- partners that have access to private capital
- access to a complex suite of funding sources and financing options

### **Existing infrastructure**

Presently there is existing capacity for technical assistance and support through programs from a number of agencies and organizations including conservation organizations, land trusts, state agencies, university cooperative extension services, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Districts, other programs within USDA and regional planning commissions. The capacity, however, may be unevenly distributed across the region, and uncoordinated between local, statewide and regional organizations and agencies. The same problems may exist across the forestry, conservation, community and economic development, and planning sectors. Additionally, the current economic climate has led to

## SUMMARY OF NEEDS

severe cutbacks in all supporting institutions and has resulted in a shrinking capacity within many of the very institutions that provide core technical assistance and support. The Community Forest Model may offer opportunities for efficiencies and coordination across new partnerships.

### **Gaps**

Identified gaps in the infrastructure of support for Community Forest projects range from incomplete information to the absence of interdisciplinary collaboration between conservation, community and economic development sectors, and lack of coordination across state lines. Following are recommended actions to remedy the most frequently cited gaps in support:

- ***Update inventories of existing town-owned forests.*** All three states need updated and complete inventories of existing town-owned forests with data on acreage, community participation, management, benefits and permanent conservation.
- ***Create new partnerships across sectors.*** Presently, Community Forest projects are almost entirely accomplished through technical support and assistance from the conservation and forestry sector. Involvement of community and economic development institutions and organizations will both strengthen and expand the infrastructure of support. The contribution made by Coastal Enterprises, Inc. and the New Markets Tax Credit Program demonstrate the importance of this sector in advancing Community Forest work. Similarly, Community Forests offer a valuable strategy for growth management and thus should more directly involve local and regional planning institutions and efforts.
- ***Expand capacity for education about monitoring and enforcing easements.*** Most Community Forest projects will incorporate an easement as part of the project. There is an existing network of county foresters, district foresters and consulting foresters that offers substantial capacity in the design and implementation of forest management plans. There needs to be greater capacity and support for institutions that hold working forest or conservation easements and are responsible for monitoring and enforcing them as well as additional capacity to work closely with communities to help them learn about how forest management plans, carried out on the ground, are consistent and compatible with terms of the easement.
- ***Create opportunities and build capacity for interstate cooperation.*** There are significant gaps in coordination between communities across state boundaries related to GIS mapping, land management and land conservation related to wildlife habitat, productive forestland, and water supplies and quality.



# COMPLETE FINDINGS

## NEEDS OF COMMUNITIES

### **Community Capacity Building & Facilitation**

Community members and organizational leaders identified this category as the most critical resource for a successful Community Forest project. Communities need resources and assistance to build community infrastructure, generate community support, facilitate meaningful discussion and reconcile competing needs and priorities.

The initial stages of a Community Forest project often benefit from an outside group that provides *convening, coordinating and facilitation* expertise so that community members have a forum for discussing options for a project, for developing a shared vision for the project, and generating public support and community involvement. In addition, these outside groups often provide or serve as links to other groups for information, technical assistance and funding. In some instances, the outside group can act as a “neutral” party, particularly when there are contentious issues within a community to air and discuss.

Communities also need access to *information and resource people* who have experience with other Community Forest projects, can provide technical assistance for activities such as maps or mapping services, and know how a project moves through municipal government. This access might require a physical place or a database where communities can go for advice and technical assistance on Community Forest projects and management.

For many rural towns, the idea of *administering and managing* a Community Forest seems beyond their capabilities, especially if the town has no paid staff. Communities need reassurance that it can be done and often this comes simply by being made aware of other projects in towns with similar demographics. Additionally, they may need help building new capacity within the town. Some towns create new volunteer committees within the town governance structure (e.g. town forest committees) but separate from the board of selectmen, or an entirely new non-profit organization to coordinate a Community Forest initiative and to manage Community Forest projects. Communities may look to supporting institutions to help facilitate the organizing phases in these efforts, provide the staff to coordinate and support volunteer efforts, or provide modest funding to support part-time staffing to reinforce volunteer efforts.

Several individuals identified that they needed help developing *communication strategies and conflict resolution*. One community volunteer explained that communication occurred only when there was a major update to report: “It’s easy for the core group of organizers to feel that there is momentum, even between major events. However, the rest of the community needs to be kept up to date. Otherwise, people [may] think that the project has failed or been dropped.” Even those who valued communication early in the project, upon reflection, felt that more was needed. This realization often occurred after surprising controversies surfaced during the final project phases. Particular areas of conflict or misunderstanding include forest management practices, easements, suspicion over funding sources and conflicts between recreational uses. Support and assistance early on in *conflict resolution* can help communities resolve conflicts that arise at different points throughout the acquisition and ownership of a Community Forest as well as in other issues that may arise in the town.

Where facilitation and communication skills are not well developed and there is an absence of effective leadership, community members will not have opportunities to meaningfully participate in decisions affecting the project. Outside expertise or facilitation may be required and valuable, but must be engaged in a manner that ensures the community is driving the Community Forest project. Several community members and organizational representatives emphasized that there is a critical need for this support role, but it is especially challenging because it requires a skillful person who can provide guidance while letting the community lead the way.

Although non-profit organizations, agencies and institutions provide valuable expertise and guidance, some capacity-building can often be accomplished through exchanges and other peer to peer learning through which community leaders learn directly from other towns and from other projects. Sharing stories at community meetings and organizing Community Forest field trips were both considered important activities. In particular, demonstration forests can help resolve apprehension about timber harvesting, allowing community members to see what forest management looks like on the ground.

In addition to outside expertise and perspectives, *time* is a necessary component of successful community capacity building and facilitation processes. Communities need the luxury of time to engage people, to sort through and address the variety of issues and questions that inevitably surface around Community Forest projects and to allow for a thorough and patient process of self-education for both leaders and the broader community.

Several communities did report that Master Planning or Comprehensive Planning processes helped to build facilitation and leadership skills in a community, which can be called upon during the Community Forest planning process. In turn, communities reported that the Community Forest planning process helped further develop these skills, which can then be called upon when other community issues needed to be addressed. These anecdotal comments highlight the community building value of the Community Forest Model.

Resources critical during this phase may include access to small grants or in-kind services for:

- convening
- facilitation, coordination and communication
- planning, coordinating and travel costs for exchanges
- preliminary inventories and management plans

### **Acquisition & Financing**

The acquisition and financing of new Community Forests can be extremely complex and typically requires a significant amount of professional expertise and guidance. Before acquisition, *advice and expertise on financing options* and *availability of resources and capital are critical*. For some projects, a private equity partner, state, regional or local non-profit that has access to capital, staff time and expertise can offer the capacity to “act fast” to acquire the land and hold it until a local initiative can get organized.

During the acquisition process, some communities need *access to legal, accounting and*

*technical expertise* for boundary and survey work, appraisals, deed research and expertise in various financing tools such as the New Markets Tax Credit, municipal bonding for land acquisition, application procedures for both public funding programs (Forest Legacy) and private philanthropy. *Assistance working through the financing process* during the acquisition stage is critical for many communities. While some communities may have existing capacity or ability to access financial expertise, many don't and it is a particularly important resource if the acquisition requires a complex financing package.

Some funding programs (Forest Legacy) require the development of a forest management or stewardship plan before the land is acquired. *Access to funding* to hire a consulting forester is important as this requirement often comes before the community is organized and able to produce the plan. Additionally, some projects have benefited from undertaking comprehensive natural resource and ecological inventories prior to acquisition of the land that has helped raise funds to acquire the land, but requires initial support from grants and technical assistance. Finally, when Community Forest lands are donated or acquired through forfeiture, communities may not require sophisticated acquisition and financing resources, but may need help with deed research. One interviewee explained that it is fairly common for such properties to have “mucky” deeds.

Many interviewees reported relative ease in accessing these resources. This may be partly due to the fact that interviews were primarily conducted in communities that had received assistance from regional or national conservation organizations. It does appear that until greater numbers of communities begin to recognize the potential of Community Forests, acquisition, financing and technical assistance resources are keeping pace through the capacity of regional and national non-profit organizations. However, although these resources currently exist in sufficient numbers, their own funding sources are less certain. And, if the Collaborative's goal of expanding the Community Forest Model is successful, community needs may begin to exceed available resources.

### **Economic development opportunities**

Communities are often skeptical about the value of investing in forestland when faced with issues related to the added responsibilities required of the municipality, capacity needed to manage forestland, and perceived loss of revenue from tax receipts from private ownership. In addition, many people do not recognize that there can be economic or community benefits from community ownership. One interviewee identified a key challenge facing the Community Forest movement: “Community members do not always understand the value streams that come from forests or how to capture them.” This concern was almost unanimously echoed in subsequent interviews underscoring the need for further research and expanded awareness of the fiscal impact to communities of owning and managing forestland, and the economic benefits and value streams from forestland.

- **Investment in asset:** For many communities, acquiring forestland can be viewed initially as a burdensome cost or a luxury. However, if a project is linked with long-range planning activities such as community visioning, cost-of-community-services studies or value-of-open space exercises,

community and economic development planning or master planning initiatives, a Community Forest project can be framed as a broader initiative and viewed as an investment strategy. Information and programs that provide economic data and opportunities to describe community ownership and management as an investment or asset-building strategy are important resources. While some limited research has been conducted describing the economic value to communities of owning and managing forestland, there is a need for broader and more rigorous economic research in this area.

- ***Managing the asset:*** For communities that acquire large tracts of land, the management may include responsibility for long-term financing, forest management and new value added opportunities. Some communities that look at Community Forest projects in part as an economic development strategy identified the need for advice and expertise in developing business plans, financing and financial management strategies. Technical assistance in economic development planning, new forest product development and marketing will be important resource needs in the future.
- ***Creating value from asset:*** Communities need access to information on potential values from the forest in the form of new products and values (e.g. ecosystem services, non-timber forest products, recreational and eco-tourism development strategies), creating or gaining access to markets, and infrastructure needs to realize value from the forest. This information can be made available through workshops, demonstration projects, exchanges and other peer-to-peer learning formats.

In addition, there is a need for expanded programs within community and economic development institutions and municipal and regional planning agencies to incorporate Community Forest projects within their focus areas.

### **Conservation Planning**

Though there is a fine line between conservation planning and stewardship, they are addressed separately in this report because during the inventory process it became clear that different organizations tend to perform one role or the other, and only sometimes both.

In general, conservation planning involves identifying and inventorying a forest's valuable resources and designing stewardship plans that are consistent with the resource values and community priorities. Conservation planning actions might include conducting natural resource or forest inventories and creating maps and planning documents. Stewardship describes the implementation and updates of these plans, monitoring activities and reinvestment in the resource. As with acquisition and financing resources, communities reported relatively easy access to conservation planning resources.

## **Stewardship**

Communities often need assistance in *implementing conservation and management plans*. This need was identified repeatedly, but more often by resource providers than by community members. Many organizations that provide assistance with acquisition and financing and conservation planning do not provide ongoing stewardship assistance. These organizations receive frequent requests for these services and express concern that this may be leaving a gap in the Community Forest support infrastructure. In the two-phase process of conservation planning and stewardship, the greater need is in phase two-plan implementation, particularly in the following areas:

- **Forest management:** While many communities will certainly see the value in forest management activities that realize income for the community, there is a whole range of forest management activities that require investment, but if done, will create greater value in the long-run (e.g. road building and maintenance, timber-stand improvement). This is an important component of stewardship and, in many cases, communities may require support and assistance in both realizing the value of this investment as well as securing necessary assistance (consulting forester) and funding.
- **Governance:** Most communities need to figure out the governance structure for managing the Community Forest. Discussions and decision-making around governance issues can be contentious with different entities of town government wanting control or responsibility for the asset. In either case, facilitated discussions, often by a third party, may be required to help resolve disagreements or develop a governance structure agreeable to the community.
- **Ecological monitoring:** The long-term monitoring of the ecological health of the forest is an important investment in the resource. Some communities, as part of the process of creating a Community Forest, undertake resource inventories and establish monitoring programs. For others, encouragement and support for investing in establishing the baseline data and future monitoring programs will be required. This important stewardship activity is one that provides ample opportunity for community engagement through community mapping projects.
- **Educational programs:** For many communities, there is increasing recognition that a Community Forest offers a valuable educational resource. Many communities could benefit from support and assistance related to curriculum assistance and the different ways in which Community Forests can be used as outdoor classrooms for schools or other educational groups.

- **Ecological services:**
  - 1) **Recreation programs**—trail building and management. Some communities manage recreation by making arrangements with independent clubs that become responsible for certain activities. Models for these agreements could be shared. Whether communities are managing recreation directly or indirectly through independent clubs, communities need help creating innovative solutions to conflicts surrounding motorized recreational use.
  - 2) **Permitting programs**—Communities may make town-owned land available to community members for firewood, wood for craftsmen, tipping of softwood boughs for seasonal greens (wreaths, roping, etc.), and other non-timber forest products. Permitting programs are often the vehicles to manage these uses and ensure that they are compatible with forest management plans.
  - 3) **Water supplies**—Municipal watershed lands are common in New England and serve as important demonstrations for how community-owned forestland can protect public water supplies. More focused efforts are needed to expand awareness of the link between forestland conservation and conservation of water supplies as well as to provide technical assistance to communities on forestland and watershed management.
  - 4) **New market values**—Communities will need information, technical assistance and demonstration programs to enable them initially to appreciate the value of carefully managed forests for clean air and clean water, and to identify new markets for forest products and forest-based activities. While it is not clear when or how new markets for other values such as biomass energy and carbon sequestration will be available, information and technical assistance to help communities plan for and be prepared to take advantage of these markets when and if they should open is needed.

### **Funding**

Community Forest projects require a variety of types of funding and funding at different times, from pre-acquisition, through acquisition and stewardship. Throughout this report, there have been references to funding needs, but in summary Community Forest projects require one or more of the following kinds of funding:

- Support for facilitation, convening, community building and project coordination
- Support for pre-acquisition activities such as mapping, legal services (deed and title research), survey work, inventory and stewardship or forest management planning
- Flexible and “patient” capital for acquisition

- Support to create governance and management structures for Community Forests (staffing, facilitation, convening)
- Support for forest management activities, community program development and monitoring

There are a number of issues related to availability of funding that were highlighted during the course of the interviews:

- Funding was identified as the critical limiting factor in realizing the full potential of the Community Forest Model, particularly as sources of funding shrink, the cost of forestland increases and the number of Community Forest projects increase.
- Currently, it is difficult to find funding sources for projects that have combined conservation, community and economic development values as most funding sources do not cross sectors. As a result, communities often find that they need to tailor objectives to match the funding source. Many interviewees identified a shortage of funds that target the wide range of Community Forest goals—in particular, those that look beyond environmental goals to incorporate economic and social goals.
- Acquisition funding sources often require communities to put together a stewardship plan at the time of application. These early, “quick and dirty” plans likely need to be expanded and improved and this cost often precedes timber income. Only a few lucky communities are able to make an early harvest to capture immediate revenue potential. Otherwise, these early planning costs accumulate and can be difficult or impossible for some communities to absorb. Several communities identified funding for conservation planning as a priority need.
- Funding is often needed to support activities that may need to begin before final stewardship or management plans—which often take two or more years to complete—are in place. Such activities may include maintenance or upgrading of roads, bridges and culverts, as well as establishing monitoring sites. All of these create opportunities to demonstrate the value to community members of the new asset.
- Easily accessible grants are important in the early stages of a project. Communities may need funds for workshops, facilitation, or part-time staff to coordinate volunteer efforts. Additionally, funding is often needed for a variety of activities such as mapping, inventories, planning, project development, designing and monitoring programs and gathering baseline data for monitoring, all of which provide communities with good information about the need for and use of stewardship funds later on.

## NEEDS OF SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

It is worth noting that while there are many agencies and non-profits that provide support services for Community Forest projects, these institutions also have resource needs of their own. Most often cited were the following:

- **Time:** As one staff person stated “[We] need time so people can buy in [to the idea]...to work out the details of a project.”
- **Operating funds:** Supporting institutions need the capacity (operating funds), primarily in staff time, to meet with community members, identify resource needs, help build local leadership and community capacity, secure technical expertise needed to complete complicated real estate and financing transactions, offer facilitation, make connections with resources, work out details of real estate transactions and financing.
- **Local champion(s):** They need a local champion because “it has to matter to someone” in the community;
- **Access to technical expertise:** supporting institutions need resources to engage legal, accounting, forestry and financing expertise; and a private equity partner, or a partner with access to private capital if a piece of land comes on the market and needs a buyer before the community is ready.
- **Access to capital:** They need access to a complex suite of funding sources and financing options that provide the capacity to be nimble and adapt to the specific needs of a given community and a particular Community Forest project.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RESOURCES

Technical assistance resources were identified through referrals, telephone interviews and internet research with the goal of discerning the nature and geographic scope of the services provided, as well as the level of interest in coordinating with other Community Forest technical assistance providers. The full inventory begins on page 29.

The inventory process highlighted a particular strength of the Community Forest Model—its potential to draw support from a variety of sectors including conservation, community and economic development and regional planning. One goal of the inventory was to look beyond key players in these sectors and try to identify new or potential technical assistance providers. There are many organizations that work across the three-state region in all or some of the areas of conservation, regional planning, community and economic development, and though the inventory has not captured them all, it does present a general picture of the variety and depth of the region’s current and potential infrastructure of support for Community Forests.

Over fifty organizations, agencies and institutions were identified, including federal and state agencies, regional planning and development agencies, land trusts, timber investment management organizations (TIMOs), university extension offices, private foundations, rural development organizations and other forest-related non-profits.



**These resources were organized into six general categories:**

- 1) government agencies**
- 2) non-profit organizations**
- 3) professional forestry organizations**
- 4) businesses**
- 5) funding organizations, and**
- 6) existing Community Forests**

Non-profit organizations were by far the largest category and were classified according to whether they were regional (serving all of northern New England), state-wide (serving a single state), or local (serving a sub-state region). The largest category by far was state-wide nonprofit organizations. Excluding funding organizations, statewide non-profits comprised almost half the inventory.

Conservation planning and stewardship are the most prevalent services offered by nonprofits. Sixty percent of groups provided stewardship resources in some form; only four offered services for education or recreation. The majority provide assistance for the implementation of conservation or forest management plans.

Close to 30 percent of the organizations reported that they provide some form of resources to support economic development, acquisition and/or financing. However, a closer look at the nature of the organizations and the services they offer reveals that only rarely, and sometimes never, have a significant number of economic development organizations provided support to Community Forest projects.

Interestingly, a number of parallel organizations across the three states provide significantly different resources. For example, Cooperative Extension in Maine focuses on community capacity building and facilitation and economic development, while in Vermont it focuses on economic development and stewardship. The University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension offers four levels of technical assistance—community capacity building and facilitation, economic development, conservation planning, and stewardship.

On a national scale, the U.S. Forest Service's Community Forest Program was created in 2008 through the reauthorization of the Farm Bill. It was funded minimally at \$500,000 to develop the rules and regulations for the program, but has not been fully funded to implement the program. Finally, The Conservation Fund is in the process of creating a National Community Forest Service Center with a goal of providing information, technical assistance and support to Community Forest projects.

Currently, there is no single organization that provides resources across the spectrum of needs for Community Forest projects. The Community Forest Collaborative, the National Community Forestry Service Center, the new U.S. Forest Service Community Forest Program and the former Vermont Town Forest Project are all examples of efforts to coordinate the array of resources needed by communities.

# PARTICIPANT & INTERVIEW LIST

The information reported on in this publication came from in-depth interviews with 28 people as well as state-based information sessions attended by 20 or more people each in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. Some people who were interviewed also participated in the state meetings, which were held in January 2010.

Affiliations and/or titles reflect positions held at the time of interview or meeting.

Participants are listed by state on the following pages.

## PARTICIPANT & INTERVIEW LIST: MAINE

| ORGANIZATION                                  | NAME                  | TITLE  |
|---|-----------------------|--|
| Bangor Savings Bank                           | John Moore            | Senior Vice President Community              |
| Beginning with Habitat                        | Bethany Atkins        | Biologist                                    |
| Coastal Enterprises, Inc.                     | Keith Bisson          | Project Developer Rural Resources and Policy |
| Community Forest Collaborative                | Marcy West Lyman      | Consultant                                   |
| William A. Bayreuther Grant Writing           | William A. Bayreuther | Principal                                    |
| Downeast Lakes Land Trust                     | Mark Berry            | Executive Director                           |
| Downeast Lakes Land Trust                     | Steve Keith           | Former Executive Director                    |
| Eastern Maine Development Corporation         | Jason Bird            | Community Business Specialist                |
| Forest Society of Maine                       | Pete McKinley         | Former staff member                          |
| Integrated Forest Management                  | Robert Ball           | Consulting Forester                          |
| Kennebec Valley Council of Governments        | Chris Huck            | Planning Director                            |
| Land For Maine's Future                       | Tim Glidden           | Director                                     |
| Maine Association of Conservation Commissions | Bob Shafto            | Executive Director                           |
| Maine Forest Service Project Canopy           | Jan Ames Santerre     | Coordinator                                  |
| Maine Forest Service Project Canopy           | Laura Zitske          | Coordinator                                  |
| Maine Natural Areas Program                   | Sarah Demers          | Landowner Incentive Program Coordinator      |
| Maine Natural Areas Program                   | Kristen Puryear       | Community Ecologist                          |
| Maine Rural Partners                          | Mary Ann Hayes        | Executive Director                           |
| Maine State Planning Office                   | Tim Glidden           | Acting Director                              |
| Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences      | John Hagan            | President                                    |
| New England Forestry Foundation               | Si Balch              | Director of Forest Stewardship               |
| Open Space Institute                          | Jennifer Melville     | New England Coordinator                      |
| Orchard Foundation                            | Brigitte Kingsbury    | Executive Director                           |
| Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust                 | Shelby Rousseau       | Stewardship Director                         |
| Small Woodland Owners of Maine                | Tom Doak              | Executive Director                           |
| Sustainable Forest Futures                    | Julie Renaud Evans    | Director of Forestry                         |
| Sustainable Forest Futures                    | Steve Rohde           | President                                    |
| Threshold to Maine R.C.&D.                    | Mark Hews             | Coordinator Development Lending              |
| Two Trees Consulting Forestry                 | Harold Burtnett       | Forester                                     |
| University of Maine Cooperative Extension     | Ron Beard             | Extension Educator                           |
| USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service    | Sally Butler          | Forester                                     |

## PARTICIPANT & INTERVIEW LIST: NEW HAMPSHIRE

| ORGANIZATION   | NAME               | TITLE                                  |
|--|--------------------|--|
| Ammonoosuc Land Trust  | Rebecca Brown      | Executive Director                     |
| Community Forest Collaborative                                 | Marcy West Lyman   | Consultant                             |
| FORECO   | Ron Klemarczyk     | Consulting Forester                    |
| New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority          | Cassandra Bradley  | Loan and Portfolio Specialist          |
| New Hampshire Community Loan Fund                              | Rick Minard        | Vice President for Policy & Programs   |
| New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development | Christopher Way    | Business Services Manager              |
| New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands                    | Melissa Coppola    | NH Heritage Bureau                     |
| New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands                    | Ken Desmarais      | Administrator                          |
| New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands                    | Susan Francher     | Forest Planner                         |
| New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands                    | Mary Reynolds      | Program Staff                          |
| New Hampshire Fish and Game Department                         | Charlie Bridges    | Wildlife Programs Administrator        |
| New Hampshire Preservation Alliance                            | Jennifer Goodman   | Executive Director                     |
| North Country Council  | Tara Bamford       | Planning Director                      |
| Northern Forest Center   | Rob Riley          | President                              |
| Randolph Town Forest   | David Willcox      | Randolph Forest Commission             |
| Rockingham Regional Planning                                   | Cliff Sinnott      | Executive Director                     |
| Society for the Protection of NH Forests                       | Will Abbott        | Director of Policy                     |
| Sustainable Forest Futures                                     | Julie Renaud Evans | Director of Forestry                   |
| Sustainable Forest Futures                                     | Steve Rohde        | President                              |
| The Nature Conservancy   | Jan McClure        | Land Protection Specialist             |
| Thirteen Mile Woods Community Forest                           | Bill Freedman      | Errol, NH                              |
| Trust for Public Land  | Rodger Krussman    | NH & VT State Director                 |
| Trust for Public Land  | Michael Giammusso  | Institutional Giving Manager           |
| UNH Cooperative Extension                                      | Phil Auger         | Land and Water Conservation            |
| UNH Cooperative Extension                                      | Karen Bennett      | Forest Resource Specialist             |
| USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service                     | Jim Spielman       | Acting Assistant State Conservationist |

## PARTICIPANT & INTERVIEW LIST: VERMONT

| ORGANIZATION                                   | NAME                    | TITLE                                 |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Audubon Vermont                                | Katie Manaras           | Conservation Biologist                |
| Brushwood Community Forest                     | Patricia Ayres Crawford | West Fairlee, VT                      |
| Community Forest Collaborative                 | Marcy West Lyman        | Consultant                            |
| Consultant                                     | Steve Keith             | Principal                             |
| Craftsbury Town Forest, VT                     | Ann Ingerson            | Craftsbury, VT                        |
| National Wildlife Federation                   | Chip Knight             | Project Coordinator                   |
| New England Grassroots Environment Fund        | Cheryl King Fisher      | Executive Director                    |
| New England Grassroots Environment Fund        | Claire Wheeler          | Program Officer                       |
| Quebec-Labrador Foundation                     | Tom Horn                | Senior Program Manager                |
| Staying Connected Initiative                   | Bob Hawk                | Linkage Coordinator                   |
| Staying Connected Initiative                   | Corrie Miller           | Linkage Coordinator                   |
| Sustainable Forest Futures                     | Julie Renaud Evans      | Director of Forestry                  |
| Sustainable Forest Futures                     | Steve Rohde             | President                             |
| The Conservation Fund                          | Nancy Bell              | Vermont Representative                |
| The Nature Conservancy                         | Phil Huffman            | Director of Conservation Programs     |
| The Wilderness Society                         | Ann Ingerson            | Resource Economist                    |
| USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service     | BethAnn Finlay          | Resource Conservationist              |
| Vermont Community Foundation                   | Lisa Cashdan            | Senior Advisor                        |
| Vermont Council on Rural Development           | Paul Costello           | Executive Director                    |
| Vermont Dept. of Forests, Parks and Recreation | Ginger Anderson         | Chief of Forest Management            |
| Vermont Dept. of Forests, Parks and Recreation | David Paganelli         | Orange County Forester                |
| Vermont Family Forests                         | Deb Brighton            | Board of Directors                    |
| Vermont Housing and Conservation Board         | Billy Coster            | Director of Stewardship and Policy    |
| Vermont Land Trust                             | Gil Livingston          | President                             |
| Vermont Land Trust                             | Mark McEathron          | Central Vermont Director              |
| Vermont Land Trust                             | Carl Powden             | Regional Director                     |
| Vermont Land Trust                             | John Roe                | VP for Land Conservation              |
| Vermont Natural Resource Council               | Jamey Fidel             | Forest Program Director               |
| Vermont Natural Resource Council               | Brian Shupe             | Sustainable Communities Pgm. Director |
| Trust for Public Land                          | Jad Daley               | Program Director                      |
| Trust for Public Land                          | Katherine Cooper        | Project Manager                       |
| Trust for Public Land                          | Rodger Krussman         | NH & VT State Director                |
| Trust for Public Land                          | Kate Wanner             | Field Representative                  |
| Vermont Woodlands Association                  | Put Blodgett            | Board President                       |
| Yellow Wood Associates                         | Shanna Ratnor           | Consultant                            |



# INVENTORY OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITY FORESTS IN NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND



The following inventory of organizations, agencies and programs is a listing of agencies, organizations and businesses that do, or have the potential to, provide support for and technical assistance on Community Forest projects in northern New England. The purpose of the inventory was to develop a general picture of the variety and depth of the region's infrastructure of support for Community Forests.

Published March 2011

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# GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

## FEDERAL

### **Community Forest and Open Space Program**

[www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us)

The Community Forest and Open Space Program was created during the reauthorization of the Farm Bill in 2009. The Program is designed to provide capital and technical assistance to communities to acquire and manage Community Forests. The program has not been fully funded (as of 2010).

### **Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)**

[www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov)

Maine: [www.me.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.me.nrcs.usda.gov)

New Hampshire: [www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov)

Vermont: [www.vt.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.vt.nrcs.usda.gov)

The Natural Resource Conservation Service is an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. They offer technical assistance and conservation programs to individuals, groups, towns and other units of government to protect, develop and wisely use soil, water and other natural resources.

### **U.S. Department of Agriculture: U.S. Forest Service – State and Private Forestry**

Durham, NH

[www.na.fs.fed.us](http://www.na.fs.fed.us)

The State and Private Forestry Program provides technical and financial assistance to landowners and resource managers. Cooperative Forestry, state assessments and the Forest Legacy Program are a few examples of the kind of assistance offered through State and Private Forestry.

## STATE

### **Maine**

#### **Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands**

Augusta, ME

[www.maine.gov/doc/parks](http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks)

The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands provides information and assistance on issues related to trails and recreation.

#### **Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife**

Augusta, ME

[www.maine.gov/ifw](http://www.maine.gov/ifw)

Maine's Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife offers publications, technical assistance and support as well as grant programs for wildlife inventory, management and monitoring.

#### **Maine Forest Service**

Augusta, ME

[www.maine.gov/docs/mfs](http://www.maine.gov/docs/mfs)

The Maine Forest Service is responsible for overseeing Maine's private forests. They provide information on many subjects related to woodland management including regulation and stewardship. District foresters and insect and disease specialists are available to provide on-site consultations while additional staff members are available to provide public education, including school programs and forest tours. The Project Canopy program provides planning and education grants up to \$10,000 for municipal forest lands. Additionally, the WoodsWise program may provide support for forest management activities on land trust properties. Currently, municipally owned lands are not eligible.

#### **Maine State Planning Office**

Augusta, ME

[www.state.me.us](http://www.state.me.us)

The Maine State Planning Office provides local and regional planning and technical assistance.



**University of Maine Cooperative Extension**

Orono, ME  
www.umext.maine.edu

University of Maine Cooperative Extension provides facilitation and other community-building services to non-profits and communities. They also offer a number of educational programs related to forestry and wildlife through the Tanglewood 4-H Camp and Learning Center.

**New Hampshire**

**New Hampshire Division of Forests & Lands**

Concord, NH  
www.nh.dfl.org

The Division manages state-owned forestland and provides forest resource information and education to landowners and communities. Communities are often referred to licensed consulting foresters to develop and implement management plans and activities. The Division also operates a Community Forestry Program, which focuses on urban forestry and community tree programs.

**New Hampshire Division of Parks and Recreation**

Concord, NH  
www.nhstateparks.org

The NH Division of Parks and Recreation provides information and assistance on issues related to trails and recreation.

**New Hampshire Fish and Game Department**

Concord, NH  
www.wildlife.state.nh.us

New Hampshire's Fish and Game Department provides publications, technical assistance and support as well as grant programs for wildlife inventory, management and monitoring.

**New Hampshire Natural Heritage Bureau**

Concord, NH  
www.nhdf.org/about-forests-and-lands/bureaus/natural-heritage-bureau

The NH Natural Heritage Bureau is in the NH Division of Forest and Lands. The Bureau finds, tracks, and facilitates the protection of New Hampshire's rare plants and exemplary natural communities (types of forests, wetlands, grasslands, etc.). The Bureau has a database of information on the state's rare plants and exemplary natural communities.

**New Hampshire Office of Energy & Planning**

Concord, NH  
www.nh.gov/oeb

The New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning promotes the principles of smart growth through municipal and regional planning assistance.

**University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension**

Durham, NH  
www.extension.unh.edu

University of New Hampshire's Cooperative Extension Program provides assistance to communities and conservation groups with Community Forest projects through several programs. As part of the Forestry and Wildlife program, county foresters offer technical assistance and education. Through the Community Conservation Assistance Program, a team of extension educators provides direct assistance for creating and implementing conservation plans. Finally, Cooperative Extension can also help design and lead community planning and decision-making processes.

## **Vermont**

### **Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife**

Montpelier, VT  
[www.vtfishandwildlife.com](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com)

Vermont's Department of Fish and Wildlife offers publications, technical assistance and support as well as grant programs for wildlife inventory, management and monitoring.

### **Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (VDFPR)**

Waterbury, VT  
[www.vtfpr.org](http://www.vtfpr.org)

Through VDFPR's Forest Resource Management program, county foresters have limited statutory authority or responsibility but can offer advice on managing forestland for resource values such as trees, wildlife, soils, water, and recreation. When time and resources permit, they may also be able to help with boundary location, forest inventories, mapping, implementing a timber sale as well as conducting school programs or forest tours. The Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program (UCF) works with communities on the health, planting and maintenance of trees and forestland and trains community leaders in environmental leadership.

### **Vermont Planning Division**

Montpelier, VT  
[www.dhca.state.vt.us/planning](http://www.dhca.state.vt.us/planning)

The Vermont Planning Division promotes community revitalization and development that maintains Vermont's compact settlements separated by rural landscapes.

### **University of Vermont Cooperative Extension**

Burlington, VT  
[www.stumpage.uvm.edu](http://www.stumpage.uvm.edu)

University of Vermont Cooperative Extension provides assistance in the areas of community development and forestry. Additionally, they offer numerous publications and educational programs.

## **REGIONAL PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS**

Regional planning and development agencies operate as non-profit local government organizations. Regional planning agencies are created by state legislatures, while regional development agencies are designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce. In Maine, single organizations often play the role of both regional planning and development organizations. In New Hampshire and Vermont, these roles tend to be quite distinct. These agencies serve in an advisory role to local governments in order to promote coordinated planning, orderly growth, efficient land use, transportation access, environmental protection and economic development. They often help develop regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies and administer federal funding such as Community Development Block Grants and transit funds.

\* Organizations marked with a star are federally designated economic development agencies.

## **Maine**

### ***Regional Planning Agencies***

#### **Hancock County Regional Planning**

[www.hcpcme.org](http://www.hcpcme.org)

#### **Mid-Coast Council for Business Development & Planning**

[www.mcbdp.org](http://www.mcbdp.org)

#### **Mid-Coast Regional Planning Commission**

[www.midcoastplanning.org](http://www.midcoastplanning.org)

#### **Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission**

[www.smrpc.maine.org](http://www.smrpc.maine.org)

#### **Washington County Council of Governments**

[www.wccog.net](http://www.wccog.net)

## **Maine**

### *Regional Development Agencies*

**Androscoggin Valley  
Council of Governments**

[www.avcog.org](http://www.avcog.org)

**\* Eastern Maine Development Corp**

[www.emdc.org](http://www.emdc.org)

**Greater Portland Council of Governments**

[www.gpcog.org](http://www.gpcog.org)

**\* Kennebec Valley Council of Governments**

[www.kvcog.org](http://www.kvcog.org)

**Lincoln County Economic  
Development Office**

[www.lincolncountymaine.org](http://www.lincolncountymaine.org)

**\* Northern Maine Development Commission**

[nmdc@nmdc.org](mailto:nmdc@nmdc.org)

**Piscataquis County Economic  
Development Council**

[www.pcedc.org](http://www.pcedc.org)

**\* Southern Maine Economic  
Development District**

A partnership of the Greater Portland Council of Governments and the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission.

## **New Hampshire**

### *Regional Planning Agencies*

**Central New Hampshire Regional  
Planning Commission**

[www.cnhrpc.org](http://www.cnhrpc.org)

**Lakes Regional Planning Commission**

[www.lakesrpc.org](http://www.lakesrpc.org)

**Nashua Regional Planning Commission**

[www.nashuarpc.org](http://www.nashuarpc.org)

**North Country Council**

[www.nncouncil.org](http://www.nncouncil.org)

North Country Council is unique in New Hampshire in that it is also the region's economic development agency.

**Rockingham Planning Commission**

[www.rpc-nh.org](http://www.rpc-nh.org)

**Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission**

[www.snhpc.org](http://www.snhpc.org)

**Southwest Regional Planning Commission**

[www.swrpc.org](http://www.swrpc.org)

**Strafford Regional Planning Commission**

[www.strafford.org](http://www.strafford.org)

**Upper Valley Lake Sunapee  
Regional Planning Commission**

[www.uvlsrc.org](http://www.uvlsrc.org)

## **New Hampshire**

### *Regional Development Agencies*

**Belknap County Economic Development Council**

[www.bcedc.org](http://www.bcedc.org)

**Capital Regional Development Council**

[www.crdc-nh.com](http://www.crdc-nh.com)

**Coastal Economic Development Corp**

[www.coastaledc.org](http://www.coastaledc.org)

**Coos Economic Development Corp**

[www.buzzgate.org/coos](http://www.buzzgate.org/coos)

**Gateway Industrial  
Development Corporation**

866-352-8250

**Grafton County Economic  
Development Council**

[www.graftoncountyledc.org](http://www.graftoncountyledc.org)

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## INVENTORY: Government Agencies / Regional Planning & Development

**Monadnock Economic Development Corp**

[www.monadnock-development.org](http://www.monadnock-development.org)

**Mt. Washington Valley Economic Council**

[www.mwvec.com](http://www.mwvec.com)

**\* North Country Council**

[www.nncouncil.org](http://www.nncouncil.org)

**Northern Community Investment Corp.**

[www.ncic.org](http://www.ncic.org)

**Rockingham Economic  
Development Corporation**

[www.redc.com](http://www.redc.com)

**Southeast Economic  
Development Corporation**

[www.sedcnh.org](http://www.sedcnh.org)

**Wentworth Economic  
Development Corporation**

[www.wedco-nh.org](http://www.wedco-nh.org)

## Vermont

### *Regional Planning Agencies*

**Addison County Regional  
Planning Commission**

[www.acrpc.org](http://www.acrpc.org)

**Bennington County Regional Commission**

[www.rpc.bennington.vt.us](http://www.rpc.bennington.vt.us)

**Central Vermont Regional  
Planning Commission**

[www.centralvtplanning.com](http://www.centralvtplanning.com)

**Chittenden County MPO**

[www.ccmppo.org](http://www.ccmppo.org)

**Chittenden County Regional Planning  
Commission**

[www.ccrpcvt.org](http://www.ccrpcvt.org)

**Lamoille County Planning Commission**

[www.lcpcvt.org](http://www.lcpcvt.org)

**Northwest Regional Planning Commission**

[www.nrpcvt.com](http://www.nrpcvt.com)

**Rutland Regional Planning Commission**

[www.rutlandrpc.org](http://www.rutlandrpc.org)

**Southern Windsor County Regional Planning  
Commission**

[www.swcrpc.org](http://www.swcrpc.org)

**Two Rivers-Ottauquechee  
Regional Commission**

[www.trorc.org](http://www.trorc.org)

**Windham Regional Commission**

[www.rpc.windham.vt.us](http://www.rpc.windham.vt.us)

## Vermont

### *Regional Development Agencies*

**Addison County Economic  
Development Corporation**

[www.addisoncountyledc.org](http://www.addisoncountyledc.org)

**Bennington County Industrial Corporation**

[www.bcic.org](http://www.bcic.org)

**Brattleboro Development  
Credit Corporation**

[www.brattleborodevelopment.com](http://www.brattleborodevelopment.com)

**Central Vermont Economic  
Development Corporation**

[www.central-vt.com](http://www.central-vt.com)

**Franklin County Industrial Corporation**

[www.fcidc.com](http://www.fcidc.com)

**Great Burlington Industrial Corporation**

[www.vermont.org/gbic](http://www.vermont.org/gbic)

**Green Mountain Economic Corporation**

[www.gmedc.com](http://www.gmedc.com)

**Lamoille Economic  
Development Corporation**

[www.lamoilleeconomy.org](http://www.lamoilleeconomy.org)

**Northern Community  
Investment Corporation**

[www.ncic.org](http://www.ncic.org)

**Northeastern Vermont  
Development Association**

[www.nvda.net](http://www.nvda.net)

**Rutland Economic Development Corporation**

[www.rutlandbusiness.org](http://www.rutlandbusiness.org)

**Springfield Regional  
Development Corporation**

[www.springfielddevelopment.org](http://www.springfielddevelopment.org)

## NATIONAL & REGIONAL

**Coastal Enterprises, Inc (CEI)**

Wiscasset, ME

[www.ceimaine.org](http://www.ceimaine.org)

Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (CEI) is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) Community Development Corporation and Community Development Financial Institution (CDC/CDFI) based in Maine whose mission is to create economically and environmentally healthy communities. CEI's primary market is Maine but some of its programs reach across northern New England. In particular, its for-profit subsidiary, CEI Capital Management LLC (CCML), works to help attract capital to low-income areas using the federal New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) program. CCML looks to underwrite projects that provide positive economic and community development impacts, social equity, and environmental protection. Although projects must meet certain geographic and size requirements, Community Forest projects may be eligible to benefit from this new and innovative rural development financing tool.

**Communities Committee of the Seventh  
American Forest Congress**

[www.communitiescommittee.org](http://www.communitiescommittee.org)

The Communities Committee is a non-profit organization made of a diverse network of people and organizations from across the United States who believe local participation in stewardship of natural resources is critical to both forest ecosystem health and community well-being. The Communities Committee offers programs, publications and advocacy on community forests, collaborative management on public lands, and community leadership development.

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## INVENTORY: Nonprofit Organizations / National & Regional

### **The Conservation Fund (TCF)**

Shrewsbury, VT  
[www.conservationfund.org](http://www.conservationfund.org)

The Conservation Fund works with public, private and nonprofit organizations on conservation projects of nationwide significance. They offer expertise in land transactions, community and economic development and leadership training. They have also provided significant technical assistance and funding for Community Forest projects.

### **Forest Stewardship Council U.S. (FSC-U.S.)**

Minneapolis, MN  
[www.fscus.org](http://www.fscus.org)

The Forest Stewardship Council coordinated the development of forest certification standards which it now promotes and works with certification organizations (such as Smartwood – see below) to achieve certification on forestland in the U.S..

### **National Community Forestry Service Center**

Chapel Hill, NC  
[www.conservationfund.org/nationalcommunityforestry-servicecenter](http://www.conservationfund.org/nationalcommunityforestry-servicecenter)

The National Community Forestry Service Center promotes the local acquisition, ownership, management and conservation of community-owned forests through the facilitation of sophisticated intermediary services and network support of U.S. community forestry practitioners.

### **National Wildlife Federation**

Northeast Regional Office  
Montpelier, VT  
[www.nwf.org/northeast](http://www.nwf.org/northeast)

The National Wildlife Federation works to protect and restore wildlife habitat through educational programs and advocacy.

### **The Nature Conservancy (TNC)**

[www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org)

The Nature Conservancy is an international land conservation organization that works to protect biodiversity through a science-based planning process. Forest conservation is one of TNC's global initiatives and they have negotiated a number of working forestland easements in northern New England. TNC works with northern New England communities through three state chapters. TNC also sponsors the Staying Connected Initiative.

### **New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF)**

Littleton, MA  
[www.newenglandforestry.org](http://www.newenglandforestry.org)

The New England Forestry Foundation is a regional organization that works for the conservation and ecologically sound management practices of New England's private and municipal forests. NEFF works to conserve forestland through outright ownership, conservation easements and by providing management support to private landowners.

### **Northern Forest Center**

Concord, NH  
[www.northernforest.org](http://www.northernforest.org)

The Northern Forest Center works through networks and partnerships to build sustainable economies, revitalize local communities and conserve the Northern Forest of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York. The Center was selected by the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities as the regional intermediary for the Northern Forest Investment Zone. One of the key programs of the Northern Forest Investment Zone is to promote the establishment and implementation of Community Forests. The Center is a partner in the Community Forest Collaborative.

### **Open Space Institute (OSI)**

New York, NY  
www.osiny.org

The Open Space Institute works to protect scenic, natural, and historic landscapes through land acquisition, conservation easements, regional loan programs, fiscal sponsorship, creative partnerships, and analytical research. OSI has provided significant funding for Community Forest projects through its Northern Forest Protection Fund and its new Community Forest Fund.

### **Quebec-Labrador Foundation/Atlantic Center for the Environment (QLF)**

Ipswich, MA  
www.qlf.org

The Quebec-Labrador Foundation works to support the rural communities and environments of eastern Canada and New England; and to create models for stewardship and cultural heritage that can be applied worldwide. QLF is a partner in the Community Forest Collaborative.

### **Rainforest Alliance – Smartwood**

New York, NY  
www.ra.org

The Rainforest Alliance manages the Smartwood Program which is a global third-party forestry certifi cal program using the FSC certification standards.

### **Sustainable Forest Futures (SFF)**

Concord, NH  
www.forestconomy.org

Sustainable Forest Futures, a non-profit subsidiary of the Northern Forest Center, promotes a competitive and sustainable forest economy in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and northern New York. SFF has substantial expertise in innovative financing options for Community Forests, including New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) Financing. As a working partner of Coastal Enterprises Inc. (CEI), SFF has facilitated two major NMTC deals involving the creation of Community Forests. SFF also provides technical assistance to communities that wish to acquire and manage forestland. SFF also has programs designed to encourage and facilitate Cut-to-Length Harvesting and innovation in wood products manufacturing. SFF is a partner in the Community Forest Collaborative.

### **SFI, Inc. (Sustainable Forestry Initiative)**

Washington, D.C.  
www.sfi program.org

SFI is an independent, non-profit organization responsible for maintaining, overseeing, and improving a sustainable forestry certification program.

### **Trust for Public Land (TPL)**

Montpelier, VT  
www.tpl.org

The Trust for Public Land is a national land trust that conserves “land for people”. TPL’s expertise is in legal and finance strategies for land acquisition, but they also have some capacity to assist with stewardship planning as well. Assistance is provided to communities on a case-by-case basis and TPL tends to focus its efforts on large, complex Community Forest acquisition projects. TPL also maintains a large network of partner organizations and may be able to link communities with additional resource providers. TPL is a partner in the Community Forest Collaborative.

## STATEWIDE NONPROFITS

### Maine

#### **Beginning with Habitat (BwH)**

Augusta, ME

[www.beginningwithhabitat.org](http://www.beginningwithhabitat.org)

Beginning with Habitat is a collaborative program of federal, state and local agencies and non-governmental organizations created to bring a habitat-based approach to conserving wildlife and plant habitat on a landscape scale. The goal of the program is to maintain sufficient habitat to support all native plant and animal species currently breeding in Maine and provide maps and technical support in the use of the approach to communities.

#### **Forest Society of Maine (FSM)**

Bangor, ME

[www.fsmaine.org](http://www.fsmaine.org)

The Forest Society of Maine is a state-wide land trust, working to maintain the ecological, cultural, and recreational values of the Maine woods through the conservation of working forestlands. They provide assistance in the areas of land acquisition, conservation planning, development and implementation of stewardship plans, and fundraising.

#### **Maine Association of Conservation Commissions (MEACC)**

Falmouth, ME

[www.meacc.net](http://www.meacc.net)

The Maine Association of Conservation Commissions works to build the capacity of existing conservation commissions as well as expand the number of Maine communities that have functioning conservation commissions.

#### **Maine Association of Conservation Districts**

Portland, ME

[www.maineswcds.org](http://www.maineswcds.org)

#### **Maine Audubon**

Falmouth, ME

[www.maineaudubon.org](http://www.maineaudubon.org)

Maine Audubon's Forestry Program works to identify and protect forestland of high conservation value, promote sustainable forest practices and support healthy, economically diverse local communities. In particular, through its Focus Species Forestry program, Maine Audubon can assist communities in designing forest management strategies that promote biodiversity.

#### **Maine Land Trust Network (MLTN)**

Topsham, ME

[www.mltn.org](http://www.mltn.org)

The Maine Land Trust Network is Maine's state-wide network of local land trusts. Its website provides links to conservation resources for landowners as well as a searchable list of land trusts around the state.

#### **Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP)**

Augusta, ME

[www.mainenaturalareas.org](http://www.mainenaturalareas.org)

The Maine Natural Areas Program collects and disseminates information about natural communities and rare plants and animals in Maine. MNAP data is readily available as part of the Beginning with Habitat program. However, where this data may be incomplete or out of date, municipalities and non-profits can request site reviews for rare and unique botanical features. At a forester's request, MNAP will also review management plans to ensure that sensitive populations are appropriately identified and managed.



**Maine Rural Partners (MRP)**

Orono, ME  
[www.mainerural.org](http://www.mainerural.org)

Maine Rural Partners is a non-profit rural development organization. They provide facilitation services to a select number of communities around asset-based community development. Additionally, they serve as a network clearinghouse for numerous rural development programs.

**Maine Tree Foundation**

Augusta, ME  
[www.mainetreefoundation.org](http://www.mainetreefoundation.org)

The Maine Tree Foundation educates and advocates for the sustainable use of the forest and the ecological, economic and social health of Maine's forest community. The Foundation sponsors four programs: Long Term Education About Forests (LEAF), Project Learning Tree (PLT), the Maine Tree Farm Committee and the Certified Logging Professional program.

**Manomet Center for the Conservation Sciences**

Brunswick, ME  
[www.manometmaine.org](http://www.manometmaine.org)

Manomet is an independent environmental research organization with a forest conservation program focused on northern and interior Maine. Its resources include indicator programs related to biodiversity and recreational management. Recently, they have been working to develop protocols for landowners related to payments for ecosystem services.

**Natural Resources**

**Council of Maine (NRCM)**

Augusta, ME  
[www.nrcm.org](http://www.nrcm.org)

The Natural Resources Council of Maine is a state-wide advocacy organization that works to protect Maine's natural areas, particularly in the North Woods area. NRCM's areas of expertise include responsible land development, sustainable forest practices and public land ownership.

**Small Woodland Owners**

**Association of Maine (SWOAM)**

Augusta, ME  
[www.swoam.org](http://www.swoam.org)

The Small Woodlands Owners Association of Maine works with individuals, organizations and municipalities who own from 10 to 1,000 acres of woodlands. SWOAM helps landowners navigate a variety of ownership and management issues including taxes, public use, land use regulations, protecting wildlife habitats and water quality, and marketing and utilizing forest products. SWOAM has several foresters on staff and works to connect woodland owners with other consulting foresters, usually arranging a first consultation free of charge. SWOAM also operates two demonstration forests, a land trust, a certification program and numerous educational workshops.

**Western Maine Alliance**

Farmington, ME  
[www.westernmainealliance.org](http://www.westernmainealliance.org)

Western Maine Alliance seeks to strengthen regional identity and support sustainable development by providing forums for regional dialogue and building capacity for change.

## New Hampshire

### **New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions (NHACC)**

Concord, NH  
[www.nhacc.org](http://www.nhacc.org)

The New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions provides assistance to New Hampshire conservation commissions and facilitates communication and cooperation among commissions.

### **New Hampshire Association of Conservation Districts**

Concord, NH  
[www.nhacd.org](http://www.nhacd.org)

### **New Hampshire Audubon**

Concord, NH  
[www.nhaidubon.org](http://www.nhaidubon.org)

New Hampshire Audubon has programs in wildlife conservation, land protection, environmental policy and education. In particular, they can provide communities with biological and ecological information about local forestlands.

### **New Hampshire Timberland Owners Association (NHTOA)**

Concord, NH  
[www.nhtoa.org](http://www.nhtoa.org)

The New Hampshire Timberland Owners is a state-wide coalition of landowners, forest industry professionals, government officials and supporters who work together to promote better forest management, conserve our working forests and ensure a strong forest products industry. NHTOA provides educational and outreach programs for forest landowners and are involved in policy and advocacy issues related to forestland ownership and the forest industry.

### **Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (The Forest Society)**

Concord, NH  
[www.spnhf.org](http://www.spnhf.org)

The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests is a statewide land conservation agency that has been working for over 100 years to maintain New Hampshire's forest resources. The Forest Society provides assistance in land acquisition and the negotiation of conservation easements, conservation planning and stewardship. Additionally, they offer a number of educational programs.

## Vermont

### **Association of Conservation Districts**

Waitsfield, VT  
[www.vacd.org](http://www.vacd.org)

The Association of Conservation Districts work with landowners, organizations and government to provide programs and technical assistance to protect soil, water, forestry and wildlife.

### **Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions**

Waterbury, VT  
[www.avccr.org](http://www.avccr.org)

The Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions works to increase the effectiveness of conservation commissions and community groups in Vermont. AVCC facilitates communication and resource sharing between local conservation commissions.

### **Audubon Vermont**

Huntington, VT  
[www.vt.audubon.org](http://www.vt.audubon.org)

Audubon Vermont works to protect birds and other wildlife through science, education and advocacy. In particular, through the Forest Bird Initiative, communities can learn how to manage forest land for bird habitat.

**Vermont Council on Rural  
Development (VCRD)**

Montpelier, VT  
[www.vtrural.org](http://www.vtrural.org)

A member of National Rural Development Partnership, VCRD is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting Vermont's rural communities. Through its Community Visit and Creative Communities programs, VCRD offers community-based facilitation services to a select number of communities each year. Through its extensive work in forest policy, VCRD can bring a significant amount of expertise to community discussions around forest resource issues.

**Vermont Family Forests**

Briston, VT  
[www.familyforests.org](http://www.familyforests.org)

Vermont Family Forests is a non-profit family forest conservation organization. Vermont Family Forests' priority is conserving the health of local family forests and promoting their stewardship, where appropriate, for community benefit.

**Vermont Land Trust (VLT)**

Montpelier, VT  
[www.vlt.org](http://www.vlt.org)

The Vermont Land Trust is a statewide land trust with significant experience with Community Forest projects. VLT helps communities acquire land, negotiate and hold conservation easements, inventory natural resources and create management plans. They may also assist with grant-writing, local fundraising and financial administration. Additionally, they have experience with priority-setting, planning and publicity strategies.

**Vermont League of Cities and Towns**

Montpelier, VT  
[www.vlct.org](http://www.vlct.org)

The Vermont League of Cities and Towns is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that serves Vermont's municipal officials.

**Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC)**

Montpelier, VT  
[www.vnrc.org](http://www.vnrc.org)

The Vermont Natural Resources Council is a statewide environmental research, education and advocacy organization. VNRC offers natural resource planning assistance to communities—helping to identify priority forestland resources and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of current conservation strategies.

**Vermont Woodlands Association (VWA)**

Rutland, VT  
[www.vermontwoodlands.org](http://www.vermontwoodlands.org)

Vermont Woodlands Association advocates for the sustainable management and enjoyment of forests. VWA seeks to educate, train and support private forest landowners in sustainable forest management. VWA manages the American Tree Farm System in Vermont, sponsors educational programs for teachers and students, and advocates for public programs that support private forestry.

## LOCAL NONPROFITS

### Maine

#### Local Land Trusts

Maine has many local land trusts. The following organizations maintain directories with contact information on specific land trusts:

#### **Maine Land Trust Network**

[www.mltn.org](http://www.mltn.org)

#### Maine Mountain Heritage Network

Farmington, ME

[www.mainemountains.org](http://www.mainemountains.org)

The Woods and Water Group of the Maine Mountain Heritage Network provides strategic planning and coordination support to groups undertaking large landscape resource studies in the Rangeley, High Peaks, Upper Kennebec and Hundred-Mile Wilderness areas of Maine. Types of assistance range from resource mapping to leading consensus-building processes. The network is currently working to join forces with additional partners (many who have already been included in this inventory) to create the Maine Woods Consortium.

#### Western Mountains Alliance

Farmington, ME

[www.westernmountainsalliance.org](http://www.westernmountainsalliance.org)

The Western Mountains Alliance is a regional network of individuals and organizations that support sustainable, multiple uses of the region's natural resources. Areas of expertise include leadership capacity training, economic development and resource and conservation planning.

### New Hampshire

#### Local Land Trusts

New Hampshire has many local land trusts. The following organization maintains a directory with contact information on specific land trusts:

#### **Society for the Protection of NH Forests**

[www.spnhf.org/landconservation/communityresources](http://www.spnhf.org/landconservation/communityresources)

### Vermont

#### Green Forestry Education Initiative

University of Vermont

Burlington, VT

[www.uvm.edu/rsenr/greenforestry](http://www.uvm.edu/rsenr/greenforestry)

The Green Forestry Initiative is a program of the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources at the University of Vermont and is designed to integrate sustainable design, land ethics and real-world learning in community-based forest conservation. The program operates on the campus of the University of Vermont, in the town of Jericho, Vermont and at other community-based sites.

#### Local Land Trusts

Vermont has many local land trusts. The following organization maintains a directory with contact information on specific land trusts:

#### **Vermont Land Trust**

[www.vlt.org](http://www.vlt.org)

#### NorthWoods Stewardship Center

East Charleston, VT

[www.northwoodscenter.org](http://www.northwoodscenter.org)

The NorthWoods Stewardship Center provides scientific, educational and conservation service programs in northeastern Vermont. They provide leadership in ecologically sensitive forest management practices through a demonstration forest and direct landowner assistance. They also run educational programs and a conservation corps program, which undertakes trail construction, habitat restoration and natural resource inventory projects.

# PROFESSIONAL FORESTRY ORGANIZATIONS

## NATIONAL & REGIONAL

### **The Forest Guild**

Northeast office in Sutton, MA  
[www.forestguild.org](http://www.forestguild.org)

The Forest Guild is a national organization of forestry and natural resource professionals with regional offices and programs around the country. The Community Forestry program provides technical assistance and education to rural, forest-dependent communities, including business assistance and forestry training for workers and youth.

### **National Network of Forest Practitioners (NNFP)**

Athens, OH  
[www.nnfp.org](http://www.nnfp.org)

The National Network of Forest Practitioners is an alliance of rural people working to build a sustainable and equitable forest economy. They serve as a clearinghouse for information and technical assistance on economic development and forest management.

### **Society of American Foresters (SAF)**

Bethesda, MD  
[www.safnet.org](http://www.safnet.org)  
New England Division: [www.nesaf.org](http://www.nesaf.org)

The Society of American Foresters is the national scientific and educational organization representing forestry professionals. They provide education and networking opportunities for member foresters. SAF also provides a forester certification program and maintains a database of certified foresters on its website.

## STATEWIDE & LOCAL

### **Consulting Foresters**

Consulting foresters are private independent businesses which assist landowners in managing forestland. In Maine and New Hampshire foresters are licensed by the state. In Vermont, foresters do not need to be licensed. Licensed forester lists can be found on state licensing websites (see below). County foresters in each state also have lists of qualified foresters and other natural resource professionals who work on community forest projects.

#### **For Maine:**

See <http://pfr.informe.org/ALMSOnline/ALMSQuery/Welcome.aspx>

#### **For New Hampshire:**

See <http://www.nh.gov/jtboard/fr.htm>

#### **For Vermont:**

See “Vermont Woodlands Certified Consulting Foresters” listing at Vermont Woodlands Association.  
[www.vermontwoodlands.org](http://www.vermontwoodlands.org)

# BUSINESSES

There are a number of businesses and consultants that provide support and services to Community Forest Projects. Categories include private consulting foresters, planning consultants and private equity forestland investment groups.

## CONSULTING FORESTERS

(See listings under Professional Forestry organizations)

## PRIVATE CONSULTANTS

### Arrowwood Environmental LLC

Huntington, VT  
www.arrowwoodvt.com

### Yellow Wood Associates

St. Albans, VT  
www.yellowwood.org

Yellow Wood Associates is a small consulting firm specializing in rural development. Its services include research, planning and facilitating/ designing group interactions. In addition, they offer specific community trainings on managing town forests and community forests. “See the Forests” is a unique community forestry education program which integrates experiential learning about forest science and economics with practical tools for guiding local decision-making. The program features activities and experiences to engage community members of all ages and perspectives in reflecting about the social, environmental and economic values and functions of forests within their community.

### Stephen Thor Johnson

Sage Advisors  
Lincoln, MA  
STJohnsonMCP@gmail.com

### Marcel Polak

Spruce Mt. Realty Buyer Broker  
Woodstock, ME  
www.sprucemountaininc.com

### Jerry Bley

Creative Conservation LLC  
Readfield, ME  
207-685-3872

### Dennis Bidwell

Bidwell Advisors  
Northampton, MA  
www.bidwelladvisors.com

### Keith Ross

LandVest Senior Advisor  
Warwick, MA  
kross@landvest.com  
www.landvest.com

## PRIVATE EQUITY FORESTLAND INVESTMENT GROUPS

### Hancock Land Company

Casco, ME  
www.hancockland.com

Hancock Land is a timber investment and land management company in Southern Maine. Hancock Land has actively sought opportunities to partner with land conservation organizations to permanently protect working forests through conservation easements.

### The Lyme Timber Company

Hanover, NH  
www.lymetimber.com

Lyme Timber is a timber investment management organization (TIMO) that specializes in properties with unique conservation values. Lyme has often worked in partnerships with government agencies and environmental organizations. Lyme’s consulting division, LTC Conservation Advisory Services (LTCCAS), provides strategic advice around the sale of land and conservation easements, the selection and management of appraisal teams and limited development initiatives.

## BUSINESSES

### U.S. Forest Capital

Portland, OR

[www.usforestcapital.com](http://www.usforestcapital.com)

U.S. Forest Capital is a forestry and financial service company that provides integrated advisory services to current and prospective landowners, including non-profit and government organizations. Its services include managing land transactions, arranging conservation financing, designing governance structures and assisting with public policy and communications strategies. U.S. Forest Capital has developed a tax-exempt Community Forestry Bond program.

## FUNDING ORGANIZATIONS

### NATIONAL & REGIONAL

#### Betterment Fund

New York, NY

[www.megrants.org/betterment.htm](http://www.megrants.org/betterment.htm)

This charitable fund focuses on improving education and health services in Maine. However, grantmaking has also supported Maine communities in efforts to improve and sustain the quality of life and to preserve and promote responsible use of Maine's natural resources. Grants are primarily directed to projects in the Western Mountains of Maine.

#### Davis Conservation Foundation

Falmouth, ME

[www.davisfoundation.org](http://www.davisfoundation.org)

The Davis Conservation Foundation provides grants to charitable organizations primarily in northern New England in support of the wise utilization, protection and advancement of the environment.

#### Elmina B. Sewall Foundation

Brunswick, ME

[www.sewallfoundation.org](http://www.sewallfoundation.org)

The Elmina B. Sewall Foundation supports projects in Maine that address priority areas of interest in land protection and community conservation.

#### Jane's Trust

Boston, MA

[www.hembar.com/selectsrv/janes/](http://www.hembar.com/selectsrv/janes/)

Jane's Trust provides grants for the conservation of natural resources. In particular, Jane's Trust aims to support meaningful and innovative contributions to the protection of critical or historically significant natural resources in traditionally underserved communities. Jane's Trust makes grants to 501(c)(3) organizations working either independently or collaboratively with municipalities.

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## INVENTORY: Funding Organizations / National & Regional

### **Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation**

Concord, NH  
[www.nhcf.org](http://www.nhcf.org)

The Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund supports the communities of northern New Hampshire and Vermont and southern Quebec, as well as regional and statewide initiatives that support those communities.

### **New England Grassroots Environment Fund**

Montpelier, VT  
[www.grassrootsfund.org](http://www.grassrootsfund.org)

The New England Grassroots Environment Fund provides small grants for environmental initiatives in New England.

### **Northeast Land Trust Consortium - The Pew Charitable Trusts**

Danbury, NH  
[www.pewtrusts.org](http://www.pewtrusts.org)

The consortium partners with local and regional land trusts, raising funds for land acquisition or the purchase of conservation easements.

### **Open Space Institute's Community Forest Fund**

New York, NY  
[www.osiny.org](http://www.osiny.org)

The Open Space Institute launched The Community Forest Fund in the summer of 2010 to provide grants and loans to communities and non-profits that want to acquire and manage community forests. The Fund is designed to provide grants and loans for pre-acquisition coordination and services, acquisition capital and grants for stewardship.

### **Orchard Foundation**

South Portland, ME  
[www.orchardfoundation.org](http://www.orchardfoundation.org)

The Orchard Foundation's Environmental Program makes grants across the region. Although the foundation has no history of supporting community forest projects, they may fit program guidelines. Environmental funding is currently focused on climate change and they do not fund land acquisition projects.

### **The Orton Family Foundation**

Middlebury, VT  
[www.orton.org](http://www.orton.org)

The Orton Family Foundation supports planning processes to help small cities and towns identify and steward community assets. The Foundation promotes inclusive, proactive decision-making and land use planning by providing guidance, tools, research, capital and other support to citizens and leaders.

### **Sudbury Foundation**

Sudbury, MA  
[www.sudburyfoundation.org](http://www.sudburyfoundation.org)

The Sudbury Foundation's Environmental Program focuses on Northeast regions facing significant challenges to ecological integrity and community sustainability, including the Northern Forest in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. The Foundation supports organizations focused regionally on promoting a healthy balance between natural resource protection and community sustainability. As of 2008, the Foundation is accepting proposals by invitation only.

### **U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities**

Greenville, SC  
[www.usendowment.org](http://www.usendowment.org)

The Endowment was established at the request of the United States and Canadian governments in accordance with the terms of the Softwood Lumber Agreement. The Endowment supports projects addressing forest management and sustainability in timber-reliant communities. Partner organizations and communities are selected through both an invitational and RFP process.

### **U.S. Forest Service – Forest Legacy Program**

Washington, DC  
[www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/flp.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/flp.shtml)

The Forest Legacy Program provides funding for the conservation of forestland threatened by development. The program provides up to 75% of the cost for fee acquisition or purchase of conservation easements. The FLP is administered through a partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and state forestry organizations, which identify and prioritize potential forest projects.



## STATEWIDE

### Maine

#### **Land for Maine's Future (LMF)**

Augusta, ME

[www.maine.gov/spo/lmf](http://www.maine.gov/spo/lmf)

Land for Maine's Future is a public funding program. LMF distributes grants for the permanent conservation of lands that provide significant natural or recreational benefits. Program requirements include 1/3 matching funds, permanent land protection by means of a conservation easement, and public access for hunting and fishing. Note: LMF funds cannot be used to purchase lands where the primary use value is commercially harvestable timber. However, Community Forest projects with multiple use values (including timber management) are eligible.

#### **Maine Community Foundation (MCF)**

Ellsworth, ME

[www.mainecef.org](http://www.mainecef.org)

The Maine Community Foundation is a non-profit community foundation that works to strengthen Maine by providing leadership and support to address community issues, connecting donors to organizations and programs they care about, and building and stewarding philanthropic resources.

### New Hampshire

#### **Land and Community Heritage Investment Fund (LCHIP)**

Concord, NH

[www.lchip.org](http://www.lchip.org)

The Land and Community Heritage Investment Program is an independent state authority that makes matching grants to New Hampshire communities and non-profits for the conservation of natural, cultural and historic resources.

#### **New Hampshire Charitable Foundation (NHCF)**

Concord, NH

[www.nhcf.org](http://www.nhcf.org)

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation is a non-profit community foundation that works to improve the quality of life in New Hampshire communities by matching community needs with philanthropic resources. Grants are available on state-wide and regional levels to support non-profit capacity building, community and economic development, and conservation, among other priority areas.

### Vermont

#### **Vermont Community Foundation (VCF)**

Middlebury, VT

[www.vermontcf.org](http://www.vermontcf.org)

The Vermont Community Foundation is a non-profit community foundation that works to foster healthy and vital Vermont communities through growing and managing philanthropic activity. Community forest projects may find support in several of VCF's grant programs.

#### **Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB)**

Montpelier, VT

[www.vhcb.org](http://www.vhcb.org)

The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board is an independent, state-supported funding agency providing grants, loans and technical assistance to nonprofit organizations, municipalities and state agencies for the conservation of important agricultural land, recreational land, or natural areas in Vermont. They provide acquisition funding for forestland of statewide significance and matching funds for projects of local priority. Smaller feasibility grants are also available.

# HELPFUL RESOURCES

## PUBLICATIONS

### **Acquiring and Managing a Community-Owned Forest:**

#### **A Manual for Communities**

Communities Committee of the Seventh American Forest Congress.

Available online at [www.communitiescommittee.org/pdfs/Community-Owned\\_Forests\\_Manual.pdf](http://www.communitiescommittee.org/pdfs/Community-Owned_Forests_Manual.pdf)

### **The Vermont Town Forest Stewardship Guide:**

#### **A Community Users' Manual for Town Forests**

Jad Daley, Editor

Town Forest Project of the Northern Forest Alliance.

Available online at [www.communitiescommittee.org/pdfs/TownForestStewardshipGuide.pdf](http://www.communitiescommittee.org/pdfs/TownForestStewardshipGuide.pdf)

### **Community Forests:**

#### **A Community Investment Strategy**

Martha W. Lyman

The Community Forest Collaborative, 2007.

Available online at [www.tpl.org/publications](http://www.tpl.org/publications) and at [www.foresteconomy.org/programs/community-forests/reports/](http://www.foresteconomy.org/programs/community-forests/reports/)

### **The Landscape of Community:**

#### **A History of Communal Forests in New England**

Robert McCullough

University Press of New England, Hanover, NH, 1995.

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COMMUNITY FOREST COLLABORATIVE



THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND  
NORTHERN FOREST CENTER  
SUSTAINABLE FOREST FUTURES  
QUEBEC-LABRADOR FOUNDATION

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