

**N.H. Timberland Owners Association
Strategic Plan Update
FINAL 05/01/12**

Definitions:

For the New Hampshire Timberland Owners Association, the forest products industry includes any person, organization, or business engaged – directly or indirectly – in growing, managing, harvesting, transporting, manufacturing, or using wood or wood products.

For the New Hampshire Timberland Owners Association, a working forest is any parcel that is actively managed to produce timber and from which timber is harvested.

NHTOA Mission:

Promote private and public working forests, responsible forest management, and a strong forest products industry.

NHTOA 25-Year Vision:

A New Hampshire that sustains timber, wood, and fiber production as a core of its economy; provides stable, well-paying forest products employment; supports recreation and tourism; protects air and water quality; and maintains wildlife and plant habitats within its forests.

NHTOA Goals, Objectives, and Measurable Indicators:

Goal 1 – *Foster a legal and regulatory environment that supports and enhances the ability of New Hampshire landowners, foresters, loggers, truckers, and mills to operate and thrive.*

Objective 1: Examine overall tax policy in New Hampshire.

Measureable indicators:

1. Sponsor a forum on taxes. Invite experts to speak – Farm Credit East, tax planners, landowners, land managers, etc. From this session, determine whether current taxes (business taxes, property taxes, current use taxes, yield taxes, etc.) are impediments to owning and managing land or to cutting, processing, transporting, and selling timber.

2. Develop a strategy from this review to address the most egregious tax policies that negatively impact the ability of the NHTOA's members to own and manage land and to cut, process, transport, and sell timber. Take into consideration the effect these changes in tax policy could have outside the forest products industry.

Objective 2: Educate New Hampshire's decision makers – legislators (chairmen and members of key committees), executives and commissioners of state departments – about the forest products industry in general and the NHTOA in particular.

Measureable indicators:

1. Host at least one field meeting annually for legislators, commissioners, and executives and their staffs.

2. Put key N.H. state legislators, members of key committees, leaders in the N.H. House and Senate, and executives and commissioners of state departments and key members of their staffs on the mailing list for the *Timber Crier* and *Forest Fax*.

Objective 3: Enhance partnerships with state trade organizations in the Northeast.

Measurable indicators:

1. Establish reciprocal memberships with New Hampshire Farm Bureau Federation, Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, N.H. Motor Transport Association, Granite State Division of the Society of American Foresters, Vermont Woodland Association, Vermont Forest Products Association, Small Woodlot Owners Association of Maine, Maine Forest Products Association, Maine Loggers Association, Professional Logging Contractors of Maine, Maine Logger Education Alliance, Northeastern Loggers Association, Empire State Forest Products Association, Massachusetts Wood Producers Association, and Massachusetts Forestland Owners Association. This will include exchanging newsletters and reciprocal links to websites.

2. Meet at least two times a year (at least once a year, face-to-face) with executives of these associations. The NHTOA will take the lead on organizing these sessions. The first meeting will occur in New Hampshire. Subsequent meetings will rotate throughout the region. Second meeting could be a teleconference. Purpose: To find two or three common issues per year the group agrees should be presented to federal legislators. Then meet with federal legislators in Washington, D.C., to discuss these issues. The group will also discuss and share the latest forest industry and timberland owner issues they are working on in their respective states.

Objective 4: Evaluate infrastructure, trade, and energy issues as they relate to the forest products industry in New Hampshire.

Measureable indicators:

1. Pinpoint the impediments to competitiveness in the forest products industry in the Northeast through meetings and conference calls with Northern Forest Center, New England Forestry Foundation, Northeast Loggers Association, and other organizations.

2. Work with the above organizations to develop an action plan to address the impediments to competitiveness in the forest products industry in the Northeast.

Objective 5: Advocate for the interests of members of the NHTOA before the N.H. General Court and N.H. state agencies.

Measurable indicators:

1. Testify before key N.H. House and N.H. Senate committees on issues crucial to members of the NHTOA.

2. Work with members of the NHTOA and legislators to draft bills favorable to the forest products industry in general and members of the NHTOA in particular.

Goal 2 – Encourage understanding and support of the forest products industry by members of New Hampshire’s congressional delegation.

Objective 1: Educate federal legislators and policymakers about the forest products industry in general and the New Hampshire Timberland Owners Association in particular.

Measurable indicators:

1. Conduct one face-to-face meeting a year with federal legislators or key members of their staffs in Washington, D.C.
2. Host at least one field meeting annually for federal legislators and their staffs to demonstrate sustainable forestry. Discuss the impact, including costs, of regulations and other issues.
3. Send copies of *Timber Crier* and *Forest Fax* to federal legislators and their key staff.

Objective 2: Educate local officials about laws relating to the forest products industry.

Measurable indicators:

1. Attend and actively participate in the annual meeting of the N.H. Association of Conservation Commissions.
2. Collaborate with the Local Government Center, UNH Cooperative Extension, and N.H. Department of Environmental Services to expand the number of local officials who attend the session on “Timber Harvesting Laws for Municipal Officials.” Offer the program twice a year.
3. Develop a program or sponsor an existing program about how and why active, sustainable forest management is vital to the health of New Hampshire’s economy, especially in rural communities.
4. Present this program twice over three years to regional planning or economic development organizations in New Hampshire such as the North Country Council.

Objective 3: Communicate the NHTOA’s mission to the general public.

Measurable indicators:

1. Assemble comprehensive media list of newspapers, magazines, and radio and television stations in New Hampshire with snail mail and e-mail contact information.
2. Develop concise, consistent message about the NHTOA and its mission.
3. Encourage all members of the NHTOA to use this message when speaking with customers, legislators, other members of the forest products industry, and the media.
4. Generate press releases whenever the NHTOA presents awards, offers programs open to the public, etc., and send out this information at least two weeks prior to the event.
5. When a person receives an award from the NHTOA – logger certification, or one of the NHTOA’s awards – customize a press release to that person’s hometown and regional newspapers.
6. Submit a “guest view” column once a quarter (using editorials from the *Timber Crier* as a basis) to newspapers throughout the state.
7. Have the NHTOA website professionally designed so that it is attractive, accurate, informative, and user-friendly.
8. Contract with a professional to assist the NHTOA staff with updating the website.
9. Participate in N.H. Public Radio’s Exchange Program twice a year on environmental/forestry/business climate issues.

Goal 3 – Encourage professionalism, safe practices, efficiency, and productivity throughout the forest products industry.

Objective 1: Continue to support the N.H. Timber Harvesting Council.

Measurable indicators:

1. Provide staff support to the Timber Harvesting Council with at least 60 percent of time from program director, 25 percent of time from office manager, and time from the executive director as needed.
2. Secure at least \$40,000 from multiple sources including N.H. Sustainable Forestry Initiative Implementation Committee, donors, and grants.
3. Develop three new classes every two years to add to the suite of elective classes available through the Professional Loggers Program. These classes will be in response to requests from membership and to industry trends.

Objective 2: Educate landowners about the importance of working with professionals in managing their land, including licensed foresters and loggers certified through the Professional Loggers Program.

Measurable indicators:

1. Develop information (electronic and print) that discusses the advantages of using licensed foresters and loggers certified through the Professional Loggers Program.
2. Provide this information to landowner-based organizations including Statewide Program of Action to Conserve Our Environment (SPACE), N.H. Tree Farm Program, land trusts – regional and statewide – and the N.H. Farm Bureau Federation in the form of a brochure, through website links or other means of communication.
3. Develop a class that will help professionals in the forest products industry – especially foresters and loggers who are members of the NHTOA to learn how market and promote their businesses.

Objective 3: Continue to partner with UNH Cooperative Extension to provide landowner education.

Measurable indicators:

1. Develop a course on the ABCs of timber sales including safety, liability, and potential revenue for landowners.
2. Develop course on the economics of forestland ownership including financing options for buying raw timberland, tax implications of capital improvements, etc.
3. Secure increased funds from N.H. state forester and the N.H. Division of Forests and Lands for the “Caring for Your Forest” series of workshops presented in collaboration with UNH Cooperative Extension, NHTOA, the N.H. Division of Forests and Lands, and the N.H. Tree Farm Program.

Goal 4 – *Provide support and service to members.*

Objective 1: Explore opportunities to provide internships.

Measurable indicators:

1. Find a source to fund one college-level internship a year.
2. Contact applied science, political science, agriculture, or communications departments at the University of New Hampshire, Plymouth State University, Keene State College, and other educational institutions about the logistics of setting up internship programs with the NHTOA.
3. Develop specific tasks and activities in marketing, public relations, or “lobbyist in training” that the intern would do.
4. Work with college advisors or professors to develop criteria for evaluating the work each student completes on behalf of the NHTOA.

Objective 2: Engage young professionals – loggers and foresters.

Measurable indicators:

1. Extend an invitation to students at the UNH Thompson School for Applied Science to participate in the functions organized for young professionals who are members of the NHTOA.
2. Speak to at least three forestry vocational technical schools annually about careers in the industry and recent industry developments.

Objective 3: Determine what resources – financial and staffing – the NHTOA needs to provide membership services.

Measurable indicators:

1. Charge the NHTOA’s Finance Committee to explore alternative sources of income. The committee should report its findings to the NHTOA’s Board of Directors in six months.
2. Contact the N.H. Center for Nonprofits or consultant to evaluate the NHTOA’s current fund-raising and membership strategies.
3. Dedicate specific staff time – a minimum of 15 hours a week – to membership recruitment and retention.

Objective 4: Generate sufficient funds to grow the NHTOA.

Measurable indicators:

1. Draft and execute a balanced, annual budget.
2. Grow the NHTOA’s assets to ensure a balance of at least six months’ of operating funds.
3. Determine whether the NHTOA should establish an endowment. If yes, how much should it be and what would be the purpose of such an endowment?

Objective 5: Communicate with members of the NHTOA.

Measurable indicators:

1. Coordinate and publish the NHTOA’s quarterly magazine, the *Timber Crier*.
2. Coordinate and distribute the NHTOA’s periodic electronic newsletter, the *Forest Fax*.
3. Schedule and organize the NHTOA’s annual meeting.
4. Schedule and organize periodic events that focus on topics of interest to members of the NHTOA including the Timber Talks and forums featuring candidates for state offices.
5. Support activities including annual meetings and woodsmen’s field days, organized by chapters of the NHTOA in Rockingham and Sullivan counties.

Goal 5 – *Maintain the current forestland base and increase forested acres managed responsibly.*

Objective 1: Maintain or expand the number of acres actively managed for forest products on public lands.

Measurable indicators:

1. Meet with the supervisor of the White Mountain National Forest, the N.H. state forester, the director of the N.H. Fish and Game Department, other state agencies, and representatives of towns that own forestland to discuss the NHTOA's interest in keeping as many publicly owned acres of forested land as possible as working forests. Urge them to keep working forests as working forests and to minimize the number of acres where timber harvesting is not allowed.

2. Meet with the N.H. congressional delegation to discuss the NHTOA's interest in keeping as many publicly owned acres of forested land as possible as working forests. Urge them to keep working forests as working forests and to minimize the number of acres where timber harvesting is not allowed.

3. Meet with all land conservation groups in the state, including the N.H. Association of Conservation Commissions and representatives of land trusts (be an active participant at the "Saving Special Places" forum held each spring), to discuss the NHTOA's interest in keeping as many publicly owned acres of forested land as possible as working forests. Urge them to keep working forests as working forests and to minimize the number of acres where timber harvesting is not allowed.

Objective 2: Continue to educate private landowners about working forests, considerations they must make regarding managing their forests sustainably, and the opportunities and challenges such considerations present.

Measurable indicators:

1. Develop written guidelines that landowners can use to determine whether a working forest conservation easement will work for them and what form that easement should take.

2. Offer a half-day workshop for landowners on how to transition ownership to the next generation. Topics could include: estate planning, family trusts, limited liability companies, conservation easements, etc. If continued family ownership is not an option, discuss how landowners can find buyers who will share their management ethics.