

Economic Resurgence in the Northern Forest

*Regional Strategy and
Recommendations of the*

**Sustainable
Economy
Initiative**



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The Sustainable Economy Initiative was led by a four-state Steering Committee appointed jointly by the governors of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York, and the organizations managing the project: the Northern Forest Center and the North Country Council. The federal Economic Development Administration and private contributions provided funding for the two-year project.

Throughout the project, 60 government, community and business leaders served as appointees, alternates and advisors representing diverse sectors—arts, tourism, forest products, education, the environment, utilities, banking and community and economic development.

For over two years, the group worked to understand the shared challenges facing Northern Forest communities, identify the region's assets and opportunities, and agree on a shared vision and strategy for revitalizing the Northern Forest economy and sustaining the long-term health of its people and lands. The strategy for Economic Resurgence represents the product of the Steering Committee's work.



**Northern
Forest
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The Sustainable Economy Initiative was jointly managed by the North Country Council and the Northern Forest Center.

For more information, visit www.nfsei.net



Sustainable Economy Initiative

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Sustainable Economy Initiative

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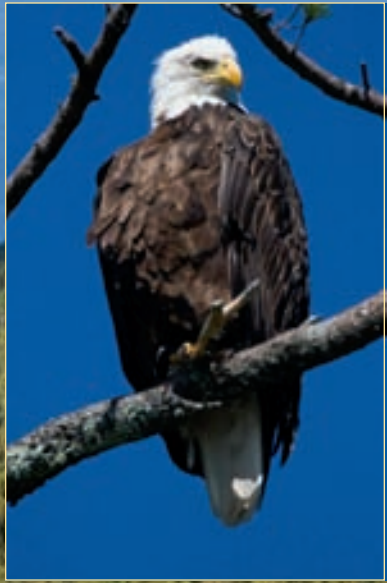
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Photos: Jerry & Marcy Monkman

The Northern Forest Sustainable Economy Initiative (SEI) began in 2006 with the goal of developing “community and economic development strategies across the region to reinvigorate the rural economies of the Northern Forest.” The initiative was created by the governors of the Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York in partnership with the Northern Forest Center and the North Country Council of New Hampshire.

I. The Case for Northern Forest Regional Action

Urgent Challenges The Northern Forest is at a unique and important point of transition. The aging of the region’s industrial and tourism infrastructure and population, the opening of new areas of forest economy around the world, the dawn of the information era, soaring energy costs, climate change and new demands on the region’s natural resources are all combining to create new and challenging realities for the people, communities, economies and landscape of the region.

New Opportunities The global trends that bring challenge are also creating great economic opportunities tied to the region’s character and ecosystem. Landscape, quality of life and culture are the new comparative advantage for rural communities, and the Northern Forest is rich with these assets. Potential new products and services from the landscape and the region’s proximity to major markets hold great promise for business development. A high concentration of colleges and universities can serve to generate new ideas and train new workers for these opportunities.

New Approaches These new realities require new approaches. Unlike an earlier era, when large corporations provided financial capital to take advantage of the region’s natural capital to build business, wealth and employment in the Northern Forest, a next generation of economic development in the Northern Forest will be led by smaller

businesses and civic organizations. In an increasingly global marketplace, however, the region’s leaders must invest extra effort to inform, connect and provide financial support and infrastructure to enable these ventures to thrive. This capacity building is the key to rebuilding the economic future of the Northern Forest.

Regional Advantages The region’s governors, its congressional delegation, and numerous business, civic and non-profit leaders have recognized the value of acting together to create a critical mass of leadership, ideas and resources for the betterment of all. A key role for regional action is to provide critical capacity to make it easier and more rewarding for enterprises and initiatives of all sorts to thrive, while safeguarding and enhancing the shared resources—human and natural—that support and enrich the people and communities of the region.

II. Shared Vision and Strategy

For the past two years, leaders from across the Northern Forest region have come together to understand the common challenges and opportunities facing the region and develop a shared vision and strategy for revitalizing the Northern Forest economy and sustaining the long-term health of its people and lands. Together, they have developed a strategy to secure a future in which:

The Northern Forest region is globally recognized for its vital regional economies and communities and the unique culture and ecosystem that support them.

To reach this vision, the SEI participants have agreed to a long-term, integrated strategy that calls for action in three areas:

- ➔ **Protect and enhance the region’s assets:** Invest in the people, communities, infrastructure and natural resource base that are the foundation of the Northern Forest’s distinct regional character and competitive economic advantage.

- ➔ **Expand Enterprise:** Create a fertile environment for workforce, entrepreneurial and business development and increase the region's ability to develop and commercialize new products and services that capitalize on the assets of the Northern Forest.
- ➔ **Coordinate and Advocate as a Region:** Increase the capacity of the region's individuals and institutions to anticipate and adapt to change and implement new initiatives by working and coordinating as a region to understand and advocate for regional interests and priorities.

III. Ten Recommendations for Urgent Action

To begin implementation of the shared strategy, the SEI committee recommends the following ten actions as immediate priorities. In keeping with the model of the SEI, the committee recommends that these actions be coordinated regionally and include public, private and non-profit sector leadership. The members of the committee stand ready to work with the governors to take these ideas to action.

- ▶ **Telecommunications:** Deliver reliable, affordable and cutting-edge high-speed telecommunications to all Northern Forest communities through increased public-private investment.
- ▶ **Creativity and Entrepreneurship:** Develop programs to support creative and entrepreneurial people in building businesses that are based on and enhance the natural and cultural resources of the Northern Forest.
- ▶ **Transportation Infrastructure:** Develop globally competitive, energy efficient, multi modal public/private transportation systems to interconnect the region and its communities and support regional, national and international trade.
- ▶ **Regional Marketing:** Develop coordinated marketing of Northern Forest products, businesses, tourism services, amenities and attractions, while maintaining individual state branding efforts.
- ▶ **Local Purchasing & Ownership:** Support activities that encourage Northern Forest residents, visitors, institutions and government to "buy local."
- ▶ **Renewable Energy:** Launch a four-state, Renewable Energy Initiative that encourages energy efficiency, increases public and private investment in a diversity of energy systems, maximizes community wealth and complements stewardship of the region's natural resources.
- ▶ **Regional Assets:** Invest in research, tracking and forecasting of natural, social and economic assets in order to make informed decisions to understand, anticipate and adapt to changes in the region.
- ▶ **Forested Landscape:** Maintain forests to protect and enhance the essential economic and ecological services derived from the landscape and to capture value from emerging markets.
- ▶ **Federal Investment:** Maintain and grow funding for new and existing federal programs that serve the long-term strategies outlined in this report; analyze and identify opportunities to more explicitly align existing federal programs with these strategies.
- ▶ **Public-private Regional Coordination & Advocacy:** Establish a coordinating body of the Northern Forest states to support implementation of the recommendations outlined in this report, continue regional coordination and address future challenges and opportunities.

Regional Context & Vision



The Northern Forest region is home to the people, communities and ecosystems of the largest intact forest in the eastern United States. Its story is one of people continually adapting to the challenges and opportunities presented by the natural world and by the local, national and global forces that have led to dramatic economic, environmental and cultural transformations.

Home to more than 2 million people, this nationally significant region stretches nearly 400 miles from New York's Tug Hill Plateau and Adirondack Mountains, across Lake Champlain and Vermont's Northeast Kingdom and northern Green Mountains, New Hampshire's North Country and White Mountains and Maine's Western Mountains, Highlands, St. John Valley

and Downeast Lakes to the border with Canada. It is a region tied together by boreal and northern hardwood forests, wetlands, lakes, rolling hills and rugged mountains.

The human cultures, economies and communities of the Northern Forest are tied inextricably to the character of the land. For centuries, the forest has underpinned the region's economy, served as the source of its people's identity and lore, and provided recreation, retreat and renewal for residents and visitors alike. In regional, national and even international history, the Northern Forest region has served as both an experiment and a model for sustaining land and people, together, as a land of industry, retreat, stewardship and change.

Shared Vision

The Northern Forest Sustainable Economy Initiative is grounded in the belief that the natural and cultural assets of the Northern Forest can once again be the basis for a vibrant rural economy. Building on the pedigree of the regional initiatives that have preceded it, the SEI offers the following vision for the region:

The Northern Forest region will be globally recognized for its unique character and ecosystem that support vital regional economies and communities.

Three guiding principles have been identified to support the vision for the Northern Forest:

Build Sustainable Wealth

Identify economic revitalization strategies that build not only the economic wealth of the Northern Forest, but social and environmental wealth as well.

Work Through Networks

Create a critical mass for action by working together across boundaries and building on good work already in place.

Think and Act as a Region

Distinguish the region globally and solve problems locally by increasing the region's collective financial, political and institutional capacity.



Regional Context & Shared Vision

The guiding principles support a vision of the Northern Forest which will be characterized by healthy communities, healthy economies, healthy ecosystems and a healthy region.

The SEI has developed a blueprint to take the first steps in securing a future characterized by:

Healthy Communities

- Communities where people of all ages and backgrounds choose to live because they can enjoy economic opportunity, good health and health care, access to the land, connections to family and friends and a rich cultural life.
- Communities that value education; where a quality education reflects the character, assets and needs of local places and people, and raises levels of learning.
- High civic engagement, where citizens from all points of view participate in community affairs and planning, where voters turn out in high numbers and volunteerism is strong.
- Communities whose physical infrastructure provides sound and safe places to live and a modern foundation for economic revitalization.
- People and communities with the capacity to face the local, regional and global challenges presented to them.

Healthy Economies

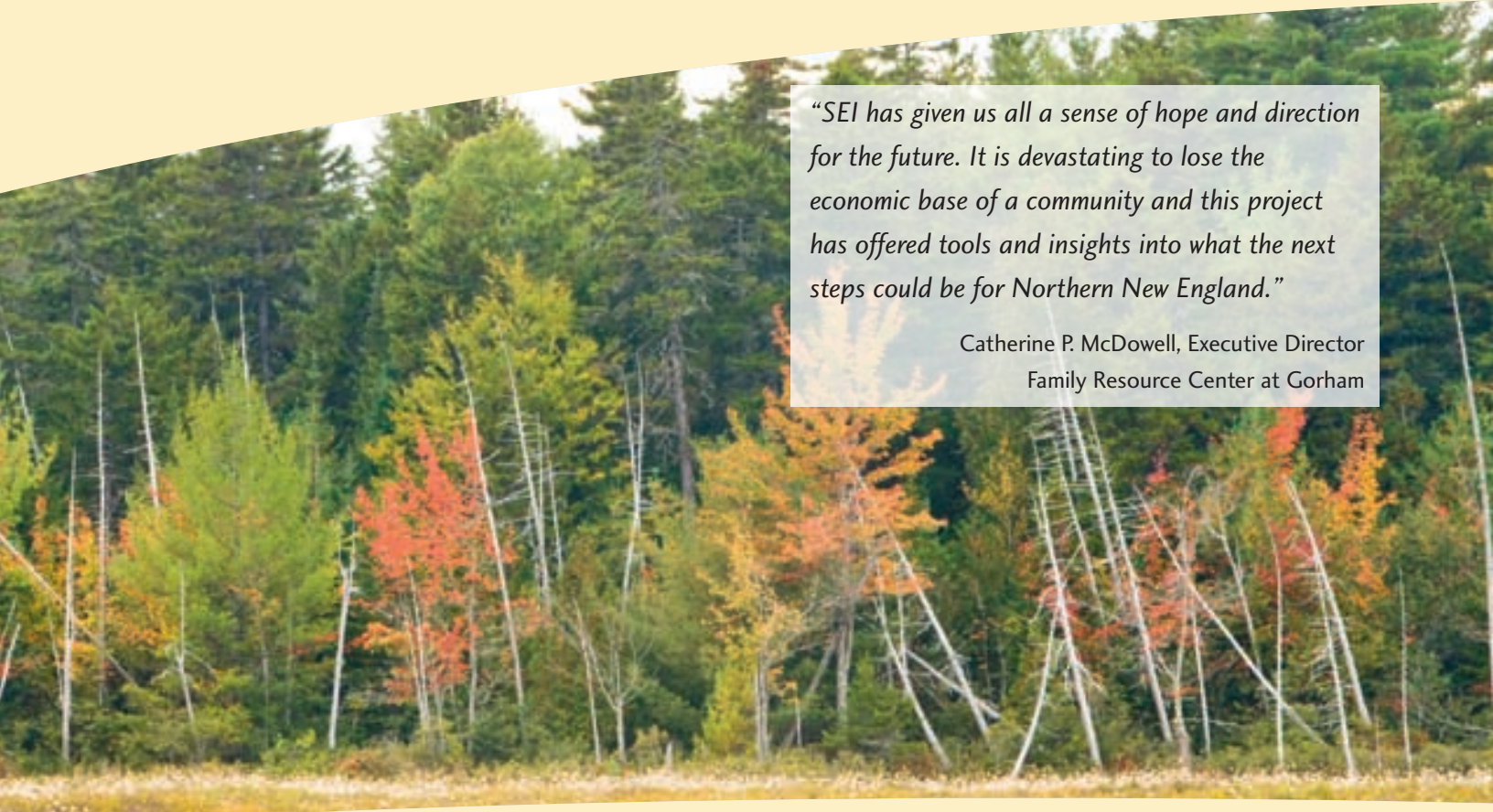
- Strong, diverse place-based economies that provide living wage jobs, attract investment and enable people to create and buy local goods and services.
- An innovative and resilient economy, aware of its position in the global economy and quick to respond to new opportunities.
- A revitalized forest industry recognized worldwide for ecologically sound practices, innovative products and skilled craftsmanship.
- World-class tourism and recreation rooted in experiences of a spectacular natural landscape and the region's unique stories, history, cultures, arts and traditions.

Healthy Ecosystems

- A forest land ownership and conservation ethic that respects the contributions and complementary roles and varieties of private and public forests and values the full set of economic, aesthetic and ecological values they provide.
- Concentrated human settlements that provide diverse human experiences in a forested landscape.
- Working landscapes and a mix of landownership patterns, sizes and uses that safeguard the land, water, air, plants and animals and all of nature's ecological processes.

Healthy Region

- New ways of working together across all sectors of the economy to build an environment of innovation.
- Pride in a distinct regional identity rooted in a shared landscape, history, culture and economy that transcends political boundaries.
- Regional infrastructure that provides communication and transportation systems, social networks and “green infrastructure” that can link places within the region to each other and to the world beyond.
- A commitment to working together across the social, economic and geographic barriers that so often divide people.



“SEI has given us all a sense of hope and direction for the future. It is devastating to lose the economic base of a community and this project has offered tools and insights into what the next steps could be for Northern New England.”

Catherine P. McDowell, Executive Director
Family Resource Center at Gorham

“Being involved with SEI has made me realize we must be more proactive in Regional and local planning. It’s very important to have interdisciplinary planning to achieve the goals.”

Everett L. Towle, President
Small Woodland Owners of Maine



Northern Forest Trends: Challenge and Opportunity

The Northern Forest is at a unique and important point in its history. The dynamics of large scale global economic change and new demographic shifts are creating tremendous challenges in many parts of the Northern Forest, while the same forces bring new opportunities to other communities. The following section presents a synthesis of the important trends, challenges, and opportunities facing the region and is a basis for understanding how the region might work together in this new era.

There are very few simple descriptions of social and economic circumstances in the Northern Forest that adequately convey its diversity, and generalizations about the region as a whole can be deceptive. While the region maintains many common ecological and cultural features and is united by strong ties to the forest landscape, it is highly diverse with respect to social and economic trends and conditions, settlement patterns and industrial structure. For example, nearly a third of the region's counties contain or are near large population centers, while a third are very remote. For every county that is losing population, there are two that are growing. For every county that depends on manufacturing for its economic well-being, there are two that either depend on services or do not rely on any one industrial sector.

Yet the region shares common challenges and opportunities even with its diversity. As a whole the region is faring better than many rural parts of the United States. When considered in this national context and in light of global trends as well, the Northern Forest region is united by three common trends:

→ **Economic Change:** The economic foundations of the Northern Forest region are shifting, as historic industries transition and new ones emerge in response to globalization and new consumer demands.

→ **Community Impact:** Northern Forest communities are facing new demographic, economic and civic realities—some positive, some challenging—as they try to adapt in a changing world.

→ **Landscape Change:** The character, use and health of the Northern Forest landscape is changing in response to new ownership patterns, stewardship practices, conservation, climate change and other factors.

The challenges and opportunities of each of these trends have been analyzed to establish a baseline understanding of changes occurring throughout the Northern Forest, and the potential for strategic interventions to support the region's economy, communities and environment. The complete analysis of the regional challenges and opportunities is available at www.nfsei.net.

Implications for a Regional Vision & Strategy

The Sustainable Economy Initiative presents strategies to move the Northern Forest toward a future in which:

The Northern Forest region is globally recognized for its unique character and ecosystem that support vital regional economies and communities.

The SEI's analysis of the trends, challenges and opportunities facing the region points to three conclusions about the region's ability to achieve the vision.

First, creating vital 21st century economies and communities for the Northern Forest will require quick and continuous adaptation to externally driven trends. The people and communities of the Northern

Northern Forest Trends: Challenge and Opportunity

Forest regions face a new world—one substantially different from the one in which the economic foundations of the region developed over 100 years ago. The aging of the region's industrial and tourism infrastructure and population, the opening of new areas of forest economy around the world, the dawn of the information era, the demand for new sources of energy, the rise of “green” markets, climate change and new demands on the region's natural resources are all combining to create new and challenging realities for the people, communities, economies and landscape of the region.

New realities require new approaches. Simply staying the course will not lead the region to economic success, nor will it maintain the quality of place so valued in the Northern Forest.

A successful economic strategy must focus on areas where the region has a comparative edge nationally and internationally, building on internal assets to adapt to externally driven change. Northern Forest communities must create an economic foundation not just for short-term success, but also for long-term resilience in the face of constant change.

Second, the alignment of national and global trends with the assets of the Northern Forest region creates great economic opportunities tied to the region's character and ecosystem. Landscape, quality of life and culture are the new comparative advantages for rural communities, and the Northern Forest is rich with these assets. The region has a relatively high concentration in creative class occupations, an indicator of the attraction and quality of a place. Potential new products and services from the landscape—forest and agricultural products, renewable energy, tourism experiences and ecosystem services—coupled with growing demand for these

products and the region's proximity to major markets hold great promise for business development. A high concentration of colleges and universities can serve to generate new ideas and train new workers for these opportunities. So while the region has many challenges, it also has many assets with which to work.

Third, capacity to capitalize on new opportunities is hampered by leadership development, information, infrastructure and investment challenges. At the core of successful adaptation must be healthy people and vibrant communities, equipped with the knowledge and tools they need in this rapidly changing world. Current realities in this regard portray a social and economic starting point in need of shoring up, and capacity to significantly change that is beyond reach of any single community or state working on its own. Yet in contrast to the external trends over which the region has little control, addressing these capacity gaps is well within the grasp of the people of the region.



Unlike an earlier era, when large corporations such as International Paper and Great Northern Paper provided financial capital to take advantage of the region's natural capital to build business, wealth and employment in the Northern Forest, a next generation of economic development in the Northern Forest will be led by smaller, locally grown businesses and civic organizations. In an increasingly global marketplace, however, the region's leaders must invest extra effort to inform, connect and provide financial support and infrastructure to enable these ventures to thrive. This capacity building is the key to rebuilding the economic future of the Northern Forest.

Small communities and small businesses—especially in a rural area like the Northern Forest—need assistance and support to provide these capacities. By collaborating regionally, Northern Forest communities and businesses can create a critical mass of leadership,

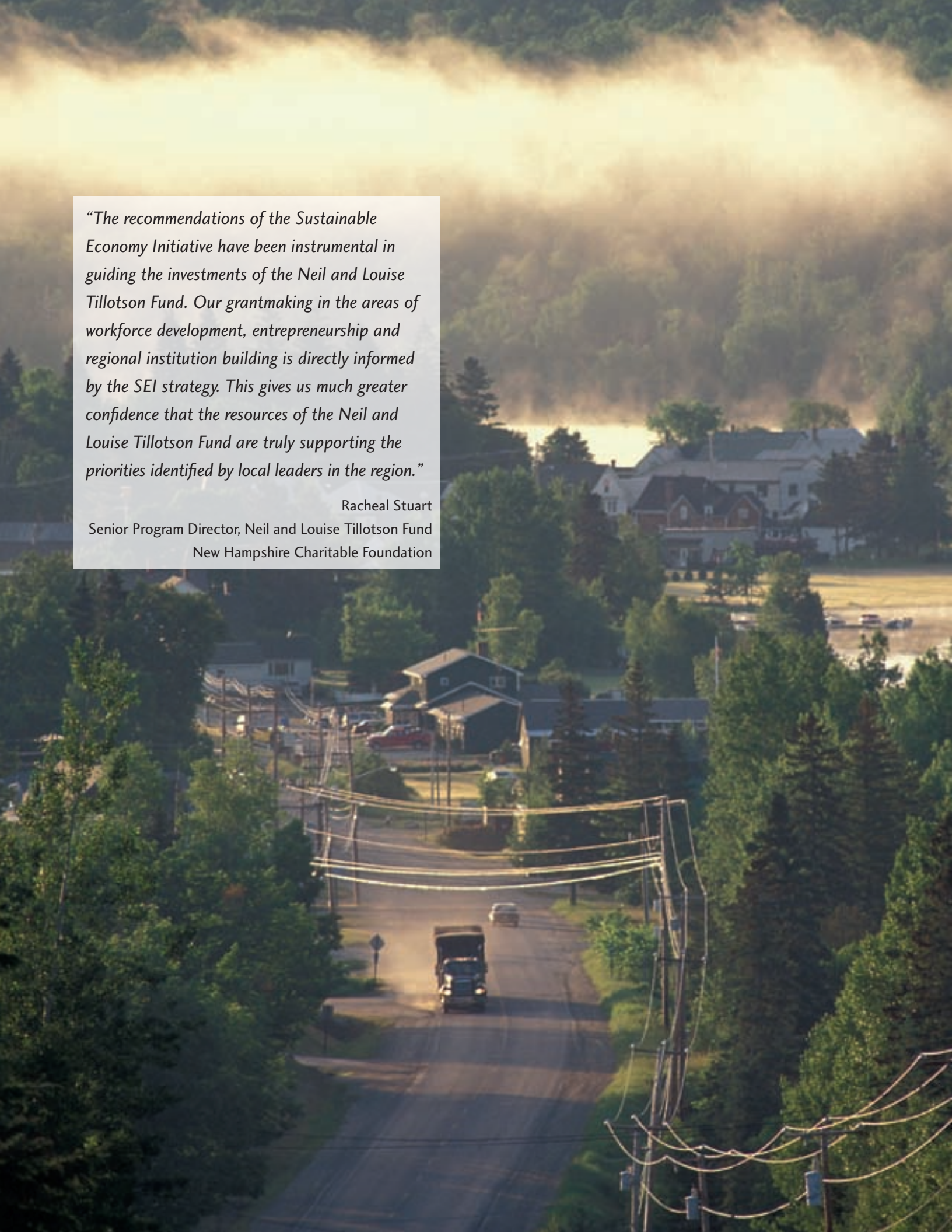
ideas and resources to advance significant economic change and achieve success in a global marketplace. The region finds three specific advantages in working together:

- ➔ **Shared challenges and opportunities:** Northern Forest communities have a commonality that is far stronger east-west than it is north-south. As noted in the Northern Forest Lands Council (NFLC) 10th anniversary report, they have “much more to learn from each other's successes and much to gain from coordinating their respective action.”
- ➔ **Geographic scale:** In a global economy, regions are rapidly becoming the locus of effective economic development due to their ability to offer a diversity of people, knowledge institutions, land types and services to businesses¹—a diversity that individual rural communities and even states often cannot match.
- ➔ **Regional voice:** Northern Forest communities are physically isolated from the centers of financial and political power and influence. Yet the region working together can enlist the attention of four governors, eight U.S. senators and eight U.S. House members. For visibility and funding, this bloc can be of much greater value than the representatives of one state alone seeking backing for a limited goal.

A key role for regional action is to provide critical capacity to make it easier and more rewarding for enterprises and initiatives of all sorts to thrive, while safeguarding and enhancing the shared resources—human and natural—that support and enrich the people and communities of the region.



Photo: Carl Heilman, II



“The recommendations of the Sustainable Economy Initiative have been instrumental in guiding the investments of the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund. Our grantmaking in the areas of workforce development, entrepreneurship and regional institution building is directly informed by the SEI strategy. This gives us much greater confidence that the resources of the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund are truly supporting the priorities identified by local leaders in the region.”

Racheal Stuart

Senior Program Director, Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund
New Hampshire Charitable Foundation

Long-Term Strategies for the Northern Forest

The charge given to the members of the SEI Steering Committee by the governors of the four states was to “develop and implement community and economic development strategies across the region to reinvigorate the rural economies of the Northern Forest.” To develop these strategies, the committee used a consensus-based decision process that built upon the collective experience of its members. The members participated in stakeholder meetings in each state and received primary and secondary research on the Northern Forest region’s economy, communities and environment. *Economic Resurgence in the Northern Forest* presents specific recommendations to strengthen the region’s economy while ensuring the distinct character of the region’s communities and natural resources. The strategy is an integrated set of recommendations to achieve the following long-term goals:

- **Protect and Enhance the Region’s Assets:** Invest in the people, communities, infrastructure and natural resource base that are the foundation of the Northern Forest’s distinct regional character and competitive economic advantage.
- **Expand Enterprise:** Create a fertile environment for workforce, entrepreneurial and business development and increase the region’s ability to develop and commercialize new products and services that capitalize on the assets of the Northern Forest.
- **Coordinate and Advocate as a Region:** Increase the capacity of the region’s individuals and institutions to anticipate and adapt to change and implement new initiatives by working and coordinating as a region to understand and advocate for regional interests and priorities.

From the start, the SEI has had a long-term focus, and the strategies and recommendations that follow reflect the reality that securing significant and positive change in the Northern Forest economy will take decades. The intent is to have the strategic blueprint for the region stand the test of time. In a dynamic world, the specific near-term needs and opportunities facing the Northern Forest will continually evolve. Many actors and many actions at many scales will be required to implement this strategy. Yet the blueprint’s essence—protect the region’s assets, develop and sell products and services derived from those assets, and work as a region to anticipate and adapt to change—will allow the Northern Forest region to thrive. The goals, objectives and action items that follow in this section all represent essential building blocks of a healthy and vibrant region.

Protect and Enhance the Region’s Assets

Fundamental to the long-term vitality of the Northern Forest economy and its ability to compete in the 21st century is the stewardship and conservation of the communities and natural assets of the region. Small towns and main streets, offering a wide range of services and goods, are characteristic throughout the Northern Forest. The abundant forest land which surrounds these communities is what is unique about the Northern Forest. These combined attributes will distinguish the region in a national and global marketplace.

Communities are at the front-line of adaptation in the Northern Forest. While community development is inherently local, there are steps that can be taken on a regional level to build and support local community capacity. The ability to effectively meet the challenges which face the Northern Forest region will require a critical mass of leadership, ideas and resources greater than any one community or state can generate alone.

Long-Term Strategies for the Northern Forest

Stewardship and conservation of the region's forests has been a focus of regional action for a century, and these efforts must continue. The forest defines the region and is the region's biggest asset. The forest's character and productive capacity are threatened by a variety of factors. Conserving the forest resource for its full spectrum of uses will conserve the region's comparative economic edge and the underpinning of its culture and heritage. Conservation will also contribute to a larger societal effort to slow and correct the effects of climate change and ecosystem degradation.

Objective: Invest in comprehensive community development to ensure that Northern Forest communities continue to be attractive places to live and work in the changing global economy.

Actions:

- **Community Leadership:** Provide community leaders with tools to develop knowledge and ideas and build networks that connect them with each other across the region.
- **Planning:** Develop and provide tools and information to support Northern Forest communities as they plan for their futures in uncertain times.
- **Infrastructure:** Ensure sound and effective infrastructure to support human needs, move information and commerce, and connect people to one another.
- **Education and Health Care:** Provide access to quality education and health care for Northern Forest residents.
- **Affordable Housing:** Ensure the availability of quality and affordable housing in Northern Forest communities.
- **Community Asset Building:** Grow stable communities by maintaining and growing programs that build assets and financial stability for Northern Forest workers and families.
- **Funding:** Maintain and grow the public and private funding streams that provide catalytic resources for community development and infrastructure.



Objective: Manage and conserve the character and productive capacity of the forest ecosystem to protect and enhance the essential economic and ecological services derived from the landscape.

Actions:

- **Conservation:** Continue public and private investment in the conservation and forest stewardship efforts catalyzed by the work of the original Northern Forest Lands Council.*
- **Forest Management & Stewardship:** Support private landowners in practicing sustainable forest management and good stewardship while encouraging public access to private land for recreational purposes.*
- **Water:** Steward and protect the water resources of the Northern Forest as a foundation for human well-being and as an economic resource.
- **Science & Monitoring:** Invest in scientific and consistent monitoring of the region's ecological assets to anticipate threats and inform responses.

**Recommendations of the Northern Forest Lands Council
10th Anniversary Forum*



Long-Term Strategies for the Northern Forest

Expand Enterprise

The Northern Forest is rich with potential for new economic enterprise tied to its natural and community assets. Yet times have changed from an earlier era, when the largest paper companies in the world such as International Paper and Great Northern Paper provided financial capital to take advantage of the region's natural capital and built business, wealth and employment in the Northern Forest. The next generation of economic development in the Northern Forest will be led by smaller, locally grown businesses and civic organizations. As with earlier generations, the region's leaders must invest extra effort to create a fertile environment for entrepreneurship and provide the financial investment and workforce that will enable these new ventures to thrive. Such investment will ensure the region's competitiveness.

Leveraging the assets of the Northern Forest into a significant and sustainable expansion of economic enterprise will require actions towards two objectives:

Objective: Expand programs and initiatives to research and develop Northern Forest products and services, train a modern workforce, and attract and develop entrepreneurial talent.

Actions:

- **Research and Development:** Enhance the region's capacity to conduct state of the art research and development.
- **Incubation and Commercialization:** Facilitate the transfer of research and ideas between research institutions, communities and businesses.
- **Business Climate:** Create a business-friendly environment that enables entrepreneurs and businesses to take new products and services in to the market.
- **Workforce & Entrepreneurial Development:** Prepare Northern Forest youth and workers with flexible and transferable skills suited to emerging industries.



Objective: Grow and support regional and sub-regional initiatives to build a significant scale of economic impact in sectors where the region finds particular competitive advantage.

Actions:

- **Sustainable forest products:** Support and promote innovation and new product development, identify and access new markets, and work regionally on policy, wood supply and education needs to establish competitive niches for Northern Forest wood products.
- **Nature-based recreation and heritage tourism:** Foster and increase private and public sector cooperation across the four-state region to develop and market the region as a national and global destination for nature-based recreation and heritage tourism.
- **Ecosystem Services:** Secure a place for forestry and the Northern Forest region in regional and national policymaking on carbon markets and other ecosystem services, and use these markets to develop new economic opportunity for forest landowners.
- **Renewable Energy:** Develop strategies and policies to transition the region to a significant four-state renewable energy economy, with an emphasis on enhancing affordable and local use of indigenous energy resources—wood, wind, water and solar.
- **Agricultural Products:** Increase the viability and economic impact of local agricultural activities in the Northern Forest.
- **Quality of Place:** Conserve and grow the cultural and quality of place assets of Northern Forest communities as a foundation for retaining and attracting residents and business.



Photos from left: John McKeith, Ned Therrien. Photos right, top and bottom: Jerry & Marcy Monkman; center: Pat & Chuck Blackley

Long-Term Strategies for the Northern Forest

Coordinate and Advocate as a Region

Achieving and maintaining economic vitality in the Northern Forest region will require constant and nimble adaptation to new economic, social and environmental trends. Regional challenges require regional strategies and coordinated implementation that build on the collective strengths of Northern Forest communities and the complementary roles of private, public and non-profit sector leadership. Designated leadership and capacity for coordinating these roles across the four states are essential.

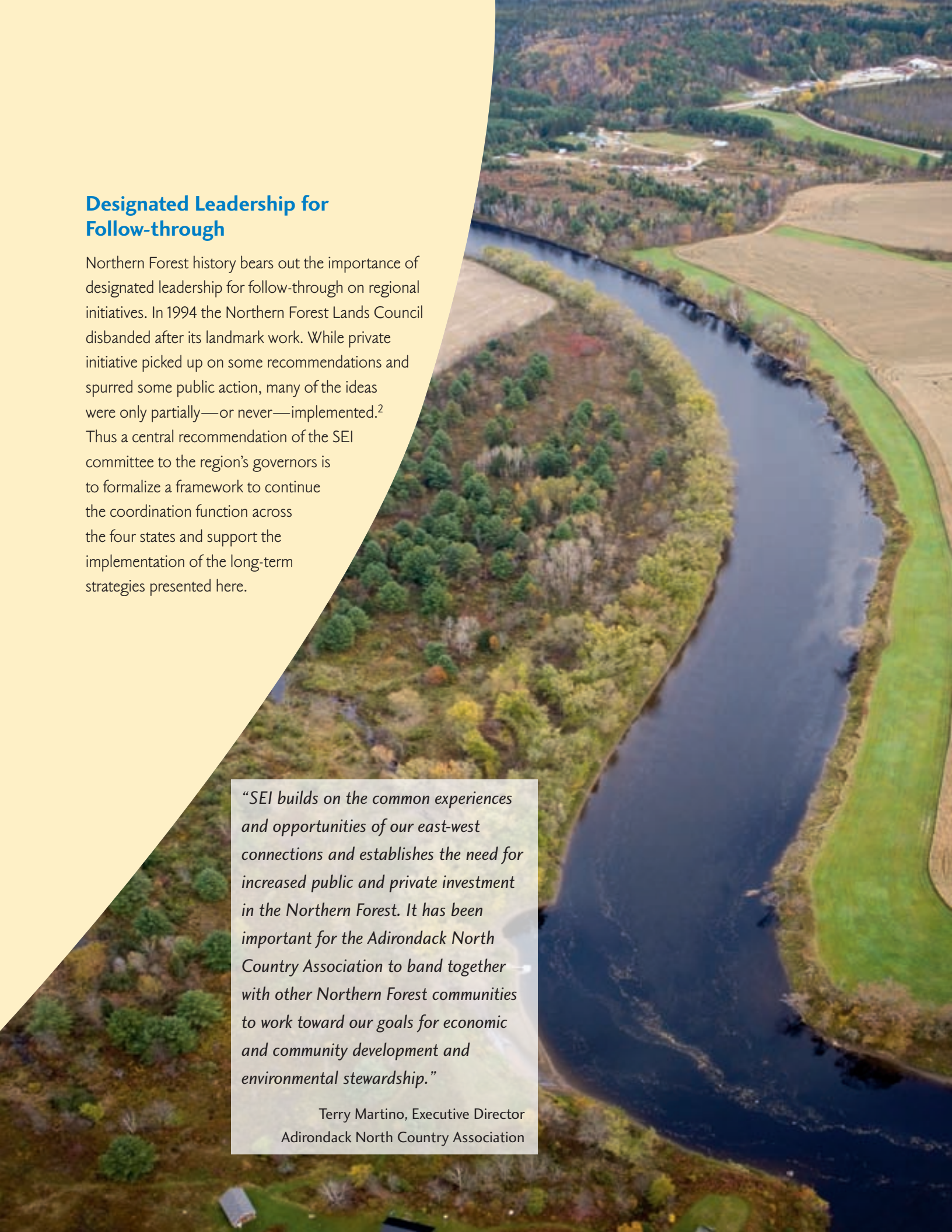
The people of the Northern Forest are already adapting to change, and supporting actions already going on in the region is a second key component of building an adaptive regional economy. In addition to regional coordination and leadership, three capacities—information, investment and innovation—can be effectively nurtured on a regional level to support existing efforts, solve problems and build capacity locally.

Advocating as a region is a powerful means for securing the resources and policies that can support these capacities. For two years the SEI committee has wrestled with the question of how to elevate the prospects of this relatively small region now that it operates in a global economy. The committee has concluded that our greatest opportunity for economic success is to band together as a region across our four states; to learn from each other, to support our mutual goals and advocate together for the Northern Forest. When communities and citizens join together across state lines, it creates more power and talent and a stronger voice to benefit everyone in the region.

Objective: Increase the ability of individuals and institutions across the region to anticipate and adapt to change, implement new initiatives and coordinate activities across the Northern Forest.

Actions:

- **Regional Coordination & Leadership:** Establish a public-private partnership to link and support government, community, business and non-profit leadership across the four Northern Forest states; coordinate the implementation of the SEI strategies; and provide coordinated and enduring ability to respond to future challenges and opportunities.
- **Regional Policy Advocacy:** Work across state boundaries to advocate on national and international policy issues that impact all four states, such as trade and border policy.
- **Information & Knowledge:** Increase the availability of research, best practices and market data required to solve problems and share information and ideas across the Northern Forest.
- **Investment:** Present a unified case for public and private investment in the region to catalyze innovation and new opportunities.
- **Innovation and Adaptation:** Align leadership, information and investment to support the region's ability to innovate and adapt to ongoing change.



Designated Leadership for Follow-through

Northern Forest history bears out the importance of designated leadership for follow-through on regional initiatives. In 1994 the Northern Forest Lands Council disbanded after its landmark work. While private initiative picked up on some recommendations and spurred some public action, many of the ideas were only partially—or never—implemented.² Thus a central recommendation of the SEI committee to the region's governors is to formalize a framework to continue the coordination function across the four states and support the implementation of the long-term strategies presented here.

“SEI builds on the common experiences and opportunities of our east-west connections and establishes the need for increased public and private investment in the Northern Forest. It has been important for the Adirondack North Country Association to band together with other Northern Forest communities to work toward our goals for economic and community development and environmental stewardship.”

Terry Martino, Executive Director
Adirondack North Country Association

A Northern Forest Action Agenda: Ten Recommendations

Even as the strategy for Economic Resurgence identifies and puts forth complex and long-term goals for the Northern Forest region, the SEI also includes a corresponding Action Agenda. The action recommendations are supported by the long-term strategies identified in the report and also by the wealth of activity taking place in the region.

For the region to achieve the maximum benefits from the Action Agenda, a collaborative and coordinated set of private, public and non-profit sector activities at the state and regional levels must be developed. The creation of systems to link and support existing efforts will enable the region to realize quick successes in the advancement of the strategy. At the same time, each state will benefit from the prioritization of their specific needs and opportunities.

Immediate implementation of these actions will represent significant gains for the region. The following ten action items present a multi-faceted approach to economic and community development and environmental stewardship throughout the Northern Forest:

- ▶ **Telecommunications:** Deliver reliable, affordable and cutting-edge high-speed telecommunications to all Northern Forest communities through increased public-private investment.
- ▶ **Creativity and Entrepreneurship:** Develop programs to support creative and entrepreneurial people in building businesses that are based on and enhance the natural and cultural resources of the Northern Forest.
- ▶ **Transportation Infrastructure:** Develop globally competitive energy efficient, multi-modal public/private transportation systems to interconnect the region and its communities and support regional, national, and international trade.
- ▶ **Regional Marketing:** Develop coordinated marketing of Northern Forest products, businesses, tourism services, amenities and attractions, while maintaining individual state branding efforts.
- ▶ **Local Purchasing & Ownership:** Support activities that encourage Northern Forest residents, visitors, institutions and government to “buy local.”
- ▶ **Renewable Energy:** Launch a four-state, Renewable Energy Initiative that encourages energy efficiency, increases public and private investment in a diversity of energy systems, maximizes community wealth and complements stewardship of the region’s natural resources.
- ▶ **Regional Assets:** Invest in research, tracking and forecasting of natural, social and economic assets in order to make informed decisions to understand, anticipate and adapt to changes in the region.
- ▶ **Forested Landscape:** Maintain forests to protect and enhance the essential economic and ecological services derived from the landscape and to capture value from emerging markets.
- ▶ **Federal Investment:** Maintain and grow funding for new and existing federal programs that serve the long-term strategies outlined in this report; Analyze and identify opportunities to more explicitly align existing federal programs with the strategies outlined in this report.
- ▶ **Public-private Regional Coordination & Advocacy:** Establish a coordinating body of the Northern Forest states to support implementation of the recommendations outlined in this report, continue regional coordination and address future challenges and opportunities.

“Our region has unique opportunities because of the quality of our natural resources, and the SEI strategy recognizes that we must maintain those resources to succeed.”

Kay Henry
Northern Forest Canoe Trail

In implementing these recommendations, aligning private sector, government and non-profit leadership can build on the strengths of each sector and collectively address their limitations.

	Private	Non-profits	Government
Offers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Innovating ● Attracting capital ● Turning good ideas in to economic activity (jobs) ● Making things happen on the ground 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developing and disseminating information about public needs and innovations ● Bridging between government and the private sector ● Building and maintaining social and collaborative infrastructure (networks) ● Linking political jurisdictions ● Managing social processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creating policy incentives for change and removing barriers ● Addressing economic and social gaps and injustices through public investment ● Building and maintaining public infrastructure
Needs Help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creating networks ● Disseminating information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Direct generation of economic activity (creating jobs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Crossing political boundaries

A Northern Forest Action Agenda: Ten Recommendations

► Telecommunications

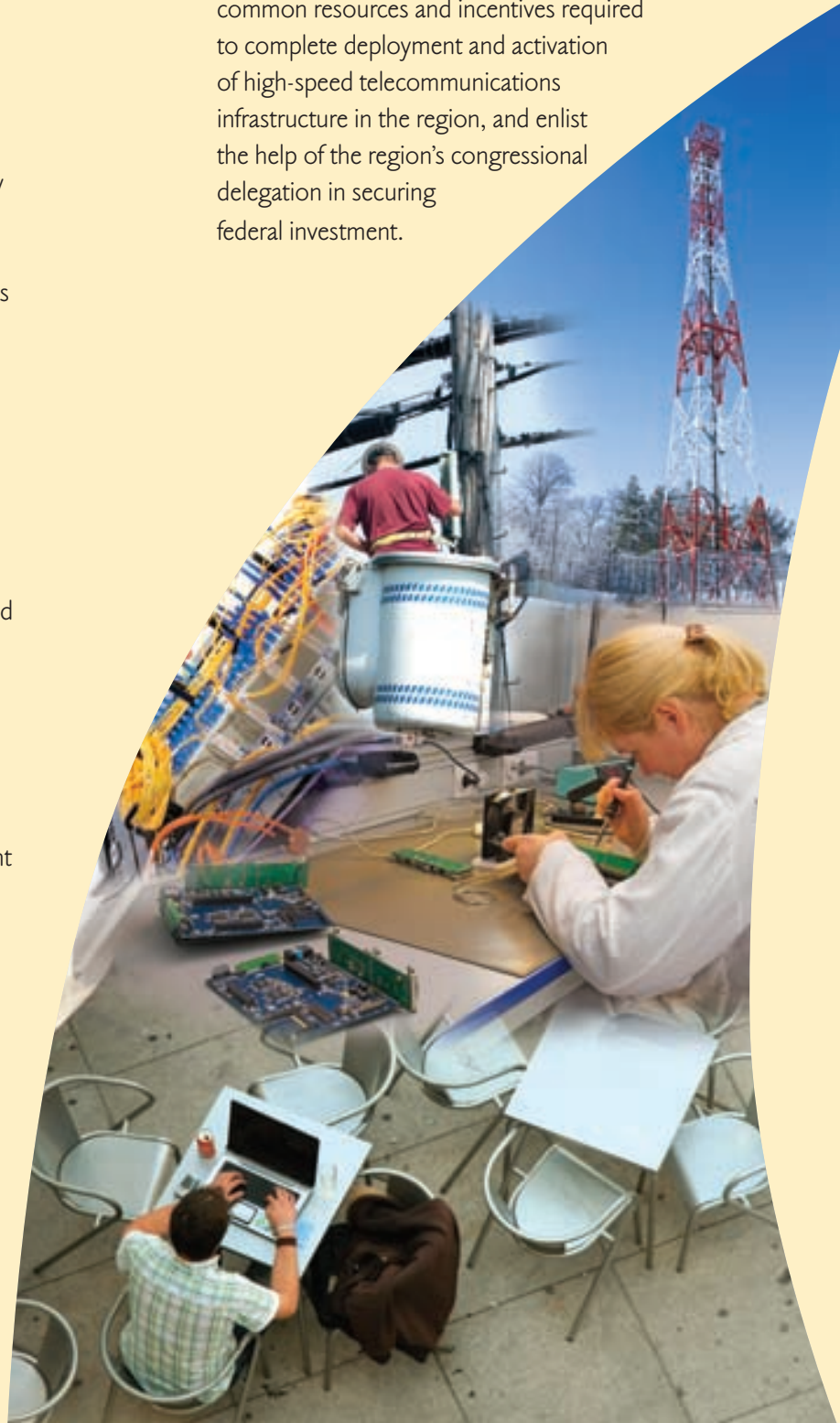
Deliver reliable, affordable and cutting-edge high-speed telecommunications to all Northern Forest communities through increased public-private investment.

Case for Urgent Action

- ➔ Lack of high speed telecommunications capacity in many parts of the region is an impediment to business development; without modern telecommunications infrastructure, many options for economic development in Northern Forest communities are difficult if not impossible to consider.
- ➔ To address these issues, state initiatives and a number of public-private and private efforts are underway across the Northern Forest states, all with common goals of developing telecommunications infrastructure in underserved areas. Expanding, accelerating and coordinating these efforts is an urgent priority for action.
- ➔ The relatively low density of customers in the Northern Forest is a barrier to the private sector shouldering infrastructure deployment alone. Community and non-profit efforts face significant financial limitations. Public investment—some have likened it to Rural Electrification of the 1930s—is needed as the catalyst to push these efforts over the top.

What Needs to Happen

- ➔ **Regional Collaboration for Resources:** The public and private leaders of telecommunications initiatives across the Northern Forest should collaboratively identify common resources and incentives required to complete deployment and activation of high-speed telecommunications infrastructure in the region, and enlist the help of the region's congressional delegation in securing federal investment.



► Creativity and Entrepreneurship

Develop programs to support creative and entrepreneurial people in building businesses that are based on and enhance the natural and cultural resources of the Northern Forest.

Case for Urgent Action

- The region is perceived as being inhospitable for new and even existing businesses.
- The region's natural, cultural and other resources hold increasing potential for economic use in view of emerging market opportunities.
- The region's economy is transitioning from a reliance on a small number of large employers to reliance on greater numbers of small- and medium-sized businesses.
- Developing and attracting the entrepreneurial talent and creative workforce needed to create and run small- and medium-sized enterprises is critical and a current area of weakness.
- What is needed are new businesses that are based on the assets of the Northern Forest region, and that are compatible with maintaining and enhancing those assets.

What Needs to Happen

- **Business climate:** Review and adjust public policies that affect business development with the intention of facilitating development of new and existing enterprises that generate maximum economic value from sustainable use of the region's natural, cultural and other resources without damaging quality of place—recognizing that quality of place is among the region's primary economic assets.

- **Incubators:** Support and create both virtual and bricks and mortar incubators in the region to leverage existing research and development assets through commercialization of emerging products and technologies as they address new market opportunities related to the region's assets.
- **Innovation:** Create and support a system of “Innovation Networks” and Entrepreneurial Clusters to better link businesses to each other as well as to academic and non-profit innovation efforts in core sectors of the Northern Forest's asset-based economy, including:
 - ◆ Sustainable and/or Green Tourism
 - ◆ Renewable Energy
 - ◆ Ecosystem Services: Carbon and Water
 - ◆ Agriculture
 - ◆ Wood Products
- **Capital:** Expand existing financing programs and opportunities for individuals to invest in local private companies. Include consideration of effective capital support for micro enterprises.
- **Talent Development:** Create a partnership among educational institutions, businesses and non-profits in the region to connect curricula and workforce training with emerging industries and entrepreneurial opportunities in the region. Promote asset-based, entrepreneurial approaches among residents of the region, especially young people.

A Northern Forest Action Agenda: Ten Recommendations

► Transportation Infrastructure

Develop globally competitive, energy efficient, multi-modal public/private transportation systems to interconnect the region and its communities and support regional, national and international trade.

Case for Urgent Action

- The federally sponsored Can-Am Connections initiative³ has found that the Northern Forest region and adjacent Canada are not meeting the necessary land, sea and air connections to compete globally including: insufficient transportation networks, high transportation costs and a lack of a regional perspective.
- The region relies more heavily on trucks and less on rail than the rest of U.S. and Canada as a whole, and the region's truck costs are on average 45-65% higher than national averages.
- In a time of dramatic rises in fuel costs, access to alternative forms of transportation will become increasingly important for moving people and goods to, within, and from the region. Inadequate transportation impedes access to jobs and critical services such as health care.
- Existing transportation infrastructure is failing and crumbling at an accelerating rate.



What Needs to Happen

The SEI committee recommends a concerted public and private effort to invest in regional transportation enhancements and upgrade land, sea and air transportation, and to support economic enterprise and cultural connections in ways that support the region's rural character and are sensitive to ecological integrity. Actions should include:

- **Freight Rail:** Rehabilitate and re-connect the east-west freight rail line connecting the Northern Forest regions of New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine.
- **High Speed Passenger Rail:** Explore opportunities to connect the Northern Forest region with southern New England and southern New York and areas further south.
- **Funding:** Maintain and grow state and federal funding for regional transportation infrastructure and community transportation enhancements including walkable communities, bike trails, scenic byways and water trails. Focus particular attention on the re-authorization of the federal transportation bill.
- **Trucking Regulations:** Establish consistent trucking regulations, including truck weights and size, to facilitate trade within and through the region.



► Regional Marketing

Develop coordinated marketing of Northern Forest products, businesses, tourism services, amenities and attractions, while maintaining individual state branding efforts.

Case for Urgent Action

- Consumers worldwide are looking for ecologically conscious, “green,” and sustainable products and services, and there is great potential to align development and marketing of Northern Forest products with that demand.
- The region has great physical proximity to large retail markets in the northeast U.S. and southeastern Canada. Over 70 million people live within a one day drive.
- Due to the rural nature of the Northern Forest, the region must work hard to make its assets known in the global marketplace and create a competitive scale of activity.
- The Northern Forest states and many of their sub-regions have invested heavily in their respective brands. Linking these efforts through marketing strategies that respect existing brands will enable the region to sell a broader spectrum of products and services.
- Existing regional marketing efforts such as the Northern Forest Canoe Trail and Handmade in the Northern Forest offer models to build upon.
- Interest in green certification chain-of-custody forest products, particularly from overseas, is beginning to exceed supply.

What Needs to Happen

- **Promotion:** Support “niche” promotional efforts that bridge business, product and tourism interests across the Northern Forest, with an initial focus on:
 - ◆ Wood Industries and Products
 - ◆ Nature-based Recreation
 - ◆ Culture & Heritage
 - ◆ Agricultural Products
 - ◆ Craft /handmade products
 - ◆ Adventure recreation (e.g, Northern Forest Canoe Trail, Appalachian Trail, regional skiing)
- **Coordination:** Create (or designate) central spokes-agency to tell the story of the Northern Forest and link to all SEI member websites.



A Northern Forest Action Agenda: Ten Recommendations

► Local Purchasing and Ownership

Support activities that encourage Northern Forest residents, visitors, institutions and government to “buy local.”

Case for Urgent Action

- Local ownership and local purchasing is proven to provide a significant economic multiplier affect in communities—dollars stay in the region longer.
- Government and large institutions such as hospitals, educational institutions, prisons and military installations are significant and steady consumers of multiple products that could be provided in-region instead of via imports. Notable opportunities include energy, food and wood products such as furniture and building materials.
- In-region use of indigenous resources can have positive impacts on food and energy security, food safety, carbon footprint and fuel costs.



What Needs to Happen

- **Government and Institutional Purchasing:** Secure commitments from state governments and large institutions in the region to seek and purchase from local suppliers whenever possible.
- **Buy Local Advocacy:** Enhance promotional efforts by government and private sector leaders to highlight local purchasing efforts and results.



► Regional Assets

Invest in research, tracking and forecasting of natural, social and economic assets in order to make informed decisions to understand, anticipate and adapt to changes in the region.

Case for Urgent Action

- Keeping a close eye on the health of the region's assets is key to ensuring that they remain in place as a foundation for the region.
- The ecological integrity of the Northern Forest's terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems is threatened by climate change, acid rain, mercury pollution, invasive species and diseases, salinization of waterways and fragmentation of the landscape.
- Communities are threatened by the outflow of young people, low educational attainment and lack of access to health care, telecommunications, etc.
- The economic health of the region is challenged through the loss of manufacturing, lack of qualified workforce and low availability of livable wage and benefited jobs.
- Good and consistent data are critical to monitoring water and air quality and forest health, identifying stewardship and conservation priorities, correcting problems and capitalizing on opportunities as they arise. Yet public funding for tracking, inventorying and forecasting is frequently in danger.

What Needs to Happen

- **Funding:** Secure consistent public and private funding for tracking and forecasting of the region's assets. Specifically, 1. Natural assets, including the Forest Inventory and Analysis Program and acid rain programs; 2. Social assets including private investment; 3. Economic assets including Economic Development Administration and Department of Labor funding, State Departments of Employment Security, Workforce Investment Act funds, etc.
- **Data Collection and Sharing:** Form a regional roundtable and/or conference for periodic sharing and coordination of data collection and research on the health of the Northern Forest region.
- **Knowledge transfer:** Use data and lessons learned to enable the public and private sectors to make and implement well-informed decisions.



A Northern Forest Action Agenda: Ten Recommendations

► Renewable Energy

Launch a four-state, Renewable Energy Initiative that encourages energy efficiency, increases public and private investment in a diversity of energy systems, maximizes community wealth and complements stewardship of the region's natural resources.

Case for Urgent Action

- Fossil fuel purchases drain immense wealth from the Northern Forest region—an estimated \$6 billion for imported fuel in 2006. Stemming even a portion of this outflow will keep more money in the region to serve other needs.
- High energy costs are a barrier to business location or expansion in the region. The Northern Forest has some of the highest cost energy in the contiguous U.S.
- The region has several commercial scale, indigenous and renewable energy resources—wood, wind, water and solar. Increasing both local production of renewable energy and efficiency will provide a much greater degree of economic return and energy security for the Northern Forest, and make a contribution to global mitigation of climate change.
- Establishing the region as a hub of renewable energy research and development and use can create jobs and be a major attractor for growth, as “green” practices, communities and vendors become more important to destination and buying decisions of consumers, tourists and businesses.

- Trends highlight the negative attributes to the local community of a pure natural resource extraction model and the resulting imbalance created in economic and environmental arenas.
- Renewable energy producers are eager to enter the region; the region must be proactive in its approach to energy issues to ensure local benefit.



What Needs to Happen

The SEI Steering Committee recommends that the four Northern Forest governors, in consultation with each other and private-sector stakeholders named below, commit specific funds per state and the time of key agency staff to a one-year effort to develop a regional renewable energy strategy. We suggest that the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) can serve as a model to affect multi-state coordinated effort and a potential source of capital for a renewable energy initiative. This initiative should include:

- ◆ **Biomass Energy:** Implementation of the recommendations of the Northern Forest Biomass Energy Initiative⁴.
- ◆ **Maximizing community (asset) based energy initiatives:** Sharing of best practices on community based energy efforts and increasing networking and collaboration opportunities in such areas as fuels for schools, etc.
- ◆ **RPS and Forests:** Refinement of renewable portfolio standards (RPS) in each state to call for fuels from sustainably managed forests.
- ◆ **Renewable Energy Regulation:** Harmonization of regulatory frameworks for renewable energy across the four states.
- ◆ **Energy Transmission:** Enhancements to energy transmission systems to support renewable energy generation in and transmission within and from the Northern Forest.
- ◆ **Energy Efficiency:** Incentives to builders and developers (among others) to conduct energy audits, retrofits and utilize new practices in energy efficient construction.

◆ **Manufacturing and Workforce Development:**

Support the development of renewable energy and efficiency businesses (manufacturers) and help train workers to meet the increase in this sector.

- ◆ **Public Education:** Increase public education programs to strengthen energy efficiency and conservation practices.

◆ **Capital for Energy Conservation:**

Expand existing models (e.g. NH surcharges, NY bonding) to provide capital sources for renewable energy development and energy efficiency.



A Northern Forest Action Agenda: Ten Recommendations

► Forested Landscape

Maintain forests to protect and enhance the essential economic and ecological services derived from the landscape and to capture value from emerging markets.

Case for Urgent Action

- Extensive parcelization and conversion of forests to non-forest uses is resulting in the loss of forest land base in the region.
- While systems to value them are still in development, it is clear that both carbon sequestration capacity and water supplies will be tremendous assets in a carbon and water-limited world. Efforts now to protect these resources and position the region to capitalize on emerging markets will pay dividends down the road.
- The capacity of forests and wood for long-term carbon sequestration is significant in a world concerned with carbon control. In addition to traditional uses, monetization of ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration may provide a new economic use for the region's forests.
- Critical to life, water is already a barrier to development and growth in many parts of the world, and regions with water supply will hold a competitive edge. The ecological and economic values of the Northern Forest's water resources are an immense asset.
- Aggressive scientific and policy work is required to turn these concepts in to true opportunities for the region.
- Establishing economic values for new forest services can create a new revenue stream for landowners.

What Needs to Happen

- **RGGI Forest Offsets:** Expand the category of eligible forestry offsets under the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative to include active forest management and avoided deforestation to support forest land ownership.
- **Easement and Stewardship Funding:** Continue public and private funding for conservation easements and forest stewardship programs that protect and enhance the essential economic and ecological services derived from the landscape.
- **Forest Tax Policy:** Establish and support a new coalition of forest interests to transform policies and ensure that investments in silviculture and long-term forest management are more financially rewarding.
 - ◆ **State policy:** Maintain favorable state current use property tax programs.*
 - ◆ **Federal policy:** Create favorable federal forest tax policy towards private timberland ownership, particularly allowing for inflation adjustment on the original cost of timber and assuring favorable estate tax policy to allow for forestlands to be passed from one generation to the next.*

**Recommendations of the Northern Forest Lands Council
10th Anniversary Forum*



► Public-private Regional Coordination & Advocacy

Establish a coordinated body of the Northern Forest states to support implementation of the recommendations outlined in this report, continue regional coordination and address future challenges and opportunities.

Case for Urgent Action

- Northern Forest communities share common opportunities and challenges and have “much more to learn from each other’s successes and much to gain from coordinating their respective action” (NFLC 10th Anniversary Forum).
- Regions are the emerging unit of competitiveness in the global economy, and functioning as an economic region requires an ability to coordinate economic strategy via institutions and networks.
- The region working together can enlist the attention of four governors, eight U.S. senators and eight U.S. House members. For visibility and funding, this bloc can be of much greater value than the representatives of one state alone seeking backing for a limited goal.
- Maintaining the momentum of the current SEI effort will ensure short and long-term effectiveness.
- Individual state resources are limited; a regional effort can leverage existing resources.

What Needs to Happen

- **Governors Council on the Northern Forest:** The SEI Steering Committee strongly recommends that the Northern Forest governors formally continue to collaborate and coordinate their actions related to SEI strategy and other regional initiatives via a regional advisory group, regional commission, or other mechanism. Regardless of form, this coordinating body should represent the diversity of the region, include public, non-profit and private sector representation and respect locally driven priorities.
- **Northern Forest Network:** Develop an umbrella network to coordinate dialogue, exchange best practices, build and support regional leaders, and create periodic regional gatherings for the range of networks working to implement the long-term strategies outlined in this report.
- **Knowledge and Information Exchange:** Create an on-line Northern Forest clearinghouse and toolkit of community development resources, funding opportunities and best practices related to implementation of the SEI strategy.
- **Strategic Alignment:** Incorporate the goals and strategies of this report into existing plans and processes across the region.
- **Resources:** Establish a diverse funding strategy (public/private) to establish the continuance and accountable nature of regional coordination and advocacy efforts.

A Northern Forest Action Agenda: Ten Recommendations

► Federal Investment

Maintain and grow funding for new and existing federal programs that serve the long-term strategies outlined in this report; analyze and identify opportunities to align existing federal programs with these strategies.

Case for Urgent Action

- ➔ Federal programs are a crucial source of funding for community development, regional infrastructure and ecosystem stewardship in the rural Northern Forest, where the tax base and state and private investment alone are seldom enough to fully meet community need.
- ➔ Declining budgets for federal programs combined with a tightening fiscal environment on the state level are together creating a shortage of catalytic resources in the Northern Forest at a time when those resources are especially needed.
- ➔ In addition to helping Northern Forest people and communities in a time of significant economic transition, federal investment in the region can serve a set of national interests.
 - ◆ **Energy security:** The Northern Forest is a source of secure and renewable biomass energy and a region that currently spends nearly \$6 billion annually on imported fossil fuels.
 - ◆ **Climate Change Mitigation:** The region is rich with forests and wetlands, which are the two land cover classes capable of long-term carbon sequestration, according to the U.N. Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.

- ◆ **Clean Water:** The Northern Forest holds the headwaters of the rivers that feed some of the largest population centers in the eastern United States.
- ◆ **A National Model:** With regional collaboration and the SEI strategy in place, the Northern Forest region can be a national model for other rural regions working to sustain their natural and cultural assets while succeeding in a 21st century economy.

- ➔ Aligning existing programs with current needs and opportunities in the region will help limited dollars go further and increase the “return” of federal investment.

What Needs to Happen

- ➔ **Analysis:** Conduct an analysis of federal programs (see Community Development, Regional Infrastructure, Ecosystem Stewardship below) to determine the following:
 - ◆ Which programs are effectively delivering funding to the region (or other regions) and why (to learn from and build on existing successes of securing funding).
 - ◆ To what extent they are currently aligned and effectively delivering towards the implementation of the SEI strategies.



- **Additive Funding:** Develop integrated cross program funding approaches to ensure that critical programs do not compete with or cannibalize one another.
- **Private Investment:** Engage the private sector to leverage the existing federal resources.
- **Evaluation:** Establish better “feedback” mechanisms that provide information about program outcomes on an ongoing basis to the program customers.
- **Coordinated Advocacy:** Ensure that the region’s congressional delegation can speak with one voice in helping to deliver funding to the region by:
 - ◆ **Developing** integrated 4-state proposals by program (building on the existing state level block funding proposals (e.g. Clean Water) and 4-state block funding (e.g. Forest Legacy).
 - ◆ **Coordinating** an annual effort to secure stable and expanded federal appropriations for key programs serving the Northern Forest.

Key Programs Serving the Northern Forest

Community Development programs* provide resources and financing options for key community development projects, including health care and education infrastructure and other community facilities, affordable workforce housing, water and sewer, and community cultural amenities.

- (USDA RD) Rural Housing Service
 - Community Facility Program Grants
 - Rural Community Development Initiative
- (USDA RD) Rural-Business Cooperative Service
 - Rural Business Enterprise Grants
 - Rural Business Opportunity Grants
 - Intermediary Relending Program
- (DOC) Economic Development Administration
- (DHHS) Community Health Centers
- (HUD) Community Development Block Grant Program
- (HUD) HOME Investment Partnerships Program
- (HUD) Rural Housing and Economic Development Program
- (DOL) Community-based Job Training Grants
- (EPA) Brownfields Programs
- (EPA) Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund
- (EPA) Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund
- (SBA) Small Business Development Centers
- (SBA) MicroLoan Programs
- (Treasury) Community Development Financial Institutions Fund
 - New Markets Tax Credit.

*See glossary on page 35

A Northern Forest Action Agenda: Ten Recommendations

Regional Infrastructure programs fund telecommunications and transportation infrastructure enhancements, including broadband deployment and road, rail and air infrastructure in the region.

- (USDA RD) Rural Utilities Service
 - Water & Waste Disposal Program Grants
 - Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grants
 - Broadband Telecommunications Grants
- (DOT) Federal Aviation Administration
 - Airport Improvement Program
- (DOT) Federal Highway Administration
 - National Scenic Byways Program
 - Transportation Enhancements Program
 - Section 5311 Non-urbanized Area Formula Grant Program
- (DOC) Economic Development Administration

Ecosystem stewardship programs support private and public landowners and state and federal agencies in stewarding, monitoring and conserving the Northern Forest ecosystem

- (USDA FS) State & Private Forestry
 - Forest Stewardship Program
 - Forest Legacy
 - Urban and Community Forestry
 - Economic Action Programs
- (USDA FS) Forest and Rangeland Research
 - Northeastern States Research Cooperative
- (USDA) Resource Conservation and Development
- (DOI) Land and Water Conservation Fund



Photos, left: Jerry & Marcy Monkman; right: Ned Therrien

Putting the Strategy into Action

The Northern Forest Center, the North Country Council, members of the SEI Steering Committee and many other agencies, organizations and businesses are working to implement the recommendations of *Economic Resurgence in the Northern Forest*. In keeping with the guiding principles of the initiative, we are working together across boundaries and building on good work already in place at the local, state and sub-regional level.

More information about implementation of these recommendations is available from:

www.nfsei.net

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“The local/state partnership in the Adirondacks benefits the state’s natural resources and tourism as much as it helps the local economy. We need that same kind of partnership between the federal government and the communities of Northern Forest.”

Brian Houseal, Executive Director
Adirondack Council



Glossary of Federal Agency Acronyms

In order of appearance in the Federal Investment recommendations

USDA-RD	U.S. Dept. of Agriculture– Rural Development
DOC	U.S. Dept. of Commerce
DHHS	U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services
HUD	U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development
DOL	U.S. Dept. of Labor
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
SBA	U.S. Small Business Administration
Treasury	U.S. Dept. of the Treasury
DOT	U.S. Dept. of Transportation
USDA-FS	U.S. Dept. of Agriculture-Forest Service
USDA	U.S. Dept. of Agriculture
DOI	U.S. Dept. of the Interior

End Notes

- 1 Council on Competitiveness, 2005. *Measuring Regional Innovation*.
www.compete.org/publications/detail/212/measuring-regional-innovation
- 2 Northern Forest Lands Council 10th Anniversary Forum Final Report, sponsored by the North East State Foresters Association, April 25, 2005. *Recommendations for the Conservation of the Northern Forest*.
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- 3 Maine DOT and the Economic Development Research Group, 2007. *Northeast CanAm Connections: Integrating the Economy and Transportation*.
www.canamconnections.com
- 4 Northern Forest Biomass Energy Initiative, 2007. *Northern Forest Biomass Energy Action Plan, 2007*.
www.biomasscenter.org/pdfs/NFBEI.pdf

Select Photo Captions

Cover collage: Waterville, ME, and freight train (© Dean Abramson); cross-country skier, foliage, green certified harvest on Dartmouth College forest, art store in Maine, and Amey Farm in Pittsburg, NH (© Jerry & Marcy Monkman).

Page a: Ticonderoga Park in New York (© Carl Heilman, II); downtown Greenville, ME, and sustainable harvest in New Hampshire (© Jerry & Marcy Monkman).

Page c: Collecting sap on a farm in New Hampshire (© Ned Therrien).

Page d: Moosehead Lake as seen from the air above Rockwood, ME, eagle, Main Street St Johnsbury, VT, hardwood logs in Eden, VT (all © Jerry & Marcy Monkman).

Page 5, top: Aerial view of North Stratford, NH (© Jerry & Marcy Monkman); bottom: Fort Ticonderoga, NY (© Carl Heilman, II); bottom left: store in Greenville, ME (© Jerry & Marcy Monkman).

Page 6-7: Shoreline of Seboeis Lake near Millinocket, ME (© Jerry & Marcy Monkman).

Page 8: Rumford, ME (© Jerry & Marcy Monkman).

Page 10-11: Adirondack chairs, Blue Mountain Lake, NY (© Carl Heilman, II).

Page 12: Rangeley, ME (© Dean Abramson).

Page 14: Island Pond, VT (© Jerry & Marcy Monkman).

Page 15: Moose River west of Brassua Lake in Maine; scientists study an old growth hardwood forest in the Nature Conservancy's Big Reed Forest Reserve in Maine (© Jerry & Marcy Monkman).

Page 16: Assembling FM broadcast antenna components at Shively Labs in Bridgton, ME (John McKeith); lumber sawyer working from a computerized control booth (© Ned Therrien).

Page 17, top and bottom: A Northern Forest Canoe Trail information kiosk and a wind energy turbine (© Jerry & Marcy Monkman); middle: Fall harvest in New York (© Pat & Chuck Blackley).

Page 19: Farmland along the Connecticut River in Guildhall, VT, and Northumberland, NH (© Jerry & Marcy Monkman).

Page 26: Women's Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN) in Bethlehem, NH; hand crafted furniture, Maine WoodNet (© WoodNet).

Page 27: Field researchers measure canopy height on a tract of timberland in Kibby Township, ME (© Jerry & Marcy Monkman).

Page 28: Power lines on private forestland in Jefferson, NH; dam on Aziscohos Lake, ME (© Jerry & Marcy Monkman).

Page 29: Wood chips for fuel (© Ned Therrien).

Page 30: Bigelow Preserve, ME (© Jerry & Marcy Monkman).

Inside back cover: The view to the west from the summit of Old Speck Mountain, ME (© Jerry & Marcy Monkman).

Back cover collage: Freight train in Maine (© Dean Abramson); covered bridge in New Hampshire (© Ned Therrien); old growth red spruce in Wells, ME (© Jerry & Marcy Monkman); traditional basket making in the Adirondacks (© Carl Heilman, II); welcome sign in Berlin, NH, and the Israel River in Lancaster, NH (© Jerry & Marcy Monkman).

“The Sustainable Economy Initiative empowers the citizens of Northern Forest communities in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York to compete more effectively in the global economy while sustaining their quality of life in this vast natural environment.”

Stephen P. Barba,
Executive Director of University Relations
Plymouth State University

“The opportunity to participate in the SEI process put me in close touch with individuals and organizations throughout Maine and the Northern Forest who are deeply committed to common environmental, economic and social goals for the region. I now explain the work of Mahoosuc Land Trust as a part of a coordinated effort stretching across the rural areas of the entire Northeastern US.”

Steve Wight, President
Mahoosuc Land Trust

“Addressing issues regionally through SEI inspired me to bring the same thinking to the Trust. I expanded our Master Logger Third Party certification program so it’s available in seven states in the Northeast. This was a direct result of meeting folks and realizing the need for efficiencies in new models if we are going to sustain them.”

Sandy Brawders, Executive Director
Trust to Conserve Northeast Forestlands

“The SEI is the basis for a local project called ‘Coos Goes South’ and is used as the framework for discussing the project with New Hampshire Legislators. The Coos Action Plan, the Coos Branding Project, the Telecommunication Project and other examples demonstrate that the people of Coos are resilient, as reflected in our ability to adapt, our commitment to evolve, and our desire to be ingenious.”

James E. Tibbetts, President/CEO
First Colebrook Bank

“I find that I can bring the SEI learning and discussion into all my work. ...I can inform that work by being an integral part of these larger, more strategic discussions on the future of the Northern Forest economy.”

Robin Zinchuk, Executive Director
Bethel Area Chamber of Commerce

“Energy efficiency is a key part of SEI’s Renewable Energy recommendations, and one that CEI is seeking to incorporate in several affordable housing projects in Northern Forest communities in Maine.”

Keith Bisson, Project Developer
Rural Resources & Policy
Coastal Enterprises, Inc.

Sustainable Economy Initiative



**Northern
Forest
Center**

The Sustainable Economy Initiative was jointly managed by the North Country Council and the Northern Forest Center.

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