



Recommended Forest Policy Guidelines

For

Maine Forest Policy Makers & Industry Professionals

**Maine Forest Products Council
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Foreword



The decisions that policy makers and industry professionals make regarding the Maine Forest are critical not only for today but also for the state's long-term environmental and economic stability. In order to protect the decision-making process from the pressures of special short-term interests, we saw the need to provide a set of principles by which these parties may govern their actions and recommendations.

The future health of the Maine forest lies in a stable, long-term, performance-based approach to policy, rather than a prescriptive, reactionary or regulatory one. Each element in this document is integral to a productive, sustainable and responsible forest policy for Maine. Each element identifies overall objectives as well as indicators for success.

This is a summary of a work in progress; we welcome your comments, questions and suggestions. Contact The Maine Forest Products Council at (207) 622-9288 or write to MFPC, Policy Committee, 146 State Street, Augusta, ME 04330.



Maine forest policy should be . . .

1. Protective

Maine forests should be adequately monitored & managed to minimize damage by fire, insects, disease, theft and criminal trespass.

Indicators of success:

- ◆ *Annual protection and monitoring programs are adequately funded and broad in scope.*
- ◆ *Maine realizes and retains the lowest possible level in the number and severity of acres damaged by fire, insects or disease.*
- ◆ *Number of reported incidents and level of loss by theft or criminal trespass reaches and retains the lowest possible level, with a high percentage of remaining cases successfully prosecuted.*
- ◆ *Effective programs are in place to educate the public on the importance of forest protection.*

2. Focused on Productivity

Maine policy should create and promote an economic and regulatory environment which encourages optimal forest productivity, innovation, and utilization in a full range of markets.

Indicators of success:

- ◆ *Landowners are allowed to utilize the full range of silvicultural tools in order to meet their management objectives.*
- ◆ *Maine forest policies encourage continually-improving forest productivity, as monitored by the Maine Forest Service's regular sampling program and biannual State of the Forest Report.*
- ◆ *Maine policy actively promotes and rewards the development of innovative, value-added wood products, improved total recovery methods, and new industries to more fully utilize mill by-products.*
- ◆ *An informational/educational program is in place which helps landowners improve forest products utilization and informs them of marketing opportunities, product values and specifications.*



3. Long-term in Economic Focus

Maine taxation policy should be stable and predictable in order to encourage long-term ownership and investment in forestland and the forest products industry.

Indicators of success:

- ◆ *Maine retains current use taxation and quantifies its value to Maine via a detailed cost/benefit analysis of the current use tax policy. This analysis is compared to other jurisdictions and updated as necessary.*
- ◆ *The state's taxation policy provides incentives for investment in forestlands and manufacturing facilities, and reduces the tax burden for forest land ownership.*
- ◆ *Tax codes and policies change as little as possible from year to year.*

4. Grounded in Research

Maine forest policy should be supported by thorough research and expert analysis of current data.

Indicators of success:

- ◆ *Policy recommendations are backed by current, verifiable data from credible sources of information.*
- ◆ *The state is adequately funding and supporting the research necessary to make informed forest policy decisions.*
- ◆ *Maine's annual expenditures on forest R & D match the forest industry's relative importance to the state's economy.*
- ◆ *Maine policies support the continuation of leading-edge research programs to identify the impact of forest management practices on the diversity of all species and their habitats.*
- ◆ *Research reports are compiled, summarized, disseminated annually, and applied where appropriate.*

5. Sustainable

Maine policy should promote a sustainable flow of goods and services over the lifecycle of the forest.

Indicators of success:

- ◆ *Landowners and managers use evolving silvicultural knowledge to uphold a land stewardship ethic which integrates the management, growth, nurture, harvesting and reforestation of trees while conserving soil, air and water*



quality, wildlife and fish habitat, and recognizing public resources.

- ◆ *Landowners and managers maintain a long-term balance between harvest and growth over the lifecycle of the forest.*
- ◆ *The majority of public and private timberlands are voluntarily enrolled under forest management/certification programs.*
- ◆ *Small woodlot owners are adequately educated and receive adequate technical support in sustainable forest management.*
- ◆ *All forestlands not converted to other uses have an adequate level of acceptable growing stock within 5 years of harvest.*

6. Science-based

Maine policy should be based on proven scientific forestry principles, using the most current silvicultural tools, and supported by inventory analysis and forecasting.

Indicators of success:

- ◆ *All regulation is evaluated and enacted on the basis of professionally accepted principles of scientific forest management.*
- ◆ *The Maine Forest Service provides a biannually updated “State of the Forest” report that includes state-of-the-art information about long-term growth and yield, annual silvicultural activities and harvest yield, forest inventory data, projected future wood supply potential, and other forest-related information.*
- ◆ *Most of Maine’s private and public forest acreages are under professional forest management.*

7. Respectful of Private Landowners’ Rights

Maine public policies should support the landowners’ ability to achieve ownership objectives and should respect and uphold private forestland ownership.

Indicators of success:

- ◆ *Maine forest policies, including laws, regulations, zoning, and public land acquisitions, provide the maximum possible freedom and minimum possible burden to private landowners.*
- ◆ *Each new forest policy proposal includes a cost-benefit analysis which specifically address how it will affect*



landowners.

- ◆ *Maine forest policy actively encourages and rewards private initiatives, such as sustainable forestry programs, Best Management Practices and other accepted methods of responsible stewardship.*

8. Mindful of the Public Resources

The forest policies of Maine should promote cooperative, outcome-based stewardship of the public resources of air, water, fish and wildlife.

Indicators of success:

- ◆ *Forest stewardship is enhanced primarily through voluntary, cooperative, outcome-based initiatives that stimulate and reward creative resource management.*
- ◆ *Baseline regulatory safety net remains in place to safeguard critical public resources.*
- ◆ *The majority of landowners voluntarily participate in cooperative wildlife agreements.*
- ◆ *Water quality data is systematically collected and disseminated, contributing to the ongoing refinement of Best Management Practices.*

9. Supportive of a Quality Workforce

Maine forest policies should encourage training in safety and professional practices among forest industry workers, and assist in providing the forest products industry with a quality Maine workforce through supporting vocational training for the forest industry.

Indicators of success:

- ◆ *A high percentage of forest workers are “Certified Logging Professional Program: or equivalently trained, with refresher training taking place regularly.*
- ◆ *Accident rates for forestry workers reach and retain lowest possible levels.*
- ◆ *Maine’s vocational schools offer programs to meet the forest industry’s demand for trained workers.*

10. Conducive to Public/Private Cooperation Regarding Recreational Access

Maine forest policies should support traditional recreational opportunities and respect landowners’ rights to manage recreational use and to control access to their forestlands.



Indicators of success:

- ◆ *Landowners, sports and recreational organizations, and government work cooperatively to manage recreation on private and public land.*
- ◆ *Recreational users consistently treat the land and resources with respect.*
- ◆ *Laws are enacted to remove landowner liability for recreational use of their lands.*
- ◆ *Recreational users have the same or greater access to Maine's public lands as they do to private lands.*

11. Committed to Maine's Economic Heritage as a Producer of Quality Forest Products

Maine forest policy should protect and preserve Maine's traditional forest-based economy and culture by encouraging the health and growth of Maine wood-products industries, supporting forest-dependent rural communities, and facilitating the free flow of raw materials and finished products.

Indicators of success:

- ◆ *The total value of products shipped from Maine's working forest and wood-using plants reaches and retains optimum sustainable levels as measured by Maine's gross *domestic product*.*
- ◆ *Maine policy recognizes and supports the infrastructure and public systems necessary for forest-based industries and communities to thrive.*
- ◆ *Public and private investment in wood-using industry facilities reaches and retains optimum levels.*

12. Proactive in Education

Maine's educational system should impart factual information to the public about the importance of Maine's forest and forest economy to the entire state, and support the Maine forest products industry through appropriate higher education programs.

Indicators of success:

- ◆ *Maine school curricula include a component on the history and use of Maine's natural resources.*



- ◆ *A high percentage of Maine certified teachers have access to and participate in professional development programs on the history and use of Maine's natural resources.*

- ◆ *The state funds and maintains undergraduate and graduate programs in forest resources, all of which maintain SAF (Society of American Foresters) accreditation.*

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