SLIDES: Changes in Timberland Ownership: The New Hampshire Experience

Paul Doscher

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Changes in Timberland Ownership

The New Hampshire Experience -
By Paul Doscher
Society for the Protection of NH Forests
About the Forest Society

• Founded 1901
• Programs in land protection; forest management; advocacy, research and education
• Own 38,000 acres of land, mostly managed forest but 30% is natural area
• Hold 600+ conservation easements on 80,000 acres of mostly private land
New Hampshire’s Changing Landscape

Population Growth
Land Use Conversion
and Resource Fragmentation
in the Granite State

2005 Update

A Research Project of the Society for the Protection of NH Forests
1999 New Hampshire’s Changing Landscape

New Hampshire’s Changing Landscape
Population Growth, Land Use Conversion, and Resource Fragmentation in the Granite State

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November 1999

2005

New Hampshire’s Changing Landscape

Population Growth and Land Use Changes: What They Mean for the Granite State

Prepared by:
New Hampshire’s Changing Landscape

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Population Growth

- New Hampshire has been the fastest growing state in New England and the Northeast for the last 40 years.

- From 1990 to 2004, we grew twice as fast as the rest of the region, at 17.2%.

- We are projected to add 358,000 new residents between 2000 and 2025, an increase of more than 28%.

- 80% of this growth will be absorbed in the four southeastern counties, on only one-third of the state’s land base.
Where is New Hampshire Growing?

Projected Population Increase 2000 to 2025

Total Increase = 357,200

Rockingham 80,750
Strafford 33,210
Belknap 19,500
Grafton 20,530
Merrimack 48,560
Hillsborough 101,680
Cheshire 17,770
Sullivan 12,430

Source: NH Office of Energy & Planning
Forestland Today in New Hampshire

- N.H. is still the 2nd most forested state in the nation after Maine.
- But we have been losing about 17,500 acres of forest cover per year since the early 1980’s.
- Estimates based on satellite data show N.H. has dropped to 81.1% forested from 87% in 1983.
- Modeling of population growth against forest land decline predicts a further drop to 79.1% by 2025.
- A 2% decline amounts to 180 sq miles
**Forest Blocks**

A “forest block” is an area of forest that is not broken up by roads, other land uses, or large water features.

A 500-acre block is big enough:

- To support significant wildlife habitat
- To protect water quality
- To allow for economic forest management
- To foster a remote recreation experience
Projected Changes to Forest Land 2001 - 2025

Loss of Forest Land (acres)
- 0 - 400 (stable to low)
- 400 - 600
- 600 - 800 (moderate)
- 800 - 1,000
- > 1,000 (high)

Loss of Forest Land (percent)
- 0 - 2.5%
- 2.5 - 5%
- 5 - 7.5%
- 7.5 - 10%
- > 10%

Community Forests: June, 2005
Trends in NH Timberland

- All large industrial ownerships have been sold as of 2004
- TIMOs have acquired most of these ownerships
- Some major conservation projects have been completed with public and private funds
- Most TIMO lands remain unrestricted and some have changed hands more than once
Community Forests: June, 2005

- Former Industrial Timber Lands in northern NH
Trends in NH Timberland

• Most of the state is in smaller tracts of non-industrial (non-TIMO) forest land
• More than 80,000 landowners – average parcel size is under 45 acres
• Most of the land conservation transactions have been south of the White Mountains NF - but most of the conserved acres are north
• Land Trusts and municipalities have become the dominant participants transactions in the south
• Forest Legacy is the dominant participant north
Examples of recent big projects

- Forest Legacy: CT Lakes – 171,000 acres (FLP, NAWCA, state, private fund)
- Forest Legacy: Randolph Town Forest – 10,000 acres from Hancock (town funds and LCHIP)
- Forest Legacy: Errol town forest -5,300 acres ($2.2 million town bond, LCHIP and FLP)
- Forest Legacy: Freedom “Trout Pond” -2,200 acres (town and private funds and LCHIP)
Examples of Community Forest projects “South of the Notches”

- Reney Forest – Grantham 450 acres – owned by SPNHF, funded with town and private funds

- Green Mountain – Freedom – 650 acres acquired by SPNHF with town and private funds (adds to existing 1,100 acre forest)

- Warner – multiple tracts in the Mink Hills – conserved by CEs held by SPNHF – town funds used for the purchase – town holds executory interest in the CEs

- Overall, 26% of NH is now conservation land, but....
How Much Land Protection is Enough?

New Hampshire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Reps*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1,235,786</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>41st</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>1,109,252</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>40th</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>920,610</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>42nd</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*U.S. Representatives for 2002

Center of the population
This map shows the point where the state would balance if everyone weighed the same and stood at home. USA TODAY calculated this point for each state for 2000 using a method supplied by the Census Bureau.

= 2000 center of the population

Each quadrant of the state represents 25% of the total population
Emerging trends:

• Increasing competition for FLP
• Declining state participation (LCHIP)
• Increasing municipal initiatives (bonds, etc) - mostly in the southern region
• Growth of state and regional land trusts continues
• Regional and local open space planning efforts are expanding dramatically
• Example: Quabbin to Cardigan Collaborative
Q2C Study Area

- NH & MA
- 85 communities
- 2,960 sq. miles
Q2C Focus Areas