

# Communities and Forests

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The Sustainable Woods Cooperative makes value-added products from lower-grade wood, such as this barn floor of "character" aspen. See story, page 6. Photo courtesy of SWC.

## Financing the new forestry

by Steve Buckley and Jen Schaffer

On April 2, 2002, the San Francisco-based conservation group Trust for Public Land (TPL) announced it had purchased roughly 171,500 acres in northern New Hampshire from International Paper. The deal, which received praise from Gov. Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire as "a transfer to future generations," highlights two significant trends in private forest management.

On the one hand, industrial landholders have increased the rate at which they are divesting themselves of their timber holdings. According to a Pinchot Institute for Conservation report prepared in 2000, "12-15 million acres of industrial timberlands will be transferred out of industry ownership during the next decade." This massive divestiture raises the likelihood that these lands will be developed for real estate and lost for both forest production or ecological conservation. On the other hand, the TPL acquisition illustrates one of many innovative financial strategies being used to keep private forests lands open and in production.

### A new class of investors

The TPL deal involves an interesting mix of financial strategies. The state of New Hampshire initially put up \$2.5 million, with the Nature Conservancy adding another \$5.5 million. While TPL maintains a National Revolving Fund for purchases of open space, the Connecticut Headwaters \$32.7 million price tag was too high for the fund to absorb.

TPL supplemented the available money with low-interest loans from Bank of America and Wainright Bank in Boston, a zero-interest loan from the Open Space Conservancy, and funding from the MacArthur and Mellon Foundations. An early interest was expressed by Lyme Timber, which in the end provided a \$12 million deposit on the land the company will ultimately work to harvest sustainably.

Erin Rowland of TPL says the International Paper sale represents a new class of investors who recognize the permanent attributes of the land and also see the importance of maintaining value-added wood processing as one component of a healthy diverse local economy.

One such investor, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), recently purchased the Kona Hema Preserve on the island of Hawai'i to protect a Koa forest. The prized Koa tree is used for fine furniture and wood carving. Sam Gon, the Director of Science for TNC's Hawaii Field Office, says he sees this purchase as a way to explore "what it would take to become a sustainable forest." Had this land not been purchased by TNC, Gon says it would have been developed or turned into crop land. Gon hopes that as this land is restored it can serve as a model where small landowners in the community can learn more about sustainable uses of the forest. The University of Hawaii and local community colleges plan to implement research on this land with their students.

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**Listserv:**

The Committee's listserv, communityforestry@lists.nau.edu, is a bulletin-board type list where committee members post weekly federal policy updates, announcements of upcoming workshops and conferences, job announcements, and related notices.

Subscribers may also post questions or comments for general discussion. However, use of the listserv for extended debate is discouraged and personal attacks are not tolerated.

To subscribe to the listserv, send the following message to listserv@lists.nau.edu:

subscribe communityforestry NAME

(Type your first and last name in place of "NAME")

## Communities and private forest lands

by Ann Moote

This issue of Communities and Forests focuses on private forest lands, which, like public forests, are of concern to local communities for both economic and ecological reasons. Yet community forestry on private lands faces some unique challenges.

Rapidly shifting land ownership in the 1980s and 1990s has led to forest fragmentation and reduced timber supply to local communities. When forestland is privately owned, however, communities have little voice in the future of their landscape. Private forest landowners face additional challenges, such as tree theft (*see 'Don't be a tree theft victim!,' page 5*).

### The problem

Many large wood products firms are divesting their timberland to gain cash flow and flexibility in the marketplace. New kinds of timberland ownership often leave communities wondering about their future: Some of the land changing hands is lost to development, and several wood products companies have added real estate development divisions to maximize returns from land sales.

Even when parcels remain forested, low economic returns on forest products offer little incentive to invest in the long-term improvements that are critical to good forest management. In some areas, timber and other forest products are being harvested at rates higher than the forests can sustain in the long term. Liquidation cutting is sometimes associated with changes in land ownership as well.

Ecological values like biodiversity are affected by land ownership changes as well. As both the acreage and rate of turnover in small private land ownerships increases, it becomes ever more difficult to manage for ecosystem-wide values like critical wildlife habitat.

### Possible solutions?

Some communities are experimenting with new financial mechanisms for purchasing conservation easements on forested lands to ensure their ecological and economic values will be maintained (*see 'Financing the new forestry,' page 1*). The 2002 Farm Bill creates additional programs to help private forestland owners pay for sustainable forest management (*see 'New assistance for forestland owners,' page 2*), and new legislation before Congress would create tax-exempt revenue bonds to allow nonprofits to raise funds for forest land conservation based on the forest's future revenue potential (*see page 7*).

In the Midwest and Appalachia, private forest landowners have banded together to form landowner cooperatives to encourage sustainable forest management practices and improve economic returns (*see 'Landowner cooperatives,' page 6, and 'Cooperatives take root in South' in Communities and Forests, Winter 2000-2001*).

A new Communities Committee task group on private lands is exploring these and other incentives to help communities adjust to rapid changes in land ownership and address ecological and economic concerns.

*Ann Moote is coordinator of the Community-based Forest Restoration Program at the Ecological Restoration Institute in Flagstaff, Arizona and chairs the Communities Committee's communications task group.*

## New assistance for private landowners

by Christina Cromley

In early May, Congress passed and President George W. Bush signed the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (HR 2646). Commonly known as the "Farm Bill," this Act contains a forestry title providing new programs to help the nation's nearly 10 million nonindustrial private forestland (NIPF) owners practice sustainable forestry.

"The Congress's recognition that working, family-owned forestlands are vital to the health of our economy and our environment is recognition that is long overdue," says William H. Banzhaf, executive vice-president of the Society of American Foresters.

### Forest Land Enhancement Program

The new farm bill creates a Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP) "to establish a coordinated and cooperative Federal, State, and local sustainable forestry program for the establishment, management, maintenance, enhancement, and restoration of forests on nonindustrial private forest land."

The program gives State Foresters new resources to help private landowners manage non-industrial forest lands—most notably a cost-share program for landowners. FLEP will fund forest management activities like sustainable growth and management for timber production, invasive species control, hazardous fuels reduction, and development of forest management plans. It will also fund a number of environmental practices for water quality protection, energy conservation, and habitat preservation and restoration.

To be eligible for the program, a NIPF owner must develop and implement a management plan. Eligible forest landowners may receive up to 75% of the total cost of implementing their management plan's approved activities and practices. The Farm Bill requires that FLEP receive \$100,000 million from May 2002 until September 30, 2007, to guarantee that cost-share assistance will be available to landowners.

FLEP replaces the Stewardship Incentives Program and the Forestry Incentives Program, both repealed by this Farm Bill.

### Community fire protection

The Community and Private Land Fire Assistance Program (CPLFAP) contains a new initiative aimed at addressing the risk of destructive wildfire to communities. This program is in part a response to the record 2000 fire season and to the increasing risk to life and property in communities adjacent to forests.

CPLFAP includes a number of provisions related to forest restoration. It supports multi-resource, landscape-level fire protection projects on federal and non-federal lands, increases outreach to communities and landowners to encourage the establishment of defensible space around homes and properties, and supports invasive species management and restoration projects. The bill also addresses the need for a specialized wood products industry that can remove restoration waste from the forests by allowing money to be spent on wood utilization improvements and developing and expanding markets for wood products.

This program is authorized at \$35 million annually through 2007 and will be implemented through state forestry organizations in cooperation with federal, state, and local agencies under the National Fire Plan. A related initiative, Cooperative

Management Related to Wildfire Threats, reinforces the need for intergovernmental cooperation by directing the Forest Service to work with state foresters on wildfire and forest management issues.

### Landowner education

A third program aimed at private forestland owners is the Sustainable Forestry Outreach Initiative that amends the Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA). This program is designed to educate landowners on the benefits of sustainable forestry and programs available to them. Authorization for RREA was increased from \$15 million to \$30 million through 2007.

### Conservation incentives

In addition to forestry, the Conservation Title contains a number of programs that non-industrial private forest landowners can use to finance sustainable forest management practices. Among these is the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), which provides incentive payments to assist landowners with conservation and other environmental improvements. EQIP was reauthorized and funded at \$1.3 billion annually.

### The ones that didn't make it

A number of forestry provisions were dropped as the House and Senate worked through differences between their bills. Among the more controversial provisions was one that would have expanded the Forest Service's stewardship contracting pilot program.

Unresolved issues related to stewardship contracting include questions about how the Forest Service can work more collaboratively, how to engage communities in project planning and on-the-ground work, and what lessons have been learned from existing pilot projects and monitoring efforts. Many community forestry practitioners hope the debate over stewardship contracting authorities will encourage Congress to continue further dialogue to address unresolved issues.

Other provisions dropped due to irreconcilable differences between the House and Senate include a biomass-to-energy grant program, a competitive grants program for nonprofit organizations that support sustainable forestry cooperatives, forest-fire research centers, a watershed assistance program to expand forest stewardship and address water-quality degradation and other watershed issues on non-federal forestland, and a suburban and community forestry and open-space initiative aimed at reducing sprawl and maintaining working forests in suburban environments.

### A victory for forestry

Simply having a forestry title included in the Farm Bill took tremendous effort and is a victory for the forestry community. Congress passes a "farm bill" that authorizes certain food and agricultural programs every five years or so. Forestry is not always included. The 1990 Farm Bill contained a forestry title for the first time, while the 1996 Farm Bill contained few provisions relevant to forestry.

*Christina Cromley is Director of the Forest Policy Center at American Forests.*

I was raised in a small mining community in the Superior National Forest, on the edge of the Boundary Waters Wilderness Area, so I gained a love for forests, wilderness, and rural communities at a young age. Although I majored in English as an undergraduate, my passion for forests and rural communities led me first to forest policy work and then to community forest policy.

### National forest policy

After I earned my master's at the Yale School of Forestry and doctorate at the University of Minnesota, I looked for a job outside of academia where I could apply my forest policy and economics expertise. In 1988, I joined American Forests, a Washington, D.C.-based citizens' group that does a lot of outreach to the non-professional forestry audience.

In my first five or six years at American Forests, I worked exclusively inside the beltway, addressing policy issues with professional societies, interest groups, congressional staffers, and agencies. I helped develop new national legislation for urban forestry and the Forest Stewardship and Forest Legacy programs that were enacted in the 1990 Farm Bill.

By the mid-1990s, around the time of the Seventh American Forest Congress, we at American Forests were working on better defining our niche in forest policy. Harkening back to American Forests' roots as a citizens' organization, we started traveling around the country and talking to community leaders working in forestry. Through that process we developed partnerships with a number of community leaders and visionaries who work with us to bring the lessons and voices of community foresters into the Washington, D.C. policy environment.

### Rural communities and policy makers

The Community-based Forestry Program at American Forests works to bridge communities and national entities in the realm of forest policy. We do that in several ways. For instance, we develop and share information about community forestry at both the community and national levels. We stay abreast of Congressional, interest group, and agency activities, conduct policy analyses, keep our partners informed on issues of importance to them, and help develop policy strategies with our partners.

We also provide national policy education, teaching community leaders about the national policy processes and bringing them to Washington to participate in congressional briefings, oversight hearings, and workshops. For those who work in national policy—congressional staffers, interest groups, and agencies—we conduct educational field tours, bringing them out into rural America to learn about forestry issues on the ground and see economic and social realities in communities.

This program has worked in part because it is not an advocacy program but a service that helps our community partners develop and articulate their own views on national policy.

### Reaching out to urbanites

Around 1998, the Communities Committee's steering committee started talking about rural community leaders' desire to engage with people who live in urban areas. There was a concern that our policy program wasn't reaching urbanites, and an interest in reaching out to those larger constituencies in order to shift forest policy.

We also realized that there were a number of issues that link urban and rural communities, like the need for greater collaboration among landowners and the emerging focus on watersheds, landscape-scale forest management, and forest fragmentation. The rural, forested communities in New York State and northern California that provide water to New York City and Los Angeles are particularly vivid examples of rural and urban community interdependence.

We developed the Urban-Rural Initiative at American Forests to link with urban forestry groups and to reach political voting majorities and marketplaces and get urbanites thinking about the impacts of their voting and consumption practices.

We have had wonderful success in realizing the vision of urban-rural linkages with local partners who already had a similar vision. In the Seattle area, for instance, we were a catalyst in the creation of a partnership involving two local non-profit groups, the U.S. Forest Service, and American Forests.

This partnership has developed a program of activities with underserved schools that is a model for escalating education and skill-training opportunities. The partnership has resulted in some significant education and stewardship funding that will help tie underserved urban communities to restoration activities on public and private forest lands.

In a similar effort in Baltimore, we partnered with local non-profit groups such as the Parks and People Foundation and Civic Works, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop education and skill-training opportunities for inner-city youth, including an EPA-funded brownfields restoration job-training program. Both the Seattle and Baltimore programs may be candidates for EPA environmental justice pilot status.

### Need to ramp up efforts

I tend to look at community forestry from a policy perspective. In the policy arena, we've had some success in getting recognition of the need to support community capacity-building and forest stewardship, but we must work harder to get across the message that communities need help becoming and staying engaged in stewardship and developing sustainable enterprises.

We've done a good job working with a small number of influential policy makers, but now we have to ramp up our efforts to sustain community forestry at the regional and national levels. We've got to make sure our ideas are getting realized. I think that will require the development of a national community forestry platform and a national campaign that clearly lays out our vision and what it will take to realize that vision. We need to create regional structures for community support, and effectively coordinate these efforts at the national level.



*Gerry Gray is Vice President for Policy at American Forests. Photo by Jane Braxton Little.*

## Don't be a tree-theft victim!

by Jim Beil

Are my trees still there? Why should any forest landowner have to ask himself that question? Unfortunately, in this day and age the prices paid for good quality "timber trees" makes for a lucrative, illegal market in the sale of logs.

If you own a woodlot and don't live nearby, or even if you do live near your woodlot but go away on an extended vacation, you may be a target for tree theft. It doesn't take much effort for a skilled, unscrupulous person with the proper equipment to drift onto your land, cut some valuable trees, drag them to the roadside, and truck them away to a sawmill for pure profit. There go years of planning for that ever-elusive sustainable woodlot. Oftentimes skidder-tractor ruts in the soil and damaged trees are all that is left behind, plus the stumps and some sawdust.

Prevention and vigilance are worth your efforts. Be sure your wood lot boundaries are properly surveyed and marked with signs or painted boundary lines. In some states, it is wise to record your property survey with the town. Know your neighbors on all sides. Learn if they plan a timber sale on their own property and who is harvesting their trees. Walk the property line with the neighbors and if possible their timber harvester.

Don't sign away or accept payment for trees on your land without first getting advice from a professional forester. Have a management plan, complete with a timber inventory, for your property. A tree management plan is your proof of what was there and what you were trying to do with it over the tenure of your ownership.

If your trees are stolen, pursue the culprit in court. Don't settle for the value of the trees as if they were still standing there (the stumpage value)—go for cleanup costs to your land. The cost to clean up the mess may be extensive and the thief should pay the price, not you. Prosecute to the fullest extent of the law. A few select trees may be more valuable than your family car—or house, for that matter. And it is simpler to replace a stolen car. There is no guarantee that you'll be able to replace valuable trees over the next 30-40 years or more! Ask others if the same thing has happened to them; don't let your pride or ego stand in the way. Consult with local law enforcement officials, the local professional forester, and any organized forest landowner groups you can find or join.

Owning forest land means not only a personal financial investment but a societal commitment. Such ownership is an investment in the health of our environment. Air, water, soil and scenic values are all adversely affected by a timber theft, no matter how big or small it is. We owe it to ourselves and to society to be vigilant, good stewards of the

forest lands entrusted to us, the private forest landowners of this country!

*Jim Beil is the New York State Assistant State Forester, a member of the New York Forest Owners Association and the Society of American Foresters. He serves on the steering committee of the Communities Committee of the Seventh American Forest Congress.*

## The Forest Stewardship Council

by Lisa Swann

*Editor's note: The following Viewpoint article was submitted in response to the articles, 'Forest certification: On shaky ground?' and 'Who certifies?', both published in the Spring 2002 issue of Communities and Forests.*

Founded in 1993, the FSC is comprised of more than 500 individual, corporate and institutional members from over 50 countries. FSC's membership includes forest product and forest management companies as well as major environmental groups including The Nature Conservancy, World Wildlife Fund and the National Wildlife Federation. In a market that is becoming crowded with industry-owned and government-sponsored schemes, FSC prevails as the "gold standard" for independent, voluntary forest management certification.

The FSC Principles and Criteria make up a "three-legged stool," whose legs represent its economic, social, and environmental membership chambers. The FSC was the first global system to recognize that forestry cannot be sustained on the landscape without each of these elements being in balance.

Forestry operations are ultimately dependent on a healthy ecosystem in order to continue to harvest timber and other goods and services from the forest. As most ecologists recognize, humans today are far from fully understanding the complex interactions of living and non-living elements that make up a healthy ecosystem. The FSC Principles, therefore, are designed to maintain all the pieces of the puzzle.

FSC-certified management also encourages local experts to contribute to designing regional certification standards. This regional expertise, combined with a healthy respect for the native ecosystem and its processes, is meant to maintain a mosaic of managed timberlands that are healthy and productive, that can support local communities economically and socially, and can sustain critical environmental links among and between protected and urban areas across the increasingly complex landscape.

*Lisa Swann is Communications Director of the Forest Stewardship Council's U.S. office.*



by Jen Schaffer

Paul Bader designed and built sawmills before becoming coordinator of the Kickapoo Woods Cooperative in early 2001. He now works to educate co-op members about forest health and management practices that will help bring degraded forests to a healthier state so they can be harvested sustainably. "Call me crazy. I don't know why I do it," says Bader with a laugh when asked why he took the job, adding, "I have always had management practices on my own land, and I thought it was good for the community."

Forest cooperatives have fluctuated in and out of popularity over the last century, but the past decade has seen a significant growth in new co-ops. "There are probably 20 to 25 forestry co-ops and associations in the United States, using several different models," says E.G. Nadeau, director of Research, Planning and Development for Cooperative Development Services. "One size doesn't fit all. Different communities need different options."

### Economy of scale

The Western Upper Peninsula Forest Improvement District (WUPFID) was the first forest cooperative of its kind in the United States, beginning in 1985 as a State of Michigan-backed initiative. Now with over 900 members owning about 150,000 acres, WUPFID focuses on pooling resources to reach a larger market for raw wood products. The co-op consists primarily of private, non-industrial land owners, though some government entities, such as counties, also have land in the co-op (*see* Communities and Forests, *Spring 2002*).

### Certification & value-added products

Sustainable Woods Cooperative in Lone Rock, Wisconsin focuses on the production of value-added products like wood floors and decking along with some raw material. Sustainable Woods also works to help its members become Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) or Smartwood certified.

One of the largest challenges facing forest landowners in Wisconsin is past forest 'high-grading', where loggers extracted the top-quality wood and left degraded forests with only low-value timber. Sustainable Woods is able to provide value to the lower-grade material by harvesting it from a number of individual

properties at once and marketing it through the co-op. Last year, Sustainable Woods had a wood-products revenue of nearly \$140,000 and according to Kilmer, "It looks like we are going to have another good year and pass those numbers."

Though she acknowledges that consumers may find slightly lower prices at a larger, national-chain lumberyard, Kilmer says some customers buy exclusively from Sustainable Woods. "Woodworkers come to us when they can't find what they are looking for at [a chain]," says Kilmer. "We have one woodworker who will buy only from us because he used to be a chemist and knows that our wood is not treated."

### Landowner education

The Kickapoo Woods Cooperative, on the other hand, has put its initial efforts into education rather than certification or even production.

"Our biggest draw is our workshops, showing people how [the forest] could be changed with active management," says Bader. "We need to convince our members that they have to invest in their land for the future. That isn't easy." Bader reminds members that the economic benefits may not be immediate, or come even in their lifetimes, but "are for their grandchildren."

Rather than seeking capital to establish its own processing facilities, Kickapoo Woods Cooperative plans to work with established industry. Nor is the co-op urging its members to become FSC-certified, although the cooperative will require that its members have an approved management plan before any harvesting can take place on their land. Given current market conditions, Bader says, certified wood is not economically viable. "When someone is building a house it comes down to the bottom line," he says, and the expense of maintaining certification isn't recovered in the marketplace.

### Gaining acceptance takes time

The Lake States Region in particular seems to be a hotbed of new forest landowner cooperatives. In other parts of the country, landowners are more cautious about joining cooperatives.

Eric Kingsley, Vice President of Innovative Natural Resource Solutions, recently participated in a feasibility study for

a land-owner forest cooperative in northern New Hampshire. That effort fell apart when organizers determined a co-op would not be viable in the "live-free-or-die" state.

"Part of it must be cultural," Kingsley says, noting that the Midwest tends to see more success in community action. While Midwesterners are familiar with co-ops, in particular agricultural ones, they are not a familiar business model in other parts of the country.

The Federation of Southern Cooperatives Land Assistance Fund, which is working to unite small landowners in parts of the South, has experienced similar resistance to the co-op idea. Amadou Diop of the Foundation's Mandingo Legacy Forest Program says most landowners he works with own between one and sixty acres of forest and have little to no forest management experience or education. As a result, "they get very little money from the forests" says Diop. The Mandingo program is teaching landowners about the many advantages of forming a cooperative, such as improved forest management and greater economic clout. "Our main problem is education," Diop says. "Most of these people don't have any idea what a co-op is."

### An attractive concept

Forest landowner cooperatives hold out the promise of not only returning ecological integrity to the land but also promoting sustainable forest harvesting and healthier local economies. This promise is starting to attract attention from governmental and private funding sources.

Last year, Sustainable Woods Cooperative, along with partner cooperatives Kickapoo Woods Cooperative and Hiawatha Cooperative, were awarded a \$330,000 grant by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The 2.5-year grant will provide for market development, member recruitment, new technology, and coordination among the three Wisconsin cooperatives. In 2000, the Mandingo Legacy Forestry Program was awarded a five-year grant from the Ford Foundation for its outreach effort. Other communities around the country are watching to see if cooperatives live up to their promise.

*Jen Schaffer is a research assistant at the Ecological Restoration Institute in Flagstaff, Arizona.*

## Publications and web sites

**Farm Bill Update.** For an in-depth look at the 2002 Farm Security and Rural Investment Act and its potential impact on forestry projects and initiatives, visit the Pinchot Institute for Conservation's web site at <http://pinchot.org/pic/farmbill/Legislation.html>.

**Landowner Assistance Programs online.** The USDA Forest Service's National Homepage for Landowner Assistance Programs provides details on Forest Legacy and other agency programs that help private landowners protect and manage their forests. <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/loa.htm>.

**Forestry Landowner Cooperatives.** The Forest Service North Central Research Station's *Forestry Landowner Cooperative Update* provides a two-page status report on the private landowner cooperatives emerging across the nation, with literature and web site references for more information. It is available online at <http://www.ncrs.fs.fed.us/4803/Highlights.htm>. Hard copies are available from Pam Jakes at 651-649-5163 or at USDA Forest Service, North Central Research Station, 1992 Folwell Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108.

**The Redwood Forest Foundation, Inc.** RFFI is a private non-profit, Section 501(c)3 organization whose purpose is to secure funds for and acquire, protect, restore and manage forestlands for the long-term public benefit of the region's citizens. RFFI bids on timberlands in Mendocino, Humboldt, and Sonoma counties in California. Visit the RFFI web site at <http://www.rffi.org>.

**Evergreen Forest Trust.** (EFT) is a non-profit corporation created by regional business, environmental, government, and academic interests to meet the public's desire to permanently protect forests from development and sprawl while maintaining the economic benefits of forestry. EFT acquires, manages, and protects forestland in Washington state. Contact Evergreen Forest Trust at 206-686-2992 or at [eft@cofen.com](mailto:eft@cofen.com) or visit their web site at <http://www.evergreenforesttrust.org/>.

**International Model Forest Network Web site.** The Canadian model forest program network has grown to include 30 model forests in 15 countries around the world and a goal of international cooperation on sustainable forestry. <http://www.idrc.ca>

*Financing, continued from page 1*

### Public-private collaboration

The U.S. Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program created in the 1990 Farm Bill provides yet another mechanism local communities can use to keep private forest lands open and in sustainable production. Forest Legacy contributes money to help buy development rights on a parcel of land or buy the land outright. When Forest Legacy funds are used, at least 25% of the total money used must come from local partners (often non-profits) and states.

In December 2001, the town of Randolph, New Hampshire utilized Forest Legacy dollars and an array of other funding to purchase just over 10,000 acres, creating a community forest. The town received several major grants, \$250,000 from the state of New Hampshire, and contributions from over 200 private contributors to raise the \$1.4 million dollars to purchase the land from TPL. TPL bought the land the previous year to prevent it from being purchased by industrial or development entities. This land in northern part of the state sits between two areas of the White Mountain National Forest and will connect over 800,000 acres of conserved forest.

### Community forestry bonds

On the eastern edge of Seattle, in the foothills of the Cascades, is a piece of land twice the size of the city itself. Under an agreement with Weyerhaeuser, the non-profit Evergreen Forest Trust plans to buy that piece of land for \$185 million using a community forestry bond, a new concept in the financing of conservation purchases.

Pioneered by the forestry investment services company U.S. Forest Capital, the proposed community forestry bond now before Congress is a variation on the tax-exempt revenue bond used by non-profit corporations like hospitals and higher education. The forestry bond would allow non-profit conservation corporations to raise money for the purchase of land by using the future revenue of the forest to maintain its credit rating. In the case of the Evergreen Forest, this means the forest would be managed for not only conservation values but also sustainable timber harvesting.

Jim McCauley, the timberland investment manager of The Campbell Group of Portland, Oregon, the company responsible for managing the

Evergreen Forest once the deal closes, suggests the agreement, "gives us a chance to physically manage the forests and provide many services," allowing community foresters to take the "additional step beyond basic stewardship."

Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and Congresswoman Jennifer Dunn (R-WA) have introduced legislation that would amend the 1986 tax code to legalize the community forestry bond. McCauley says that once the community forestry bond has been introduced for a vote there "should be smooth sailing. Most Congressmen see it as a way to resolve land use conflicts and still be able to generate revenue."

Tom Tuchmann of U.S. Forest Capital says community forestry bonds are about "creating a financing vehicle for community forestry to take place. For the first time," he adds, "you are going to have decision making at the level of the community foresters."

*Steve Buckley and Jen Schaffer are research assistants at the Ecological Research Institute in Flagstaff, Arizona.*

# Communities and Forests

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## Upcoming Events

**Annual Meeting of the National Network Forest Practitioners.** November 6-9, 2002, Pray, Montana. For more information about the meeting or to suggest topics send email to [info@nnfp.org](mailto:info@nnfp.org).

**Firewise Communities Workshops.** September 10-12, 2002 in Albuquerque, New Mexico; September 24-26, 2002 in Bolton Landing, New York; October 23-25, 2002 in Norman, Oklahoma. The workshops teach participants how to protect their communities from wildland fire loss by engaging local agencies, associations, and private citizens. Participants receive planning tools and programs. For more information visit <http://www.firewise.org/communities>.

**Rocky Mountain Summit: Sustaining Ecosystems and Their People.** September 22-25, 2002, Grouse Mountain Lodge, Whitefish, Montana. Major themes of the summit include human dimensions of mountain cultures and ecosystems, sustainable mountain development, and mountain ecosystems and resources. For more information, contact Julia Rodriguez at 573-882-7458 or visit the conference web site at <http://www.cares.missouri.edu/rms2002/>.

**World Forestry Congress.** September 21-28, 2003, Quebec City, Canada. Mark your calendars now for this global forestry conference held just once every six years. Community foresters are encouraged to attend and submit papers or posters. The deadline for paper/poster submission is September 30, 2002. For more information visit <http://www.wfc2003.org>.

## Mission statement:

The purpose of the **Communities Committee of the Seventh American Forest Congress** is to focus attention on the interdependence between America's forests and the vitality of rural and urban communities, and to promote:

- improvements in political and economic structures to ensure local community well-being and the long-term sustainability of forested ecosystems;
- an increasing stewardship role of local communities in the maintenance and restoration of ecosystem integrity and biodiversity;
- participation by ethnically and socially diverse members of urban and rural communities in decision-making and sharing benefits of forests;
- the innovation and use of collaborative processes, tools, and technologies; and
- the recognition of the rights and responsibilities of diverse forest landowners.