



STRATEGIC PLAN 2008 – 2012

The Northeast is both the most forested and the most populated region of the United States. Together, these 170 million acres of forest provide aesthetics, clean water and air, habitat, recreation, wood, employment, nontimber forest products, microclimate modification, and renewable energy for the region's 125 million people and beyond.

As the forests throughout the Northeast face the pressures of development, invasive species, and wildfire, among others, State Foresters are positioned to lead efforts to manage, protect, and restore these forest resources. This strategic plan establishes key opportunities that State Foresters, collectively through NAASF, can undertake over the next 5 years to improve forest resources and the public's interest in these resources. It is not intended to capture all activities in which NAASF will participate.

Mission: *The mission of NAASF is to facilitate a coordinated regional approach that provides diverse and sustainable public benefits from trees and forests in the Northeastern U.S. for current and future generations.*

Vision: *Public and private forests in the Northeastern U.S. have the capacity to maintain their health, productivity, and diversity.*

Guiding Principles:

- ❑ *Serve as a **forum** for communication and discussion*
- ❑ *Raise awareness of the benefits of and threats to forests*
- ❑ *Share technological developments among states*
- ❑ *Collaborate on regional issues and priorities*
- ❑ *Advocate for Eastern forests*
- ❑ *Pursue opportunities to expand the impact of funding investments*

GOAL 1. Promote the long-term sustainability of forested landscapes across the Northeast.

OBJECTIVE 1. Slow forest fragmentation and conversion to other land uses.

Potential Strategies

- ❑ Promote a full range of federal and state legislation to sustain the Northeast's forest landscape.
- ❑ Seek public support to protect the Northeast's forested landscapes through the media and public outreach.
- ❑ Promote the protection of priority forest areas through acquisition, conservation easements, land exchanges, and donations.
- ❑ Encourage states to work with local governments to help them conserve working forest land and to promote urban natural resource stewardship.
- ❑ Increase sustainable forest management of private forests to enhance public benefits derived from trees and forests for present and future generations.
- ❑ Promote and facilitate informed decisionmaking by family forest landowners.

OBJECTIVE 2. Limit the introduction and spread of invasive exotic species.

Potential Strategies

- ❑ Raise public awareness of the threat of invasive species and how actions and decisions affect the impact of those species.
- ❑ Improve the coordination of federal and state agencies in the prevention, detection, and control of invasive species.
- ❑ Promote the needed research, tools, and training to address invasive threats.
- ❑ Encourage and promote federal and state investments in the prevention, inventory, and treatment of invasive species.

OBJECTIVE 3. Develop and maintain robust and diverse markets for the goods and services that come from trees and forests.

Potential Strategies

- ❑ Support the development of markets for ecosystem services.
- ❑ Demonstrate the connection between sustainable markets and sustainable communities.
- ❑ Support new market opportunities for woody biomass as an energy source.
- ❑ Develop markets for urban wood.
- ❑ Promote public policy, awareness, and investment to improve the viability of the Northeast forest products industry.

OBJECTIVE 4. Use trees and forests as a tool to address global climate change.

Potential Strategies

- ❑ Promote the use of trees as a tool to reduce air pollution and cooling costs in cities and communities.
- ❑ Support the development of carbon markets that promote sustainable forestry.
- ❑ Promote actions to reduce the negative impacts of climate change on the forests of the Northeast.
- ❑ Increase public knowledge of the benefits of trees and forests in mitigating climate change.

OBJECTIVE 5. Maintain adequate state capacity to successfully deliver programs and initiatives.

Potential Strategies

- ❑ Serve as a forum for sharing technical expertise among states.
- ❑ Advocate for the role of state agencies in effecting landscape-level changes.
- ❑ Form working relationships with other agencies and organizations as a source of technical expertise.
- ❑ Establish a more effective working relationship with Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry.
- ❑ Effectively engage committees to carry out the association's strategic objectives, while providing opportunities for state staff skill development.

GOAL 2. Raise public awareness of the value of trees and forests to society.

OBJECTIVE 1. Reconnect the public to trees and forests in their everyday lives.

Potential Strategies

- ❑ Promote conservation education to increase environmental literacy through partnerships with groups that benefit and educate urban populations.
- ❑ Promote the acquisition and management of community-owned forests.
- ❑ Increase public awareness and investment in the management of public water supply watersheds.
- ❑ Use and promote forest certification schemes, where appropriate, to help build public trust in the management of public and private forests.
- ❑ Reach out to new partners with an interest in municipal water supplies to help promote the positive role of forests.
- ❑ Develop effective public affairs strategies aimed at media outlets and organizations with good public connections.
- ❑ Support regional watershed initiatives.
- ❑ Promote policies supporting public awareness of the benefits of urban tree canopy cover.

OBJECTIVE 2. Ensure effective communications with the public, partner organizations, and policymakers.

Potential Strategies

- ❑ Work with members of Congress to develop support for forestry and natural resource conservation in the Northeast.
- ❑ Form relationships with a wide variety of organizations across the Northeast on issues of mutual interest.
- ❑ Ensure State Foresters take an active role in the association.
- ❑ Develop well-trained and effective association staff.