

Introduction—Setting the Stage

A Message from the State Forester

Thank you for reading the revised *Good Forestry in the Granite State*. If this is your first time using this document, I hope you find the information valuable, providing you with useful guidance as you identify and implement your forest management objectives. This revision expands and builds upon the principles and practices conveyed in the original.

The purpose of *Good Forestry in the Granite State* continues to be providing the educational tools needed to manage ecologically sensitive and unique natural features of forest land. These recommended practices, or educational tools, are intended to be voluntary, even though RSA 227-I:4 requires the production of this document:

Recommended Forest Management Practices. – *The director (division of forests and lands) shall coordinate an effort to produce educational tools that identify recommended voluntary forest management practices for sites or practices which are ecologically sensitive due to soils, wildlife habitat, and other unique natural features such as high elevations, steep slopes, deer wintering areas, riparian zones, sensitive soils, and clearcutting.*

This revision incorporates new approaches to forest management and advances in science and technology developed over the past decade, while remaining a practical guide for a diverse audience. *Good Forestry in the Granite State* isn't intended to be an all-inclusive document on forest management, but a foundation. Users are encouraged to supplement their knowledge through literature review or discussions with resource professionals.

Just as this publication has a diverse audience, it has many suitable applications. For example, many conservation easements reference *Good Forestry*. Forest management practices on conservation easements held by the N.H. Division of Forests and Lands are conducted in accordance with, or guided by, goal-specific recommendations in *Good Forestry*. Timber harvesting operations on state-owned lands are conducted in accordance with this document. *Good Forestry* serves as a reference for harvesting biomass, as well as all other forest products on both private and public forest lands.

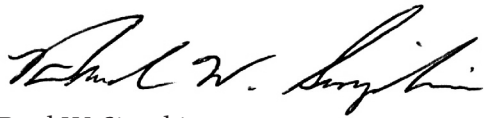
As a voluntary guide to forest management in New Hampshire, *Good Forestry in the Granite State* is not intended for use by local governments or state agencies to regulate or restrict timber harvesting practices. Recommendations in one chapter may conflict with those of another chapter. This isn't a mistake, but rather by design, in recognition of the different objectives and goals selected by the landowner in consultation with natural resource professionals relative to a given situation on a particular piece of property. Site-specific characteristics may require modifying some recommendations. Attempts to adopt *Good Forestry in the Granite State* for land-use regulation, in part or in its entirety, don't align with the intent and spirit of the law establishing the document (RSA 227-I:4). The State, through the Division of Forests and Lands, takes a primary role in the regulation of timber harvesting in New Hampshire (RSA 227-J). The State Legislature made clear the importance of practicing forestry through what is known as the "Right to Harvest" law (RSA 672:1):

Forestry, when practiced in accordance with accepted silvicultural practices, constitutes a beneficial and desirable use of New Hampshire's forest resource...the State of New Hampshire has declared that it is in the public interest to encourage preservation of open space by conserving forest and

other natural resources. Therefore, forestry activities, including the harvest and transport of forest products, shall not be unreasonably limited by use of municipal planning and zoning powers or by the unreasonable interpretation of such powers.

Managed forests help maintain New Hampshire's rural character. The continued management of working forests for multiple objectives and goals is critically important to the environmental, economic, and social well-being of our state. Our forests provide jobs, forest products, wildlife habitat, clean water and air, recreation, tourism, and an overall higher quality of life to our citizens and visitors. Our forests will play an even bigger role in the future, as we face challenges such as continued development pressure, climate change, and renewable-energy development. New Hampshire's number one forest management goal is keeping forests as forests. To that end, the Division of Forests and Lands, and others as evidenced by their use of *Good Forestry in the Granite State*, support and encourage responsible management of working woodlands and forests.

Our forests and woodlands have played an integral part in our state's history, and undoubtedly will play a vital role well into the future. More than 80 percent of New Hampshire remains forested. Much of the forest land that looks untouched by human activity has, in reality, been managed as working forests for generations. This long history of management is a testament to the established tradition of practicing good forestry in the Granite State. Whatever you decide for your individual goals and objectives on your woodlands, I hope this document provides you the foundation to make wise decisions. Most importantly, I thank you for expressing interest in being a good steward, because a well-managed forest provides many benefits, both tangible and intangible, far beyond the boundaries of your property.



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