



Northern Forest Lands Council

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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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NORTHERN FOREST LANDS COUNCIL MOVES AHEAD AT BERLIN NEW HAMPSHIRE MEETING

BERLIN, NH--The Northern Forest Lands Council held its regular bi-monthly meeting at the Berlin City Hall Auditorium last Wednesday and left with a strong sense of accomplishment, according to Executive Director Charles A. Levesque.

"Council members feel we are really moving forward in order to meet our goal of providing succinct, direct recommendations to conserve the Northern Forests to the Congress and Northern Forest States. The work by the various subcommittees--focussed on property taxes, state and federal taxes, land conversion, the local forest based economy and resource information collection--is really starting to produce results," Levesque said.

The Council agreed at the meeting to send letters to the governors and legislative leaders of the four Council states of Maine, New Hampshire, New York and Vermont, urging their support for the continuation of the respective current use valuation programs. The

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programs are under various levels of attack in the respective legislatures.

"These existing programs are essential tax policies needed to help stabilize forestland ownership in the Northern Forests", said Robert L. Bendick, Jr., Deputy Commissioner of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Chair of the Northern Forest Lands Council.

The Council also agreed to provide specific tax policy recommendations to the Congress which will encourage conservation of the Northern Forests. The Council will be sending those recommendations to Washington within two weeks.

State citizen advisory committees to the Council--one within each of the states--are being organized to provide public input to the Council on its work. The Council set a target date for each of those committees to meet before the next Council meeting in April. The Council will be meeting in the Tug Hill region of New York State when it meets again on April 15, 1992.

More information about the meeting and the Council can be obtained by calling Charles Levesque, Executive Director at 603-224-6590.

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Note to Editors: The Northern Forest Lands Council is a 17-member advisory non-profit organization with four Governor-appointed representatives from each of the States of Maine, New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont and a seventeenth member from the U.S. Forest Service. It follows the work of the Governors' Task Force on Northern Forest Lands and the Northern Forest Lands Study, commissioned by the Congress in 1988. The Council's existence results from the agreement by each of the Governors of the four States to participate in this process and the authorization from the Congress within the 1990 Farm Bill Forestry Title (Sec. 1244). The Congress has funded the Council and its related work through the 1991 and 1992 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Bills.