

FINAL REPORT
FOREST SERVICE GRANT NO. NA-97-0283

Period covered by this report: July 14, 1997 through June 30, 2000

NOTE: *Please review the following information and revise/complete as necessary.*

Issued to: Maine Forest Service, Department of Conservation

Address: 22 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0022

Congressional District Number: _____

Project Name: Promote Holistic Effective Management of Forested Parcels

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Date of Award: July 14, 1997

Grant Modifications:

Mod 1: No-cost time extension from June 30, 1999 to December 31, 1999.

Mod 2: No-cost time extension from December 31, 1999 to June 30, 2000.

Date of Expiration: June 30, 2000

Funding: Federal Share: \$123,600 plus Grantee Share: \$129,000 = Total Project: \$252,600

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Project abstract (200 words or less):

Holistic Forest Management in the Urban-Rural Interface is an education program that promotes an ecological, economic and sociological approach to understanding and managing natural resources located in or near populated areas. The program includes: (1) resources management education for policy makers, local planners and those involved in community-level planning, and (2) natural resources education targeting homeowners living on 1 to 10 acres. Target audiences include: forestland owners with less than ten acres, families, community-level policy makers and planners, natural resource professionals, non-profit organizations and the general public. The education programs and associated publications are in the public domain and are designed for easy adaptation by other states.

Project Objectives:

The principal goal of this project will be generating sound information about natural resource planning and management using a holistic approach and getting the appropriate information into the hands of municipal leaders, property owners and natural resource professionals.

The project will produce the following:

- Master resource guide,
- ❖ Holistic informational booklet,
- ❖ Brochure to engage property owners, and
- ❖ Statewide workshops.

Objectives met successfully:

- *The Woods in Your Backyard*, a 92 page booklet that targets small landowners, was completed in June, 1999. 5000 copies were printed. A promotional strategy was developed to increase public awareness of the project and announce availability of the booklet. As of June 29, 2000, the Maine Forest Service has mailed 1966 copies of the booklet to landowners who have either (a) sent the mail-in coupon to request a copy or (b) called to request a copy. An additional 2500 copies have been distributed to (a) landowners and community planners at workshops or training sessions, (b) handed out to landowners in the field by forest rangers, natural resource educators, and foresters (c) provided to educators who specifically work with on forest/forestry topics with children and adult audiences, and (d) provided to natural resource professionals and educators within the state to use as a training tool and provided to their out-of-state counterparts on request. Due to the response to this information and the availability of funds, an additional 5000 copies were printed in June 2000.
- A *Woods in Your Backyard* brochure was developed with a mail-in coupon for a copy of the booklet. Distribution of the brochure resulted in a pre-publication list of 212 names and addresses requesting the *Backyard* booklet. Brochures were made available to other conservation agencies and organizations to hand out at educational events.
- The Master Resource Guide (MRG) package provided to all Maine towns and regional planning councils (and available at workshops and on request) recognizes the diverse educational and natural resources background of the audience by providing information that takes into account different learning styles. While the information is specific to the state's unique ecological and sociological considerations, the products are easily adaptable for replication by other states. The Master Resource Guide package includes the following:
 - 1 - *What Do Trees Have To Do With It? A Forestry Guide for Communities*, a 70 page booklet that targets those involved in community-level planning (with an emphasis on the comprehensive planning process) was completed in June 2000. 3000 copies were printed. The booklet includes guidelines and guiding questions to aid in collecting and analyzing data about municipal natural resources, checklists to consider when using that data to create policies, guidelines for creating effective ordinances, and a directory of additional

resources to aid in incorporating forests and related natural resources into the municipal planning process.

- 2 - *What Do Trees Have To Do With It? Forests, Natural Resources and Town Planning*, a 1 1/2 hour training module for town planning boards and citizens involved in community planning was produced. 500 copies.
- 3 - *Forest Stewardship Planning Guide: Northeast Decision Model* (USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Forest Experiment Station: General Technical Report NE-203) Software with decision guiding matrices for developing plans with a holistic approach.

- Outreach education efforts across the state have directly reached 8300 landowners, planners, and natural resource professionals in the combined years of 1998, 1999, and 2000. Note: This number (8300) includes 700 people who attended *Holistic Interface Project* workshops, training sessions, slide shows, demonstrations and lectures. Note: This number (8300) does not include an additional estimated 8000 more people (for a total of over 16000 people) who stopped to pick up literature at the Maine Forest Service *Backyard Forestry* booth at flower shows, county fairs, garden shows and other venues. The *Backyard Forestry* booth was created specifically to promote the *Holistic Interface Project*. (See Supporting Information on locations of venues and associated numbers of attendees).
- An educational display targeting small landowners was created to use at trade shows, agricultural affairs and other outreach education venues.
- A slide program that introduces natural resource management concepts in the context of small wooded properties was developed and presented across the state.

Objectives not met:

- Translation: The need for a bilingual assessment was explored during the audience analysis stage of research. None of the stakeholders, landowners, and natural resource professionals questioned found value in a French version of the informational booklet or the Master Resource Guide. For this reason, we are returning the funds designated for translation.
- Model Ordinance: Once development of the Master Resource Guide (MRG) was taken over by Maine Forest Service staff,¹ it became clear that the guide concept needed modifications due to the recent development of better information and proposed legislation on "sprawl" and "smart growth." Since this project began, local, state, and regional initiatives to address sprawl have, to varying degrees, addressed development impacts on forest land and natural resources. For example, excellent model ordinances for subdivision design in forested areas are available in the publication "Growing Greener: Putting Conservation into Local Plans and Ordinances" (Arendt, National Lands Trust, 1999). Recently enacted state legislation directs the Maine State Planning Office to develop a Municipal Handbook of Model Smart Growth Ordinances and Policies consistent with the goals of this project. To be effective and to meet the objectives of the grant, the MRG provides a base of understanding about how forest land functions under different management and development scenarios, establishes a protocol for assessing forest land and natural resources in the comprehensive planning process, provides

¹ See previous status report (through 31 December 1999).

talking points and checklists to guide comprehensive planning discussions and decision making, and points to existing credible information rather than duplicates it. Guidelines for creating ordinances are included in *What Do Trees Have To Do With It? A Forestry Guide for Communities*.

List the major research or policy findings of your project.

Policy findings are not directly relevant to this project.

Research, while not the focus of this educational outreach project, factored into it in the following ways:

- Input from planners, resource professionals, and outreach educators during planning sessions helped direct the final form of the Master Resource Guide.
- Audience analysis directed the design, language, and marketing of the landowner guide. (See supporting materials for a professional paper on audience analysis delivered in June 1998 at the University of New England).

How did the project increase the knowledge we have about urban forestry? How does the public benefit?

A holistic approach to community resource management builds on the ecosystem management model by addressing the community's environmental, economic, and social needs and concerns. This project furnishes policy makers and resource professionals with a broader array of tools to assess the current status of community resources and to develop comprehensive municipal and regional plans and policies.

The public benefits by getting individuals thinking beyond their own parcel and encouraging landowners to think holistically about natural resource activity in their community. It encourages property owners to consider how their land management decisions affect their own property, their neighbors properties, and the surrounding area. This has been amply demonstrated by the popularity of the booklet and feedback from the public (See supporting materials).

What recommendations might you make for community foresters or others who might benefit from your project?

- 1 - Look to collaborate with a range of new partners (outside the established community of professionals) in the design and delivery of educational materials and programs.
- 2 - Spend the necessary time to do an audience analysis. If knowledge of communication theory does not exist in-house, contract for a brief but thorough audience analysis and ask for recommendations on how to effectively reach the intended audience, or contact a natural resources department in a university (such as Cornell University in New York State) that includes a human dimensions research focus and can provide insight into effective strategies to reach the intended audience.
- 3 - Make marketing of the educational materials a high priority. Be creative in marketing strategies by working with new collaborators who can reach a larger or different audience than traditionally reached by natural resource agencies.

Attach copies of reports, publications, or videos. If your work has been published (journals, popular press, etc.) provide where they have been published or reported and how copies can be obtained.

See all supporting materials.

How were your results disseminated to the public?

The products and trainings were promoted through collaboration with the following partners and associated venues:

- Agriculture and Garden Shows
- Library talks
- Cooperative Extension
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Flower shows
- Maine Arborist Association
- Land Trusts
- Regional Planning Councils

The methods of dissemination were:

- Press releases
- Brochures
- Workshops
- Slide shows
- Field demonstrations
- Training sessions
- Educational booth at trade shows, fairs and conferences

Interested states and organizations can electronically tailor the materials and print their own hard copies for their specific use. Disks will be available to all on request. Final hard copies of all materials and publications are available on request for use in Maine. All State Foresters, Urban Forestry Coordinators, and any others recommended by the NUCFAC and USDA Forest Service will receive hard copies.

List the active partners (key individuals or organizations) involved in the project to date:

- Maine Community Forestry Council
- Pine Tree State Arboretum
- USDA Forest Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- University of Maine Cooperative Extension
- Kevin Doran, Natural Science Educator, Maine Forest Service
- Maine State Planning Office
- Time and Tide Resource Conservation and Development Area (Grant agreement terminated July 1999)

Photo or illustration: Photo with credits that represents the project.

See supporting materials

If a no-cost time extension has been requested for this project, why was it needed?

The Master Resource Guide was behind schedule due to personnel changes at the Maine Forest Service and changes in sub-contractors who were hired by the subgrantee (Time and Tide Resource Conservation and Development Area) to research and write the guide. David Spicer, Community Forester at the Maine Forest Service and Principal Investigator for this grant, resigned his position at the agency in June 1998. The first subcontractor hired to complete the Guide, Johnson's Arboriculture, resigned from the project in August 1998 when it became clear to the project partners that Johnson's Arboriculture was unable to meet their deadlines or to submit an effective new schedule for project completion. A second subcontractor, Steven West, was hired by the subgrantee in September 1998. He resigned for personal reasons in October, 1998. The third subcontractor, Robert Silverman, was hired in January 1999. His contract was terminated in May 1999.

The Maine Forest Service terminated the subgrant to Time and Tide Resource Conservation and Development Area by mutual agreement and chose to complete the MRG in-house.

Due to unavoidable changes in personnel and linked delays in completing certain parts of the project, we requested (2) no-cost extensions in order to effectively complete the project.

An additional no-cost extension was requested for the duration of June 30, 2000 to September 30, 2000 in order to pay outstanding bills.

How would you evaluate the grant process? What changes, if any, would you recommend?

A small change that makes it clear what material should be reported to NUCFAC and what to the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area would be useful.

Comments considered of importance but not covered above.

As stated in the grant narrative, the principal goal of this project is to provide sound natural resource planning information to property owners and natural resource professionals, while emphasizing urban/rural forest interface considerations. In the dynamic atmosphere of changing awareness and information about development and sprawl, and due to the sheer mass of information now readily available on the topic, it was necessary to tailor the proposed products to effectively reach the intended audiences and adhere to the objectives of the grant.

Master Resource Guide. Once development of the Master Resource Guide (MRG) was taken over by Maine Forest Service staff, it became clear that the guide concept needed modifications. To be effective and to meet the objectives of the grant, the MRG provides a base of understanding about how forest land functions under different management and development scenarios, establishes a protocol for assessing forest land and natural resources in the comprehensive planning process, provides talking points to guide comprehensive planning discussions and decision making, and points to existing credible information rather than duplicate it.

² See previous status report (through 31 December 1999).

Recognizing the diverse educational and natural resource background of the audience for the MRG, we chose to provide a package of information that takes into account different learning styles. This package includes the written MRG, "What Do Trees Have To Do With It? A Forestry Guide for Communities," a training module, software, and the landowner guide. While the information is specific to the state's unique ecological and sociological considerations, the products are easily adaptable for replication by other states.

Information Booklet. During the research phase for the informational booklet, it became clear that further audience analysis was warranted if the booklet was going to meet the desired goal of effectively reaching interface property owners. This analysis included reviews of recent sociological and psychological research literature on how the public assesses natural resource values; a comprehensive review of media coverage and associated public opinion related to a proposed forestry referendum in the state; and discussions with landowners, stakeholders, natural resource educators, land use managers and planners from state and federal agencies. The messages were clear:

- 1 - Interface landowners were confused about forest management and about the role their property played in the larger landscape;
- 2 - Many valued the forest (including the interface forest) from an aesthetic perspective; and,
- 3 - Many did not see the existing style of information being offered (brochures, pamphlets, bulletins) or the purveyors of it (Cooperative Extension, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Maine Forest Service, etc.) as being relevant to their interests or land ownership.

This analysis clearly pointed to the need for a more thorough and comprehensive informational booklet that was packaged in a way to appeal to this audience profile if the product was indeed going to be an effective educational tool. An informational brochure could not provide the level of information clearly called for in the audience analysis, and a 20 page pamphlet would have less appeal than a longer guide that would engage landowners into thinking about their yards and their woods as an extension of their homes. For these reasons, the landowner publication was expanded to booklet form designed to interest and engage this new audience and the brochure was designed to spur interest **in** acquiring the landowner guide. This publication *The Woods in Your Backyard: A Homeowner's Guide*, has received recognition across the state, the region, and the country.

This report was prepared by:

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