



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **PSNH donates \$60,000 to Northern Forest Sustainable Economy Initiative**

Public Service Company of New Hampshire (PSNH) has donated \$60,000 to the Sustainable Economy Initiative (SEI), which is working to develop a strategic blueprint for sustainable economic development in the Northern Forest region based on balanced investment in business, community and environment.

SEI is a project of the Northern Forest Center and New Hampshire's North Country Council, with support from all four states' governors and the congressional delegation. It received \$800,000 in funding from the federal Economic Development Administration, with the stipulation that the amount be matched by private donors and in-kind support. PSNH's \$60,000 is the largest single designated donation toward the match so far.

"The Northern Forest region's vitality is important to people throughout New Hampshire and beyond," noted Gary Long, PSNH president and chief operating officer. "Balancing a healthy business environment with community needs while respecting the landscape will contribute to the region's overall economic success. Through this donation to SEI, PSNH is pleased to be able to support the Northern Forest's long-term health."

"We have an opportunity here in the Northern Forest to prove that we can have a high quality of life and still sustain the forest we depend on in so many ways," said Steve Blackmer, president of the Northern Forest Center. "We are grateful to PSNH for funding SEI's work to create a plan for a vibrant future for the region."

"Businesses, organizations and community leaders from all four Northern Forest states are involved with SEI," said Jeff Hayes, assistant executive director of the North Country Council. "We appreciate the support PSNH has given to the project— through both this funding and participation on SEI's steering committee."

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SEI is directed by a four-state steering committee jointly appointed by the four Northern Forest governors and the project managers. The project aims to:

- Deliver a regional strategy and action plan for revitalizing the declining Northern Forest economy and sustaining the long-term health of its people and lands;
- Provide a framework for new public and private investment in Northern Forest communities;
- Recommend specific actions for leveraging the competitive advantages of the region's primary economic sectors—forest products, recreation and tourism, energy, and the knowledge/creative economy—into sustainable economic development; and
- Create region-wide commitment to action and form networks of individuals, communities, organizations and governments ready for implementation.

The project will deliver a set of recommendations to the four Northern Forest governors in spring of 2008.

Founded in 1997, the Northern Forest Center works through networks and partnerships to build a sustainable economy, revitalize local communities and conserve the landscape of the Northern Forest of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York. Visit [www.northernforest.org](http://www.northernforest.org) for more information.

The North Country Council, a regional planning commission, encourages effective community and regional planning for the development of economic opportunity and the conservation for natural, cultural and economic resources. Visit [ww.nccouncil.org](http://ww.nccouncil.org) for more information.

PSNH is New Hampshire's largest electric utility, generating and distributing clean electricity for more than 490,000 homes and businesses in an environmentally friendly manner. Each year, PSNH supports dozens of forest protection, energy conservation, and environmental organizations through both financial contributions and generous employee volunteerism. PSNH is proud of its commitment to the environment and willingness to create innovative solutions to environmental issues. Visit [www.psnh.com](http://www.psnh.com) for more information.

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NOTE TO MEDIA: A photo of an oversized donation check from PSNH Community Development Manager Doris Burke and Director of Business Planning and Customer Support Services Terry Large, being accepted by the Northern Forest Center's Steve Blackmer, is available in electronic format for reprint. Please contact Shelly Angers, marketing & pr coordinator, at 603-229-0679, ext. 109, [sangers@northernforest.org](mailto:sangers@northernforest.org).