

Northern Forest Sustainable Economy Initiative
Steering Committee Meeting
October 22-23, 2007
Lake Placid, New York

Meeting Summary v. 10-24-07

Participants

Steve Barba	Plymouth State University
John Bartow	Tug Hill Commission
Steve Blackmer	Northern Forest Center
Cali Brooks	Adirondack Community Trust
Paul Bofinger	Northern Forest Center board
Tom Both	Northern Forest Center board
Sandy Brawdars	Professional Logging Contractors of Maine (by phone)
Michele Boomhower	Lamoille County Planning Commission
Doris Burke	Public Service of New Hampshire
Don Caldera	Adirondack North Country Association
John Collins	Northern Forest Center board
Jim Davis	Northeastern Vermont Development Association
Tom Deans	Tillotson Trust
Tom Doak	Small Woodland Owners Association of Maine
Roy Duddy	NH Dept. of Resources & Economic Development
Steve Erman	Adirondack Park Agency
George Gay	Northern Forest Alliance
Bruce Hazard	Mountain Counties Heritage
Brian Houseal	Adirondack Council
Art Lussi	Crowne Plaza Resort
Michael King	North Country Council
Jolinda LaClair	USDA Rural Development
Terry Martino	Adirondack North Country Association
John Mills	Paul Smith's College
Matt Polstein	New England Outdoor Center
J. R. Risley	Adirondack Association of Towns & Villages
Ann Ruzow Holland	Community Planning Advisor
Fran Sheehan	NY Dept. of Environmental Conservation
David Sleeper	Hubbard Brook Research Foundation
Zoe Smith	Wildlife Conservation Society
Katie Stone	Open Space Institute
Racheal Stuart	New Hampshire Charitable Foundation
Hank Swan	Wagner Forest Management
Bob Thompson	Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments
Jim Wagner	Northern Community Investment Corp.
Steve Webster	Land Owner
Ross Whaley	Former chair, Adirondack Park Agency
Steve Wight	Sunday River Inn
Robin Zinchuk	Bethel Area Chamber of Commerce

Project Staff and Consultants

Jane Fink	Northern Forest Center
Jeff Hayes	North Country Council
Tom Gross	Genesis Consulting
Michael Manolson	Genesis Consulting
Bo Norris	Northern Forest Center
Rob Riley	Northern Forest Center
Joe Short	Project Manager
Bill Webb	Northern Forest Center

Meeting Objectives, Activities, and Outcomes

Objective #1: Agree a decision-making framework.

- ◆ **Activities:** The committee discussed the process it will use to make decisions for the remainder of the SEI. Project staff provided a list of steering committee members and participant advisors and a strawman decision-making framework, and the committee discussed two questions: who will be part of the decision-making body, and what will the decision process be?
- ◆ **Outcomes:** The committee agreed that steering committee members as appointed by the governors will be the decision-making body. The committee then unanimously adopted a decision-making process as outlined [below](#) (page 4).
- ◆ **Next Steps:** Project staff will follow up with those committee members not in attendance to review the decision-making framework as agreed and ensure their understanding.

Objective #2: Agree on a shared vision

- ◆ **Activities:** The committee discussed as a full group and in sub-groups the components of a shared vision for the Northern Forest region to frame the SEI recommendations and guide implementation. Based on the conversation a sub-group developed a draft vision statement for the full committee's consideration.
- ◆ **Outcomes:** By a unanimous vote the committee approved a vision statement as presented [below](#). (page 5).
- ◆ **Next Steps:** Project staff will develop a values statement that will support this vision statement as requested by the committee.

Objective #3: Agree on the core concepts of the SEI recommendations

- ◆ **Activities:** As a full group and in smaller groups the committee refined the emerging SEI recommendations, based on the first draft report circulated in September and materials prepared for the meeting by the project staff.
- ◆ Five sub-groups worked concurrently on Tuesday to develop their own recommendations. After reports and full committee discussion, a group of representatives from each sub-group drafted a consolidated set of recommendations for the full committee's consideration.
- ◆ **Outcomes:** By a unanimous vote the committee approved the elements of the SEI recommendations as presented [below](#) (page 5). The vote was understood as an approval of the core concept of each recommendation, not as a final approval on the exact wording. (Note: the committee agreed to discuss these concepts as recommendations, not strategies. These will provide the basis for identifying implementation strategies.)
- ◆ **Next Steps:** The project staff will work with the vision and recommendations as agreed by the committee to write a next draft of the SEI report by the end of 2007 at the latest.

Objective #4: Begin identification of high-impact strategies to implement the recommendations.

- ◆ **Activities:** Sub-groups worked to identify existing ideas from past committee meetings (as compiled by project staff) and brainstorm new implementation ideas to address the recommendation concepts.
- ◆ **Next steps:** Project staff will work with the ideas generated at the meeting and those from prior meetings to prepare a consolidated list for committee consideration.

Objective #1: Agree a decision-making framework

As agreed unanimously by the group in attendance:

NF SEI Decision Making Process v. October 22, 2007

Purpose

- The Steering Committee will achieve shared understanding, buy-in and commitment to the NF SEI Strategy.
- Final recommendations would all be supported by the consensus of the Steering Committee resulting in the Report being signed by every active member of the Steering Committee

Process of Decision-making

- We will make our interim decisions today with those in attendance
Staff will follow up with those who are not in attendance
- Healthy debate and dialogue
- Seek 65% majority opinion or unanimity
 - ✓ If there is a 65% majority opinion and no unanimity, the dissenters would either say, "I've been heard and while I did not agree, I can and will support the majority"=*consensus*
 - ✓ Or, "I cannot support the majority" In this scenario, the Project Management Team would follow up with those in favor and those against to seek a compromise that can result in agreement
 - ✓ If compromise on certain points can not be achieved ultimately, then those points would *not* be part of the final recommendations.

Additional Notes from the Discussion

- Canvass those missing prior to a meeting—get the major issue out in advance and will be taken into consideration
- Decisions are taken by those present—could include call-in.
- Spirit of inclusiveness
- If one state is unhappy with a recommendation—consider this as a caution.
- There was unresolved discussion of the use of minority reports in the final product. The sense of the staff is to evaluate this on an as-needed basis.

**Objective #2: Agree on a shared vision; and
Objective #3: Agree on the core concepts of the SEI recommendations**

As agreed unanimously by the group in attendance:

Vision: The Northern Forest region is globally recognized for its unique character and ecosystem which supports vital regional economies and communities.

Values Statement: *Draft to be developed by project staff based on work done by group #1 at the meeting (e.g. INNOVATION)*

Recommendations:

- **Foster an environment for investment** in entrepreneurship and economic development (incl. create new market opportunities)
- **Manage and conserve the character and productive capacity** of the forest ecosystem (incl. water, forests, ecosystem services, etc.)
- **Invest in comprehensive community development** to make the region's communities attractive places to live, work and play (incl. leadership, infrastructure, facilities, services, etc.)
- **Invest in research and development** of products and services that capitalize on the comparative advantages of the Northern Forest (incl. biomass, small business investment, innovative and creative economy)
- **Formalize a framework** to coordinate leadership and the implementation of these strategies (balance regional and decentralized coordination)

If these recommendations are accomplished, the region will attract and retain people.