



# **Vermont Forest Products Council**

## **Blueprint for Action**

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# Vermont Forest Products Council Blueprint for Action

## Executive Summary

This Blueprint for Action is the result of two years of study by the Vermont Forest Products Council (VFPC) of the challenges to the value-added wood products industry.

It is designed to serve as an action plan to promote value-added wood manufacturing in the State of Vermont.

As such, it documents 24 action steps in four broad areas that the Douglas Administration, Legislature, and the industry itself should undertake to support in-state wood processing, manufacture, and craftsmanship.

The success of the value-added forest products economy (and ultimately, the conservation of Vermont's "working landscape") depends on progress in four areas outlined in this report: Marketing, Economic Development, Education and Training, and Wood Resources.

**Marketing:** A "Vermont Brand" for value-added wood products should be built and marketed with all appropriate resources from state marketing agencies and the industry working together. Marketing should include trade shows, an annual Vermont Showcase, and ongoing public relations.

**Economic Development:** The forest products economy needs increased state agency support, working capital, technical assistance, and improvements to the Workers' Compensation system.

**Education and Training:** Educational opportunities needed by the industry range from employee leadership skills to education in public schools about Vermont's natural resources economy.

**Wood Resources:** To ensure a viable wood supply to businesses in the state, market linkages should be established, wood utilization for energy and timber stand improvement encouraged, and education of private landowners by County Foresters supported.

This report is a call to leadership—from the Governor's office and Statehouse to united leadership within the forest products industry sector—toward a viable wood products economy providing jobs and supporting rural communities throughout the State of Vermont.

## Introduction

Challenged by national and international competition, Vermont's forest products industry needs and deserves both public and private leadership support in order to succeed in the future.

It is in the general interest of the State of Vermont to encourage a vital forest products sector and particularly to enhance opportunities and build conditions to capture the highest value for the resource as possible. Toward that end, the Vermont Forest Products Council was established to build a comprehensive set of policy recommendations in support of the value-added forest products economy.

### The Working Landscape

The “working landscape” of Vermont's fields, farms, and forests is a unique rural resource, one that is both renewable and sustainable. The landscape that Vermonters love and tourists come to visit is, and will be for the foreseeable future, largely the product of the cumulative decisions of private landowners and managers.

Vermont will not maintain its working landscape through preservation alone. The conservation of that landscape, and the vital rural communities that have produced it, will depend on the success of the forest products economy. Since most forestland in Vermont is privately owned, positive forest stewardship must be economically viable in order to provide an *economic* foundation for landowner decisions around development. Too often, these decisions are misunderstood or under-appreciated, and it is assumed that the state makes the essential decisions on land use. In fact, since 80% of the forested land in the state is in private hands, decisions about the landscape are driven by family and farm economies as much as or more than government policy.

It would be a mistake to plan to save the working landscape through regulation alone. We must ensure that forestry and the forest products economy are viable. By supporting the success of those who have worked the land, in some cases for generations, and who steward the natural resources of the state, we support the economic basis that has produced the open land and healthy forest that is their legacy.

### The Economic Impact of the Industry

The economic impact of the forest and wood products industry in Vermont was modeled and the results summarized in a January 2001 report produced for the Vermont Department of Economic Development.<sup>1</sup> Some of the report's findings included:

- The industry accounted for 18,463 direct and indirect full-time and part-time jobs in 2000, or about 6.2% of the total statewide job opportunities.
- The industry generated more than \$330 million in personal income in 2000.
- The industry generated more than \$24.9 million in taxes and other revenues to the state in 2000.
- In addition to its economic benefits, the industry also is a vital part of the rural working landscape, helps support the existence of commercial forestland, and has important relationships with the tourism and recreation sectors.

As the statistics above demonstrate, the forest products sector is a critically important feature of Vermont's economic development, one that supports the image or "brand" of the state, draws tourists, and serves as a vital feature of the "quality of life" here that attracts new enterprises. This role is magnified when we consider where the industry is located and the jobs it produces in parts of the state that may lack other industries. The forest products economy is overwhelmingly rural and plays a disproportionately important role in the viability of the rural communities.

## Value-Added Forest Products

Vermont's value-added forest products economy today faces many challenges. It must respond to a competitive global economy with a strategic plan for marketing, development, and coordination. It confronts difficulties in securing an adequate labor force and a sufficient wood supply. It faces the high costs of energy and insurance, complicated regulatory procedures, rapidly changing market dynamics, the need for effective technical assistance, current gaps in industry collaboration, the decline of the low-value wood industry in the U.S., a lack of a uniform marketing message, and a sometimes confusing or controversial image to the public. These challenges have contributed to the recent closures of several Vermont businesses in the primary and value-added industries.

To address these challenges, Vermont should promote trade in forest products that provides the best economic benefit, per unit harvested, to in-state landowners, rural communities and businesses; increases the proportion of value-added to raw material exports; and complements and rewards sound forest management.

Vermont's value-added wood products industry has tremendous potential to succeed and continue to enrich the lives of Vermonters. Our hardwood forests provide a renewable resource of premium quality. Many of the state's wood products businesses are small, unique, adaptable, and innovative. Vermont's tradition of craftsmanship and design and our environmental reputation can, if systematically promoted, provide a real marketing edge.

## The Work of the Vermont Forest Products Council

Founded and produced by the Vermont Council on Rural Development, the Vermont Forest Products Council consists of 11 members, along with a coordinator to support the group's work. The group held its first meeting in June 2001, and has met regularly since then; this report represents the completion of the VFPC charge.

VFPC began its work with a full review of the relevant history of policy studies connected to the forest products sector, including those produced by the Forest Resources Advisory Council and the Northern Forest Lands Council. While these efforts are historically significant and had important results for the industry, both made significant economic development recommendations that, in the end, were either ignored or lost in subsequent debates about particular forest practices. While stewardship practices are important to the industry and to Vermonters, too often public debates have concentrated on arguments around definitions of "sustainability," overshadowing equally important concerns about the *viability* of the industry. The VFPC sought to build on the important economic development recommendations from earlier studies, directing research and inviting speakers to provide information to the group on key issues. In addition, the VFPC monitored and sought to coordinate its work with on-going related efforts, including the Vt. Dept. of Economic Development's wood products marketing initiative and projects of other state agencies and non-profit organizations.

## A Call to Leadership

The Vermont Forest Products Council looks to the Governor of the State of Vermont as a leader who can support forest stewardship and the forest products industry. The Governor is in a critically important position to describe the crucial role the industry plays in the Vermont economy, supporting healthy rural communities and a thriving working landscape. We encourage Vermont's leadership to celebrate Vermont's reputation for quality from "tree to table;" and to commend the forest products industry for the progress it is making today.

The VFPC also requests that the Governor require state agencies to review the effectiveness of administrative rules regarding business development in order to address existing barriers and build opportunities for the advancement of wood products businesses.

At the same time, VFPC challenges industry groups and other stakeholders to work together to strengthen mutual responses to the opportunities ahead. Toward that end, the primary and value-added wood products industries should form a new strategic alliance that works for the long-term benefit of both.

## Vision

The Vermont Forest Products Council envisions a future in which:

- Vermont forests continue to be well-managed for harvests of high-value timber, clean water, and wildlife habitat and where increased value-added processing supports the economies of the state's rural communities.
- Viable low-value markets and state policies support long-term forest stewardship.
- The working forest is understood to provide positive economic and ecological returns to rural communities and is valued for its economic role in producing the working landscape.
- Foresters, loggers, mill workers, wood manufacturers, craftspeople and artists are respected for their role in an ecological economy and for their production of needed valued-added goods.
- The design, quality, and tradition behind Vermont forest products earn them a competitive edge within the state and globally.

# Recommendations

## Marketing

### 1) Vermont Wood Products Brand

The Vermont Wood Products Marketing Council should organize a collaborative, statewide effort among wood products mills, manufacturers, and craftspeople to cooperatively market Vermont wood products through the Vermont brand, so that each product advertises all the others. Landowners, foresters, loggers, mill-owners, value-added manufacturers, and environmentalists should back the work of the Vermont Wood Products Marketing Council around the Vermont brand, and should expand the initiative to include other public education efforts that advance common goals.

### 2) State Marketing Efforts

The state should expand the role of the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing into economic development initiatives in order to increase the visibility of the wood products industry in state agency promotional efforts. The Department of Tourism and Marketing and other appropriate agencies should:

- a) **State website.** Make available to the wood products industry at no charge all existing state website possibilities for listing businesses, products, events, and tours (including ThinkVermont.com and Vermontvacation.com).
- b) **Welcome centers and rest areas.** Offer the Vermont wood products industry all possible marketing and public relations opportunities at Vermont welcome centers and rest areas, including the use of Vermont wood products in constructing and furnishing the centers, a presence on interactive screens and permanent display panels, placement of wood products in rotating temporary displays such that wood products are always featured in at least one center, and distribution and display of Vermont wood products brochures at all centers at no charge.
- c) **Regional Marketing Organizations.** Assist the wood products industry in identifying opportunities and establishing on-going productive relationships with regional marketing organizations, including participation in regional field days and other events.
- d) **Factory Tours, Open Studios, and Other Demonstration Sites.** Assist the wood products industry in creating a statewide factory tour and open studio/showroom program (including signage, publications, and promotional efforts) that could begin with an open studio/factory weekend similar to that presently sponsored for the Vermont Crafts Council.



- e) **Presence at Lodging Facilities.** Help to facilitate the placement and showcasing of Vermont wood furniture and other wood products in Vermont inns and other lodging facilities through assistance in developing a presence at the annual Vermont Business Expo and the Vermont Lodging and Restaurant Association Showcase (industry trade show).
- f) **Marketing Theme.** Add a sixth marketing theme titled “working forest heritage” to the Department of Tourism and Marketing’s five marketing themes; and develop promotions based upon this theme of an equal magnitude as the efforts expended on the other themes.
- g) **Liaison.** The Vermont Wood Products Marketing Council should act as liaison between the wood products industry and the Department of Tourism and Marketing (and other state agencies) to promote the industry to tourists and Vermonters.

### 3) Trade Show Support

The State of Vermont should provide matching funds to publicize and promote the Vermont brand at wood products trade shows, such as the annual International Home Furnishings Market® in High Point, North Carolina. The primary purpose of such a presence would be to raise potential future purchasers’ awareness of the key brand attributes of Vermont wood products. The Vermont Wood Products Marketing Council, working in full partnership with other organizations and agencies, should coordinate this effort on behalf of the industry.

### 4) Public Relations

The Vermont Wood Products Marketing Council should develop a collaborative and statewide effort among wood products mills, manufacturers, and craftspeople to actively seek and compile stories of good forest stewardship and product craftsmanship from Vermont wood products businesses. These stories should be forwarded, for example, to the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing to post on the state tourism website, and to Vermont and national reporters.

### 5) Legislative Affairs

A collaborative and statewide effort among wood products mills, manufacturers, and craftspeople should be developed to connect the industry with legislators. Efforts should include bringing wood manufacturers and craftspeople, along with their products, to the statehouse to talk directly with legislators about their businesses and issues.

**6) Annual Showcase for Vermont Wood Products**

The Vermont Wood Products Marketing Council should convene a yearly event to showcase the Vermont wood industry and its products.

- a) **Design Competition.** A design competition should be held for Vermont wood products, which could be included in the annual showcase or independently. The design competition should include products made from low-grade wood grown in Vermont. In conjunction with the showcase event, tours of working forests and an operating sawmill also should be planned.
- b) **State Co-Sponsorship.** The state should co-sponsor the showcase with the industry, and should provide matching funds annually to help organize and promote the showcase.

## Economic Development

### 7) Workers' Compensation Changes

- a) **Improving Workers' Safety.** Forest products businesses should expand workers' safety training programs to incorporate and respond to risk management audits, and so reduce worker injuries.
- b) **Ombudsman for Employers.** Workers' Compensation costs are a clear impediment to competitiveness; communications between businesses and the Vermont Department of Labor and Industry should be improved to ameliorate this situation. Toward that end, the State of Vermont should designate a neutral ombudsman within the Department of Labor and Industry to assist employers in understanding the claims process; help employers understand the Workers' Compensation insurance market and what is offered; help educate employers about the up-front policies necessary to make claims processes smoother; help educate employers about the importance of VOSHA's consultation services; and assist employers in dealing with insurers during claims.
- c) **Reducing Costs.** The State of Vermont should examine Workers' Compensation insurance programs with the goal of reducing costs. Some practices to consider include: establishing self-insurance pools; establishing tiered rates that recognize experience; establishing a state-sponsored private insurance pool that uses a tiered-rate structure; discounting employers' annual Workers' Compensation insurance premiums if they provide employee safety training; revising liability statutes to limit third-party suits; controlling health care costs; better guarding against fraudulent claims; enacting mechanisms that more quickly resolve disputed claims; improving adjudication claims by the Department of Labor and Industry; and evaluating the way issues surrounding pre-existing conditions are managed.

### 8) State Agency Support

In order to make better use of state resources to promote the state's rural economy, the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Agency of Natural Resources should annually re-evaluate the programs and assistance they provide to the forest products industry sector, and should make a recommendation to the governor regarding support of the sector.

### 9) Working Capital

The Vermont Economic Development Authority should offer its agricultural programs, including working capital, to primary and value-added wood companies.

**10) Forest Service Economic Action Program**

Vermont's Congressional delegation should work to restore full funding to the Forest Service Economic Action Program to support improvements in Vermont's forest products economy through capacity-building grants and technical assistance.

**11) Business Transfers**

The Vermont Department of Economic Development, working with other partners, should provide technical assistance and outreach to help facilitate the transfer of businesses in cases where current owners seek to sell their wood products businesses to heirs or employees.

## Education and Training

### 12) Educational Standards

To integrate forest products and Vermont's natural resource economy into public school curriculums, the Vermont Department of Education should revise the Science, Math, and Technology Standards, including the Natural Resources Standard, in *Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities*. This revision should require specific Kindergarten –12<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum on Vermont forests, forest products, and the natural resources economy.

### 13) School Curriculum

Based on the revised Natural Resources Standard (Recommendation #12), a balanced forestry and forest products standards-based curriculum should be commissioned by the Vermont Department of Education and distributed as a model to Vermont public schools. The curriculum should build on the forest curricula already available.

### 14) State Employee for Forestry Education

The Department of Education should fund one-half of a full-time employee to coordinate forestry education programs, to match the support of the Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation. The Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation should continue to fund one-half of a full-time employee to coordinate Project Learning Tree, the state naturalist program, and other forestry education programs.

### 15) Promotion to Educators and Students

The Vermont Wood Manufacturers Association should work with other industry groups to promote the image and importance of the wood products industry and employment opportunities within it to educators and mainstream and vocational students, including marketing the industry to guidance counselors and at career days.

### 16) Business / Employee Leadership Skills

Because employee-led innovation and strategic thinking builds productivity and because a creative workforce is resilient, wood products businesses in cooperation with the Department of Employment and Training and educational institutions should create a business / entrepreneur / employee apprenticeship program that promotes broad business leadership skills. Vermont should build a reputation for innovative business as it builds its reputation for design.

## Wood Resources

### 17) Market Linkages

In order to promote the in-state use of Vermont-grown wood, the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation should strive to facilitate market linkages between Vermont landowners, mills, manufacturers, state lands, and retail development. State government and the wood products industry should improve the process for connecting Vermont wood products businesses with the types of wood they need and the types available in Vermont, making it easier for more businesses to purchase Vermont-grown wood. Toward this end, a web-based clearinghouse for Vermont forest products should be developed.

The business-to-business application should start with a place for manufacturing companies of finished products or project managers to find the resources they need for their projects. Utilizing the Vermont Department of Economic Development's Vermont Business Assistance Network (VBAN) and partnering with the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund's Cornerstone Project, the State should look to set a pilot program between wood suppliers and wood manufacturers.

### 18) Wood Utilization

- a) **Wood Use for Energy.** The wood manufacturing industry is energy-intensive and faces high energy costs. Therefore, the state and other organizations should promote the use of wood processing residues as value-added co-products from the wood products industry. In addition, they should provide assistance to Vermont commercial and industrial businesses, communities, and institutions to generate more electricity, space and water heat, and process heat from the residues using existing and emerging technologies. Toward that end:
  - i) **Net Metering.** The state should amend the current net metering legislation to include biomass power generated on-site by wood products manufacturers using up to 150 KW of clean-burning wood energy systems.
  - ii) **Renewable Portfolio Standard.** The legislature should pass a renewable portfolio standard that includes biomass energy use for electricity.
  - iii) **State Policy on Wood Burning.** The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources should issue a consistent policy on wood burning for energy.
- b) **Timber Stand Improvement Programs.** In order to promote and facilitate the sustainable production of a high-quality timber resource for Vermont's forest products producers and to promote the economic viability of long-term forestland ownership:

- i) **Regional Request for Federal Funds.** The timber stand improvement programs should be revived in Vermont. Toward that end, a regional request for federal funds should be made by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation, and other neighboring states.
- ii) **Congressional Delegation Request for Federal Funds.** Vermont's Congressional delegation should lobby to restore federal funding for timber stand improvement programs.
- c) **Wood Utilization Funding.** The state should restore and maintain full staffing and funding to the wood utilization section of the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation (estimated at \$100,000 annually) in order to provide tools to undertake a range of expanded activities, including outreach to Vermont companies to encourage them to use Vermont-grown wood; seminars for the wood products industry (e.g., on how to use red maple in Vermont wood products); and other projects promoting Vermont value-added operations.

## 19) State Use of Vermont Wood Resources

The State of Vermont should require that all state Departments, Offices, and Agencies use, and require their contractors and consultants to use, wood products that originate from and are manufactured by in-state sources, whenever cost-effective and to the extent practicable.

## 20) Current Use Benefits

- a) **Forestlands.** Forestlands should continue to be eligible for Vermont's Use Value Appraisal Program (current use) with benefits that are equivalent to those granted to agricultural lands.
- b) **Forest Stewardship Education.** Non-industrial forest landowners are key to the success and viability of forest economy. To support education and encourage sustainable forest management among them, County Foresters should educate non-industrial forest landowners about forest stewardship. The state should support development of active demonstration sites.
- c) **Funding Current Use.** Currently, County Foresters must administer the current use program, which leaves them little time to provide forest stewardship education to landowners. The state should fund the administration of the current use program (estimated at \$250,000 annually) to allow County Foresters time to educate non-industrial landowners.

## 21) Green Certification in State Forests

State government should explore green certification for state forestlands as a way to help ensure a stable supply of certified wood.

## Forest Products Council Members

**Susan Bartlett**, State Senator from Lamoille County

**Tim Copeland**, Chief Executive Officer, Copeland Furniture

**Paul Costello**, Executive Director, Vermont Council on Rural Development

**Bill Johnson**, State Representative from Canaan (Essex County District)

**Mark Lorenzo**, Northern Forest Project Manager, National Wildlife Federation /  
Northeast Natural Resource Center

**Conrad Motyka**, (FPC member through 10/02), Former Commissioner, Vermont  
Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation

**Mary Jeanne Packer**, Executive Director, Vermont Wood Manufacturers Association

**Jeff Parsons, FPC Chair**, Vice President, Beeken/Parsons, Inc.

**Albert Perry**, State Representative from Richford

**Charles Shackleton**, President, Charles Shackleton Furniture

**Richard Smith**, Deputy Commissioner, Vermont Department of Economic Development

**Jonathan Wood**, (FPC Chair through 12/02), Commissioner, Vermont Department of  
Forests, Parks, and Recreation

**Brenda Hausauer**, Coordinator, Forest Products Council



## The Vermont Council on Rural Development

The Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD) is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping Vermont communities develop their capacity to create a prosperous and sustainable future through coordination, collaboration and the effective use of public and private resources. VCRD is non-partisan, with a board of federal, state, local, non-profit, and private partners.

In 2000, the VCRD board formed a Forestry Committee to examine a variety of issues surrounding the primary and value-added wood industries. The Committee searched to find a point of consensus for action among the stakeholders that would advance the interests of the sector statewide. To that end, VCRD held a series of field visits to investigate how to support value-added wood processing with about 30 environmental organizations, mill and factory owners, and leaders in the industry. VCRD found widespread concern that much of Vermont's wood is being sent out-of-state for processing; all stakeholders wanted Vermont's rural communities to gain the highest possible value for their wood resource. In addition, stakeholders felt that the industry needed incentives rather than penalties to assist toward this goal.

While VCRD studied ways to support the wood products industry, Governor Dean's Development Cabinet also considered how to support the wood products sector. The Cabinet concluded that a comprehensive set of policy recommendations was needed to support and provide incentives for the value-added wood products sector.

As a result, VCRD established the Vermont Forest Products Council (VFPC) to build a common set of policy recommendations to promote value-added wood products in Vermont, building on research that had already been done. Membership on the Council was intended to include about 12 stakeholders who had leadership and vision within the sector, experience with wood products, and knowledge of the policy dialogue surrounding the industry. In addition, members were selected to ensure a full representation of the diverse concerns of the sector, so that the resulting recommendations would represent a general consensus. VCRD invited participants, set up a two-year framework for the Council's work, created a draft charge for the Council, appointed the chair of the Council, hired a coordinator, and oversaw facilitation of the group.

The VCRD Forestry Committee, now called the Working Landscape Committee, continues to oversee the work of the Forest Products Council. The VCRD Working Landscape Committee members are: Alexander L. Aldrich (Chair), Executive Director, Vt. Arts Council; Tom Berry, Senator Jeffords' office; Paul Costello, Director, VCRD; Barbara Grimes, General Manager, Burlington Electric Company; Steve Kerr, Secretary, Vt. Department of Agriculture; Jolinda LaClair, USDA; Bob Paquin, Senator Leahy's office; Ed Stretch, Executive Director, Gilman Housing Trust; David Tucker, Director, Vt. Office of Economic Opportunity; and Jonathan Wood, Commissioner, Vt. Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation.

## Forest Products Council Charge

The charge of the Forest Products Council is to evaluate issues and build recommendations to advance the promotion of value-added forest products in Vermont.

The FPC will evaluate opportunities provided by Vermont's forest resources and rural workforce to maximize the use-value of that resource by encouraging local processing, manufacturing, and craftsmanship in the production of Vermont-made wood products.

The FPC will review the history of the dialogue around forest products development, particularly the economic development recommendations of the Northern Forest Lands Council and the Forest Resources Advisory Council, the long-term practical leadership provided by Vermont's Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation, as well as research conducted through the Department of Economic Development's Wood Products Marketing Initiative. Building on this history, the group will develop a platform for furthering "value-added" forest products development and promotion to serve the long-term interests of Vermont's rural communities.

The FPC will integrate the recommendations of previous examinations of this sector as it evaluates current issues and the needs of the sector and forms them into a platform for action.

The FPC will seek positive solutions to enhance the long-term viability of Vermont's forest products as a cornerstone of the rural economy.

The FPC is not designed to address forest practice issues, but to make specific recommendations toward public policy and private or cooperative action to support and enhance the value-added wood products economy.

### Goals of the Forest Products Council

- Bring together forest products and crafts manufacturing leaders and concerned parties to enhance the health and long-term viability of the forest products sector.
- Build policy recommendations designed to promote the vitality of the value-added forest products sector in Vermont.
- Promote a positive image of Vermont's forest products businesses and manufacturers and raise the profile of this critically important sector of the state's rural economy.

## Vermont Forest Products Council Blueprint for Action

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- Create a statewide strategy to produce incentives for value-added forest product entrepreneurial activity in Vermont.
- Foster a results-oriented dialogue.

## Acknowledgements

The Vermont Council on Rural Development greatly appreciates the leadership of its **Working Landscape Committee** in forming and overseeing the work of the Forest Products Council.

**Presenters** to Forest Products Council meetings expanded our understanding of many issues and helped form important recommendations. They included:

Tasha Wallis, Vt. Department of Labor and Industry; Stephanie Carter, Vt. Department of Marketing and Tourism; Roberta MacDonald, Cabot Creamery; Jill Peck, Vt. Department of Education; Jane Clifford, Vt. Department of Agriculture; Liz Soper, National Wildlife Federation; John Bradley, Vt. Department of Education; Shanna Ratner, Yellow Wood Associates; Ed Delhegan and Dan Davis, Vt. Cornerstone Project; Bob De Gues, Vt. Dept. of Forests, Parks and Recreation and Vt. Dept. of Public Service; Tim Maker, Biomass Energy Resource Center; Steve Greenfield, Vt. Economic Development Authority; Nancy Wasserman, Sleeping Lion Associates; Patrick Bartlett, Consulting Foresters of Vt.; Richard Carbonetti, LandVest; Ed Larson, Vt. Forest Products Association; Mike Rainville, Maple Landmark; and Bill Sayre, A. Johnson Lumber.

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Charles Shackleton provided production support for the cover of this report. The cover photo of a forest is by Emily Sloan and is from the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park in Woodstock, Vermont.

The Forest Products Council and VCRD appreciate the leadership, thoroughness, and skilled assistance of Brenda Hausauer, VFPC coordinator.

Finally, VCRD is deeply grateful to the members of the **Vermont Forest Products Council** for their frankness, collaborative spirit, and dedication to the wise use of Vermont's forest resources and the progress of Vermont's rural communities.

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<sup>1</sup> Memorandum to Rich Smith, Deputy Commissioner of Economic Development, from Jeffrey Carr and Karen Robinson, re: Preliminary Results of the Economic Impact of the Value-Added Portion of the Forest and Wood Products Industry in Vermont, January 25, 2001.