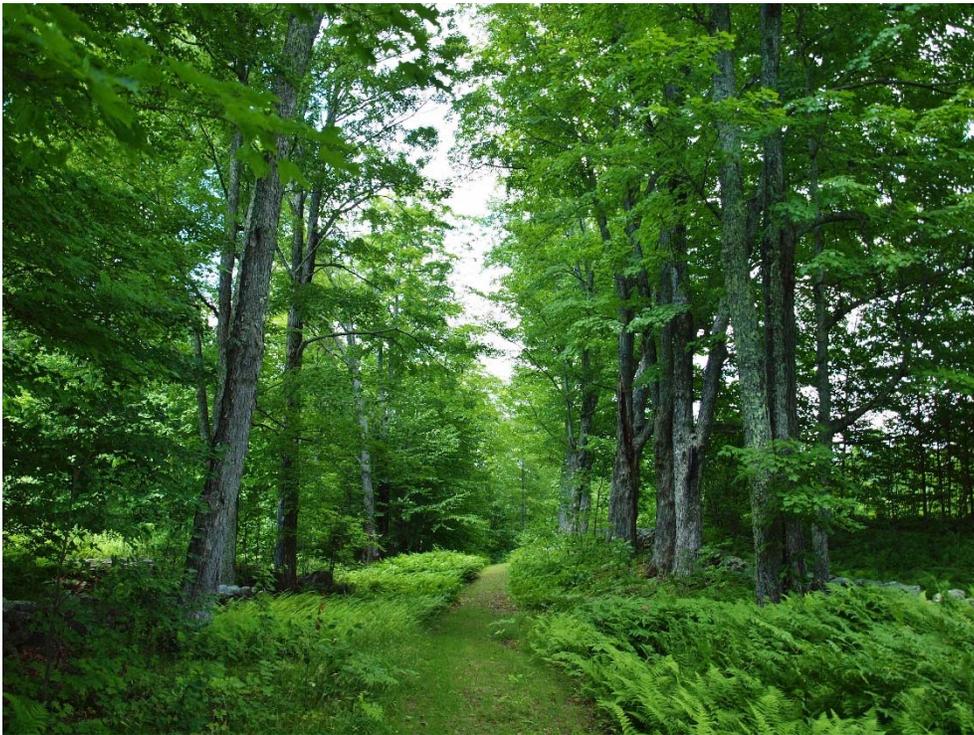


Working Lands Study 2020

Executive Summary

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Privately owned timberlands contribute \$1,282 per acre in recreation value to New Hampshire's economy and \$384 per acre in timber value.

Forests define New Hampshire. With 4,714,647 acres of the state (approximately 82 percent) covered by forest, they are also important to the state's economy. Besides forest products (logs for lumber, firewood for heating, and wood chips for power, heat, and paper-making), timberlands also support a wide variety of outdoor recreations, thus making a vital contribution to one of the state's largest industries: tourism. To quantify the economic contribution that public and private forestlands make, the N.H. Timberland Owners Association (NHTOA) commissioned Innovative Natural Resources Solutions, LLC and Plymouth State University to conduct two studies to measure the economic value and impact of these lands. This value and impact is impressive. Here are the **annual** totals:

- **\$4.43 billion** (\$3.0 billion recreation, \$1.43 billion timber) - Total estimated economic output
- **\$2.52 billion** (\$1.7 billion recreation, 0.82 billion timber) - Direct economic output
- **\$258 million** (\$196 million recreation, \$62 million timber) - Taxes/fees annually

Even more impressive is how this economic value and impact compares among landowner types. With 75 percent of New Hampshire's forestland owned privately, it is not surprising private lands make the largest overall economic contribution compared to state/locally owned land and federal lands (i.e. White Mountain National Forest, federal wildlife refuges, etc.). But what is surprising is how these ownerships compare on a per-acre basis, **annually**:

- **\$1,666/acre** (\$1,282/acre recreation, \$384/acre timber) - Total estimated economic output – private land
- **\$1,458/acre** (\$1,196/acre recreation, \$262/acre timber) - Total estimated economic output - state and municipal ownership
- **\$508/acre** (\$431/acre recreation, \$77/acre timber) Total estimated economic output - federal lands

Lands managed for forest products also support outdoor recreation. Logging roads and trails become snowmobile and hiking trails, forestry activities that benefit wildlife populations, support hunting and wildlife-watching. The data in these reports show that private lands, on a total dollar and per acre basis, make the largest economic contribution when compared to public land. This can be attributed to New Hampshire's long and enduring tradition of private landowners allowing passive recreation (i.e. not posting property to trespassing). Although virtually no New Hampshire landowners receive compensation for allowing passive recreation on their property, the NHTOA believes four factors encourage this tradition:



An overwhelming majority of timberland owners open their land to recreational uses, including snowmobiling

- Tax policy that is fair, reasonable, and encourages passive recreation;
- Laws that limit a landowner's liability to personal injury lawsuits;
- A regulatory framework that is reasonable, flexible, and encourages sustainable forestry; and
- A forest products industry and infrastructure capable of compensating timberland owners for growing trees, enabling them to economically own timberland and not have to seek alternative sources of income through development or requiring lease payments (e.g., hunting leases).



These reports quantify the value New Hampshire and its communities receive from New Hampshire's forestland. Moreover, the reports illustrate the economic importance of tax and legal/regulatory policies that encourage forest management and public recreation and how timber markets enable private timberland owners to keep their lands open.

Sustainable timber harvests on private timberland not only create economic value from the timber, but trails like this one are often converted to recreational uses once the harvest is complete, adding even more value.