

## The Forest Speaks

### Local Wood, Local Good

Shortly after the timber harvest began on the McIlvaine Town Forest, I found myself driving north on I-93 near Manchester. I came up behind a tractor trailer loaded with wood chips and noticed a slogan on the back in huge print saying “Local Wood, Local Good”. As I got closer, I saw that it was a truck belonging to D.H. Hardwick & Sons, the contractor conducting the timber harvest on our new town forest. I knew that load was some of our Windham wood and it was headed off to market. This started me thinking that once the harvest was over, other Windham residents might be interested to know where all the wood went. I am happy to report that all of it stayed right here in New Hampshire and has benefitted the local New Hampshire economy.

The main goals of this harvest on the McIlvaine Town Forest were to clear out older trees nearing the end of their lifespan, and to remove low quality trees making room for higher quality younger trees. We want to promote desirable species for wildlife and for future forest products for decades to come. Markets for high grade wood are good, but being able to sell the low grade wood in order to generate revenue for forest management projects is a key to forest management success. Forest land owners in New Hampshire are fortunate to have markets for their wood right here in New Hampshire.

The harvesting and processing of wood is an important segment of the New Hampshire economy. The annual value of New Hampshire’s forest products industry totals nearly \$ 1.4 billion. Landowners received approximately \$30 million in stumpage payments for timber harvested in 2012. In 2012, forestry, logging, and associated trucking accounted for over 1300 jobs in New Hampshire. Makers of lumber products employed approximately 2000 workers. It was estimated that the wood energy sector accounted for 470 jobs. These figures do not account for trickle down jobs. For example, a sawmill employee is accounted for, but if the lumber this employee made goes into other products, not all of those jobs are accounted for in these numbers.

There are still many sawmills in New Hampshire turning logs into lumber, and that is still a very important market for the wood. A newer wood products market is the biomass energy sector which generates renewable electricity and heat. Biomass is typically a locally sourced fuel made from chipping low quality trees and benefits the local economy through jobs in the harvesting, processing, and use of the chips. Switching to biomass from fossil fuels often results in emissions reductions depending upon the application and fuel being replaced or offset. There are 8 biomass energy plants in NH producing electricity. Over 75 commercial facilities use wood chips or pellets for heating in New Hampshire and that number is increasing rapidly. There are also consumer markets for wood products with companies producing firewood and manufacturing wood pellets for home heating.

So where did all the wood from our McIlvaine Town Forest harvest actually go? Sawmills that bought the higher quality logs for lumber production included New England Forest Products in Greenfield, Colby Lumber in Boscawen, Madison Lumber in Madison, and Durgin and Crowell in Springfield. Biomass chips for electricity production went to Schiller Station in Portsmouth, Bridgewater Power in Ashland, and Springfield Power in Springfield. Higher quality wood chips were sold to Crooked Mountain Rehabilitation Center for heat and energy production, Froling Energy in Peterborough, a provider of wood pellets and high quality wood chips and wood fired boiler systems to burn both fuels, and New England Wood Pellet in Jaffrey who focuses on bagged wood pellets for heating. If you have a pellet

stove and buy pellets from The Stove Shoppe in Windham, you might be buying pellets made from Windham wood at New England Wood Pellet.

So the slogan, Local Wood, Local Good, nicely summarizes the wood products cycle here in New Hampshire. From locally grown trees, supplying raw materials to many New Hampshire businesses, to all the jobs supported along the way. We live in an area with abundant forest and wildlife resources. The Windham Forestry Committee will continue working to manage these resources wisely on the McIlvaine Town Forest for the benefit of our neighbors here in Windham, and throughout New Hampshire for decades to come.

Submitted by Wanda Rice on behalf of the Windham Forestry Committee