

Forest Certification in Maine



Gravure Association of America, Inc.

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R. Alec Giffen
Department of Conservation
Maine Forest Service
22 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333
www.maineforestservice.org

We help you make informed decisions about Maine's forests



Maine Forest Demographics

Maine's forests are overwhelmingly private, many are in family ownership and in small parcels

- **Total state land acres = 19,751,394 (96% private, 4% public)**
- **Total forested land acres = 17,833,109 (90% of the state)**
- **Total timberland acres = 17,338,955 (94% private, 6% public)**
- **Total family forest (under 10,000 acres) = 5,705,685 acres, or 1/3 of the total state timberland -- 234,000 individuals and organizations own family forest parcels**
- **2,941,000 acres (51% of family forest) are parcels under 100 acres in size, owned by 221,000 individuals**

Status of Certification in Maine

Maine has a high proportion of certified land and unusually large acreages of private FSC & SFI

- **Total certified acres = 7,259,877 (42% of total timberland; 92% private, 8% public)**
- **FSC certified acres = 2,743,686 (16% of total timberland; 78% private, 22% public)**
- **SFI certified acres = 5,541,714 (32% of total timberland; 90% private, 10% public)**
- **ATFS certified acres = 35,169 (less than 1% of total timberland; private and university)**
- **SCS certified acres = 1,554,011 (9% of total timberland; all private)**

Status of Certification in Maine (cont.)

- **The Master Logger Certification Program originated in Maine**
 - **113 certificates**
 - **Harvests ½ of total state harvest volume**
 - **75% comes from certified forestland**
 - **Harvest from non-certified lands contributes approximately 12% to statewide certified volume**

Non-Certified Timberland in Maine

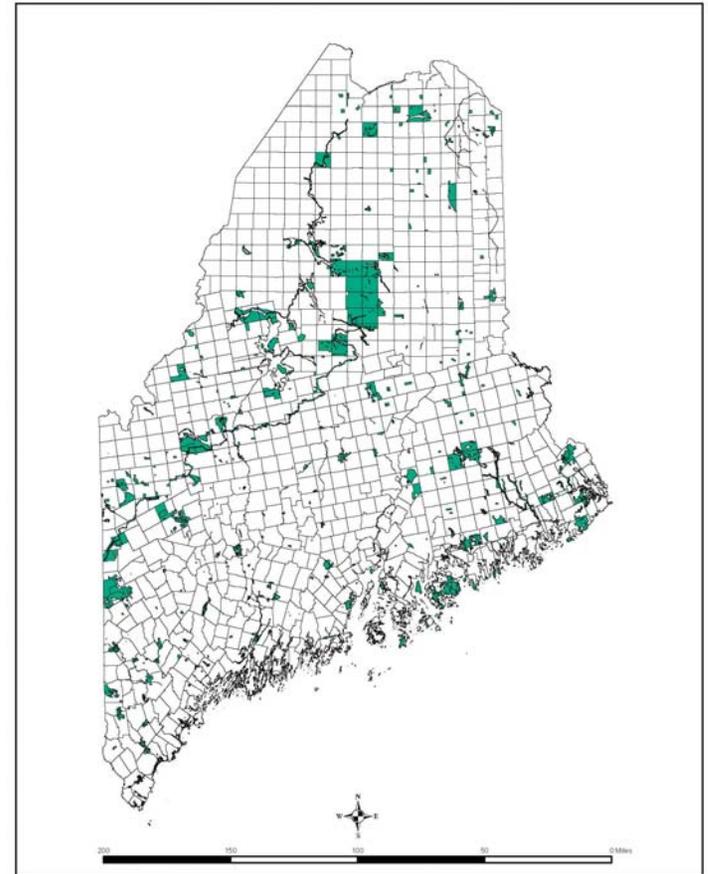
Most of the uncertified land is family owned.

	Size	Total Acres	Number of Landowners
Large Parcels	Over 50,000 acres	1,920,000	10 owners
Mid-sized Parcels	10,000 to 50,000 acres	2,000,000	140 owners
Family Forest Parcels	Less than 10,000 acres	5,370,000	232,000 owners
Total	--	9,290,000	232,150

Issues Limiting Certification in Maine

Issue #1. Limited Public Ownership in Maine

- **Historic priority given to certification of public lands, especially FSC**
- **Low amount of public timberland in Maine compared to other northern states**
- **Relative difficulty of certifying private lands compared to public lands**
- **Relative environmental risk of management on private vs. public lands**



	Maine		Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin	
	Public	Private	Public	Private
Total Certification	8%	92%	73%	27%

Issues Limiting Certification in Maine (cont.)

Issue #2. Landowner Costs and Perceived Lack of Financial Benefits (particularly important for private owners)

- **Costs of certification, auditing, re-certification, and membership**
- **Lack of perceived financial benefit: access to markets? price premium?**

These are issues across the board:

- **Small, mid-size, large landowners**
- **Private, public, institutional landowners**
- **Forest industry, conservation organization, and other landowners**

Issues Limiting Certification in Maine (cont.)

Issue #3: Differences Among the Needs of Landowners and Landowner Classes – Needs Include:

- **Difficulty obtaining consensus among multiple owners, especially with partnerships and extended family owners**
- **Concern regarding public scrutiny**
- **Different time horizons for achieving (increasing emphasis on short term)**
- **The sheer number of family landowners to reach**
- **Lack of interest on the part of some family landowners**
- **Timber management is not the highest priority for some landowners, particularly small ones**
- **Intermittent harvest schedules on small properties**
- **Ownership turn-over**

Issues Limiting Certification in Maine (cont.)

Issue #4. Uneven Distribution of Mills Seeking Certified Wood

- **Problem of having primarily one industry sector interested in certification (i.e., paper)**
- **High cost of transportation when a certified mill is not close by**
- **Many “certified” products are sold to mills without an interest in certification**
- **Chain of Custody for products requiring multiple processing steps can be challenging**

Sustainability: The Bigger Picture

Sustainability is a “landscape” scale issue. We need to see the forest as well as the trees.

Certification is an indicator of sustainability, it is not the same as sustainability

- **True sustainability requires a landscape perspective**
 - **Growth vs. harvest**
 - **Diversity of forest types and size classes**
 - **Diversity of management approaches**
 - **Susceptibility to outbreaks of insects and disease**
 - **Fire potential**
 - **Surface and groundwater quality**
 - **Meeting the needs of wildlife (particularly for a wide-ranging species)**
 - **Connectivity**

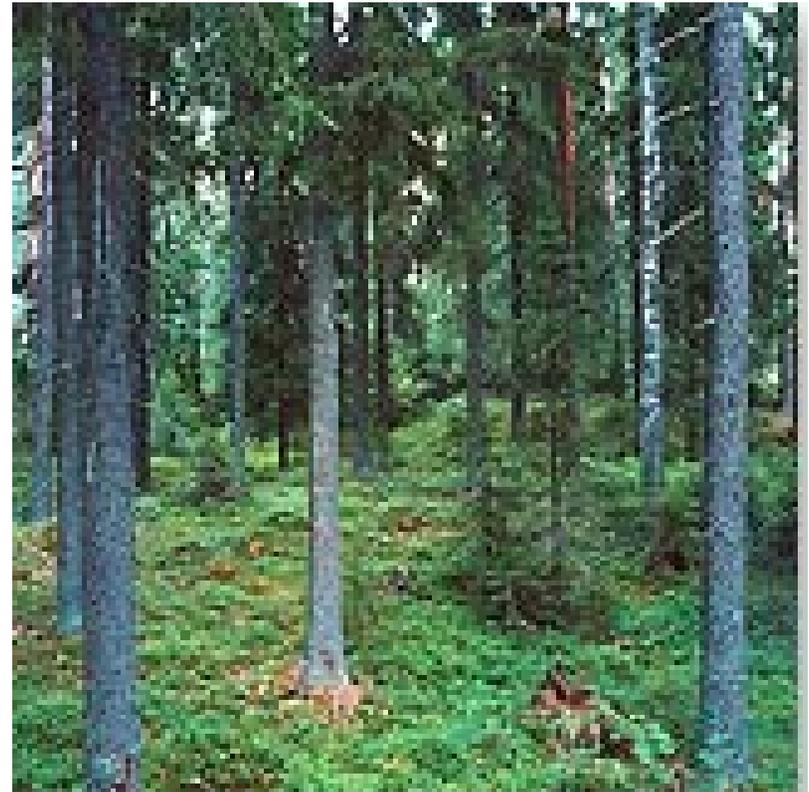
Sustainability: The Bigger Picture (cont.)



A Comparison of Forest Sustainability in Maine and Finland

Finland	Measure	Maine
55 million acres	Forest size	17.4 million acres
95%	% of forest certified	42%
19,900	Forest industry employees	18,130
4	Number of commercial species	17
Scots pine (65%)	Dominant species in stands	3 species of spruce (19%)
Simpler	Complexity	More complex
Yes	Growth = or > harvest	Yes
15.2	Stocking (cords/acre)	16.6
20%	Plantations	2.1%

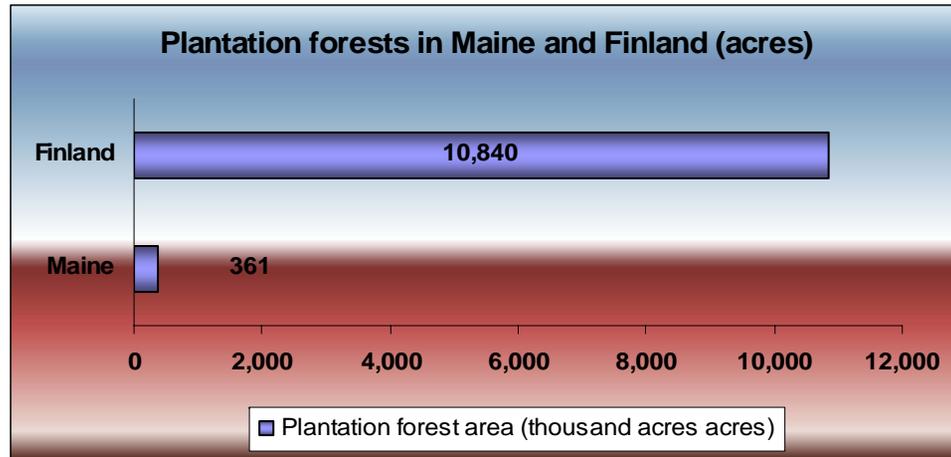
Finland's Forests are Simpler



Maine's Forests are More Complex



Plantation Forests

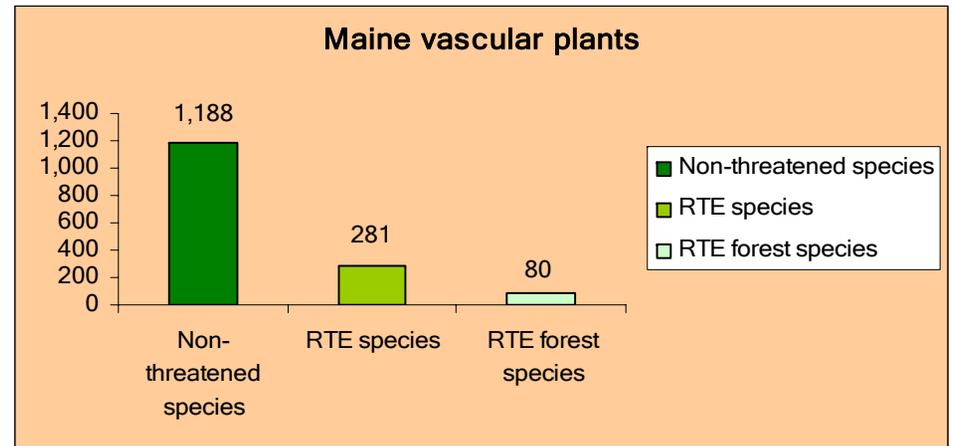


Finland (20%)

Maine (2.1%)



Rare, Threatened, Endangered Species



- Approximately 10% of all boreal forest species are at risk of extinction in southern Finland.
- The majority of rare plants on Maine's managed forest landscapes occur in open wetlands, along river shores, and on mountain tops and talus slopes.
- Managed forest types with any significant amount of rare plant species include cedar swamps in northern ME, rich hardwood forests in western ME, pitch pine in southern ME.



The “Landscape” Approach to Certification

Maine has a number of advantages over other areas when considering sustainability at the landscape level

- **Natural characteristics – Maine has a “natural” advantage**
- **31 State laws**
- **Over 100 public and private programs**
- **Existing forest certification initiatives**
- **Socio-economic characteristics**
- **Traditional management practices**



The Landscape Approach to Certification (cont.)

Evidence of Sustainable Forest Conditions

- **Maine is home to the largest unfragmented forest east of the Mississippi River (10 million acres, one-quarter of New England)**
- **97.7% Natural regeneration**
- **79% of stands are moderately well stocked, only 5% poorly stocked**
- **Standing timber volume since 1950 has doubled**
- **Growth and harvest are essentially equal**
- **Stands evenly distributed across size classes**
- **2 million acres protected through acquisition or easement over the past 5 years**

The Landscape Approach to Certification (cont.)

Evidence of Good Forest Conditions (cont.)

- **77,000 acres managed as ecological reserves, with another 15,000 acres as potential**
- **With few exceptions, flowing water in the forest meets national swimmable/fishable standards -- Maine's forest provides the best remaining habitat in the Northeast for brook trout**
- **Habitat for diverse species: 1,432 plant, 198 bird, 54 mammal, 52 fish, 15,000 insects – including abundant game species**
- **Only 41 plants and 20 animals considered threatened or endangered at the state level; are stable or increasing; 300+ nesting pairs of bald eagle, 16 pairs of peregrine falcons – populations are stable or recovering**
- **Turkey, white-tailed deer, black bear, moose (game species) all are abundant**

The Landscape Approach to Certification (cont.)

Goal

- **Without changing the standards for certification, streamline and simplify certification to make it more understandable and less costly to landowners**

A Maine Action Agenda: Action #1

- **Refine the analysis of how landscape-scale information and state laws and programs can meet the requirements of certification systems and institutionalize this approach.**
 - **Conduct gap analyses of SFI and ATFS standards (the analysis for FSC is almost done and suggests that approximately half of the requirements can be met or substantially met through the landscape approach).**
 - **Identify how the key elements of the landscape approach might be applied to address the needs of the various landowner classes and certification systems.**
 - **Refine state programs to facilitate certification, e.g., provide easy access to information on rare or exemplary natural communities.**
 - **Prepare materials identified as being especially worthwhile through gap analyses (e.g., prepare descriptions of key state laws and regulations focused on how they meet certification requirements and package materials for use by landowners, auditors, and group managers).**
 - **Work with the certification systems to institutionalize the landscape approach.**

A Maine Action Agenda: Action #2

- **Continue efforts to promote certification by owners of large forestland parcels (50,000 acres +).**
 - **Retain the focus on individual parcel certification.**
 - **Maintain contact with landowners.**
 - **Provide access to information concerning the landscape approach and potential for cost savings through collaborative or other creative means.**
 - **Provide technical assistance (to the extent this does not disadvantage those who certified on their own initiative).**

Note: These landowners understand certification and have all been contacted previously. Simply continuing to request that they certify will have adverse consequences.

A Maine Action Agenda: Action #3

- **Take steps to promote certification by owners of mid-sized forestland parcels (10,000 – 50,000 acres+):**
 - **Maintain contact with landowners and track changes in ownership.**
 - **Provide access to information concerning the landscape approach and potential for cost savings.**
 - **Identify logical geographic and management class groupings, and adapt the landscape approach. to groupings that show high potential for certification.**
 - **Form associations of similar parcels, either for formal group certification or for making individual certifications more efficient.**

Note: This is a largely untapped area that (1) shows great promise and (2) should be considered a near-term priority.

A Maine Action Agenda: Action #4

- **Take steps to promote certification by owners of small-sized forestland parcels (less than 10,000 – acres+) Making full use of landscape approach:**
 - **Expand opportunities for point of harvest certification (need not be limited to small parcels).**
 - **Utilize existing management plan programs to target landowners for potential enrollment in certification groups.**
 - **Provide opportunities for certification through licensed forester alliances.**
 - **Initiate a pilot project tailored along the lines of the FSC Family Forest Alliance initiative.**

Note: Certification of family forests is an absolute necessity if Maine is to meet anticipated demands. There is no single quick fix here; a multiple-pronged initiative is required. The action items with the greatest potential for producing near-term results will be given priority.

A Maine Action Agenda: Action #5

- **Continue to help grow demand for certified wood products, and for the use of Maine wood products more generally.**
 - **Follow-through on the Governor's Executive Order requiring state purchase of certified paper, including providing assistance to State paper procurement officials in defining purchase specifications.**
 - **Follow-through on the Governor's Executive Order requiring the development of a strategy for applying green building standards to state financed buildings and for otherwise increasing the use of certified wood in these buildings.**