

*A Resource for Everyone:* FORESTS  
*and the*  
CONNECTICUT  
ECONOMY



CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION

*Bureau of Natural Resources  
Division of Forestry*



University of  
Connecticut

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM  
*College of Agriculture and Natural Resources*



## *The Beauty and Bounty of Wildlife*

Because forests are our natural vegetative cover, most of our native wildlife species need healthy forests to reproduce and thrive. Connecticut's resident wildlife populations include some 60 species of mammals, 135 species of birds and 82 species of freshwater fish.

Connecticut and its municipalities collect some \$4 million in fees each year from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses, permits and tags. In addition, \$3.8 million worth of meat and fur are harvested from our state's forests each year. Deer hunting alone produces \$5.9 million of directly related annual economic expenditures in our state.

Tens of thousands of residents and visitors to our state also enjoy viewing and photographing wildlife. These photographers, bird watchers and wildlife enthusiasts contribute much to the state's economy, although their exact impact is yet to be fully quantified.

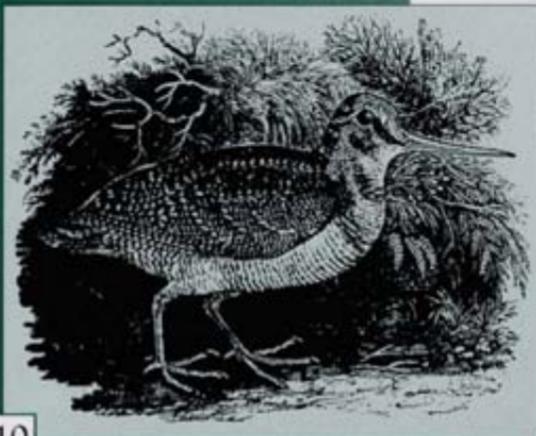




Photo by Susan Egan

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Connecticut is one of the nation's most heavily forested states. This is a surprise to many people, in part because we are also the nation's fifth most densely populated state. Simply put, there are few places on earth where so many people live among so much forest.

Despite over 380 years of settlement, the twenty-first century finds Connecticut nearly 60% forested. Today's forests remain a vital resource contributing much to our economy, our environment and the quality of our daily lives.



### A World Class Timber Industry

Connecticut's forests produce between 60 and 80 million board feet of timber annually, providing over \$14 million in direct income to forest landowners and raw material for some 350 Connecticut processing and manufacturing firms. These firms convert timber into a wide range of products including framing and finish lumber; custom cabinets and furniture; architectural millwork; flooring; doors; and windows. In doing so, they contribute over \$500 million dollars to our annual economy while employing some 3,600 people. And because trees are a renewable



natural resource, this industry can be sustained indefinitely without altering the rural character of our countryside.

Connecticut's forests produce world-class timber products that are exported around the globe, including Canada, Europe, Japan and Malaysia. Worldwide, demand is increasing while supplies are shrinking. As a state where the annual growth of both softwood and hardwood timber exceeds the annual harvest, Connecticut's timber industry has excellent potential for growth in the years ahead.



Photos by Peter Morenus



## *Holiday Trees and Greens*

Pick up any Christmas card, and chances are there will be a snow-covered tree on it somewhere. Trees, forests and the holiday season have been fully intertwined since the first Christmas tree was brought in to stand by the hearth.

Over 350 Connecticut growers plant, tend and harvest over 6,000 acres of Christmas trees. They sell at least 400,000 trees each winter, earning over \$10 million. In addition, 12.5 tons of mountain laurel greens are sold from our Connecticut State Forests each year, and the manufacture and sale of wreaths, laurel ropes and a variety of other holiday decorations earns growers and others considerable additional holiday income.



## The Sweet Sugar Maple

Connecticut residents have enjoyed the sweet, natural flavor of pure maple syrup and candy since colonial times. Who wouldn't enjoy a good old-fashioned sugar-on-snow party on a crisp, sunny March day?

The opportunity awaits us all, because Connecticut's maple industry is alive, healthy and growing.

Connecticut today has over 300 maple producers who boil the sweet sap into an average of 12,000 gallons of maple syrup per year, with a retail value of almost \$1/2 million. Best of all, the "supply and demand" picture offers great promise for the future: demand for Connecticut's maple syrup typically exceeds our production, while our forests contain tens of thousands of acres of sugar maple that go untapped every year.

Anyone who's visited a sugarhouse at boiling time has fond memories of the experience, and today a growing number of Connecticut sugarhouses are open to the public.

Innovative marketing strategies to promote maple products and the opportunity for a close-to-home "sugarhouse experience" can play a key role in the growth of Connecticut tourism.



*Photos by Peter Morens*



## Protecting Our Water

The people of Connecticut use more than 3 billion gallons of water each year. Over 2 million state residents obtain their water from surface reservoirs, while another one million use wells to pump ground water. Connecticut's forests play a vital role in the cleansing and protection of both these water supplies, providing what amounts to a free service that could cost untold millions to replace or rectify in their absence. In New York, for example, studies showed that spending \$1.5 billion to safeguard forested reservoirs would save \$6 to 8 billion in treatment costs for New York City's water system.

Forests have long been used as buffers around reservoirs, cleansing and regulating the flow of surface runoff and protecting the watershed from contamination. Research has shown that forests are the best possible land use for protecting ground water quality as well. As our population grows, healthy forests that help keep our water clean will become an increasingly important investment in our childrens' future.



Photo by Susan Egan

## Keeping Warm With Wood

Some 500,000 cords of firewood are harvested from Connecticut's forests each year, displacing 108 million gallons of fuel oil which would otherwise cost our residents over \$130 million annually (average winter 2000-2001 retail prices). Best of all, firewood is very often a byproduct of environmentally sound timber and wildlife improvement practices. Properly done, removing fuelwood from a working forest can actually increase the value growth rate of the remaining timber and/or enhance the habitat for wildlife.



# FORESTS *for the* FUTURE

**W**hen a Connecticut landowner grows and nurtures a seedling into a Christmas tree, or a veneer log, or a tree to be harvested for firewood, new capital is created: new wealth that did not previously exist in our economy.

Economically speaking, it's the same as pumping oil out of the ground, with one BIG difference: forests are a renewable resource. You can always grow another seedling into another veneer log, and another and another.

Connecticut's forests contribute hundreds of millions of dollars annually

to our state's economy, protect our environment and keep our state a beautiful and desirable place to live. Better still, they have the potential to contribute much more. But will they? We cannot forget that almost 90% of our forests belong not to the state or federal government, but to tens of thousands of private individuals. As a result, thousands of acres of forestland are lost each year through conversion to residences and other uses. The future of what remains lies squarely in these owners' hands.

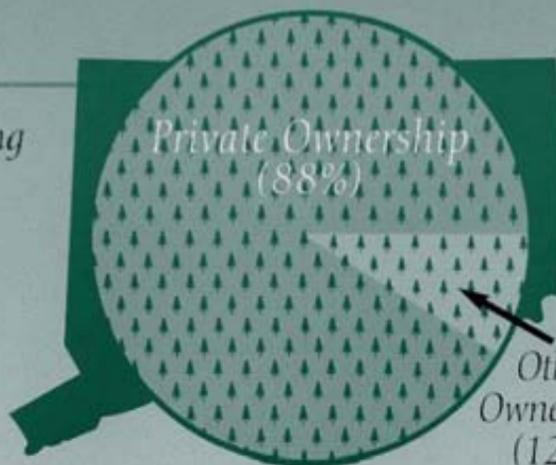
Studies show that most owners want to be good forest stewards. Many want to ensure that their land remains forest at least into the next generation. But forest manage-



ment and estate planning issues are complex, and few owners have the expertise to reach these goals on their own.

If we can provide our forest owners with the education and

professional advice they need, Connecticut can lead the nation in demonstrating how lots of people and lots of forests can happily co-exist, and how healthy forests contribute to a healthy economy.



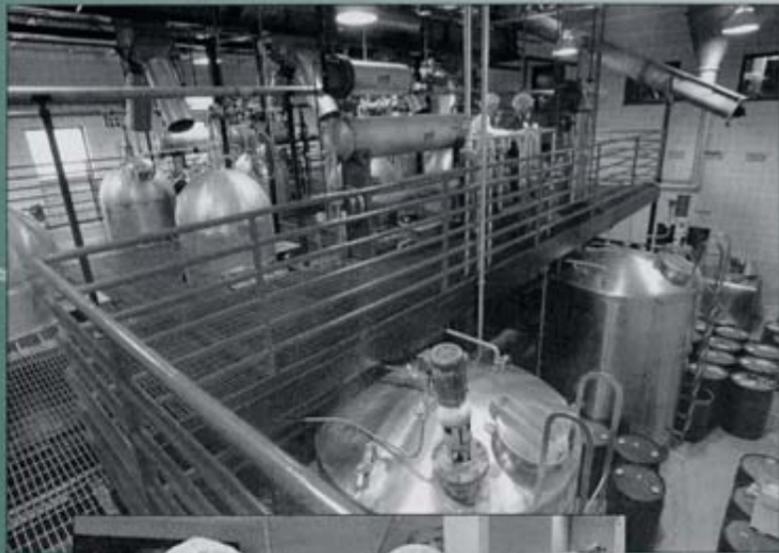
Other Ownership (12%)





### *Witch Hazel: A Connecticut Yankee Product*

Witch hazel, a forest shrub unique to the northeastern United States, reaches its greatest concentrations in southern New England. Over 100 years ago, the Reverend E.E. Dickinson of Essex learned that it could be distilled into an astringent with numerous medicinal qualities, and a uniquely Connecticut industry was born. Today, witch hazel enjoys a global market and is sold as an astringent for home use, an ingredient in specialized over-the-counter drugs, and as a base for many cosmetics. Connecticut produces over two million gallons of processed witch hazel each year, with a wholesale value of over \$9 million, representing virtually 100 percent of the world's supply. Better yet, for the past decade demand for witch hazel has grown 10-12% annually and is projected to continue to increase at that rate in the future.



Photos by Peter Mironovic





## *Recreation and Tourism: Enjoyment for Residents and Dollars for Local Economies*

Connecticut's forests form the essential backdrop for our state's \$4.9 billion tourism industry. Surveys repeatedly show that the state's appeal as a tourist destination is largely attributed to its scenic qualities, of which Connecticut's forests are an integral part. Tourism annually supports an estimated 114,500 state jobs (7.7% of the state labor force), which pay over two billion dollars in wages and generate \$1/2 billion in state and local taxes.

Residents and out-of-state visitors enjoy some 8 million recreation days each year in Connecticut's 171,479 acres of state parks and state forests, generating \$2.4 million in day-use fees. Our state's public and private campgrounds attract over 900,000 visitors each year, generating \$16 million in user fees. Campground travelers (about 38% are out-of-state visitors) spend some \$296 million in our state each year.

One key component of the many recreational uses in Connecticut forests is a network of hundreds of miles of hiking trails, used by tens of thousands of visitors each year. Our state's Blue Blazed Hiking Trail System, maintained by Connecticut Forest and Park Association volunteers, has over 700 miles of trails on both public and private forestland. These forests also provide countless opportunities for cross-country skiing, snow-mobiling, mountain biking, picnicking, bird watching, horseback riding and many other activities. The demand for quality outdoor recreation experiences continues to grow, creating increasing income opportunities for private forest owners who offer these activities in their forests on a fee basis.

