

cation and coalition building. By bringing opinion leaders into the field, initially perceived divisions in interest were overcome and what might have otherwise evolved into heated debate, quickly developed into earnest discussions deeply grounded in reality and understanding.

With this newly established understanding, participants capped the event with the development of a series of "next steps." These future steps identified during the closing session included:

- To continue networking among participants and forge new coalitions.
- To organize future "practical" workshops (similar to this effort) in other regions of the US.
- To seek increased funding opportunities (e.g., investigate the applicability of "escrow" accounts or provision of new money on a use-or-lose basis within the Forest Service).
- To begin a NEPA process dialogue among the range of interests (e.g., practitioners, EPA, Forest Service, OGC, CEQ, Fish and Wildlife).
- To begin formal exploration of solutions to administrative and policy bottlenecks.
- To pursue the development of economic incentives or a rewards program for successful efforts.
- To develop demonstration pilots for innovative watershed approaches (e.g., streamlined NEPA processes, new contracting procedures, programmatic approaches, multi-year funding, etc.).

Proceedings from the event are currently being formulated. If you would like more information on this event or would like to reserve a copy of the workshop's proceedings, please contact Mary Mitsos at 202-797-6582 and [mmitsos@pinchot.org](mailto:mmitsos@pinchot.org) —or— Andrea Bedell Loucks at 202-939-3455 and [andreabedell@pinchot.org](mailto:andreabedell@pinchot.org)

## Forest Certification Pilot Projects Expanded on State and Tribal Lands

*Will Price*

As part of its nationwide study of the applicability of certification on public forest lands, the Pinchot Institute is expanding its certification pilot program to include extensive state and tribal forest systems in the western and southern United States, to augment those already completed or currently underway in the Northeast and Lake States. Independent, third-party certification is one of several tools that shows significant promise for advancing sustainable forest management in the United States. Thus far, certification has been applied primarily on private forest lands, but significant opportunities exist for extending certification to the more than 250 million acres of federal, state, county, and municipal forest lands in the nation. A limited series of pilot demonstration projects has been initiated, involving state and county forest land in several locations in the northeastern United States.

There are substantial variations in public forest land systems in different parts of the country, in terms of social, political, economic, and institutional considerations as well as in biological and physical terms. A strategic approach is needed to guide the expansion of pilot demonstration

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<sup>1</sup> Based on average sawtimber harvest 1985-1998. Source: Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry, *A Calendar Report for Executed Contracts* ©1999.

<sup>2</sup> Mater, C., Sample, V.A., Grace, J. and Rose, G., *A Third-Party Performance-Based Certification: What Public Forestland Managers Should Know*, © *Journal of Forestry*, February 1999, pp. 6-12 (also available as a Pinchot Institute Policy Report by the same title, issued November 1998).

projects on public forest lands, addressing a broad range of situations with the most efficient application of time, effort, and financial resources.

The Pinchot Institute is facilitating the development and implementation of such a strategy by compiling information essential to initiating and completing certification pilot projects in targeted geographic regions throughout the US within the next year.

### **Building on the lessons from Pennsylvania**

At the start of this study, the Pinchot Institute facilitated what has become the largest and most ambitious application of independent, third-party certification on public forest lands, resulting in the successful certification of the entire 2.1 million-acre system of state forests in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania state forest system now represents a supply of approximately 45 million board feet annually in high quality hardwood to producers of certified wood products, domestically and worldwide.<sup>1</sup> An adequate and reliable supply of certified wood has been cited as one of the most critical elements in the development of a successful system of producers and retailers of certified wood products. The Pinchot Institute recently published a summary of the process and lessons learned from the Pennsylvania pilot project, as well as the Minnesota and Massachusetts efforts.<sup>2</sup>

A key objective of the pilot projects is to examine the new and additional issues that arise when certification is applied on public forest lands, such as how certification requirements can reconcile with forest management standards or direction given through statute or through management plans developed with broad public involvement. During the past year, the Pinchot Institute has made a substantial commitment of resources to laying the groundwork for a major expansion of forest certification pilot projects on state and tribal lands. State forestry agencies throughout the United States, but especially in the West and South, have been contacted about participating in pilot certifications. More than 30 tribal governments have been contacted, and the Pinchot Institute is continuing to coordinate closely with the Intertribal Timber Council to identify specific tribal governments well-suited to participating in pilot certifications.

### **Planned Activities**

At this time, four state forestry agencies have provided the Pinchot Institute with letters of intent to proceed with pilot certifications as a part of this study (see table below). In addition, 30 tribal governments have agreed to undergo the preliminary scoping evaluation that usually precedes a full-scale certification assessment, and four tribes have are so confident that the scoping on their forest lands will be successful that they have already indicated their intent to proceed with certification as part of this study.

<i>State forest systems:</i>	<i>Acres</i>
Washington	1,200,000
Maine	480,000
North Carolina	61,000
Tennessee	156,000
<i>Tribal forest systems:</i>	
Northern Cheyenne	105,000
Coeur d'Alene	26,000
Colville	614,000
White Mountain Apache	690,000
<i>Total</i>	<i>3,332,000</i>

If adequate funding can be secured to retain certifier organizations to carry out these assessments, it is expected that all of these projects will be underway before the end of 2000 and all will be completed before the end of 2001. The results of the pilot certifications, and a detailed examination of the ways in which independent, third-party evaluation was applied in the context of the different policy frameworks that exist in each state and tribal government, will be made available as a published report of the Pinchot Institute, electronically on the Pinchot Institute website ([www.pinchot.org](http://www.pinchot.org)), and in summary form as articles in professional journals and other publications.

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