

**GREEN MOUNTAIN DIVISION
NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS
POSITION STATEMENT
RIGHT TO PRACTICE FORESTRY**

ISSUE: Government regulation which significantly and adversely limits the use of private property can work to destroy the incentive for private landowners to invest time and capital in long term forest management. Growing and harvesting forest products often represents the only source of income that can be produced for a forested property without resorting to development of the land for more intensive uses. Statutory protection is needed to prevent unnecessary restrictions against the growing, harvesting and transport of forest products.

BACKGROUND: The profession embraces the science, art, and practice of creating, managing, using, and conserving forests and associated resources for human benefit and in a sustainable manner to meet desired goals, needs, and values. This includes the growing, tending, protection, harvest, regeneration and transportation of wood crops. The practice of forestry protects air and water quality, and creates or enhances wildlife habitat. The harvesting of timber is a major forestry tool, and when practiced in accordance with accepted silvicultural practices and Accepted Management Practices, it is a desirable and beneficial use of Vermont's forest land and contributes greatly to the State's economy. Additional benefits are improved recreational opportunities preserving the traditional use of the Vermont landscape.

Forests are an important component of the landscape and add immeasurably to the quality of life for Vermont's citizens and tourists. Private ownership accounts for about 77% of the forested land in Vermont. Forestry activities are traditional and fundamental uses of the land and include harvesting and transporting forest products. Because this is a heavily forested state, harvests are sometimes conducted near populated areas, which may give the public a perception of conflict with other values.

POSITION: It is in the public good to encourage the preservation of open space by conserving our forest and other natural resources. Therefore, it is the position of the Green Mountain Division of the New England Society of American Foresters that forestry activities, including silvicultural activities and the harvest and transport of forest products shall not be unreasonably limited by state law, municipal and regional planning and zoning powers or by the unreasonable interpretation of those laws and powers.

EXPIRATION: Adopted on 08-13-98 as passed by the Executive Committee and will expire on 09-01-2008