



## NSRC-FUNDED RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

# ***Special Topic: Evaluating Northern Forest Stakeholder Perceptions of NSRC Research***

PROJECT AWARD YEAR AND TITLE:  
**2009**

***Connecting the Dots between Research  
Priorities and Stakeholder Needs: An  
Evaluation of Northern Forest Stakeholder  
Perceptions of NSRC Research***

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Research supported by the NSRC should play a critical role by providing better understanding of the relationships between human and natural systems and the challenges faced by the Northern Forest region and by offering potential solutions and approaches to achieve regional objectives. Since 2001, NSRC has funded over 170 research projects. This is an appropriate time to assess how well these projects have addressed the needs of the region, how well they have engaged key stakeholders, and what can be done to improve project relevancy and strengthen links between researchers and stakeholders, particularly in dissemination and use of project findings.

This evaluation is also timely because it takes place soon after the recently completed Northern Forest Sustainable Economy Initiative (NFSEI) and Northern Forest Summit. The NFSEI, led by the Northern Forest Center and the North Country Council, brought together leaders from diverse sectors across the Northern Forest to address challenges facing communities, identify the region's assets, and agree on a shared vision and strategy for revitalizing the Northern Forest economy and sustaining the long term health of its people and lands. This evaluation will take advantage of the organizational structures that have brought these leaders together for the NFSEI and Summit.

Principal investigators will evaluate the relevancy and usefulness of NSRC research through surveys, interviews, and focus groups that ask stakeholders these critical questions:

- 1) What are the current research needs and priorities of the Northern Forest region's stakeholders and what research topics or directions might be beneficial or relevant to them?
- 2) How relevant and useful is the current NSRC research focus to the region's stakeholders, i.e., how does it mirror the current needs and priorities described by the stakeholders?
- 3) What mechanisms are grantees using to communicate the results of their research to these stakeholders and how effective are they?
- 4) What other communication/outreach strategies might be more effective?