



Project Impacts

NSRC-FUNDED RESEARCH FINAL REPORT

Forest Industry Considers a Northern Forest Brand of Wood Products

PROJECT AWARD YEAR AND TITLE:

2004

Branding Forest Products from the Northern Forest

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The forest products industry in the Northern Forest is always searching for ways to promote its wood products to better compete with national and international markets. One option under consideration is to create a Northern Forest brand of wood products. NSRC researchers interviewed northern wood product industries throughout New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine to determine regional perceptions of a Northern Forest brand.

In response, 88 representatives of sawmills, manufacturing facilities, and wholesale lumber companies agreed that regional branding of their products might boost sales. However, half of respondents supported a regional effort to coordinate individual state brands rather than creation of a single regional brand. They were also more willing to participate in a branding program if administered by a non-profit trade association. The 19 non-governmental conservation and community development groups that were interviewed also offered support of and involvement in a branding effort.

Interviewees said branded products made from higher grade hardwoods and sold in retail shops would be most successful. Branding paper products would not be successful. A brand based on reputation for craftsmanship and quality of wood most appealed to businesses. The retail sector was identified as the group most likely to respond to a brand based on sustainability or environmental stewardship. If a related NSRC study shows that consumers respond positively to a Northern Forest brand, branding high quality hardwood products sold in retail shops could be the first step in this program.