

INTO THE WOODS

NEW ENGLAND FORESTRY FOUNDATION | WINTER 2022

NEFF Awarded \$30 Million by USDA

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Dear Supporters and Friends,

Congratulations! We've won a milestone victory for forest-based climate change mitigation in New England with the recent award of \$30 million from the USDA Climate-Smart Commodities program. It's your support through the last ten years that helped us steadily build our program and demonstrate that Exemplary Forestry™ could be a major pathway to mitigating climate change, and now we have been nationally recognized and given a chance to prove our approach at a much larger scale.

It is time to pause and celebrate, and the New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF) staff and Board of Directors invite you to join us in basking in the moment. We've accomplished something very significant by unearthing a major climate pathway that is critically important, and until now has been largely overlooked. This wouldn't have happened without you. You have been part of a truly significant and hopeful effort in the multigenerational fight against climate change.

So, celebrate!

And then let's turn our attention to the challenge ahead. The USDA grant will allow us to launch a pilot program to address about 80,000 acres as proof of concept while building the market for mass timber. But, our aim is a full victory and complete accomplishment of our 30 Percent Solution. In order to hit the goal of offsetting 30 percent of New England's necessary emissions reductions in 30 years, we need to spread Exemplary Forestry to all of New England's managed forested acres and make progress with building with wood. Most of the \$30 million will be passed to forest landowners to help them make the necessary changes in forestry practices (more about the actual grant on page 3). But New England has 32 million acres of forestland. We'll need to vastly expand our education, communication and outreach programs, and we will need a continuous source of funding—perhaps \$3 billion or \$100 million a year—to reach our 30-year goal. That will require both private philanthropy and a major forest- and climate-policy effort to drive public funding and support.

To some, that may seem like an outsized goal for a small New England forestry-and-conservation outfit. But NEFF has proven itself before—and look at where we are now. We have a clear vision of what forests can look like and we know what they can deliver on climate change, but most importantly, we have the ambition to make it a reality. So please continue with us on this forest journey. We'll need your support, your enthusiasm, your trust, and your conviction. What a wonderful chance to personally make a big difference in the world! We can't ask for more than that and the USDA grant provides us with that chance. With leadership comes great responsibility and now it is up to us to fully achieve the 30 Percent Solution. Are you with us?

Robert Perschel
Executive Director

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NEFF AWARDED \$30 MILLION BY USDA

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A TRIBUTE TO MERLOYD LUDINGTON LAWRENCE

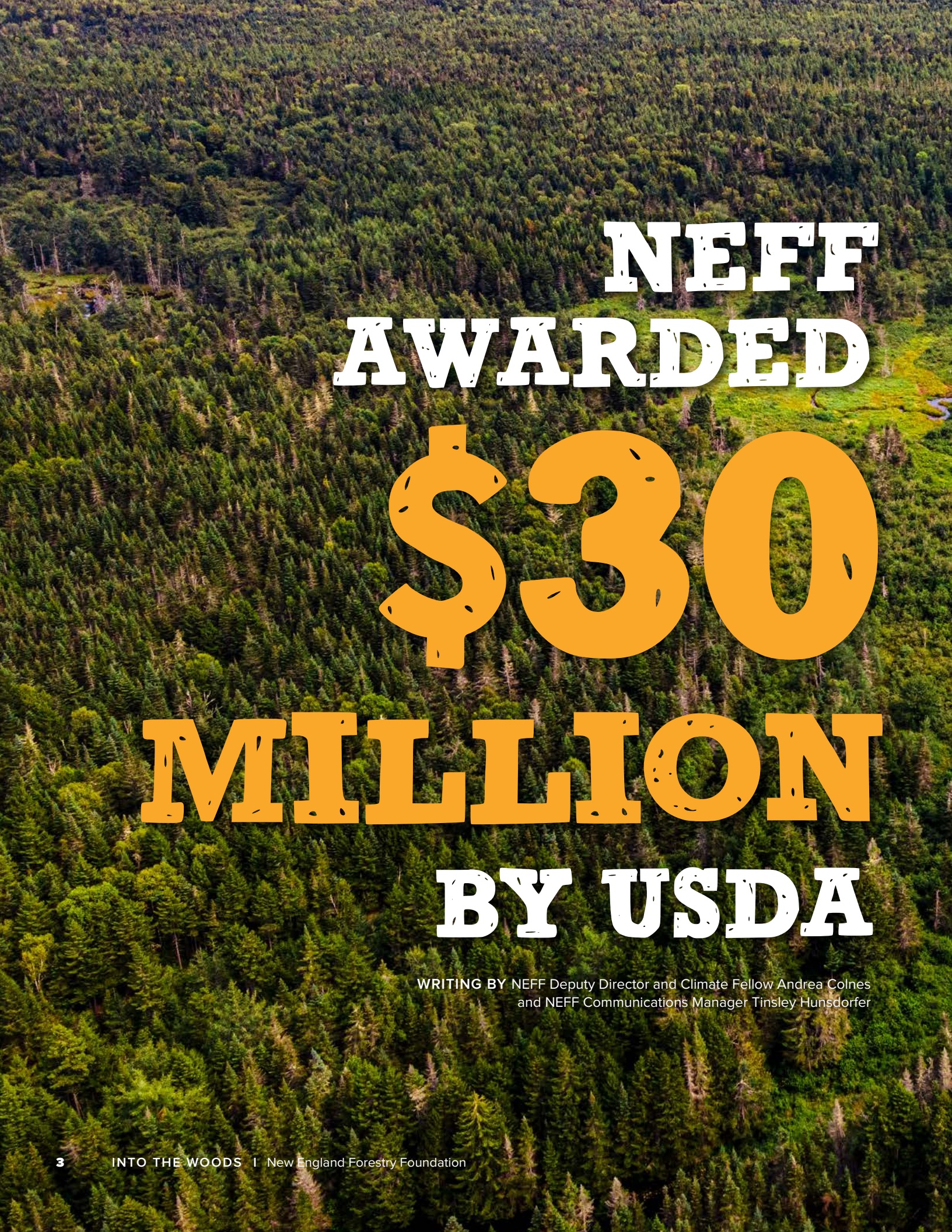
It's Time to Celebrate!

NEFF staff and Board members gathered this October to celebrate the \$30 million Climate-Smart Commodities award NEFF and partners have received to increase carbon storage in the region's working forests and build the market for climate-smart mass timber (details on page 3). They discussed exciting future plans over dinner and toasted to NEFF's success.



NEFF Deputy Director and Climate Fellow Andi Colnes, NEFF Board President Rick Weyerhaeuser, and NEFF Senior Forest Science and Policy Fellow Alec Giffen. Photo by Tinsley Hunsdorfer.





**NEFF
AWARDED
\$30
MILLION
BY USDA**

WRITING BY NEFF Deputy Director and Climate Fellow Andrea Colnes
and NEFF Communications Manager Tinsley Hunsdorfer



Break out your party hats! This USDA Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities program marks a historic moment for NEFF and partners' efforts to spread climate-smart forestry across New England.

New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF) has experienced a few sea changes in its 78-year history, where the organization accomplished something so momentous it changed not only how the wider world saw NEFF, but also how NEFF's immediate community, Board of Directors and staff saw themselves.

Once, NEFF wasn't considered the sort of organization that could conserve 760,000 acres of forestland in one fell swoop.* Once, NEFF didn't seem the sort of place to produce groundbreaking forestry standards capable of mitigating nearly a third of the region's necessary CO2 emissions-reductions. Once, NEFF winning a \$30 million grant to implement climate-smart forestry wasn't even on the horizon. And yet—here we are, having accomplished all this, and still looking for more ways to make a strategic difference in the fight against climate change.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities program awarded NEFF and partners \$30 million in September, and this latest sea change has created a moment where the world feels new as we look toward taking solid, measurable steps to mitigate the climate crisis, alongside a strong group of talented, diverse and dedicated project partners.

[*newenglandforestry.org/learn/land-conservation/conservation-achievements](http://newenglandforestry.org/learn/land-conservation/conservation-achievements)

NEFF's Holmes Stream Community Forest, a demonstration site for Exemplary Forestry, and surrounding lands in Downeast Maine. Photo by Michael Perlman.



Making the Case for Climate-Smart Forestry

In February 2022, NEFF's climate and forestry staff members had a game-changing combination of new and existing information before them. What they already understood was NEFF's 30 Percent Solution, an analysis that shows a holistic approach to forest management, forest protection, and climate mitigation in New England could keep more than 646 million metric tons of CO2 out of the atmosphere over the next 30 years, or nearly one-third of the total energy-related CO2 emissions reductions needed across New England by 2050.

The new information was the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's identification of improved forest management as essential to achieving the planet's climate targets, and the scope of the United States' privately owned forestlands powerful climate resilience and carbon-capture mitigation opportunities. Specifically, the U.S. EPA 2022 *Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks 1990-2020* showed that 84 percent of current U.S. carbon storage is happening on private forestlands.

But, how to realize this potential? How could NEFF work with forest landowners—large and small—across New England to actually implement climate-smart forestry?

Enter the USDA's Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities program:

"USDA is committed to supporting a diverse range of farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners through Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities. This effort will expand markets for America's climate-smart commodities, leverage the greenhouse gas benefits of climate-smart commodity production, and provide direct, meaningful benefits to production agriculture, including for small and underserved producers."**

This initiative seemed tailor-made to capitalize on NEFF's work over the past decade to define Exemplary Forestry, model the impact and economics of climate-smart forestry with commercial forestland owners, and build understanding of and networks around mass timber to store carbon and substitute for steel and concrete in the region's buildings. While it was daunting to apply for a federal grant of this scale, when has NEFF been one to back down from a challenge? Instead, staff members gave up sleep and weekends for a few months, broke out the spreadsheets and got to work.

Over the next several months, NEFF proceeded to convene, plan and anchor the New England Climate-Smart Commodities Partnership, involving more than 20 companies, organizations, and institutions from across New England that represent forest-related industries and have climate interests at the forefront of their concerns. The creativity, vision and excellence of partners across the spectrum of programs included in this effort have been outstanding. Alongside NEFF, each worked to define clear and effective ways of getting the right work done. NEFF and partners also secured the strong support of New England's congressional delegation, and in May 2022, NEFF submitted its proposal.

When the USDA chose to award \$30 million to the NEFF project this September, you could hear cheers from Mansfield to Katahdin from NEFF staff and project partners alike. It was happening—the region had received a transformative investment, an investment that will enable forest landowners to implement climate-smart forest practices that also protect ecosystem health and biodiversity as part of a nationally relevant pilot program. Once again, New England has an opportunity to lead the nation.

**usda.gov/climate-solutions/climate-smart-commodities

Clockwise from top right: Robert Perschel, photo by Twolined Studio; Alec Giffen, photo by Twolined Studio; NEFF Board member Bob Ackerman, Jennifer Shakun and Penny Flynn at NEFF's party celebrating the USDA award, photo by Tinsley Hunsdorfer; Connor Rockett and Jennifer Shakun on Connor's last day at NEFF, photo by Tinsley Hunsdorfer; Andrea Colnes.



The Dream Team

These key staff members worked tirelessly on NEFF's proposal to the USDA. Cheers to them!

ANDREA COLNES

NEFF Deputy Director and Climate Fellow

PENNY FLYNN

NEFF Development Manager

ALEC GIFFEN

NEFF Senior Forest Science and Policy Fellow

ROBERT PERSCHEL

NEFF Executive Director

CONNOR ROCKETT

previously NEFF Forest Policy Fellow, now graduate student at Yale School of the Environment

JENNIFER SHAKUN

NEFF Climate-Forest Specialist





As this article was being written, NEFF was still discussing details of the program to be conducted under this grant with the USDA. NEFF's climate and forestry staffers look forward to sharing more information as the pilot project takes shape.

Visit newenglandforestry.org/learn/initiatives/climate-smart-commodities for updates.

A NEFF-lead Exemplary Forestry field trip focused on restoring globally important wildlife habitat using climate-smart forestry, photo by Twolined Studio.

How The Program Works

The project is a five-year pilot initiative that will be organized around three broad goals and areas of work. A diverse group of partners will work together across the region, including commercial forestland owners, small family woodlot owners, foresters, loggers, research and modeling partners, and First

Nations. NEFF is pleased to be working in conjunction with the Family Forest Carbon Program of American Forest Foundation, another USDA Climate-Smart Commodities awardee, on outreach to small family landowners. For a full list of partners, see page 8.

Incentives

A pilot group of forest landowners, foresters and loggers will receive climate-smart forestry incentives for practices that store more carbon in working forests across all six New England states, including on large commercial forests, smaller family woodlots and First Nation woodlands.

This facet of the program stems from NEFF's long experience in engaging with family and commercial landowners, which has revealed they are ready to enhance their forest practices if the right incentives are in place to make the economics work. NEFF's calculations also indicate offering financial incentives for improved forestry is a very efficient and cost-effective way to mitigate climate change compared to technology-based carbon-capture approaches.

Market-building for Mass Timber

The project will encourage the expansion of mass timber construction with a focus on affordable housing. Project partners will work on outreach to affordable housing agencies across the region, engage with mass timber developers and architects, develop mass timber design specifications for a multi-family affordable housing unit, and more. NEFF will focus on ensuring the material going into new affordable housing comes from well-managed, climate-smart forests. To accomplish this, NEFF will develop climate-smart wood sourcing criteria, protocol, and supply chain tracking that can be inserted into existing green building programs.

Monitoring and Verification

NEFF's forestry and climate experts are confident the organization's forestry approaches will store more carbon in the forest and produce more renewable climate-smart products, but everyone involved in the USDA program has to prove these practices work over time. To do so, NEFF and the partner organizations who have signed on to help with this part of the program will define how to verify that carbon is captured and stored from both improved forest management and mass timber construction. A project team is prepared to conduct detailed tracking and modeling work to verify that practices are conducted as planned and predict how much carbon will be there in future decades. NEFF will bring all its forestry expertise to bear, and take advantage of new research that describes the benefits of building with wood and substituting wood for other more carbon intensive materials.

Next Stop: The 30 Percent Solution

For NEFF to accomplish its 30 Percent Solution, it must significantly expand the use of its own approach to climate-smart forestry—Exemplary Forestry—across the managed portion of the 32 million acres of forestland that spans New England, which makes this five-year, 80,000-acre pilot project an important first step.

In balance with wildlands, NEFF will work to leverage the USDA's generous investment to bring its climate-smart Exemplary Forestry to all of New England's working forestland using public and private funding sources, and apply lessons learned from the pilot to this wider landscape.

The recently passed Inflation Reduction Act includes billions of dollars to support sustainable forestry across numerous programs, and it also includes a major new financing mechanism for climate investments, including carbon reduction: the \$27 billion Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. NEFF will work with national partners to develop programs that provide low-cost financing to forestland owners to implement carbon-aligned forest management.

NEFF has spent more than a decade researching and promoting New England working forests' potential to mitigate the climate crisis, and at last, the pieces that will turn that potential into reality are finally falling into place.



80K

ACRE PILOT PROJECT



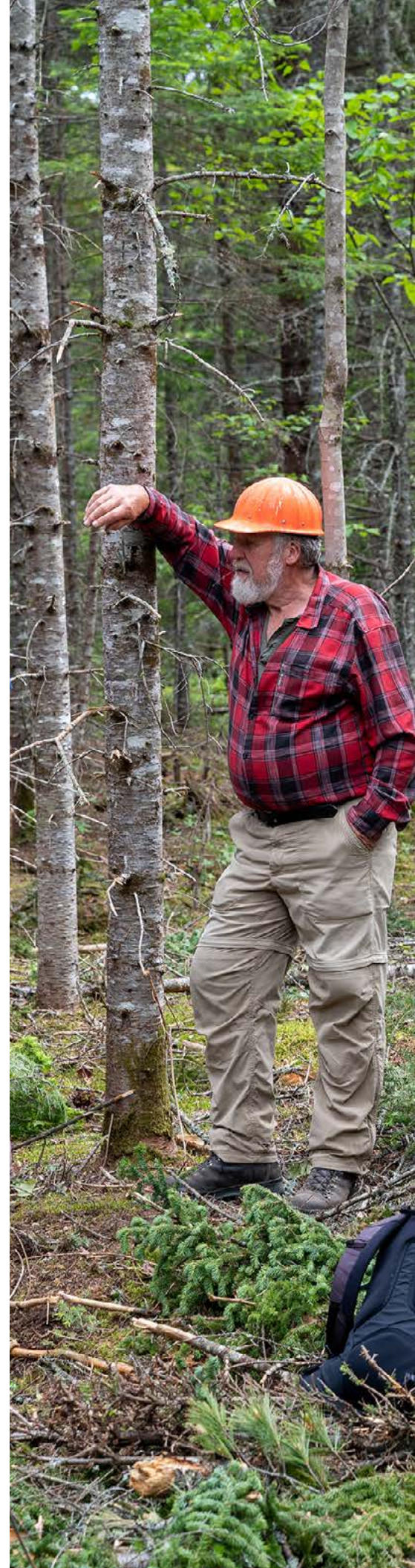
\$27B

GREENHOUSE GAS
REDUCTION FUND

Forestry for the Future

It can be difficult to listen to climate change news these days, but we hope NEFF's Climate-Smart Commodities work now serves not only as a reminder that dedicated people all over the world are making genuine progress on addressing the climate crisis, but also as an emotional bulwark of sorts.

If you find yourself feeling hopeless or frustrated, remember this: every weekday, the members of NEFF's climate-change mitigation teams are giving their all to a game-changing project that will have a real, measurable impact on atmospheric CO₂. We know it's going to work. The next step, then, is to scale it up: climate-smart forestry for more acres and more years than the pilot project covers, and climate-smart forestry for the future of New England and the world. 🌱



Right: NEFF Senior Forest Science and Policy Fellow Alec Giffen and NEFF Executive Director Robert Perschel on an Exemplary Forestry field trip, photo by Twolined Studio



Project Partners

This USDA program called for project proposals from partnerships, and finding and connecting with the right New England Climate-Smart Commodities Forest Partnership participants has been one of the most impactful parts of this process for NEFF staff members. Every partner to join in—from all over the region, from a range of specialties, from different cultures, from urban and rural areas, from the forest and architectural and academic and housing sectors—has only made the project stronger and NEFF's understanding of the pilot's potential richer.

LANDOWNERS, FORESTERS, LOGGERS: PARTICIPATING PRODUCERS

- Seven Islands
- Weyerhaeuser
- Wagner Forest Management, Ltd.
- Baskahegan Land Company
- Robbins Lumber
- Passamaquoddy Forestry Department
- Mi'kmaq Nation
- The Nature Conservancy (Maine lands)
- Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership
- Massachusetts Tree Farm Program
- Hull Forestlands, L.P.
- Heyes Family Forests LLC
- Appalachian Mountain Club

LANDOWNERS, FORESTERS, LOGGERS: PARTICIPATING LOGGERS & FORESTERS

- Professional Logging Contractors Maine
- Trust to Conserve Northeast Forestlands
- Professional foresters and loggers

COMMODITY MARKET BUILDING

- Spiritos Properties, LLC (Mass Timber Developer)
- Leers Weinzapfel Associates (Architects)
- Quantified Ventures (Finance)
- WoodWorks (Mass Timber)

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE ASSISTANCE WITH PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

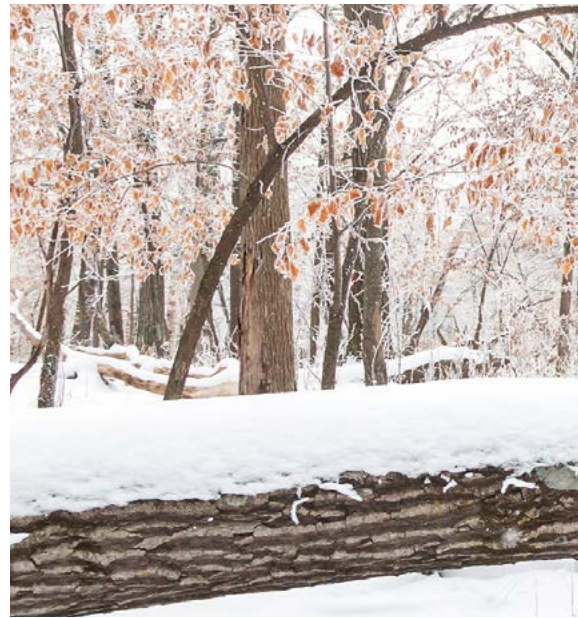
- Dr. John Daigle, Liaison to Maine's Penobscot Nation, Passamaquoddy Tribe, and Mi'kmaq Nation
- University of Maine Advanced Structures & Composites Center
- Forest Policy & Economics – School of Forest Resources
- School of Forest Resources and Climate Change Institute
- Office of Innovation and Economic Development

MONITORING, VERIFICATION AND REPORTING

- American Forest Foundation – Family Forest Carbon Program
- Spatial Informatics Group
- Thomas Walker, Resource Economist
- Eric Kingsley, Innovative Natural Resource Solutions, LLC

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

- Forest Stewards Guild
- Mass Audubon
- Our Climate Common
- Highstead Foundation
- Massachusetts Forest Alliance
- Connecticut Forest & Park Association



A LEGACY AND PROM

WRITING BY NEFF Executive Director Robert Perschel

The essential ingredient in New England Forestry Foundation's decades of success in building forest-driven, climate-smart programs is you, our donors. Year after year, with your continued support, NEFF's staff and programs have remained compelling, relevant, and competitive.

Now that the USDA award has affirmed NEFF's climate change strategy on the national stage and provided our programming with a major boost, the natural question is, what comes next as NEFF builds off its current momentum, and what can we all do to help? Here are a few insights into our strategic direction.

Partners

First, we need partners. The USDA grant is only a pilot that will allow us to address perhaps 80,000 acres. New England has 32 million acres of forestland and 215,000 landowners. We have a big job ahead of us to improve forest management on those acres, but improving forest practices is not sufficient by itself.

Recently, NEFF staff members served as co-authors on a groundbreaking Highstead Foundation and Harvard Forest report, *New England's Climate Imperative: Our Forests as a Natural Climate Solution*.^{*} With our partners, we looked at five forest-based pathways to climate change mitigation. While improved forest management presented the largest potential, we also need to stop losing forestland to development, establish a more complete system of wildlands, build more with wood products, and plant more trees in urban areas. In the coming years, NEFF will need to partner with organizations that understand these approaches better than we do.



Twolined Studio

ISE FOR THE FUTURE

Approach

Second, we need to continue to take a systems approach to the climate problem. We know forests and how to manage them sustainably. We know the foresters, loggers, and landowners—large and small—all across New England. We know what’s important to them, the communities that surround them and their way of life. We also know that forest management is one part of a larger system that extends deeper into the forest to protect ecological values and farther outside the forest to address the needs of underserved populations. That means a richer way of modeling the impacts of climate change from a variety of perspectives, and it also swings us back to building relationships with new partners. NEFF needs to work hand-in-hand with wilderness and affordable-housing advocates, as well as farmers, architects, and many others.

Programs

Third, the pathway toward improving forestry across a privately owned landscape likely runs through incentive programs such as what we are piloting in the USDA grant. We can pay landowners to practice climate-smart forestry just like we pay homeowners to install solar panels, and to do so, we will likely need incentives totaling \$3 billion over 30 years.

Some and maybe most of the funding for these incentives will probably take the form of low interest rate loans. If a landowner can obtain a 1% interest loan for 20-30 years to improve practices today and then pay the loan off when these practices yield higher-value forest products, this model could really work. Forestry with its long paybacks for upfront improvement is perfectly suited for these structures. The Inflation Reduction Act establishes \$27 billion in funding for such programs, and we intend to explore them.

Support

Fourth, and most excitingly, NEFF now has a path charted to truly accomplish our 30 Percent Climate Solution in 30 years, but we can’t get there without you, our supporters. Each of these strategic directions calls for expansion of work beyond what we can do with the USDA grant. We look forward to staying in close touch as we put together our upcoming programs for long-term success.

Ultimately, we here at NEFF believe conserving and managing forests to not only mitigate the climate crisis, but also protect forest biodiversity, support local communities and produce climate-smart wood is one of the most critical actions any of us can take right now—and it will have positive, reverberating effects for generations to come. We’re proud to have your partnership in NEFF’s vision and mission, and hope you will continue to support our expanded efforts in 2023. Thank you. 🌱

FOUR WESTERN
MAINE GENERATIONS
COMMIT TO
**WILDLIFE-
FRIENDLY
FORESTRY**

WRITING BY NEFF Western Maine Project Specialist Christine Parrish



The Smith family has had the farm for a century, tending livestock and growing trees. Now, the family is using Exemplary Forestry to help native wildlife thrive.

In 1916, one year before the U.S. entered World War I, college student Edmund Smith left his senior year at Columbia University to visit a gentleman's farm on the river flats of the Androscoggin near Bethel, Maine.

"We don't know if he intended to go back and finish his degree," said Ian Smith, who now oversees 474 acres of the farm and forest his grandfather started tending over a century ago. "We think he was just coming up to rusticate with some city folks."

Working first as a farm hand, then as owner of a hardscrabble farm during the Depression, Edmund Smith grew crops, tended the dairy, hayed and timbered, married a schoolteacher, raised a family, watched the big house burn from a lightning strike, and kept farming. In the 1930s, Smith planted white pine, red pine, and hemlock in the rolling hills just under the headwall of the mountain, likely with some assistance from President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs.

Smith was scholarly by nature, but he likely did not know his property would one day be a puzzle piece in one of the largest remaining blocks of temperate forest of its type left in the world.

At ground level, it is hard to grasp the landscape-scale ecological significance of the sweep of connected forest that runs in a band from New York's Adirondacks across and through Western Maine to the Gaspé Peninsula



"We want to improve on what my grandfather started," said Smith. "And if my kids start to get the higher timber value in 30 years while the wildlife benefits, that's okay by me. It's going to be theirs to take care of when the time comes."

Above: Farmer Edmund Smith's legacy lives on through the next three generations, right to left: his son Charles Smith, 90, granddaughter Barbara Smith, 57, great grandson Austin, 26, and grandson Ian Smith, 58, pictured here on a family work day planting sugar maples along the stream.

in Quebec. Known as the Acadian Forest, it is of global importance due to three factors: it is where the northern hardwood forest type overlaps with the spruce-fir forest type and thus is inherently more diverse than either alone; it ranges in elevation from lowland river valleys to mountain peaks with related changes in forest habitat; and it is one of the largest blocks of relatively undeveloped northern mixed forest left on earth.

As such, the Smith property offers a unique opportunity to help grow a complex and well-stocked future forest that provides the widest range of Acadian Forest wildlife habitat for roaming wildlife like Canada Lynx, Black Bear, and Moose, as well as contribute to large tracts of unbroken forest for nesting songbirds to thrive, while also increasing carbon storage and providing a continual supply of quality wood.

Building that forest takes patience, action, and commitment.

Edmund Smith had patience. His grandson is taking action. His great-grandchildren are committing to ethical and active forest management that will continue the stewardship across a century and a half.

The New Deal trees Edmund Smith planted grew in one single-aged stand around the little log cabin an uncle built near a stream on higher ground. White pine and spruce naturally seeded in. Older trees grew on the steepest slopes. Together, the trees shrouded the mountain pond in solitude, covering the foothills and creating a forested buffer between the flats and the White Mountain National Forest beyond. A wild trout stream, cooled by forest shade, connected Pond Brook to the alder-banked stream on the flats leading to the Androscoggin River.

After 53 years of farming and shortly after watching men land on the moon in 1969, Smith sat down in his parlor chair after a big supper and called it a day.

Left: Ian Smith, right, and his 26-year-old son Austin in the woods next to a cabin built by a Smith great-uncle in the 1930s when the area was pasture, as depicted in the left side of the photo. The trees are too tall to fit in the right side of the photo's frame now.

Smith's son, a doctor, left the Roosevelt-era trees alone, too. At some point, Peregrine Falcons returned to the cliffs above to nest and rare turtles hunkered down in the sandy flats. Deer wintered in the forest at the southeast corner.

Ian Smith, Edmund's grandson and the current caretaker of the Smith Forest, hired a forester for a basic management plan, cut a little wood for this and that, and worked with his children to clear a walking road to the trout pond. Otherwise, he also left the trees alone.

The forest grew more slowly as trees shaded each other. The canopy closed overhead. A few trees fell. New ones sprouted up in the available light. What had been a field in the 1920s grew into a stand of trees. Still, it would be a long time before the Smith Forest developed the mix of characteristics of an older, complex forest with rich habitat variety—including a mix of big trees, little trees, deep shade, dappled shade, big logs on the ground, open gaps in the forest, and a higher number of snag and woodpecker trees.



Ian Smith didn't know this in 2019 when he saw an ad from the New England Forestry Foundation announcing assistance to landowners to help improve forested wildlife habitat. He just thought he might be able to do more.

A conversation with the Western Maine NEFF team led from a single question to the full engagement of three living generations of Smiths on why and how to grow and shape a complex, resilient forest. Wildlife habitat was at the forefront of their management goals, with climate values and timber income from harvesting as two benefits that would still serve to create that better native habitat.

Using a \$1.5 million 2016 Resource Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), NEFF set out to recruit Smith and other Western Maine family landowners whose properties could supply critical pieces of the landscape-habitat puzzle, worked with them and their foresters to develop habitat plans, and then assisted them in putting those plans into active harvesting with reimbursement from the NRCS for most of the cost—an important step for thinning overstocked young stands or doing other practices that cost money but don't generate timber dollars.

Left: Smith roots run deep. Meddy Smith, 25, uses her other great-grandfather's draw knife to girdle a 16-inch diameter poplar to create a standing dead tree. The snag will provide wildlife habitat used by woodpeckers, bats, denning mammals and nesting birds, as well as provide an important link in the food supply. Large snags are in short supply in Western Maine.

Over the next five years, NEFF plans to work with family and non-profit landowners on a minimum of 6,000 acres in a 7-million-acre region

By September 2022, the NEFF Western Maine team had worked with 16 landowners, including Smith, on 8,000 acres across the area to develop habitat-specific plans in line with broader forest management plans. NEFF then helped them secure 10-year NRCS financial contracts to get the work done on the ground.

It takes time to grow a strong forest that in turn grows good habitat and good wood, so all project landowners signed a NEFF forest stewardship pledge that asserts their long-term (30-year) commitment to ecologically-based forestry that is compatible with the NEFF standards for the Acadian Forest.

In August 2022, NEFF received a new RCPP grant award for \$1.5 million to refine and continue this Western Maine habitat work. Over the next five years, NEFF plans to work with family and non-profit landowners on a minimum of 6,000 acres in a 7-million-acre region that runs from Bethel northeasterly to Baxter State Park and west to the New Hampshire and Canadian borders.

Ian Smith said the NEFF process allowed time and guided the family in thinking through what the land means to all of them. The 30-year promise focused their attention on the future and the NRCS helped move the forest forward.

"We want to improve on what my grandfather started," said Smith. "And if my kids start to get the higher timber value in 30 years while the wildlife benefits, that's okay by me. It's going to be theirs to take care of when the time comes." 🌿





A TRIBUTE TO Merloyd Ludington Lawrence 1932–2022

New England Forestry Foundation was deeply saddened to hear of Merloyd Ludington Lawrence's passing from this natural world that she loved and advocated for. She was a remarkable woman—a friend and advisor to so many who worked and volunteered at NEFF.

Merloyd had been a generous supporter of NEFF since 1981, and served as a Board member from 1989 to 2008. She also served as Clerk for several years and was on both the Executive and Development Committees. So many conservation organizations around New England benefited from her kindness, intellect and leadership.

“Merloyd was one of the most interesting people I was fortunate to have called my friend,” said former NEFF Board and staff member Keith Ross. “I first met her when we were both Board members of NEFF. She and her good friends Bayard Henry and Bill King would travel with me on many occasions for meetings. The conversations were always wide ranging and memorable.”

“When I became NEFF's Director of Land Protection,” Ross continued, “the organization had an opportunity to purchase with grant funding a large block of land, portions of which had to be managed for wilderness. This was a landmark decision by an

“I was drawn to NEFF both because of its great work in forest conservation and also out of a feeling for forests deepened over thirty years of summer holidays spent in a small cabin at the end of a forested trail in Nova Scotia.”

organization founded to promote sustainable forest management, with timber harvesting being a key tool. Merloyd joined me in convincing the Board to purchase the land by arguing, ‘How can NEFF be a credible advocate for forest management if we do not own any land where the forest is allowed to grow on its own without manipulation to compare the two management methods?’ Not only was the project approved, but the size was doubled with a land donation from Julie and Bayard Henry.”

This property went on to become the 3,256-acre Hersey Mountain Community Forest, which remains one of the largest woodlands NEFF has protected through ownership.

In an interview for a 2006 NEFF newsletter, Merloyd was quoted as saying, “I was drawn to NEFF both because of its great work in forest conservation and also out of a feeling for forests deepened over thirty years

of summer holidays spent in a small cabin at the end of a forested trail in Nova Scotia.”

The time she spent “savoring the spruce, pine, fir, larch and oak woods” in Nova Scotia brought her to appreciate what was closer at hand in New England.

“While I have a special interest in forests left forever wild, the importance of sustainable, responsible harvesting of timber, as advocated by NEFF, is equally clear,” she was also quoted as saying. “‘Woodlands and Wildlands’ need one another.”

Merloyd's extraordinary legacy of leadership in the conservation world is reflected in NEFF's work to this day.

“Everyone at New England Forestry Foundation, myself included, was fortunate to have shared in Merloyd's wisdom, guidance and friendship,” said NEFF Executive Director Robert Perschel. “She will be missed by all.” 🌿



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