



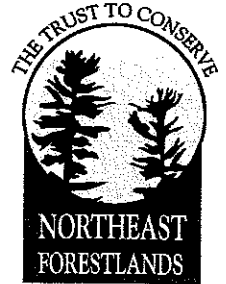
**Professional Logging Contractors &  
The Trust to Conserve Northeast Forestlands**

49 Pineland Dr. Suite 201A

New Gloucester, ME 04260

Phone: (207) 688-8195

Fax: (207) 688-8197



December 2, 2008

Governor John Baldacci  
#1 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0001

Dear Governor Baldacci:

The Professional Logging Contractors of Maine extends their appreciation for the invitation to join the "Panel on Optimizing Wood Harvesting in Maine" by inviting our Executive Director, Sandra Brawders to participate. PLC is a thirteen year old association which represents loggers' voices exclusively at multiple economic development tables, as well as many kitchen tables throughout the state of Maine.

We applaud you for realizing just how important this is for our State and our future. Please know that we understand the pressure of the economic crisis on both the State and Federal levels, but as our newly elected President brings energy projects online, we want to be heard. Maine logging companies are finding that they are not making a fair rate of return for the fiscal investments required, and the personal risks they face every day in this unpredictable environment we call the Maine forest. Farmers are reimbursed when their crops are destroyed, yet loggers struggle through excessive rain and snow in the woods without any assistance at all, while working hard to follow the ethical forest practices required of them. Logging companies have 52 weeks of bills, payroll and payments, but finding only 34, 42, 39 weeks of work depending on the effects of climate change in the forests of Maine. Wood harvesting will require a process towards equity of support and held in a similar regard with fishing and farming as one of Maine's natural resource based economic drivers.

The full board of PLC met all day with Sandy on November 14<sup>th</sup> in Bangor to create a menu of possibilities that would optimize wood harvesting in Maine for all markets. We have provided the outcome of that meeting and we hope it will be helpful as the Panel meets over the next few weeks. Sandy will be our voice on these issues, since we need to be at our small businesses to keep the wood flowing. It's not a lack of interest, Governor, but an economic necessity that keeps us from the halls of government. Our daily livelihood, and that of our employees, often family members and neighbors, depends on our immediate availability to problem solve. Decisions regarding weather issues, breakdowns, delivery delays, inspections, or loss of labor need to be addressed in what sometimes may only be a split second. Most of us would rather jump into a machine, rather than have it idle, disrupting the flow of productivity. So when others say, "where are the loggers?" we are business people, hard at work, keeping our businesses alive in the Maine woods. We are unable to be there, but we have hired excellent and trusted representatives.

PLC has had three goals in the last thirteen years: 1) increase professionalism until we are the best in the world, 2) help the public to understand what we know, and can do to increase the health of the Maine forest, and finally, 3) promote 'business lessons learned' and move from survival mode to a thriving model of small business success for the benefit of our families, our employees' families, and our rural and urban communities.

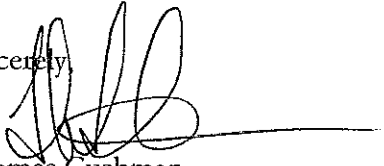
Governor, please know that we are not braggarts, but there comes a time when Maine needs to understand the harvesting asset we have developed over the last thirteen years.

- PLC has designed and implemented the third party Master Logger Certification of logging companies. We now administer this program in seven states and in partnership with Atlantic Canada and the Lake States, but Maine has the most third party certified harvests in the world.
- Our third party certified MLC program is third party certified through the Rainforest Alliance's Smartwood auditing body, and in 2006 earned the first Smart Logging designation in the world.
- We hold an FSC Controlled Wood Certificate, which all of the MLC loggers in all six states are held to in concert with MLC standards.
- We have an FSC Chain of Custody certificate for logging companies and recently added manufacturing to the list. Since then we have certified seven saw mills at a minimal rate to cover staff time at \$500/day.
- We are one of the few group managers in the United States and the world for FSC family forests, and are offering at no cost this third party certification of small landowners through a partnership with Verso Paper and Tillotson Fund of N.H.
- We are founding members and current Secretariat of the Family Forest Alliance in the U.S., which has met in Portugal with others worldwide trying to bring management accountability to forests privately held.
- We have crafted a memorandum of agreement with Manomet Center in Brunswick, Maine to continue the research and implementation of a carbon audit procedure that can be embedded in FSC certification for family forest owners, recognized by the Voluntary Carbon Standard and FSC.

We are not, nor have we ever been the caricature of a logger without any idea of his/her costs. We do not borrow hundreds of thousands of dollars without a business plan, or without thinking every moment how to be more cost effective while still protecting the environment. We are smart business people trying to keep up with the global economy, as Maine is trying to do. We want multiple markets in our State to survive, so we have charged Sandy and her staff to make it happen through collaboration and partnerships with organization we use to avoid. Avoiding other people's concerns does not solve problems; we have learned this the hard way. We are born problem solvers, and so we offer you some ideas that we believe can help achieve multiple markets in Maine, including energy without making pulp or lumber suffer in any way.

Please find our ideas enclosed with this letter, and we thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'T. Cushman', written over a horizontal line.

Thomas Cushman  
President

Enclosures:

Suggestions to Optimize Wood Harvesting in Maine

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PLC and Trust Board Member Directory

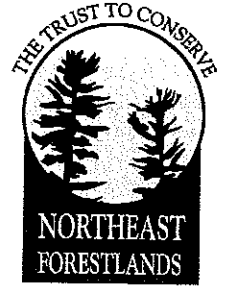
Professional Logging Contractors of Maine

Suggestions to Optimize Wood Harvesting in Maine

1. To allow the model of cutting “small stick harvesting” for biomass/energy, (which is now being left in the woods), to be designed by each company. Using their unique mix of equipment or modifications of equipment, and to develop a cost effective and efficient model of commercial thinning. Best to leave modeling to the experts. If companies develop this for landowners then we have passed the test of “additionality” required to sell carbon the CCE or Native Energy of Vermont.
2. To allow loggers to continue carrying the extra 5,000 pounds of product during the winter months (Dec 1 thru March 15).
3. To broaden the historical “chipper exempted sales tax” to equipment needed in the woods. Farmers and fishermen do not pay sales tax on their equipment. If loggers could reinvest in new iron again we would begin to see productivity increase. Loggers are holding onto iron for 5-6 years when the average prior to 2006 was 3 years and it was replaced.
4. To end the State sales tax on off road diesel.
5. To provide equity between the Federal and State tax for income and capital gains.
6. To map all lands taken out of production due to land trusts and conservation easements. Understand that every 50,000 acres taken out of production in the State of Maine is the equivalent of one logger contractor going out of business. Even though conservation easements harvest timber, they’re not managing to even modest levels.
7. To institute a “floating” plan so loggers are able to move when wet, switch to another parcel, rotate equipment, etc. Every day is a new plan. Large landowners/foresters should realize there has to be a new idea of forest management due to the wet weather we now have in Maine
8. To make commercial thinning a new product that we would leave in the woods for now, and double the growth of good trees, making an investment for the future in the Maine woods. The big trees are gone in most places of operable forestland, and if commercial thinning is done correctly, it would be a new product rather than taking pulp logs and making them energy logs, diverting to a new market. We would have four markets: pulp, lumber, biomass/chips, and small stick harvest (commercial thinning) for energy.



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New Gloucester, ME 04260  
Phone: (207) 688-8195  
Fax: (207) 688-8197



## PLC and Trust Board Members

### President

Maine Custom Woodlands  
Tom Cushman  
41 Campus Dr. Ste 103D  
New Gloucester, ME 04260  
Tel: 207-688-5334  
Fax: 207-688-5273  
[mcw@maine.rr.com](mailto:mcw@maine.rr.com)

### Treasurer

Irish Logging  
Andy Irish  
PO Box 184  
Peru, ME 04290  
Tel: 207-562-8839  
Fax: 207-562-7189  
[airish251@adelphia.net](mailto:airish251@adelphia.net)

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President

Nicols Bros. Logging, Inc.  
Jim Nicols  
PO Box 12  
Mexico, ME 04257  
Tel: 207-364-8685  
Fax: 207-364-7985  
[cmnicols@yahoo.com](mailto:cmnicols@yahoo.com)

A.W.Madden, Inc.  
Tony Madden  
P.O. Box 499  
Milford, ME 04461  
[awmaddeninc@aol.com](mailto:awmaddeninc@aol.com)

### 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

Hanington Brothers, Inc.  
Steve Hanington  
488 US Rt. 2  
Macwahoc Plt., ME 04451  
Tel: 207-765-2681  
Fax: 207-765-2121  
[hanbrosinc@yahoo.com](mailto:hanbrosinc@yahoo.com)

### Secretary

Rodney Wales  
374 McNeil Rd.  
Fryeburg, ME 04037  
207-925-2634  
[rodwales@pivot.net](mailto:rodwales@pivot.net)

Willard Hanington & Sons, Inc.  
Willard (Cub) Hanington  
1619 Military Rd.  
Reed Plantation, ME 04497  
Tel: 207-456-7511  
Fax: 207-456-7161  
[cuband4@midmaine.com](mailto:cuband4@midmaine.com)

Treeline, Inc.  
Brian Souers  
PO Box 127  
Lincoln, ME 04457  
Tel: 207-794-2044  
Fax: 207-794-2047  
[treeline@onperfect.com](mailto:treeline@onperfect.com)

R.A. Thomas Logging  
Dick Thomas  
58 Butter St.  
Guilford, ME 04443  
Tel: 207-876-2722  
Fax: 207-876-2573  
[rtmasterlogger@verizon.net](mailto:rtmasterlogger@verizon.net)

L & A Ridley, Inc.  
Ron Ridley  
266 East Dixfield Rd.  
Jay, ME 04239  
Tel/Fax: 207-645-3041  
[ridleylogging@hotmail.com](mailto:ridleylogging@hotmail.com)

Allen & Sons, Ltd.  
Jean-Guy Allen  
PO Box 592  
Jackman, ME 04945  
Tel: 418-593-5491  
Fax: 418-593-5492  
[Jeanguyallen@sogetel.net](mailto:Jeanguyallen@sogetel.net)

Linkletter & Sons, Inc.  
Bob Linkletter  
PO Box 135  
Athens, ME 04912  
Tel: 207-654-2301  
Fax: 207-654-3250