VT FOREST FUTURE STRATEGIC ROADMAP
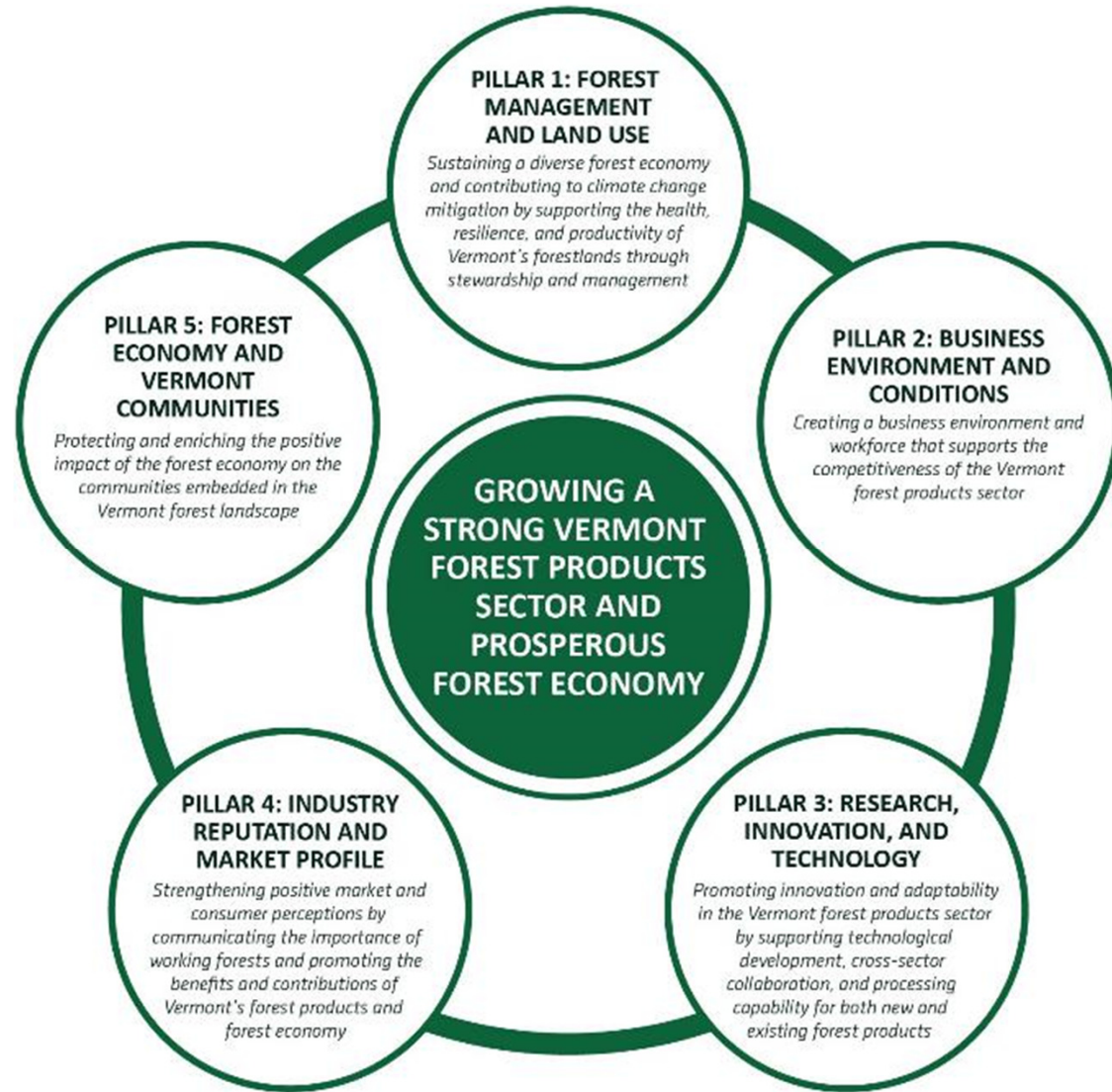House Agriculture & Forestry Committee Briefing
January 24, 2025

WELCOME

Roadmap Development

- Act 183 of 2022

- Engaging Perspectives: Insights from Tours, Presentations, and Direct Conversations

- Advisory Panel: Wide range of perspectives and voices, took a "big tent" approach

- Roadmap Finalized in March 2024

5 Interconnected Pillars

PILLAR 1: FOREST MANAGEMENT AND LAND USE

Sustaining a diverse forest economy and contributing to climate change mitigation by supporting the health, resilience, and productivity of Vermont's forestlands through stewardship and management

PILLAR 2: BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT AND CONDITIONS

Creating a business environment and workforce that supports the competitiveness of the Vermont forest products sector

PILLAR 3: RESEARCH, INNOVATION, AND TECHNOLOGY

Promoting innovation and adaptability in the Vermont forest products sector by supporting technological development, cross-sector collaboration, and processing capability for both new and existing forest products

PILLAR 4: INDUSTRY REPUTATION AND MARKET PROFILE

Strengthening positive market and consumer perceptions by communicating the importance of working forests and promoting the benefits and contributions of Vermont's forest products and forest economy

PILLAR 5: FOREST ECONOMY AND VERMONT COMMUNITIES

Protecting and enriching the positive impact of the forest economy on the communities embedded in the Vermont forest landscape

GROWING A STRONG VERMONT FOREST PRODUCTS SECTOR AND PROSPEROUS FOREST ECONOMY

Preferred Future

- Intentional forest management and proactive industry adaptation

- Public and private capital investing in innovation, technology, & marketing

- Forest health & management increase via policy to maintain working forests, mitigate threats to forest health.

- Demand for skilled workforce increases as wood products sector becomes more technologically advanced.

- Industry changes rapidly, greater focus on regional supply chains, innovation networks, and new products.

Photos Erica Houskeeper, VSJF

Pillar 1: Forest Management and Land Use

· Manage for increased forest health

· Promote land use policies to maintain working forestlands

· Empower landowners to maintain working forests by reducing barriers and creating incentives

Photo: Erica Houskeeper, VSJF

Pillar 2: Business Environment and Conditions

· Enhance capacity for industry adaptation.
· Build strong connections to the next generation workforce.
· Create a "problem-busting" approach focused on the forest economy.

Photos Erica Houskeeper, VSJF

Pillar 3: Research, Innovation, and Technology

· Pursue new development opportunities and innovative uses of Vermont forest products.
· Accelerate the adoption of technical innovation.

Photo: Erica Houskeeper, VSJF

Pillar 4: Industry Reputation and Market Profile
· Strengthen and maintain the social license of the forest products sector.
· Encourage the demand, use, and appreciation for Vermont forest products.

Pillar 5: Forest Economy and Vermont Communities
· Build stronger linkages between forest users and the forest products sector.
· Imagining the forest community of tomorrow.

Short-Term High Priority Actions

- **Action 1:** Provide robust data on forest health trends.

- **Action 4:** Promote working forests in land use planning.

- **Action 9:** Adopt climate resilience strategies.

- **Action 12:** Boost the next generation of forest workers.

- **Action 18:** Invest in accelerating innovation.

- **Action 19:** Promote forest industry's critical role as ecosystem manager.

- **Action 22:** Elevate the importance of modern and efficient wood energy.

- **Action 26:** Connect recreational uses and the forest products sector.

- **Action 30:** Promote the economic contribution of forest economy to VT

Implementation Progress to Date

- Created Implementation Steering Committee
- Socialization of Roadmap
- Fundraising & Financing efforts
- Legislative Engagement (Reports, Tours & Funding)
- Areas of Focus for 2025:
  - Workforce Development
  - Accelerating Innovation (CONFIR)
  - ISC Organization and External Communication (Data)
  - Securing funds, tracking & sharing results

Vermont Forest Future Strategic Roadmap Implementation Steering Committee

Committee Members

- **Trevor Allard**, Allard Lumber Company*
- **Chris Brooks**, Vermont Wood Pellet Company*
- **Tony D'Amato**, University of Vermont
- **Scott Duffy**, Rockledge Farm Woodworks*
- **Jamey Fidel**, Vermont Natural Resources Council*
- **Chris Fife**, Weyerhaeuser*
- **Liz Gleason**, Vermont Housing & Conservation Board*
- **Steve Hardy**, Green Mountain Forestry*
- **David Lane**, Farm Credit East*
- **Elizabeth Lesnikoski**, Burlington Electric Department*
- **Chris Lindgren**, UVM Extension*

- **Jed Lipsky**, Blue Hill Land + Timber LLC
- **Abby Long**, Kingdom Trails Association
- **Matt McAllister**, Matt McAllister Logging
- **Christine McGowan**, Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund*
- **Luke McNally**, Ruffed Grouse Society*
- **Joe Short**, Northern Forest Center*
- **Allan Thompson**, Vermont Woodlands Association*
- **Danny Fitzko**, Commissioner, Dept. of Forests, Parks & Recreation*
- **Oliver Pierson**, Director of Forests, Dept. of Forests, Parks & Recreation*
- **Katharine Servidio**, Forest Economy Program Manager, Dept. of Forests, Parks & Recreation*
- **Molly Willard**, Wood Energy and Forest Products Specialist, Dept. of Forests, Parks & Recreation*
- **Charlie Hancock**, Franklin and Grand Isle County Forester, Dept. of Forests, Parks & Recreation*

*indicates previous participation on the Advisory Panel

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  - Securing funds, tracking & sharing results (Dashboard)

Roadmap Implementation

- Implementing a 10 Year Vision and Set of Actions is a marathon, not sprint

- Roadmap provides a great framework for forest sector, state and partners to revitalize and grow the forest-based economy

- Open to your idea and participation

- Thanks for your support!