

Forest Sustainability Indicators Information System

USDA Forest Service
Northeastern Area
State and Private Forestry



Providing Information for State and Regional Forest Assessments

Description: The Northeastern Area (NA) and the Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters (NAASF) are working in partnership to assess and support forest sustainability across the Northeast and Midwest. NA and NAASF are compiling information to evaluate forest status and trends for 18 measurable base indicators that are organized according to an internationally recognized framework of seven forest sustainability criteria: forest biodiversity; forest productive capacity; forest health; soil and water quality; global carbon cycles; social and economic benefits; and the legal, institutional, and economic framework. They have developed an on-line Forest Sustainability Indicators Information System (FSIIS) to report on these 18 indicators at State and regional levels. The FSIIS allows State and regional forest planners and others to:

- Dynamically graph data at regional, State, multi-state, and other scales.
- Download data that track trends over time for each indicator.
- Create a report that displays the data for all the indicators in one pdf document.
- Read technical documentation about the data and link to related resources.

Key Issues:

- NA and State forestry agencies play a key role in providing reliable information on forest sustainability.
- Sustainability assessments underpin effective agency strategic planning and performance accountability.
- The use of common criteria and indicators provides consistent information and techniques for sharing sustainability information at the State, regional, and national levels.

Status:

The FSIIS will be publicly available soon. NA and State forestry agencies have already benefited from the information in the system. NA has used the indicators information for strategic planning and corporate communications products. Several States have used the information for state forest resource assessments.

Budget History:

Costs for Forest Sustainability Indicators Information System (\$ Thousands)			
FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
\$25	\$61	\$6	\$47

Future Direction:

NA will continue to maintain the information system and work with NAASF to promote the use of the base indicators and related information. In addition, the U.S. Forest Service State and Private Forestry Redesign effort requires each state to complete a state forest assessment and response plan to be eligible for competitive funding. The FSIIS is a key resource for these state forest assessments. Our hope is that the resources ordinarily used to assemble data can be devoted to discussion, decision-making, and actions that help to achieve forest sustainability.

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