

## Catskill WoodNet - Good Wood, Clean Water

## Supporting a “Buy Local” Forest Products Initiative

## The Challenge

The Catskill/Delaware System of the New York City watershed provides clean drinking water to more than 10 million homes. Nearly all of New York City’s water—90 percent—originates in the Catskills, where forests protect water quality in streams and reservoirs. Roughly 75 percent of the region is forested. Sound agricultural and forestry practices protect water quality and are critical to the region’s economy. The region’s forest-related businesses provide over 1,500 jobs.

A Watershed Protection Strategy is helping to create and maintain diverse markets for local wood, improve wood utilization, boost local economies, and promote forest management. A Watershed Forestry Grants Initiative was used to award roughly \$2.4 million to 58 wood-using companies between 2000 and 2007.

Using funding from the watershed forestry initiative, many firms acquired new equipment or expanded product lines to thrive in volatile markets. The initiative uncovered more opportunities for business collaboration and underscored the need for a regional marketing strategy to emphasize the importance of a viable wood industry.

## The Solution

The Watershed Agricultural Council assembled a steering committee with members from each industry subsector with funding from the U.S. Forest Service, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Wood Education and Resource Center. This group founded a regional network called Catskill WoodNet and developed a Web site to connect businesses and market forest products made by companies based in the Catskill Mountains.

The site hosts a growing network of over 75 local wood-using companies and industry service providers of all sizes.

*“Membership in Catskill WoodNet led to a \$13,000 order within weeks after posting a photo of my product.” — Eric Dahlberg, Hardwoods Unlimited*



*Forests, such as those that surround the Cannonsville Reservoir in Deposit, NY, help protect water quality.*

They share resources and promote the Pure Catskills “buy local” trademark on products.

## Resulting Benefits

- Offers a Web presence for small firms and rural businesses that have limited computer skills or Internet access
- Leverages marketing dollars by fostering connections among complementary producers
- Transfers information, business opportunities, and training
- Showcases products and generates sales leads with buyers across the globe
- Gains the economic and environmental advantages of “buying local”

## Sharing Success

- The Catskill WoodNet Web site is available at [www.catskillwoodnet.org](http://www.catskillwoodnet.org).
- A “Pure Catskills” wood products member directory that lists 200 companies is available at [www.catskillwoodnet.org/secondary/resources.aspx](http://www.catskillwoodnet.org/secondary/resources.aspx).



USDA Forest Service  
**Northeastern Area**  
 State and Private Forestry

## For more information, contact:

Kathryn P. Maloney, Area Director  
 11 Campus Blvd., Suite 200  
 Newtown Square, PA 19073  
 Phone: 610-557-4103  
 E-mail: [kmaloney@fs.fed.us](mailto:kmaloney@fs.fed.us)

Steve Milauskas, Director  
 Wood Education & Resource Center  
 301 Hardwood Lane  
 Princeton, WV 24740  
 Phone: 304-487-1510  
 E-mail: [smilauskas@fs.fed.us](mailto:smilauskas@fs.fed.us)