

Act 171 Forest Integrity Study Committee
Draft Summary of Potential Changes Presented on Oct. 18, 2016

Other Potential Land Use and Policy Changes

| Contributor / Organization Name | # | Type | Potential Change | Notes |
|---|------|---|--|---|
| Municipal Assistance and Zoning | | | | |
| Lucy Leriche ACCD | 3.1 | Municipal assistance | Improve local and regional capacity to support town plan implementation | Help towns and regions use ANR's Atlas and BioFinder |
| Lucy Leriche ACCD | 3.2 | Roads | Modify VTrans road standards (from the 'Orange Book') to assure new road connections (curb cuts/driveways) support development at the edge of a forest block. | |
| Agency of Natural Resources | 3.3 | Section 248 | Ask the regulatory reform task force described above to consider changes to Section 248 so that applicants would address impacts to forest integrity in the certificate of public good process | |
| Bonnie Waninger VAPDA | 3.4 | Municipal assistance | Enable towns and citizens to know how they can better reach the goal of forest health and integrity. The challenge for addressing the issues lies in public and organizational education and engagement, and in modernizing and using regulatory and non-regulatory tools. | |
| Review Licensing, Regulation, Workers Compensation and Sales Tax in the Forest Economy | | | | |
| Sam Lincoln Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting | 3.5 | Forester Licensing and Other Regulation | Clarify whether or under what conditions a logger can acquire and harvest a job without a licensed forester involved. | |
| Sam Lincoln Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting | 3.6 | Forester Licensing and Other Regulation | Address the number of foresters on the ground and available to evaluate and prepare jobs. | |
| Sam Lincoln Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting | 3.7 | Forester Licensing and Other Regulation | Streamline management plan approvals and amendments to minimize turnaround time and assist loggers responding to market changes. | Prioritize approving changes that will put a harvesting operation back to work. |
| Sam Lincoln Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting | 3.8 | Forester Licensing and Other Regulation | Reduce chip harvest notification to a two day turnaround. | |
| Sam Lincoln Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting | 3.9 | Uniformity in Truck Weight Limits | Create uniform weight regulations for trucks in light of increased delivery to neighboring states. | |
| Sam Lincoln Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting | 3.10 | Workers Compensation Insurance | Differentiate in premium rates between certified loggers and non-certified loggers. | |

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| Sam Lincoln <i>Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting</i> | 3.11 | Workers Compensation Insurance | The Department of Financial Regulation and Insurance companies have not been able to readily provide answers to causes of rate increases. Knowing what types of claims have been paid or they type of accidents that have occurred would help policyholders understand how they can reduce risk on the job. | |
| Sam Lincoln <i>Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting</i> | 3.12 | Workers Compensation Insurance | Provide state-led assistance to develop a self-insured trust or to recognize the various certifications obtained by safety-oriented loggers and truckers to lower their rates. | |
| Sam Lincoln <i>Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting</i> | 3.13 | Workers Compensation Insurance | Create a policy that gives loggers the ability to pay workers compensation premiums in a manner similar to payroll tax, as used, on a bi-weekly or quarterly basis | |
| Sam Lincoln <i>Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting</i> | 3.14 | Sales Tax Policy | Clarify sales tax policy on forestry equipment, including tracked forestry equipment and rubber tire equipment, in order to encourage investments. | |
| Sam Lincoln <i>Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting</i> | 3.15 | Sales Tax Policy | Make forestry equipment, parts and supplies exempt from sales tax as is done in the agriculture industry and in other Northeastern states. | |
| Support Outreach and Education on Forest Values and Benefits | | | | |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.16 | Education and Outreach | Expand the role of county foresters to support forest integrity. | |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.17 | Education and Outreach | Expand the services of the Vermont Farm and Forest Viability Program (VFFVP) to reach a wider network of landowners and forest products sectors, increase implementation grants, increase financing to help businesses put plans and system upgrades into practice. | |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.18 | Education and Outreach | Promote forest integrity by offering technical assistance from the Vermont Working Lands Enterprise Board (WLEB) to targeted forestland that have the highest impact on regional integrity. | |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.19 | Education and Outreach | Further support the Staying Connective Initiative. | |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.2 | Education and Outreach | Continue to support mapping tools that help professionals plan for growth, conservation, and resource protection; continue funding of state-wide LiDAR coverage, | |
| Invest in Strategic Forestland Conservation | | | | |
| | | | Enhance forestland conservation by targeting parcels that: | |

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| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.21 | Conservation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are located within or adjacent to existing blocks of conserved forestland - rank high in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Block Assessment - provide important climate adaptation and regional connectivity functions - have long term contracts to provide sustainably harvested wood projects or fuel for in-state processing and consumption. - provide a high level of ecosystem services or conservation values | |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.22 | Conservation | Enhance forestland conservation strategy that facilitates the intergenerational transfer of large forestland blocks without parcelization. | |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.33 | Conservation | Enhance forestland conservation strategy that shifts large tracts of forestland into alternative ownership models, such as cooperatives, that prevent further fragmentation. | |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.34 | Conservation | Expand land trust services (purchase of development rights to help farmers pass on large tracts of land, guidance on estate and tax planning around land transfers) to focus on conservation investments that facilitate the intergenerational transfers of large forestland blocks. | |
| Increase Landowner Incentives to Keep Intact Forests | | | | |
| Joe Nelson VWLEB | 3.34 | Landowner Incentives | Consider reducing or eliminating Transfer Tax when adjoining parcels are combined into one ownership. | |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.35 | Landowner Incentives | Maintain the Use Value Appraisal program to keep annual property tax affordable. | |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.36 | Landowner Incentives | Revise the Use Value Appraisal Program to allow enrollment of large forested parcels for values other than timber management, expanding the provision that allows enrollment of land that provides unique ecological services. | |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.37 | Landowner Incentives | Revise the Use Value Appraisal program to increase the benefit levels for parcels that comprise high ranking forest blocks according to the Department of Fish & Wildlife Habitat Block Assessment. | |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.38 | Landowner Incentives | Revise the Use Value Appraisal Program to establish tiers of commitment, where tax benefits would increase the longer a landowner commits to keep a parcel in the program; award highest benefits to parcels under conservation easement. | |
| Joe Nelson VWLEB | 3.39 | Landowner Incentives | Reduce the per acre Forestland value on larger forested parcels enrolled in the program. Consider a sliding scale, such that as parcel size increases, the per acre value decreases. | This would decrease the property tax burden on larger parcels, and encourage larger land ownerships. |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.4 | Landowner Incentives | Lessen the impact of estate taxes or provide enhances estate planning for forestland owners. | |

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| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.41 | Landowner Incentives | Monetize ecological services that forestland provides; socialize the cost of these services and provide modest income or additional tax benefits to forestland owners. | |
| Promote Sustainable Forestry and the Vermont Forest Economy | | | | |
| <i>Sam Lincoln Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting</i> | 3.42 | Promote Sustainable Forestry and the Vermont Forest Economy | Assist Forest Product Industry to market low-grade timber and encourage economic viability of low-grade timber harvests. | The entire chain of the forest product industry, beginning with forestland ownership, is affected by the lost marketability of low-grade timber. |
| <i>Sam Lincoln Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting</i> | 3.43 | State Agency Operation | Prioritize efforts of all related departments with interaction or oversight of the Forest Products industry to assist the largest volume consumers of low grade timber, existing or proposed, until at least 75% of the tonnage harvested in Vermont that has lost a market in the past 12 months, has been recovered. | |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.44 | Promote Sustainable Forestry and the Vermont Forest Economy | Support and improve training for loggers. | See section 3.4.a in Recommendations in support of Forest Health and Integrity in response to Act 61 of 2015 |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.45 | Promote Sustainable Forestry and the Vermont Forest Economy | Promote and improve infrastructure that supports the local wood industry. | See section 3.4.b in Recommendations in support of Forest Health and Integrity in response to Act 61 of 2015 |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.46 | Promote Sustainable Forestry and the Vermont Forest Economy | Expand modern wood heating in Vermont. | See section 3.4.c in Recommendations in support of Forest Health and Integrity in response to Act 61 of 2015 |
| <i>Sam Lincoln Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting</i> | 3.47 | Energy and Development Policy | Ensuring that the Ryegate Power Station and Burlington Electric Department remain viable. | |
| <i>Sam Lincoln Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting</i> | 3.48 | Energy and Development Policy | Ensuring that information is included in all future energy discussions regarding the need to market low grade timber to fulfill UVA management plans and the economic impact of low grade timber harvesting. | |
| <i>Sam Lincoln Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting</i> | 3.49 | Energy and Development Policy | Ensure that state policy encourages development of low grade timber harvests. | |

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| Sam Lincoln <i>Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting</i> | 3.50 | Energy and Development Policy | Through policy changes, encourage the construction and location of biomass and processing and consuming facilities where the combined heat and/or power produced can be marketed and utilized. | Industrial parks and industrial zoned areas are ideal settings. |
| Sam Lincoln <i>Lincoln AgriSource, LLC and Lincoln Farm Timber Harvesting</i> | 3.51 | Energy and Development Policy | Use procurement standards for biomass facilities, such as the SFI Forest Management and Fiber Sourcing Standard and Vermont's Acceptable Management Practices. Random audits by facility or independent foresters would review harvesting conditions to ensure they are meeting the standards. | |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.52 | Promote Sustainable Forestry and the Vermont Forest Economy | Expand markets for Vermont wood products. | See section 3.4.d in Recommendations in support of Forest Health and Integrity in response to Act 61 of 2015 |
| <i>Agency of Natural Resources</i> | 3.53 | Promote Sustainable Forestry and the Vermont Forest Economy | Recognize and promote the value of forests in outdoor recreation and tourism. | See section 3.4.e in Recommendations in support of Forest Health and Integrity in response to Act 61 of 2015 |