



Founded in Maine in 1995 by a handful of loggers who were concerned about the future of the forest economy, the Professional Logging Contractors (PLC) of the Northeast has grown steadily to become a regional educational non-profit, which provides independent logging and trucking contractors a voice along with a suite of other forest certification programs, which are grounded in responsible forest management.

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*The Economic Contribution of Logging and Trucking in the Northeast was prepared by:
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LOGGING & TRUCKING

The Backbone of the Northeast's Forest Economy

By: Dr. Ryan Wallace, PhD - Wallace Economic Advisers, LLC

For generations, logging and forest trucking have formed the foundation of the forest products economy across the Northeastern United States. From Maine through New York, these industries support rural employment, sustain working forests, and enable the flow of raw materials to mills, manufacturers, and energy producers throughout the region. As global markets, cost pressures, and mill capacity continue to evolve, understanding the economic role of logging and forest trucking has never been more important.

In 2024, logging and related trucking activities generated a substantial economic contribution across the seven Northeast states. Including direct activity and multiplier effects, the industry supported more than 10,500 jobs, produced \$645 million in labor income, and generated approximately \$1.3 billion in total economic output. In addition, logging and trucking activity contributed an estimated \$61 million in state tax revenues, underscoring the sector's importance not only to rural communities, but also to state and regional fiscal health.

As in previous studies examining the impact of the industry, the economic contribution of logging and trucking can be measured well beyond the woods. Day-to-day operations support equipment dealers, fuel suppliers, repair shops, and professional services, while wages earned by workers circulate through

local economies in the form of household spending.

These indirect and induced impacts are particularly significant in rural areas, where logging and trucking often represent some of the most stable year-round employment opportunities.

Survey results from logging and trucking businesses across the Northeast reveal an industry dominated by small, long-established firms. Most respondents operate with fewer than a dozen employees, rely on highly mechanized harvesting systems, and work between 40 and 45 weeks per year. While many businesses supplement their income with related activities such as road construction or land clearing, logging remains the primary source of revenue for nearly all firms surveyed.

Despite its economic importance, the industry is facing mounting challenges. Contractors across all regions reported a decline in their ability to sell or harvest wood over the past five years, driven by mill closures, reduced low-grade markets, rising fuel and equipment costs, and persistent labor shortages.



THE INDUSTRY

By Chuck Ames, President of the PLC

HARVESTING METHODS

47% Cut-to-Length
42% Whole Tree
11% Hand Crew



This first-ever regional economic impact study commissioned by the PLC confirms what loggers across the Northeast have been saying for years. Logging and trucking remain the backbone of the forest economy, yet the people doing the work are not reaping the rewards. Despite generating more than a billion dollars of economic activity and supporting more than 10,000 jobs, loggers are always at the bottom of the barrel when it comes to who gets paid first and who absorbs the most risk.

Today's logging operations are more technologically advanced, more environmentally responsible, and more professional than ever before. But those improvements come at a cost. Equipment prices, parts, insurance, fuel, labor, and compliance requirements all continue to rise. Most people don't understand that loggers can't raise their prices to keep up with inflation because those prices are set by those they work for, not by the loggers themselves. Many loggers will tell you, "we've never gotten a pay raise, but our costs go up every year." That statement perfectly captures the reality many contractors are living with.

Only 14 percent of survey respondents believe there are sufficient markets to sell product.

Margins are tight, and for many companies, it feels like they are one breakdown or one mill shutdown away from real trouble. Many more are already in trouble. Weak markets, mill curtailments, and transportation and labor challenges only add to the strain. It's no wonder so many loggers feel discouraged right now.

And yet, what continues to impress me is the resilience of this industry. Loggers show up every day, adapt to new systems, invest in safer and more efficient equipment, and take pride in doing the job right. The problem is not the workforce or the professionalism of our members. The problem is an economic system that depends on loggers but does not consistently support them.

The PLC exists to help change that. By advocating for fair policies, supporting common-sense tax reforms, supporting logging training and safety programs, and making sure decision-makers understand the real value of logging and forest trucking, we are working to give contractors a fighting chance.

Loggers don't ask for special treatment. They ask for recognition, fair compensation, and the opportunity to keep doing the work that sustains our forests and our communities. Given that chance, I know this industry will continue to deliver.

THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE

By: Dana Doran, Executive Director of the PLC

In 2023, the Professional Logging Contractors of the Northeast (PLC) made a historic decision to expand beyond Maine to advocate for and educate the public about the value of timber harvesting and hauling across seven Northeastern states: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont. To support this regional expansion, the PLC commissioned a first-of-its-kind economic impact study to benchmark the value of logging and trucking across the region, highlighting the interconnected nature of the forest economy beyond state borders.

This study establishes a clear picture of the industry's economic significance in a region that has relied on forestry for centuries. It is the first analysis to quantify logging and trucking impacts across multiple Northeastern states, revealing that the industry supports more than 10,500 jobs, generates \$645 million in earnings, and contributes \$1.3 billion in economic output annually. While Maine and New York serve as anchors of this activity, every state contributes meaningful economic value. The findings reinforce a fundamental reality: without loggers harvesting wood and truckers transporting it, the broader forest economy cannot generate additional value.

The study also captures an industry in transition. Since the PLC conducted its first economic impact study more than a decade ago, harvesting practices have changed significantly. Cut-to-length (CTL) systems now account for nearly half of all harvesting activity, surpassing

traditional whole-tree systems.

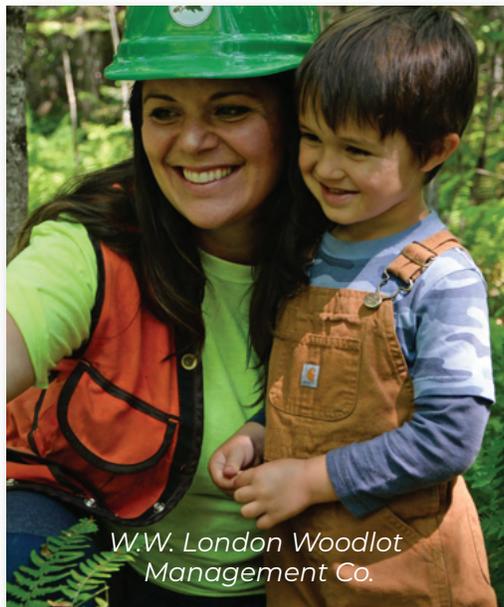
This shift reflects advances in technology and the industry's response to environmental expectations, workforce challenges, and evolving market demands.

These changes have required substantial investment in modern equipment at a time when contractors face rising operating costs and continuously tightening margins. Expectations for safety, environmental performance, and professionalism have also increased, financial pressures continue to mount, with little to no increases in what contractors are paid to produce their products.

In response, the PLC has evolved to better support logging and trucking businesses throughout the region. Its work now focuses on helping companies invest in training, implement best management practices, and pursue continuous

improvement. Programs that offset costs, incentivize strong environmental performance, and recognize professionalism are essential to sustaining the industry.

Logging and trucking remain the cornerstone of the forest economy. Today's contractors are leaner, more technologically advanced, and operating under greater constraints than ever before. The PLC's mission is to meet them where they are—supporting adaptation, advocating for smart incentives, and ensuring a skilled workforce is in place to seize emerging opportunities as new markets for wood come online.



W.W. London Woodlot Management Co.

MAINE

\$534M
ECONOMIC
OUTPUT

\$283M
LABOR
EARNINGS



Maine's logging and forest trucking industry is the largest and most economically significant in the Northeast, serving as a cornerstone of the state's forest products economy and rural employment base. In 2024, the industry supported approximately 2,744 direct logging and trucking jobs, along with an additional 1,715 indirect jobs, for a total of about 4,460 jobs statewide. Total economic output from logging and trucking reached approximately \$534 million, the highest in the region, including \$283 million in total labor earnings, and generated an estimated \$23 million in state tax revenues.

The sector plays a foundational role in Maine's broader forest economy, supporting industries that employ thousands statewide. Logging and forest trucking are the front end of this value chain, supplying raw material to pulp and paper mills, sawmills, biomass facilities, and wood product manufacturers that remain central to Maine's rural and industrial landscape.

Surveyed contractors in Maine reported some of the most acute challenges in the Northeast, including mill closures, loss of low-grade wood markets, rising operating and capital costs, and persistent labor shortages. These pressures have significantly reduced contractors' ability to sell and harvest wood over the past five years and have increased financial risk for equipment investment and business succession planning.

Reflecting on the sector's importance, Maine State Forester Patty Cormier said:

"Maine's loggers are a crucial link in the wood products supply chain, between Maine's abundant forests and its forest products manufacturers. As a primary driver of rural economies in communities across the state, loggers and truckers help build economic value at mills while bringing value back to their communities, in the form of employment, equipment, ancillary services, and other local businesses, from grocery stores to local banks. Many challenges are currently facing the industry, including weather, high costs of inputs, labor, and wood products markets. Maintaining a diverse forest products economy, from small 1-person firms to large companies in logging, trucking, forest management, and manufacturing, is a critical need to support Maine's forests and people."



GCA Logging Inc.

NEW YORK

\$280M
ECONOMIC
OUTPUT

\$140M
LABOR
EARNINGS



New York's logging and forest trucking industry represents the second largest contributor to the forest-based economy in the Northeast, reflecting the state's extensive forestland base and diverse wood products sector. In 2024, the industry supported approximately 1,911 direct logging and trucking jobs, along with an additional 500 indirect and induced jobs, for a total of about 2,411 jobs statewide. Total economic output from logging and trucking reached approximately \$280 million, including \$140 million in total labor earnings, and generated an estimated \$19 million in state tax revenues.

The sector plays a critical role in supporting New York's broader forest economy. Logging and forest trucking provide the essential raw material supply that supports sawmills, pulp and paper facilities, wood energy, and secondary wood manufacturing across the state.

Surveyed contractors in New York reported ongoing pressures from rising operating costs, tightening labor markets, and market volatility. Labor shortages were cited as particularly acute, and trucking remains a key constraint in moving wood from remote forest regions to processing facilities, both in-state and across state lines.

Reflecting on the sector's importance, New York State Forester Fiona Watt, said:

"Working forests are a priority in New York State for their contributions to natural resource and watershed protection, climate resiliency, and rural economies. The logging and forest trucking industry is vital to

supporting sustainable forest management on public and private land, including helping keep forests as forest in a state where more than two-thirds of forests are in private ownership. New York State's forest tax law supports this industry, which ranks third in employment in the forest products economy. NYS is committed to supporting the logging and trucking workforce and exploring ways to ensure people continue to enter into these important professions."



Day's Timber Harvesting

NEW HAMPSHIRE

\$243M
ECONOMIC
OUTPUT

\$94M
LABOR
EARNINGS



New Hampshire's logging and forest trucking industry continues to play a vital role in the state's rural economy and forest-based supply chains. In 2024, the industry supported approximately 804 direct logging and trucking jobs, along with an additional 700 indirect jobs, for a total of about 1,504 jobs statewide. Total economic output from logging and trucking reached approximately \$243 million, including \$94 million in total labor earnings, and generated an estimated \$6 million in state tax revenues.

The sector supports a broader forest products economy that includes sawmills, biomass facilities, and wood manufacturers, and forest products are widely recognized as one of the most significant components of the state's natural resource and rural economy.

Surveyed contractors in New Hampshire reported challenges related to rising costs, market access, and workforce availability similar to those reported by contractors in neighboring states. Limited in-state processing capacity increases dependence on trucking and regional markets, making contractors particularly sensitive to fuel costs and transportation logistics.

Reflecting on the sector's importance, New Hampshire State Forester Patrick Hackley, said:

"New Hampshire has a vibrant forest products industry that is consistently one of the top three industries in the state based on economic output where loggers and forest products truckers serve as the backbone of our rural economy. Without their commitment to a profession that requires long days and dealing with a host of challenging variables, from weather to wood markets, our vast forested landscape would look markedly different. The State of New Hampshire supports efforts to promote a positive image of the industry and encourage young people to consider careers in it."



804
DIRECT LOGGING
& TRUCKING JOBS

700
INDIRECT &
INDUCED JOBS



\$6M
STATE TAX REVENUES



VERMONT

\$140M
ECONOMIC
OUTPUT

\$75M
LABOR
EARNINGS



Vermont's logging and forest trucking industry remains a vital economic and cultural component of the state, even as it faces persistent operational challenges. In 2024, the industry supported nearly 800 direct logging and trucking jobs, along with an additional 500 indirect jobs across the state. Total economic output ranked fourth in the Northeast at approximately \$140 million, including \$75 million in labor earnings, and generated an estimated \$9 million in state tax revenues.

The sector plays a foundational role in supporting Vermont's broader forest economy, underpinning this value chain by supplying raw materials, sustaining mill operations, and supporting rural employment across the state.

Surveyed contractors in Vermont reported many of the same pressures observed elsewhere in the region, including rising operating costs, constrained markets, and ongoing labor shortages that limit harvesting activity and capital investment. Weather-related disruptions were also cited as a notable challenge. Vermont has one of the highest shares of small-scale operators in the Northeast, making firms particularly sensitive to cost volatility and market fluctuations.

Reflecting on the sector's importance, Vermont State Forester Oliver Pierson said:

"The forest sector is the fiscal leader of Vermont's natural resources economy, one of Vermont's big three manufacturing industries, and the cornerstone of Vermont's rural economy and economic identity. The logging and forest trucking industry is a vital element of the broader forest economy in Vermont, and it is a top priority for the state to support this industry to ensure that businesses thrive and contribute to economic growth and forest health. The State of Vermont is working to support the logging and forest trucking industry through implementation of the Forest Futures Roadmap, provision of grant funding and low-interest loans to help loggers offset regulatory compliance and high equipment finance costs, and promoting active forest management on state and private lands throughout the state."



Long View Forest Inc.

MASSACHUSETTS

\$72M
ECONOMIC
OUTPUT

\$34M
LABOR
EARNINGS



Massachusetts' logging and forest trucking industry, while smaller than in northern New England states, continues to provide important economic and land management benefits, particularly in western and central parts of the state. In 2024, the industry supported approximately 440 direct logging and trucking jobs, along with an additional 124 indirect and induced jobs, for a total of about 564 jobs statewide. Total economic output from logging and trucking reached approximately \$72 million, including \$34 million in total labor earnings, and generated an estimated \$3.3 million in state tax revenues.

The sector supports local sawmills, specialty wood markets, firewood production, and forest management activities that contribute to rural employment and active land stewardship. Forest products remain an important component of the state's natural resource sector.

Surveyed logging contractors in Massachusetts reported pressures from rising costs, limited market access, and competition for labor, consistent with broader regional trends. Smaller parcel sizes and suburban development patterns further shape operating conditions in the state.

Reflecting on forests' importance in the state and the logging sector's importance to forest management, Peter Church, Director of Forest Stewardship for Massachusetts' Department of Conservation and Recreation said:

"Our forests are vital to fuel our economy, protect wildlife and combat climate change."



J.H. Conkey and Sons Logging

CONNECTICUT



RHODE ISLAND



Connecticut's logging and forest trucking industry plays a small but meaningful role in supporting forest management, rural employment, and local wood markets. In 2024, the industry supported approximately 208 direct logging and trucking jobs, along with an additional 72 indirect and induced jobs, for a total of about 279 jobs statewide. Total economic output from logging and trucking reached approximately \$39 million, including \$17 million in total labor earnings, and generated an estimated \$1.7 million in state tax revenues.

Logging and forest trucking support local sawmills, firewood markets, and land management objectives.

Reflecting on the sector's importance, Connecticut State Forester Christopher Martin, said:

"The Northeast logging and trucking industry is essential to successful forest landownership in Connecticut. Without such an industry, forest management simply would not occur, significantly impeding Connecticut's ability to respond to ongoing insect, disease, and climate issues challenging the health and resiliency of our tree cover. The ability for forest landowners to contract tree removal and in turn forest product transportation services is absolutely necessary to keep our forests as forest as it is commonly understood; no markets, no management equates to severely compromised forest health and ecological integrity loss."

\$39M
ECONOMIC
OUTPUT

279
JOBS
STATEWIDE
(DIRECT &
INDIRECT)

J.M. Logging Forestry Co.

Rhode Island has the smallest logging and forest trucking footprint in the Northeast, but the sector continues to support working forests, land management, and niche wood markets. In 2024, the industry supported approximately 40 direct logging and trucking jobs, along with an additional 24 indirect and induced jobs, for a total of about 64 jobs statewide. Total economic output from logging and trucking reached approximately \$8 million, including \$2 million in total labor earnings, and generated an estimated \$200,000 in state tax revenues.

Harvesting in Rhode Island is typically small-scale and closely linked to land management, development, and regional wood markets. Much of the state's harvested timber is transported to processors in neighboring states.

Reflecting on the sector's importance, Rhode Island State Forester Tee Jay Boudreau said:

"While Rhode Island's logging and forest trucking sector is small in scale, it plays an essential role in sustaining our working forests, supporting land management, and connecting Rhode Island's local resources to regional markets. Its positive economic contribution and employment showcase the importance of maintaining a resilient and regionally integrated forest products infrastructure."

\$8M
ECONOMIC
OUTPUT

64
JOBS
STATEWIDE
(DIRECT &
INDIRECT)

Jerimoth Forestry

LOGGING AND TRUCKING IN THE NORTHEAST

2024

Economic
Contribution

\$1.3B CONTRIBUTED
TO THE REGION'S
ECONOMY

EMPLOYED
6,930
WORKERS

\$393M
DIRECT
EARNINGS

+

3,613
INDIRECT
JOBS

\$646M
TOTAL
EARNINGS

\$61M

STATE & LOCAL
TAXES PAID

