

## **Executive Summary of the Recommendations to Support an Effective Policy Program and to Bolster Membership Engagement**

March 8, 2010

In the July 2009 membership survey our members identified four recurring member-valued purposes that they desire from the New England Society: Empower our members - give them the potential to impact; Effectively build public awareness of forestry issues and the value of foresters; Provide a sound, unified foundation for regulatory initiatives; and Strengthen our organization - increase member value by being actively relevant.

To meet these concerns we focused the recommendations that follow on ensuring:

1. Relevancy – products must be timely and about issues immediately important to the state or region for which it is being drafted;
2. A Targeted Audience – speak to the right people to ensure its use;
3. Quality Control – there needs to be a formal review process so issues reflect membership but also to make sure a quality product goes out the door; and
4. Effective Communications – so that the product is effective in serving its purpose.

We recommend that the Executive Committee redefine how we approach policy efforts at the New England Society. From redefining how we approach policy, increasing our effectiveness with sustained communication efforts, to engaging and empowering our members; our recommendations are as follows.

- *Ensure that Policy Chair vacancies are filled through a thorough candidate search for a clearly defined role*
- *Create a Communications and Outreach Chair position to facilitate full use of position statements and to meet member-valued purposes*
- *Focus the initiatives of our policy efforts on State regulatory initiatives*
- *Clearly identify selection criteria for our position statements*
- *Restructure the standing Policy Committee into an issue-specific, ad hoc committee structure*
- *Ground all initiatives in forest science with direct input from issue experts*
- *Provide for a structured member comment period*
- *Seek a vote of the membership for each position statement*
- *Ensure the timeliness of position statements throughout the development process*
- *Officially adopt the Operations Manual*
- *Actively clean our member email lists in order to enable maximum response and participation*

We believe that these actions will strengthen our Society, and ask that you put these suggestions before our membership.