



What is a *Healthy, Working*, Forest Landscape?

“The first and perhaps most critical step in practicing balanced forestry is to accept and support the premise that some of the landscape must be left alone.” –Seymour & Hunter, 1992

A Forest is a biological community dominated by trees, other woody vegetation¹, and non-woody plants.

Forests provide a variety of ecosystem services² including:

- Provision of food, fresh water, wood & fiber, and fuel;
- Support services such as carbon storage, nutrient cycling, and biological diversity;
- Regulation of climate, floods, disease, and water quality; and
- Cultural services, including aesthetics, spiritual connections, education, and recreation.

A Working Forest is a forest where forest ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration and storage, water filtration, flood control, terrestrial and aquatic habitats for a full range of native flora and fauna, recreation opportunities, and natural beauty are actively conserved. A working forest may also be managed for wood products such as timber, fuelwood, smallwood, or pulpwood and non-wood forest products such as maple syrup, wild edibles, herbs, and medicinals.

An Ecological Forest Reserve is a Working Forest since it provides key forest ecosystem services such as: habitat for rare or threatened flora and fauna; high rates of carbon sequestration and storage; and excellent water filtration.

A Tree Farm is a Working Forest since it focuses on the production of high quality timber and associated values.

A Family Forest is a Working Forest since it focuses on conserving forest health, and when appropriate, on providing forest ecosystem services, non-wood forest products and/or wood products.

¹ Stephen Spurr & Burton Barnes. 1973. *Forest Ecology*.

² United Nations. 2005. *The Millennium Project*.



Health is the capacity of the land for self-renewal.³ Five essential indicators of a forest landscape's capacity for self-renewal are the status of water quality, site productivity, native biological diversity, carbon storage and sequestration potential, and forest vitality.

A Healthy Working Forest Landscape requires a three-part or *Triad Concept*⁴ of forest land allocation including:

- **Ecological Forest Reserves** focused on preserving the forest's capacity for self-renewal;
- **Family Forests** focused first on forest health while producing a variety of forest ecosystem goods and services.
- **Tree Farms** focused on the production of high quality wood products and associated forest ecosystem goods and services.

³ Aldo Leopold. 1949. *A Sand County Almanac*.

⁴ Robert Seymour and Malcolm Hunter. 1992. *New Forestry in Eastern Spruce-Fir Forests*.