

Northeast Master Logger Certification



An Overview



Meets Rainforest Alliance
requirements for
SmartLogging



About Master Logger Certification

The Master Logger Certification program operates under the Trust to Conserve Northeast Forestlands. The Trust to Conserve Northeast Forestlands (TCNF) is a 501(c)3 organization formed by the Professional Logging Contractors of Maine in 2003 to administer the Northeast Master Logger Certification program with the broader goal of “enhancing the health of working forest ecosystems through exceptional accountability” throughout the Northern Forest region.

The Trust supports exemplary forest professionals, landowners, and wood product manufacturing companies who are committed to responsible and accountable management of forest ecosystems by providing low-cost access to forest certification and building the region’s capacity to produce third party certified forest products and ecosystem services.

Who? Maine was the first place in the world with a point-of-harvest Master Logger Certification program, offering third party independent certification of logging companies’ harvesting practices.

Why? To compete successfully in a global marketplace, we believe that Northeastern harvesting companies and other forest professionals must demonstrate that they set a world standard for economic AND environmental performance.

When? Rather than be swept along by the changes occurring in the global marketplace, the Professional Logging Contractors of Maine decided in 2000 to reinvent their profession and hold it to a world-leading standard of excellence.

What? The content of NEMLC is based on a common vision for communities and forest resources of the northeast. The nine goals guide loggers in their work: Document Harvest Planning, Protect Water Quality, Maintain Soil Productivity, Sustain Forest Ecosystems, Manage Forest Aesthetics, Ensure Workplace Safety, Demonstrate Continuous Improvement, Ensure Business Viability and Uphold Certificate Integrity.

Where? As of 2011, the New England states, New York, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, 3 Canadian provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island) and Japan have Master Logger programs based on this model.

Key Features - Master Logger (ML) Membership

- ML is based on Point-of-Harvest performance standards.
- ML recognizes the company not only the individual.
- ML does not require you to attend class and training to become certified.
- ML is based on your experience and allows the company to choose optional workshops that fit their needs.
- ML is the recognition of the good work you are already doing.
- ML is true third-party certification of Logging Contractors



2023 Master Logger Statistics:

- ✓ 5.7 Million Tons Processed, almost 20% of the Northeast timber harvest
- ✓ 135 Master Logger Companies
- ✓ 1,217 Employees

Benefits

- Enhance your Companies Reputation
- Access to New Markets
- Promotional Opportunities for your company
 - Site signs
 - Master Logger Online Directory for landowners
 - Promotion through Landowner Networks
 - Positive Media Attention
- Access to Networking and Workshops
- Lower Workers' Compensation rates with certain carriers
- Gain Access to FSC® Chain of Custody Certificate
- Marketing tool directed at landowners by giving them assurance of harvesting to an accepted and recognized standard
- Direct Link Loan Access



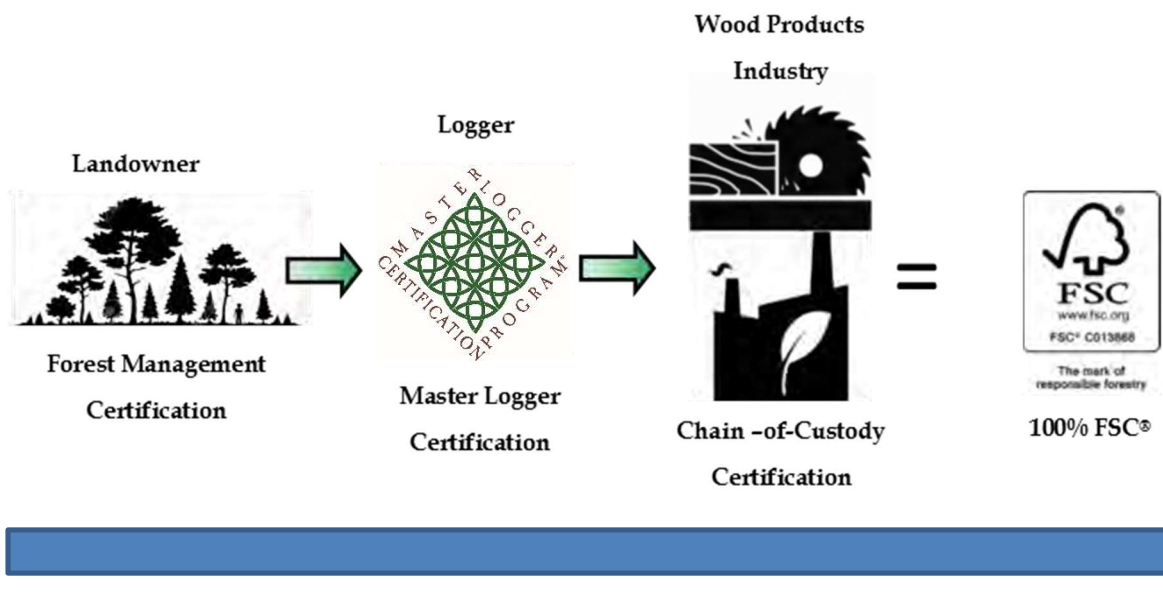


Nine Guiding Principles

1. **Superior harvest operations planning**
2. **Protections of water quality**
3. **Maintenance of soil productivity**
4. **Improvement of forest ecosystems**
5. **Management of forest aesthetics**
6. **Attention to workplace safety, with clear regulatory compliance**
7. **Commitment to continuous improvement, including the application of recent forest research and emerging technologies, up-to-date training and accurate documentation, as well as an “above-and- beyond” approach**
8. **Ensuring business viability by active participation in many levels of the industry, and**
9. **Upholding Certificate Integrity**

For more information on ML, please visit our website at:
www.masterloggercertification.org

Overview of Certification Process and Flow



Access to FSC® Chain of Custody (COC):
Do you buy or have the opportunity to buy FSC® stumpage?

Master Loggers can gain access to FSC® COC by being a member. This can be a huge asset if you can buy FSC® stumpage, own a wood yard or sawmill that wants to sell FSC® certified wood.

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Examples of companies with FSC certified products

patagonia®

Charmin



west elm



Examples of companies with procurement policies favoring FSC



L.L.Bean



P&G



STARBUCKS®



The
Walt Disney
Company

IKEA

SCHOLASTIC

LEGO

Andersen
WINDOWS • DOORS

STAPLES



WILLIAMS-SONOMA



Kimberly-Clark

Steps to becoming a NEMLC

Step One:

Interview

- Performance standards are explained
- The commitment to superior management practice is defined
- Five past and current harvest sites are identified
- Three professional references are obtained, and
- Company has opportunity for some self-reporting and evaluation



Step Two:

Field inspection by an NEMLC accredited field verifier.

Step Three:

The company reviews the NEMLC application for accuracy, provides challenges, clarification or explanation, signs Code of Ethics, and approves sending application to the Certification Board.



Step Four:

Certification Board reviews application.



Step Five:

The Certification Board meets and votes on acceptance of application.

Step Six:

Newly certified NEMLC companies are announced at a public reception.



CTL Land Management Services

WASHINGTON, ME – CTL Land Management Services was founded by Kyle Overlock and Gavin McClain in 1998 and has been a Master Logger company since 2003. As the name makes clear, CTL is a cut-to-length logging company, with five employees running two cut-to-length operations and a small kiln-dried firewood business, Hobby Hill Firewood.



Gavin and Kyle first met working for a landscaping company in the mid-1990s. At that time Kyle was cutting wood in the winters and landscaping in the summers, and following his example Gavin began cutting on his own land in the off-season to make additional money. By 1996 the two had begun logging together, each with their own cable skidder, but it was in 1998 that they officially joined forces and went in a different direction.

Gavin recalls learning about cut-to-length logging first at a 1997 logging show, and then from brothers Don and Will Cole of the Trees LTD. logging company in Sidney, Maine. (Trees LTD. is a Master Logger company).

“They were very patient. I learned a lot from those guys, they’re good people,” Gavin said. At the time, the cut-to-length method of logging was being encouraged by some of the larger buyers in the market and the quality of work it allowed was attractive to landowners. CTL Land Mgt. Services went into it and has never looked back. Over the years the company has expanded to include the two cut-to-length operations, kiln-dried firewood with delivery, and a bulldozer and excavator for road building and Best Management Practices (BMP) tasks.

CTL subcontracts portions of some jobs out to logger Jeff Moran, who runs a traditional one-man cable skidder operation, for difficult terrain and large diameter, high-value veneer timber where cutting by hand is the best way to ensure no damage to the wood. These are difficult times in logging and CTL is dealing with the same poor markets, high equipment costs, and competitive challenges facing most loggers today.

The mid-coast Maine area in which CTL is based has a great deal of untapped logging potential with many private landowners uncertain about whether to harvest their lands and wary of logging. This makes it a competitive area in which to operate, with a mix of independent logging companies vying with others organized and backed by industry buyers. A logging firm must remain adaptable and professional to succeed and can be hurt by any bad experience a landowner has with another company – bad news travels faster than good when it comes to logging.

Being a Master Logger company definitely helps in this environment. “I don’t use it a lot as a marketing tool, but if I have a landowner who may be a bit skeptical or on the fence, I always refer them to Master Logger standards and the webpage, it offers peace of mind,” Gavin said. CTL sells much of its timber to Verso Paper and so CTL is in a holding pattern for now in terms of future plans, waiting to see how Verso’s emergence from bankruptcy affects its Maine operations.

In the meantime, Gavin and Kyle are loggers because they love the outdoors and the work, and CTL is busy and focusing on the professionalism and hard work Master Loggers are noted for, a solid business plan in any environment.

Kimball & Son Logging

PORTLAND, ME – There's a grapple skidder hauling a load along the edge of the tree line this morning, a slasher at work on the landing, and before long an empty pulp truck pulls up ready for a load of logs. If it weren't for the low hum of rush hour traffic beyond the trees, you'd never know this logging job is in the middle of Maine's largest urban area – a thinning operation in Portland's Evergreen Cemetery woods that has been underway since mid-February and has brought Master Logger company Kimball Logging & Firewood of Poland, Maine to work about as close to the geographic center of the city as you can get. Ron Kimball and his son, Randy, are used to logging wherever jobs take them, but they admit this job is different. "When people saw us rolling in here with all the equipment on trailers a lot of heads turned," Randy says.



The Kimballs are not here to educate the public about timber harvesting, but there's no doubt the heavy use of the cemetery and woods by urban walkers, joggers, cyclists, and skiers has provided a rare opportunity for city residents to see active logging done right by professionals. Jeff Tarling is the city arborist, forestry, and horticulture manager, and he credits the good work by the Kimballs as an important piece of overcoming many residents' worries about logging in an area they use for recreation. "Anytime you can do a project like this and have the public support it that's good" Tarling says. "It's a great thing to see it done right. Having the right contractor as well as the right PR (public relations) is important."

The Kimballs don't lack experience. Ron grew up on a dairy farm in Poland and started cutting wood when he was 17. He is 56 now. He bought his first cable skidder when he was 31, and Randy rode with him in the skidder from the time he was a toddler, so logging was in his blood from an early age. In 1989 Ron stopped working for others and went out on his own, and in time Randy went to work with him. Now between the two of them they have a four-man crew with a feller buncher, grapple, slasher, chipper, two trucks, a track dozer and other equipment including Ron's firewood processor as needed. The crew is efficient and serious about safety and the job, but they find time to give Ron a hard time when he starts talking about retiring to Florida as a cold wind rises and he must mount the loader with the open seat – it has great air conditioning he says.

Logging is a tough business with long hours and many ups and downs over the years, so it is not easy to explain on a cold winter day why he or any other veteran logger is still doing it, Ron says. "If we weren't stubborn there wouldn't be any of us doing this," Ron says, "You've got to be stubborn, you wouldn't do it if you weren't stubborn, you'd give up."

Like most other Maine loggers, the Kimballs are dealing with a tough market for softwood pulp and low chip prices. Costs to operate keep rising, and the closure of paper mills has been rough, but Ron says in his 39 years in logging there have always been ups and down in the business, and he thinks it may take a while, but new markets for fiber will eventually open up. In the meantime, he and Randy agree buyers of wood need to keep their prices high enough to afford loggers a living if they want to preserve a professional workforce to supply timber in the future. Many logging companies have branched out into construction, road building and other areas to reduce their reliance on the ups and down of wood markets, but the Kimballs are strictly a logging company and plan to stay that way. "All we do is cut wood, and that's enough," Randy says. But the forestry professionals and landowners that the Kimball's work with will tell you they offer a lot more than just a quality job.

Do you have what it takes to become a Northeast Master Logger?

"I think my company has done Master Logger work for a long time!" Of course you have, but the world is looking for new assurances of your commitment to excellence. As you well know, harvesting is not just about "cutting trees." Harvesting companies are asked to efficiently. Extract the resource and minimize impacts on the landscape. Northeast Master Logger Certification (NEMLC) enables your company (sole proprietor or contractor with employees) to be certified by a third-party system that is recognized regionally, nationwide, and even internationally. It is recognized by the industry, their customers, and international accrediting organizations.

Now for the best news... you will not need to attend any classes to earn Northeast Master Logger Certification. NEMLC respects your work and will validate what you already know and do consistently. Throughout the NEMLC process, your company will be identified by a code number, thereby ensuring confidentiality. Once we receive the Enrollment Form and the first installment payment, we will schedule an on-site or phone interview to answer any questions and go over all expectations and procedures.

Please take a moment to look at the Northeast Master Logger Certification Program goals and ask yourself: Can you support these goals, should you choose to become a Master Logger Company?

You will likely find that the work you do every day is reflected in the vision, principles, and goals, and that you already have what it takes to join an elite group of professional wood harvesters! We will be ready when you are. Just complete and return the Enrollment form and process payment and we will start you on the road to Northeast Master Logger Certification.

Requisites for NEMLC and NPH-NEMLC Applicant Companies

- **All harvesting companies (contractors or sole proprietors) interested in the NEMLC or Non-Point-of-Harvest (NPH)-NEMLC program must be willing to demonstrate that 60-100% of their annual income is derived from logging activities.** Master Logger Certification is not a program for non-professionals, landowners who want to cut their own forestland, or foresters who subcontract the work but have no loggers as employees.
- All applicant companies going through the NEMLC certification/recertification process must be willing to accept the responsibility of assuring that all work conducted on their logging operations **or their role in a logging operation meets** the NEMLC standards. This includes any work conducted by employees or sub-contractors.
- **Those companies seeking NPH-NEMLC understand that their certification applies only to their portion of the harvesting operation; this certification does not certify the entire logging operation.**
- All sole proprietors must be willing to set up their company and equipment according to OSHA safety regulations although they are not required to do so by law.
- All applicant companies must be willing to supply information through a coded system of data collection.
- All applicant companies must understand that certification and recertification reviews, which take place after two years and every four years without incident, with random audits in between, are required to maintain recognition.
- All applicant companies must sign a code of ethics for the entire company's consistent practices.
- Landowners with no loggers on payroll are not eligible for NEMLC Certification.
- Applicant companies must be willing to provide three personal references and go through all phases of the certification process, knowing that the decision to submit their application to the Certification Board remains theirs. A signed release form is required before an applicant's materials are sent to the Certification Board.
- Decertification **and/or change of status** of an NEMLC **or NPH-NEMLC** company takes place when a company no longer meets the **non-point** or point-of-harvest logging requisites, the Certification Board makes the decision to decertify, or after grievance procedures are followed. The following are examples of how this process could be set in motion: self-reporting that requisites are no longer being met, on-going pattern of poor harvest or business practices, or harvest violations or convictions. This does not mean decertification is a foregone conclusion.
- Regulatory oversight was set aside for NEMLC companies in relation to liquidation harvesting rules, January 4th, 2005. Any issue that compromises this public trust will be immediately investigated and NEMLC designation suspended until a decision is made by the Board. **Non-Point-of-Harvest (NPH) NEMLCs are not eligible for this set aside due to not being responsible for the complete harvest operation.**



Contact

Master Logger Certification

www.masterloggercertification.com

108 Sewall St.

PO Box 1036

Augusta, ME 04332

207-688-8195 Ext. 2

executivedirector@tcnef.org



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