

## NED SOFTWARE FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT: NEW DEVELOPMENTS

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The term NED describes a set of computer programs designed to help resource managers and landowners develop goals, assess current and potential conditions, and produce sustainable management plans for forested properties. A number of new programs have been released recently. Stewplan, published in 2003, is software that helps create standard forest stewardship plans to facilitate enrollment in the Stewardship Program sponsored by the USDA Forest Service and state agencies throughout the United States. NEDLite allows use of handheld computers using the Palm OS for field data collection, with automatic transfer of data to NED-1 and NED-2. NED-1 is a comprehensive analysis program to evaluate goals and current conditions on a forested property from the perspective of various forest resources for management areas up to several thousand acres. NED-2, presently in beta testing, expands on previous versions of NED software by integrating treatment prescriptions, growth simulation, and alternative comparisons of management scenarios across a management unit. NED-2 implements a goal-driven decision process that ensures that all relevant goals are considered; the character and current conditions of forestland are known; alternatives to manage the land are designed and tested; the future forest under each alternative is simulated; and the alternative selected will achieve the owner's goals. The resources NED addresses include visual quality, ecology, forest health, timber, water, and wildlife, allowing a user to evaluate the degree to which individual stands or a management unit as a whole may provide the conditions required to accomplish specific goals. Programs such as the Forest Stewardship Planning Guide and NEWILD allow people with an interest in managing their forests to improve their understanding of various management activities and their effects on the forest, even if they lack detailed data. The software is distributed without charge and is available for downloading from the internet at <http://www.fs.fed.us/ne/burlington/ned>. NED development is led by the USDA Forest Service's Northeastern and Southern Research Stations in cooperation with many other organizations and individuals.

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