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Environmental Affairs

An Evaluation of the Economic Needs of Wood Product and Tourism Based Businesses in the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership

An Interactive Qualifying Project Report to
The Faculty of
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

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Abstract

Businesses in Berkshire and Franklin counties face many challenges. The Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership (MTWP), comprised of representatives from twenty one towns in the region, is investigating ways to improve the regional economy. We worked with the Massachusetts Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership to evaluate seven programs proposed by the MTWP to help local wood and tourism businesses. We conducted interviews with five businesses in the region to obtain their opinions on the programs and to create profiles for each business illustrating their challenges and strategies to overcome them. Finally, we provided recommendations on how to improve the seven plans, marketing, internet infrastructure, and tourism in the region.

Executive Summary

An Evaluation of the Economic Needs of Wood Product and Tourism Based Businesses in the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership

Nicholas Songer, James Loring, Ryan Foley, and Taehyun Kim

The Problem

Many rural areas suffer from the inability to grow and maintain economic stability. All around the world, being economically and socially sustainable challenges rural economies (Gabe, 2013). One such rural area that is struggling economically is Berkshire and Franklin Counties in Western Massachusetts. A very large problem that this region is facing is that it is suffering from population decrease (McKeever, 2014). This hurts local businesses in the twenty one town region because with a lack of population comes a lack of people there for businesses to employ as a part of their workforce.

The Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership (MTWP) is a partnership with representatives from twenty one towns in the region of Berkshire and Franklin counties that are investigating ways to revitalize the economy. The Partnership has worked with the Massachusetts Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) to propose seven programs to the region that pertain to technical assistance, marketing assistance, receiving grants and loans, and more. The Partnership is seeking support from the state and federal government in order to institute the seven programs.

The Goal

The goal of our project was to evaluate the seven programs established by the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership that aim to revitalize wood and tourism related businesses in Berkshire and Franklin counties.

Methods

In order to accomplish the project, goal the following three objectives were completed:

Objective #1: Determine the economic challenges that forest and tourism based businesses are facing as well as what they have been successful on and their opinions on the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership's seven proposed programs.

Owners of five different businesses were interviewed, Zoar Outdoor, Hall Tavern Farms, Stump Sprouts, Red Rose Motel, and Kuklinski Woodworking. Each person was asked the same

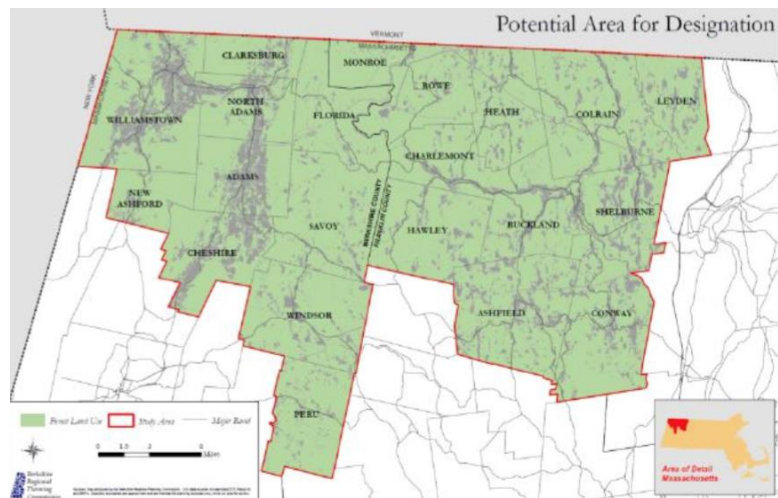


Figure i: Map of twenty one town Region (i.e. Berkshire and Franklin county) (Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership, 2016)

questions which addressed the history of the business, its current economic standing and future goal, and the seven proposed programs of the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership. The information gained from these interviews was used to create a business profile for each business. These profiles are stories about the businesses interviewed. Each profile focuses on a specific challenge the business has overcome.

Objective #2: Determine the depth of the differing types of wood and tourism businesses in the region.

An inventory of wood and tourism in the region was created to better range the depth of wood and tourism businesses in the region. The data for the businesses added to the inventory was collected by driving down the main roads of some of the partnership towns to see what wood and tourism businesses were present, web searches using Google, input from the partnership, and using marketplaces such as EBay, Etsy, and Craigslist.

Objective #3: Assess programs similar to the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership's to identify factors and programmatic features that have enabled them to be successful and how they could be beneficial in Berkshire and Franklin counties.

We identified organizations and programs that help supply small rural businesses with the money and training they need to be more economically sustainable. We examined programs that already exist, such as the North East State Foresters Association (NEFA) and the Northern Forest Center (NFC). With the information gathered about these programs through research we were able to compare more specific details such as the size of the program compared to the area it benefits, the type of area the program works in, and also what exactly the program does for the businesses. We then compared these details to Berkshire and Franklin counties.

Challenges and opportunities of the programs

1. The proposed plan for creating a forestry center to educate visitors has had mixed to mostly negative reviews.

Some businesses like the forestry center while others did not. They all liked the idea of it being a virtual place before it possibly becomes a physical one.

2. The wood pellet provision in the Partnership's plan is drawing attention away from other helpful proposals of the Partnership.

More attention should be put on the good economic plans the partnership is proposing and not on the wood pellet provision.

3. The proposed grant programs of the partnership were all well received.

The partnership's proposed programs for grants and loans for rural wood and tourism businesses for various needs were all strongly liked by all of the businesses interviewed.

Challenges that the programs missed

1. Businesses face several barriers to creating an effective social media and marketing presence.

Due to either a lack of time or technological understanding, several of the five businesses interviewed have little marketing or social media presence.

2. The lack of high quality internet access is a barrier to business success.

Very slow internet speed is hurting small businesses as well as driving away some tourists who would otherwise stay overnight at a motel.

3. The lack of distribution for small woodworking businesses is causing a smaller customer base.

Small woodworking businesses are not able to distribute their products as much as they should and are not doing as well as they could.

4. Two family run businesses are concerned with what will happen to their businesses after they retire.

The aging population in the region is creating a troubling figure of family businesses that are unclear as to what will happen when the owner retires.

5. There are concerns that government regulations may hamper businesses due to preexisting beliefs.

Fear that government regulations could interfere with business are present in this region. However, government financial assistance is well received.

Recommendations

Based on the findings we recommend that the MTWP should improve its seven programs by:

1. Pursuing a virtual forestry center that includes information about the region, and also provides business owners with a place to market their own business.
2. Emphasizing the marketing opportunities available to businesses that are in need of help.
3. Hiring local and or regional marketing specialists to help local businesses find customers locally and also on a regional level.



Figure ii: View from Stump Sprouts (Songer, 2017)

4. Promoting a regional fair that allows local artisans, woodworkers, and other local business owners to sell and advertise their products.
5. Providing additional support to help the process of getting high speed Internet to the region

Deliverables

As part of our study we provided the EEA and the MTWP with the following deliverables:

1. Five business profiles each focusing on a challenge that each business overcame.
2. An inventory of wood and tourism businesses in the twenty one town region.
3. A review of programs that can serve as models for the MTWP.

Conclusion

Berkshire and Franklin counties are just two examples that represent a wide range of struggling rural areas due to an increase in urbanization. The Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership was created in an effort to increase forest-based economic development in twenty one towns in northern Berkshire county, and Franklin county. In order to do this, they have established seven programs that would be implemented in the area once legislation is passed and the funding is received. For our project, we focused on 5 major businesses in the area that broadly represent wood product and tourism based businesses in the region. Through interviews, each business was asked questions related to their background, to their future plans, and to their views on the seven programs developed by the Partnership. Using their responses, we determined which programs would be the most beneficial, and other ideas the partnership had not thought about.

Based on the responses we got from the five businesses, we determined that many of the programs focused on the biggest concerns of the businesses. However, a forestry center which was one of the major priorities of the partnership received indifferent responses. The idea of what the forestry center would provide received interest, but the physical location did not. That being said we recommended that the Partnership wait for the right time to construct a forestry center, and for the time being focus on a virtual forestry center, and the other six programs. Outside the seven programs we recommended that they focus more on getting high speed internet to the area, promote the area by hosting a regional fair, and hiring local or regional marketing specialists. After determining what wood product and tourism based businesses in this region need most, we believe the partnership and the EEA are closer to making a significant impact on a rural region in desperate need of economic stimulation.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Rural areas suffer from the inability to grow and maintain economic stability. All around the world, being economically and socially sustainable challenges rural economies (Gabe, 2013). It has become essential that resource rich rural areas utilize their resources in the most profitable and socially beneficial ways possible (Blackman, 2008). Maine has struggled to increase both the profit and social status of the rural areas of the state. Suffering from the most recent recession, an economic innovation group did a study on the recovery in Maine, and it came to be that rural areas recovered the least after the recession in the area of business growth and job growth (Fishell, 2016). These examples speak to the fact that Maine's economic stability in rural areas hasn't been given enough attention and it has put them on a steady decline. On the other hand, Oregon's forest sector has succeeded in bringing wealth to the area, and being economically beneficial. Oregon's forest sector has contributed \$12.7 billion to Oregon's economy per year, provided over 58,000 jobs, and has brought in millions of dollars due to tourism (Oregon Forest Resources Institute, 2017). While some states and regions do succeed in utilizing their forests in profitable and economically beneficial ways, others, like Maine, fail to simultaneously accomplish both.

The Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership (MTWP) is a partnership with representatives from twenty one towns in the region of Berkshire and Franklin counties that are investigating ways to improve the economy. The partnership has proposed seven programs to the region that pertain to technical assistance, marketing assistance, receiving grants and loans, and more. The partnership hopes to get the legislation passed so the partnership can receive funding from the state and federal government in order to institute the programs. One thing that puts this region in a tough situation is that it is suffering from population decrease (McKeever, 2014). Population decrease hurts Berkshire and Franklin counties because it is causing the average age of a resident in the region to be higher" (Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership, 2016). This hurts local businesses in the twenty one town region because with a lack of population comes a lack of people there for businesses to employ as a part of their workforce. Another issue that the twenty one town region is facing is that local wood resources are not being utilized by local businesses. There is a great amount of businesses that sell raw material and don't take advantage of making finished products. Finished products have a high return on investment than that of the unprocessed trees themselves.

In addressing the issue of businesses not using the resources that surround them to their benefit, Tom Matuszko, of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, states, "We'll be helping locals use what they have in abundance to create economic development and community sustainability" (Stafford, 2015). This represents one of the steps the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission will do to help local businesses utilize the natural resources that the region has in surplus and enable them to grow on an economic scale.

Berkshire and Franklin counties are not the only regions to work on addressing their economic issues, other rural areas have addressed their economic issues in a couple of different ways. One way is using programs like the North East State Foresters Association and the Northern Forest Center that help support local forest and sustainable forest tourism based businesses by providing direct business assistance and specific skills training. The NFC has "benefited 4,600 jobs in wood products manufacturing, tourism and wood heat," and has also "helped to secure and leverage \$178 million for projects that benefit the region's communities"

(Northern Forest Center, 2017). Programs such as these look “to support the businesses and forest landowners that depend on the forest for their livelihood” (North East State Foresters Association, 2017). In learning about these few methods and programs the MTWP can take them into consideration and decide whether or not they would work in the seven programs they have already created.

The goal of our project was to evaluate the current seven programs established by the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership that aim to revitalize wood and tourism related businesses in Berkshire and Franklin counties. We accomplished this by completing three major objectives. First, we interviewed five local forest and tourism business owners on how their businesses is doing economically and their opinions on the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership’s current business plan. We used this information to create business profiles of the five interviewed businesses. These profiles are intended to represent a challenge that has been faced and how that specific business has overcome this challenge or is working to do so. Second, we investigated what businesses exist in the twenty one town region that are related to forest industries and tourism to create an inventory so that outreach and technical assistance programs could focus on these businesses. We then conducted shorter interviews of wood and tourism businesses from the inventory as well as tourists in the region. Lastly, we researched programs similar to Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership that provide support to local forest based and tourism businesses with their economic needs. Programs such as the NEFA, and NFC were considered and assessed due to the positive impacts they have had on areas like Maine, and Vermont. The Massachusetts Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs has been working closely with the MTWP and wants to see their programs succeed. It is our hope that this project will be useful as the MTWP develops and moves towards the implementation stage.

Chapter 2: Background - Evaluating the Challenges in Small Town Rural Economies

In this chapter, we discuss the challenges facing and possible solutions to creating economic sustainability in rural areas. We first begin with the important role that small town economies play in the United States as well as how Berkshire and Franklin counties fit into that role. We also discuss the importance of The Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership and tourism in rural economies. Next, we provide a more detailed focus on the changing population in small towns and the effects it has on the region's economies. Finally, we provide insight on the challenges these businesses face and programs that help mitigate these challenges.

2.1 The Role of Small Town Economies in the United States

Rural economies, like that of Berkshire and Franklin Counties, are an intricate part of the United States. Rural counties account for 72 percent of the land area in the United States (Kusmin, 2017). In 2015, roughly 14 percent of U.S. residents lived in rural counties (Kusmin, 2017). Not only do rural counties account for a large amount of land and a sizable population in the United States, their economies vary from that of urban counties. Small town economies are more dependent on goods production than their urban counterparts (Kusmin, 2017). The main goods production industries in rural economies are farming, forestry, fishing, and mining. These industries account for more than 11 percent of earnings in rural economies (Kusmin, 2017). Farming alone contributed \$136.7 billion to the United States gross domestic product in 2015. This is about one percent of the national gross domestic product (Morrison, Melton, 2017). Farms also account for roughly 1.4 percent of employment in the United States (Morrison, Melton, 2017). While these numbers may seem quite small on the national level, on a local level they are quite significant. Although farming and goods production are an important part of rural economics, manufacturing actually fills a bigger role. Manufacturing jobs make up 15 percent of earnings in rural areas (Kusmin, 2017). While goods production and manufacturing make up a large chunk of rural economies, tourism is also a very important industry in rural areas.

In rural areas where tourism is prevalent, the average earnings per person is eight percent higher than in regions where tourism is not prevalent (Reeder, Brown, 2005). However, tourism does not just drive up earnings in an area, it also increases the amount of employment in a region. In the 1990s "recreation counties, on average, had more than double the rate of employment growth of other rural areas" (Reeder, Brown, 2005). Tourism in rural areas is not just helping the local population improve economically, it is also helping local businesses. Agricultural tourism is very prevalent in rural Michigan. Agricultural tourism includes activities such as U-pick fruits and corn mazes (Veeck, Hallett, Veeck, 2016). Agricultural tourism is helping rural agricultural businesses by "providing the additional income needed to compensate for the fluctuations in wholesale agricultural prices" (Veeck, Hallett, Veeck, 2016). One area in Massachusetts where tourism is a sizable economic contribution is Berkshire and Franklin counties.

Berkshire and Franklin counties are located on the western edge of Massachusetts and are a predominately forested rural area. These forests prove to be an important resource for this area as every year millions of tourists flock to this region to enjoy the fall foliage as well as the

region's general beautiful and peaceful atmosphere. This region is rich in both natural beauty and resources such a lumber.

In Berkshire and Franklin counties, twenty one towns have come together to form an economic partnership with the goals of improving both the environmental and the economic sustainability or the region known as The Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership. The member towns of this partnership comprise roughly of 345,450 acres (Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership, 2016). Located within these acres are a variety of things and they are as follows:

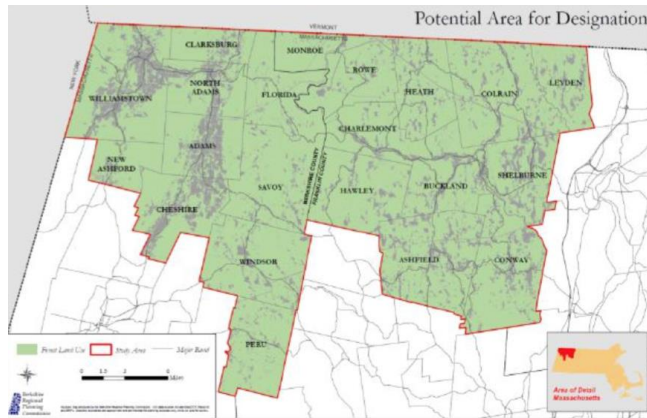


Figure 1: Map of twenty one town Region (i.e. Berkshire and Franklin county) (Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership, 2016)

- The Deerfield and Hoosic Rivers run through this region. The banks of these rivers are occupied by many homes, farms and stretches of wilderness.
- The twenty one town region provides a vast array of outdoor recreational activities for visitors such as Whitewater rafting and hiking.
- Three long-distance hiking trails located in this region.
 - One trail is the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, which sees 2-3 million visitors on its various stretches from Georgia to Maine each year (Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership, 2016).
 - Taconic Crest Trail that extends from U.S. Route 20 in Hancock, MA. And extends to the border of New York.

The economies of Berkshire and Franklin counties have benefited from tourism. In 2012, approximately 2.6 million people visited Berkshire and Franklin counties and spent \$413 million. Tourism created 3,507 jobs and total payroll of \$96 million (Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership, 2016). As reported by Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism, 88 percent all of visitors visited Berkshire and Franklin counties for scenic beauty, and 42 percent have engaged in some kind of natural resource-based activity. Tourism is beneficial for the region economically because it brings in outside dollars that can ultimately help boost local small businesses. Although tourism is a driving economic force in the region, the economies of Berkshire and Franklin Counties need to expand in order to be sustainable

2.2 How Berkshire and Franklin Counties are Threatened

The lack of rural economic development is the largest threat at hand in Berkshire, and Franklin counties. The main symptom that stems from this issue is population decrease. “Berkshire County’s population has been declining since 1970, but the region is currently losing more people at a higher rate than any other area of Massachusetts, according to U.S. Census Bureau figures” (Dobrowolski, 2016). The biggest population decrease in the counties occurred in the early twenty first century. The population in the twenty one Town region of the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership declined by 4.9 percent between 2000 and 2010 (Mohawk Trail

Woodlands Partnership, 2016). The population is also projected to continue to decline by another 4.5 percent by 2030. Another large factor that is taking a toll on the region is the high median population age for the residents. “16 of the twenty one towns have a median population age over 45” (Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership, 2016). A decreasing population and a high median age have both have adverse effects on the local economy. Currently plans in place to try to rectify this suffering economy however they are untested. The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Executive Director Nathaniel W. Karns even said, “The efforts that are going on to try to reverse that (decline) are just really in their beginning stages. When you have a big ship, it takes a while to get the thing turning in a different direction. This is one of those big ship issues”(Dobrowolski, 2016)

Sector	2001	2007	2013	2001 – 2013 Change	2001 – 2013 % Change
Number of Establishments					
Wood Product Manufacturing	28	15	12	-16	-57%
Paper Manufacturing	21	18	10	-11	-52%
Total	49	33	22	-27	-55%
Average Monthly Employment					
Wood Product Manufacturing	297	246	150	-147	-49%
Paper Manufacturing	2,284	1,591	1,267	-1,017	-45%
Total	2,581	1,837	1,417	-1,164	-45%

Table 1: 2001, 2007, and 2013 Number of Establishments and Average Monthly Employment, Berkshire and Franklin Counties (Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership, 2016)

The main businesses in the twenty one town region are logging, wood product, and paper manufacturing. A large percentage of employment in the region come from these industries. Wood Product Manufacturing has shrunk by 57 percent from 2001 to 2013.

During this same time period paper manufacturing

shrunk by 52 percent. Employment in both wood product manufacturing and paper manufacturing fell by 49 percent and 45 percent respectively during this time (Figure 2). These decreases in employment and manufacturing companies are part of the cause of the drop in the region’s population. Local businesses are continuing to struggle, employment will continue to decrease and perpetuate the economic problems (Pettinger, 2016). Due to these economic problems, the region is currently relying on property taxes for large portions of its revenue.

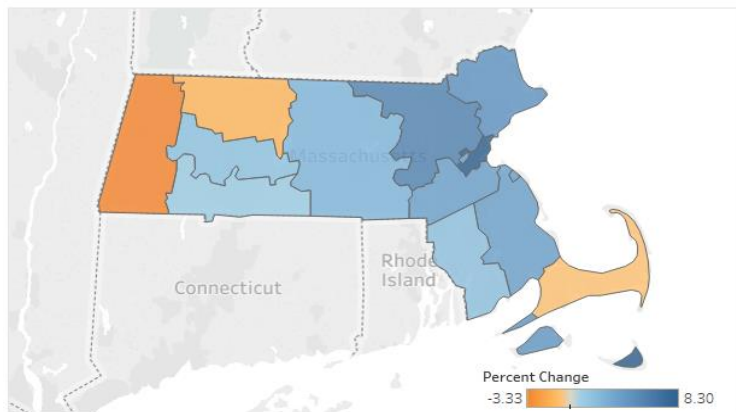
Changing tourism trends are also hurting this region. In the past five years, tourism has seen some big changes. Large numbers of travelers have lost interest in cookie cutter restaurants, lodging, and attractions (Steele, 2017). According to the U.S. Department of Commerce (1997), most international visitors only stay in urban area like New York City, Boston, or Los Angeles (Gartner, 2004). Consequently, in 2015, 2.6 million people visited Berkshire and Franklin counties with a total payroll of \$413 million (Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership, 2016) as opposed to approximately 35 million visitors with \$2.6 billion payroll in Boston (Chesto, 2015). These economic issues are not just localized in both Berkshire and Franklin Counties, they are found in other rural areas.

2.3 Threats to Small Rural Town Economies

County	2000	2010	Change	% Change
Dukes	14,987	16,535	1,548	10.3
Nantucket	9,520	10,172	652	6.8
Worcester	750,963	798,552	47,589	6.3
Plymouth	472,822	494,919	22,097	4.7
Suffolk	689,807	722,023	32,216	4.7
Hampshire	152,251	158,080	5,829	3.8
Norfolk	650,308	670,850	20,542	3.2
Essex	723,419	743,159	19,740	2.7
Middlesex	1,465,396	1,503,085	37,689	2.6
Bristol	534,678	548,285	13,607	2.5
Hampden	456,228	463,490	7,262	1.6
Franklin	71,535	71,372	-163	-0.2
Berkshire	134,963	131,219	-3,734	-2.8
Barnstable	222,230	215,888	-6,342	-2.9
Total	6,349,097	6,547,629	198,532	3.10%

Table 2: Chart of population increase and decrease in counties of Massachusetts (U.S. Census)

Population change, 2010-16



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division | Graphic by Greg Saulmon / The Republican

Figure 2: Map displaying population decreases in the counties (Schoenberg, 2017)

that it is difficult to maintain school systems. Although it doesn't necessarily lead to schools being shut down, a decreasing population does result in shrinking class sizes and higher per-pupil costs, which lead to staff or program cuts (Schoenberg, 2017). Problems in rural areas, such as an ageing and decreasing population, negatively affect the workforce in rural areas. However, a small work force is not the only challenge that rural businesses face.

All sizes of businesses in rural areas face many challenges. One challenge is the ways in which they generate income. Most of the income generated in rural areas is based on resource extraction jobs. This is becoming a very large challenge for these areas as, "jobs are declining and incomes are eroding in rural areas that depend on natural resource-based industries, such as

Another rural area in Massachusetts that is facing similar problems to those of Berkshire and Franklin counties is Barnstable County. Barnstable County is one of three counties in Massachusetts that has suffered significant population decrease. Barnstable County is located in Southeastern Massachusetts. Table 2 shows that the year-round population of Barnstable County has dropped 3 percent since 2000 (Shemkus, 2011). Population decrease hurts the community's development as a whole. Whether it be social status, economic growth, or environmental stability, it is

tough for a community to face these issues, especially when the surrounding counties have an increase in population. On Cape Cod, the Census numbers mostly tell a story of population loss, with decreases in 11 of Barnstable County's 15 towns (Shemkus, 2011). Figure 2 shows that there are currently three counties suffering from population decrease in Massachusetts. However, population decrease is not the only population related factor hurting rural economies. An overall ageing population can have very serious negative effects on rural areas (Schoenberg, 2017). One of the biggest issues derived from an ageing population in rural areas is

farming and mining” (Whitener, McGranahan, 2003). In order to thrive in today’s global economy, “innovative income-generating strategies are needed to build on their assets, diversify their economies, attract new businesses, and sustain their successes” (Whitener, McGranahan, 2003). This has proven to be successful in areas such as Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire where industries have been diversified, and opportunities for recreation, retirement, and enjoyment have been created. These steps have in turn created more revenue for the affected regions (Whitener, McGranahan, 2003).

Another challenge faced by rural businesses is businesses marketability. Due to their location, small rural businesses face complex issues such as market size, geographic isolation, and lack of skilled labor (Ring, Pedro, Chrisman, 2010). To overcome these challenges, business networks are necessary. Business networks are defined as “mutually beneficial relational contracts between two or more legally independent firms that involve the sharing or exchange of resources” (Ring, Pedro, Chrisman, 2010). These business networks are known for having “myriad opportunities for overcoming the scale and capability limits inherent in rural enterprises” (Ring, Pedro, Chrisman, 2010). Without these networks, businesses struggle to develop new ideas and expand. Rural areas without inclusive social infrastructure, such as roadways to transport goods, make it difficult for businesses to build networks with urban areas (Ring, Pedro, Chrisman, 2010). Businesses who are incapable of networking often face difficulties with growth and production.

Overall, businesses in rural areas face major challenges such as income generation, and marketability. These problems arise from their geographic location, and lack of inclusive infrastructure. Both of these issues can be seen in Berkshire, and Franklin counties. Solutions to these issues will allow for more money to be in local circulation, which will result in a positive impact on the economy.

2.4 Strategies to Mitigate Threats to Rural Economies

There are areas that have already had more success than Berkshire and Franklin counties with developing local forestry businesses. Vermont is one such example. The landscape of Vermont is very similar to that of the twenty one town region. Vermont’s forests cover 4,591,281 acres of land. That’s 78 percent of the State, a level which has stayed steady since the 1980s. The northern hardwood mix of beech, birch, and maple dominates Vermont’s forests, accounting for 71 percent of the forest cover (Sinclair, Anderson, DeGeus, Frederick, & Long, 2013). Vermont’s forest based and tourism business interests are also very similar to that of Berkshire and Franklin counties which include forest-based manufacturing as well as forest-related recreation and tourism (Sinclair, Anderson, DeGeus, Frederick, & Long, 2013). Vermont is also comparable in that it has relatively little public land. The Green Mountain National Forest, and other publicly owned land only account for 19 percent of the forest. More than 80 percent of the forest is privately owned (Sinclair, Anderson, DeGeus, Frederick, & Long, 2013). In many ways, Vermont is a prime example

Similar to that of Vermont, the promotion of forestry-related manufacturing is one of the main frameworks of The Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership. The making of furniture, moldings, turnings, and similar products employs nearly 1,600 Vermont workers (Sinclair, Anderson, DeGeus, Frederick, & Long, 2013). Annual economic output, in the form of sales or value of shipments for the secondary wood products sector, is approximately \$143 million in Vermont (Sinclair, Anderson, DeGeus, Frederick, & Long, 2013). This is very useful for Berkshire and Franklin counties as its paper manufacturing jobs were in decline from 2001 to

2013 (Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership, 2016). Christmas tree and maple syrup production are economic opportunities that Berkshire and Franklin counties currently do not utilize to their full potential. Lumber manufacturing process generally follows eight steps and often requires skilled laborers. However, Christmas tree and maple syrup production generally requires a low skilled work force. In 2012, Christmas tree and maple syrup industries created \$29 million in revenue and created more than 500 jobs (Sinclair, Anderson, DeGeus, Frederick, & Long, 2013). By implementing new forest based businesses along with supporting current businesses through programs such as North East State Foresters Association (NEFA), Berkshire and Franklin counties' economies will benefit greatly. The Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership has created a business plan for the region that it hopes will bring about more economic sustainability to the region. By looking at the programs previously mentioned, the partnership can benefit greatly with a new understanding of operating programs.

2.5 Seven Programs Proposed by the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership

The Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership is a committee that was established in 2013 that was created to assess the economy of Berkshire and Franklin Counties. The partnership contains twenty one towns within it and has a representative from each town who attends multiple meetings a year. In the past four years, this partnership has come up with a business plan that proposes seven programs that they would like to get funding for to help the region. These seven programs are:

- A Forestry Center in a prominent location to educate visitors about forests and sustainable forestry, and to be a center for public education about the ecological services forests provide, and research and development on sustainable forestry and climate change. It would also provide support for tourism businesses as a visitor center and support for marketing efforts by providing a location to showcase local forest products.
- Technical assistance to businesses with planning and marketing.
- A grant program for forest landowners to support sustainable forestry practices.
- A revolving low-interest loan fund for businesses.
- A marketing program to promote natural resource based tourism in the region.
- A marketing campaign for locally-produced wood products.
- Grants to towns for infrastructure or municipal service to support tourism.

2.6 Summary

Overall, Berkshire and Franklin counties, as well as other rural areas, are suffering from a mirage of issues related to both population decrease and an aging population. Businesses in rural areas need to network to be economically sustainable and often need assistance from programs like that of the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership. Wood and tourism businesses are an important part of the economies of Berkshire and Franklin counties. With the help of the Mohawk Trail Woodlands partnership these businesses have an opportunity to be able to become more economically sustainable.

Chapter 3: Course of Action

The goal of our project was to evaluate the current seven programs established by the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership that aim to revitalize wood and tourism related businesses in Berkshire and Franklin counties. In order to accomplish this goal, the following objectives were completed:

Objective #1: Determine the economic challenges that forest and tourism based businesses are facing as well as what they have been successful on and their opinions on the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership's seven proposed programs.

Objective #2: Determine the depth of the differing types of wood and tourism businesses in the region.

Objective #3: Assess programs similar to the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership's business plan to see what are the factors and programmatic features, that have enabled them to be successful, and not so successful and how they could be beneficial in Berkshire and Franklin counties.

Completing these objectives helped us provide the EEA and the MTWP with the following deliverables:

1. Five business profiles each focusing on a challenge that each business overcame.
2. An inventory of wood and tourism businesses in the twenty one town region.
3. A review of programs that can serve as models for the MTWP.

Objective #1. Determine the economic challenges that forest and tourism based businesses are facing, what they have been successful on, and their opinions on the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership's seven proposed programs.

To develop an understanding of what challenges businesses in the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership face as well as their opinions of the seven proposed programs of the partnership, five different businesses were interviewed. The five businesses interviewed were Zoar Outdoor, Hall Tavern Farms, Stump Sprouts, Red Rose Motel, and Kuklinski Woodworking. These businesses were selected as they are a diverse spread of the types of wood and tourism businesses in the region as they range from outdoor recreational businesses to motels and woodworking places. A comprehensive list of questions was developed for the interviews (See appendix A). These questions also included the seven proposed programs of the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership. Each business owner was asked the same questions during their respective interviews. If the interviewee was willing, the audio from the interview was recorded to later review. The information gained from these interviews was used to create a business profile for each business. These profiles (see appendix B) are stories about the businesses interviewed. Each profile focuses on a specific challenge the business has overcome.

Objective #2: Determine the depth of the differing types of wood and tourism businesses in the region.

Although the five businesses interviewed represented a diverse spread of businesses in the region, more data needed to be collected on the different types of wood and tourism businesses present there. An inventory of wood and tourism in the region was created. The business inventory itself (see appendix C) is a spreadsheet. The first column of the spreadsheet is the category that the business falls under, either wood or tourism, and also what the business actually does. The names of businesses along with their contact information and their websites, if they have them, are also included on the inventory.

The data for the businesses added to the inventory was collected in several different ways. The first few businesses were collected by driving down route 2 along with the main roads of some of the partnership towns to see what wood and tourism businesses were present. The bulk of businesses added to the inventory were collected via web searches using Google. Specific types of wood and tourism businesses were searched during this phase of collecting data. The last method that was used to add different types of businesses to the inventory was to use online marketplaces such as EBay, Etsy, and Craigslist. Using these marketplaces, the search region was limited to the twenty one towns of the partnership and various wood products and wood art were searched. The EEA has expressed interest in using the business inventory to send either a mail or email survey to many businesses on their opinions of the seven proposed programs of the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership.

Objective #3: Assess programs similar to the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership's to identify factors and programmatic features that have enabled them to be successful and how they could be beneficial in Berkshire and Franklin counties.

Identifying programs that will provide significant help to local forest and tourism businesses is a key part of our project. We began this objective by determining organizations and programs that help supply small rural businesses with the money and training they need to be more economically sustainable. We did this by examining programs that already exist such as the North East State Foresters Association (NEFA), and the Northern Forest Center (NFC). With the information gathered about these programs through research we were able to compare more specific details. These details included; the size of the program compared to the area it benefits, the type of area the program works in, and also what exactly the program does for the businesses. We then compared these details to Berkshire and Franklin counties. We looked for programs that work specifically with areas similar to Berkshire and Franklin counties with rural businesses. Overall, completing this objective gave us the information needed to provide suggestions to the EEA for certain programs to be implemented into Berkshire and Franklin counties.

Chapter 4: What We Discovered

In this Chapter, we discuss what challenges businesses in the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership are facing as well as their opinions on the partnership's seven proposed programs. Five businesses, Zoar Outdoor, Hall Tavern Farms, Stump Sprouts, Red Rose Motel, and Kuklinski Woodworking were interviewed. The owners of these businesses were all asked the same interview questions which ranged from the general history of the businesses to its current economic state and future plans and then finally on to the business owner's opinions of the seven proposed programs of the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership. The responses to these questions were used to create profiles for each business that features a unique challenge that they all overcame. More information on these businesses can be found in appendix B. When the information gained from the interviews was analyzed, ten key points and similarities were noticed.

Table 3: Overview of Findings

<i>Finding</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
Businesses face several barriers to creating an effective social media and marketing presence.	Due to either a lack of time or technological understanding, several of the five businesses interviewed have little marketing or social media presence.
The proposed plan for creating a forestry center to educate visitors has had mixed to mostly negative reviews.	Some businesses like the forestry center while others did not. They all liked the idea of it being a virtual place before it possibly becomes a physical one.
Poor internet speed	Very slow internet speed is hurting small businesses as well as driving away some tourists who would otherwise stay overnight at a motel.
The wood pellet provision in the partnership's plan is drawing attention away from helpful plans.	More attention should be put on the good economic plans the partnership is proposing and not on the wood pellet provision.
Positive reactions to the proposed grant program	The partnership's proposed programs for grants and loans for rural wood and tourism businesses for various needs were all heavily liked by all of the businesses interviewed.
Lack of distribution for small woodworking businesses	Small woodworking businesses are not able to distribute their products as much as they should and are not doing as well as they could.
Several family run businesses are concerned with what will happen to their businesses after they retire.	The aging population in the region is creating a troubling figure of family businesses that are unclear as to what will happen when the owner retires.
Concern that government regulations may hamper businesses.	Fear that government regulations could interfere with business are present in this region. However, government financial assistance is well received.

4.1 Challenges and opportunities of the programs

Finding 1: The proposed plan for creating a forestry center to educate visitors has had mixed to mostly negative reviews.

Out of all of these planned programs, the creation of a forestry center generated the most differing opinions. The owners of both Zoar Outdoor and the Red Rose Inn opposed the creation of the forestry center. They expressed that it would not help the region nor would visitors want to go to it. However, the owners of Hall Tavern Farms and Stump Sprouts has a slightly differing opinion to that of Zoar Outdoor and the Red Rose Inn. They had liked the idea of educating visitor about sustainable forestry practices as well as the ecological benefits that forests provide. They also stated that a physical location may not be the best way to convey this information tourists in the region. Jay Healy in particular stressed this idea that it did not have to be a physical building in the twenty one town region also long as the ideas behind it were presented. Both Jay Healy and Tom Kuklinski mentioned the fact that more people need to be educated on the opportunities of the area. They suggested using a regional fair as possible way to do this. The common theme of the five businesses interviewed is that the forestry center should not be the partnership's first priority.

Finding 2: The wood pellet provision in the Partnership's plan is drawing attention away from other helpful proposals of the Partnership.

One provision of the partnership's plan, creating a wood pellet plant in the region, has been met with a small amount of opposition in the area. This plan would use sustainable forestry practices and low quality wood for pellets. Nonetheless, a few people oppose it. Jay Healy made an interesting point in his interview stating that "the wood pellet provision is drawing a lot of attention away from the good programs of the partnership". Although switching heating systems is not included in the partnership's plans, some businesses are concerned that they cannot afford to change their heating systems. Both the Red Rose Motel and Stump Sprouts have indicated that they currently cannot afford to change their heating systems over to a wood pellet system. This negative attention to the partnership's proposal is drawing attention away from the much-needed economic programs that they plan to implement.

Finding 3: The proposed grant programs of the partnership were all well received.

A large recurring theme with the five businesses interviewed was that when they first started they had little capital. Four out of the five businesses, Zoar Outdoor, Hall Tavern Farms, Stump Sprouts, and the Red Rose Motel, needed loans at some point in the past. Starting businesses with little capital is particularly challenging as obtaining loans is very challenging. One of the partnership's seven proposed programs is the creation of a revolving low-interest loan fund for forestry and tourism businesses to upgrade facilities and equipment and for new product development. This program has been met with an overwhelmingly positive response from all five of the businesses interviewed. They all viewed this as a great program that will be useful to many struggling small businesses across the twenty one town partnership that have little capital.

4.2 Challenges that the programs missed

Finding 4: Businesses face several barriers to creating an effective social media and marketing presence.

The marketing and social media presence of the five businesses interviewed varied greatly. However, there was a noticeable trend seen in the marketing efforts of these five businesses. Three specific businesses, Hall Tavern Farms, Stump Sprouts, and Kuklinski Woodworking, all have very little to no social media or marketing presence at all. There were several reasons given by these three businesses as to why this is a problem for them. The main repeated theme with these businesses is that the owners of these businesses typically do not have the time to run their own social media pages and marketing websites. In the case of Jay Healy, the owner and operator of Hall Tavern Farms, he expressed multiple times during his interview that he “could not remember his passwords”. Along with Jay, both Lloyd Crawford, the owner of Stump Sprouts, and Tom Kuklinski, the owner of Kuklinski Woodworking, expressed that they did not have the time to manage the social media accounts for their businesses. Jay in specific has showed interest in the possibility of hiring someone to manage his social media accounts. Besides social media, these three businesses do very little for marketing. Again, the main problem here seems to be that the owners does not have the time to do it. These three businesses are each run by only one or two people. Each of these businesses, with the exception of Stump Sprouts, wants to increase their marketing capabilities. This lack of time to conduct marketing and social media has seen these businesses not live up to their full potential. Small businesses in rural North Carolina were having very similar marketing problems to that of these five businesses. The Southern Appalachian Work Group (SAWG) implemented a program that hired several marketing specialists to help drawn in new customers. This program also hired locals who were out of work to help with marketing (Land of Sky Regional Council, 2008). The Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership could benefit from similar plans to that of the Southern Appalachian Work Group.

Finding 5: The lack of high quality internet access is a barrier to business success.

Probably one of the biggest complaints of the five businesses interviewed has been the current state of the internet infrastructure in the area. Riana Pizzi, one of the three operators of the Red Rose Motel, has expressed significant concern with the current shape of the internet infrastructure. The Red Rose Motel offers free Wi-Fi to visitors; however, Riana stated that the speed of the Wi-Fi is not very good. Similarly, Tom Kuklinski stated that was negatively affecting both his business and the entire region. Slow internet speed has kept Tom from advertising more of his products online to customers that are outside of the twenty one town region. Slow internet speed is significantly harming this region. Internet access in rural areas increases the economic opportunities as well as reduces population decrease from our migration (LaRose, Gregg, Strover, Straubhaar, Carpenter, 2007).

Finding 6: The lack of distribution for small woodworking businesses is causing a smaller customer base.

One aspect of running a business that is almost equally as important as marketing is distribution. Tom Kuklinski of Kuklinski Woodworking has the largest amount of trouble with this. Tom has a hard time distributing some of his larger wood creations, such as large tables or desks, due to the packaging that is needed to do so. This distribution problem can adversely affect a business by reducing the available clientele to a localized area. Tom also has a problem with showing some of the very unique work he has done. Tom has completed woodworking projects at the White House yet he does not mention this on his website. Tom's business is not as well-known as it could be because he has not capitalized off of his work at the White House.

Another reason why woodworking businesses are having trouble with their distribution is because of their location and inability to be contacted. As evidenced by the business inventory (Appendix C) there are a sizable amount of businesses that are not along the main roads of town. There are even more businesses that do not even have a website. Mills and Woodworking businesses that are off of main roads and hard to get in contact with need to form a strong collective to effectively market themselves.

Finding 7: Two family run businesses are concerned with what will happen to their businesses after they retire.

A smaller, often overlooked, problem of small businesses is succession. What will be happening to a small business after the owner retires. This is a large concern of both Lloyd Crawford of Stump Sprouts and Jay Healy of Hall Tavern Farms. Currently, they have no succession plans and this uncertainty of what will happen to what they have created is troubling to them. Their long-term goals for their businesses may not be reached if a solution to this problem is not presented to them. Because the region is mostly comprised of small family owned businesses and has an ageing population, this is a problem that Lloyd and Jay are not facing alone.

Finding 8: There are concerns that government regulations may hamper businesses due to preexisting beliefs.

Distrust in new government regulations is present in the businesses of this twenty one town region. This is the Case for Lloyd Crawford. Several times during his interview, he expressed concern that increased government regulations could harm his business by increasing the amount of paperwork he would need to complete. This is a real concern of businesses that are run by one or two people who do not have very much spare time for more work. However, this is the opinion of only one of the businesses that were interviewed. Although he is concerned about the possibility of government regulation hampering his business, Lloyd is in favor of the proposed programs of the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership.

Chapter 5: Recommendations and Conclusion

By heavily considering both the successes and challenges faced by wood product and tourism based businesses in Berkshire and Franklin counties, we have proposed recommendations that the EEA and the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership should consider while pursuing the implementation of their business plan.

The following table lists our recommendations, and a summary of each one. Following the table are descriptions for each recommendation that include what our sponsor and the partnership should do, and why.

Table 4: Overview of Recommendations

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Description</i>
The MTWP should pursue a virtual forestry center that includes information about the region, and also provides business owners with a place to market their own business.	A virtual forestry center will provide people from all over the world with information on what the region has to offer and also serve as a marketing tool for local businesses. Due to people becoming more and more dependent on technology, the information on the region will be very easy to find for people looking to visit. It will also allow the MTWP and the state to form a more concrete plan on building the actual forestry center.
The MTWP should emphasize the marketing opportunities available to businesses that are in need of help.	Contracting outside the region is a major marketing opportunity for wood and tourism businesses in this region due to lack of internet. After learning about the success, the Red Rose Motel has had since investing in a marketing company called Main Street Hub out of Austin Texas, lack of Internet no longer becomes a concern. These opportunities need to become known and available for wood product and tourism-based businesses in the area.
The MTWP should consider hiring local and/or regional marketing specialists in the area to help connect local producers to local and regional consumers.	As stated in finding four, marketing is a major issue in the region and the MTWP aims to help the issue in two of their seven programs. One specifically focuses on technical assistance catered to specific businesses. We recommend hiring local or regional marketing specialists that will work alongside business owners of the area to help connect businesses with the local consumers. This will also provide jobs to the area.
The MTWP should promote a regional fair that allows local artisans, woodworkers, and other local business owners to sell and advertise their products.	The MTWP wants to use the forestry center as a way to promote the area. The business owners we interviewed like the idea, but believed there were better ways to promote the area. We recommend a regional fair, which will get people out to region, and also provide another form of marketing for local businesses.
The MTWP should provide additional support to help the process of getting high speed Internet to the region.	Internet has been a major issue in this region, and has halted the growth of many local businesses. People are in need of constant stimulation, and will look for that capability when choosing a vacation spot. For wood product businesses, high-speed internet is a necessity for marketing, and reaching buyers. We recommend that the MTWP provide additional support to help get Internet to the area.

5.1 Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The MTWP should pursue a virtual forestry center that includes information about the region, and also provides business owners with a place to market their own business.

The first program/initiative in the MTWP's plan is the construction of a multimillion-dollar forestry center. While a forestry center would provide a great welcome to guests all over the world that visit the region, more time and a more concrete plan is necessary as alluded to in finding one. We recommend a virtual forestry center be created instead of a real one for the time being. The online forestry center will be available to people through one simple online search. They will learn about the history of the area, what the area offers, and all the accommodations they can find when visiting. It will also serve as a marketing platform for local businesses. This should be a major priority for the MTWP due to many businesses expressing the concern that people simply do not know what is in the region. Educating people on what the area has to offer is the first step in growing tourism.

In order for this to be accomplished we recommend that the MTWP dedicate a specific person or team to create the website. This team can be made up of members of the partnership, or outside specialists. Using funding that is received when legislation is passed, the website can be created. Creating this website will save the partnership both time, and significant funding which will open up space to start implementing the other six programs.

Recommendation 2: The MTWP should emphasize the marketing opportunities available to businesses that are in need of help.

Marketing, as discussed in finding four, was the most common issue that wood product and tourism based businesses expressed during the interviews that were conducted. For many foresters, their only form of marketing is through "word of mouth." While this will always be a form of marketing, a new age of technology has re written the process of how people find and buy products. The advancements in technology have brought forth many opportunities for businesses to make a name for themselves. Therefore, we recommend that the MTWP make the opportunities for marketing help more available to local businesses. For example, Main Street Hub will take care of every social media account a business would like to be on, hold photo-shoots for the business, and most importantly allow the business owner to focus more on the business itself. If businesses had the opportunity to receive loans, and grants in order to invest in a program such as Main Street Hub, they would no longer have the extra hassle of taking care of their marketing on top of their business itself.

For this recommendation to be successful, the MTWP must determine the opportunities that are available in terms of marketing. Once those are determined, using our inventory of the local wood product and tourism based businesses, an email or voice recording can be sent to all the businesses on the list. Once businesses learn about the possible marketing opportunities, they can then pursue them on their own, possible for Jay Healy, or reach out to the partnership for a possible loan or grant.

Recommendation 3: The MTWP should consider hiring local and/or regional marketing specialists in the area to help connect local producers to local and regional consumers.

As indicated by finding four, connecting local producers to local consumers is a large issue for this region. While many people are unaware of what is in the region, the businesses also make it very difficult to be discovered. We recommend that the MTWP consider hiring marketing specialists that represent towns, or one or two specialists that represent the region. These specialists will provide technical assistance to businesses, MTWP plan number two, that will revolve around their marketing. They will more importantly find consumers directly in the local area, and also outside the local area that are interested in buying whatever products are being sold. These specialists would provide the most assistance for wood product based businesses, but could also be very helpful for tourism businesses in need of marketing help.

Once legislation is passed and funding is received, marketing specialists can be hired. Alongside these specialists several business owners can start working part time. Since they have already been working in the wood product industry, they should be aware of the various niches that go along with the job. That information will allow the marketing specialists to target the correct consumers. The MTWP must decide on the marketing specialists, and also who is available/looking to work part time, that know the wood product industry very well. This opportunity, depending on its success, could provide several part-time jobs to the region.

Recommendation 4: The MTWP should promote a regional fair that allows local artisans, woodworkers, and other local business owners to sell and advertise their products.

Regional fairs are used all over Western Massachusetts as a way to promote the region itself, and also the people and businesses of the area. With a region that is struggling economically, mainly due to lack of marketing, a regional fair would be a great opportunity for the towns of the MTWP, as stated in finding one by both Tom Kuklinski and Jay Healy. The regional fair would have any business from farming to restaurants, and they would have an opportunity to promote the products they sell. This would help businesses get their names out there, and also provide people with a way to find out what the region offers. So, based on our findings from the businesses we interviewed and the concern that people are unaware of what the region has to offer, we recommend that a regional fair be held in one of the towns in the partnership.

The location for the fair would be the first priority. It should be in an easy place to reach for visitors coming from outside the region. The location can be on the property of one of the members of the partnership, or someone with a large piece of land. Funding for the event would be necessary in order to provide tents and tables for local businesses displaying their work, and also other parts of the fair that may be put in, for example, having live music or other performances. This event would also need to be marketed possibly on the virtual forestry center site, or its own personal site. Finally, local businesses would need to be contacted to see who would attend, which could once again be done using the inventory we have created.

Recommendation 5: The MTWP should provide additional support to help the process of getting high speed Internet to the region.

As shown in finding five, the lack of high speed Internet in the region is a major concern. Riana Pizzi from the Red Rose Motel in Charlemont, MA believed that people nowadays need constant stimulation wherever they go. Since Berkshire, and Franklin counties lack a strong Internet connection, many people overlook them as a choice to visit. Besides being unattractive

for people visiting the area, the lack of Internet also hinders businesses. Businesses are incapable of keeping up with advancing technology, which decreases their marketing presences. Do to the overwhelming concern about the weak Internet connection, we recommend that the MTWP provide additional support to those advocating for high speed Internet in the area.

For the past ten years, the state has made efforts to get broadband Internet to the region. Almost \$90 million was spent on stringing fiber-optic lines through the towns. After getting Internet to town halls, schools, and other public buildings, the “middle mile,” there was a lack of funding left to get high-speed Internet to the “last mile.” There are still efforts to get Internet to the “last mile,” but the major issue now holding the process back is that towns can’t agree on which path they would like to take (Parnass, LeBoeuf, 2017). This is where Bob O’Connor, and the MTWP can provide their support. They can do through funding, but most importantly, in the MTWP meetings having each town representative decide what they would like to see done.

5.2 Deliverables

The recommendations we have proposed will provide assistance to the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership. Our recommendations are based on five interviews we conducted that we believed would be representative of the other wood product and tourism based businesses in the area. For a better, and more concrete understanding, we believe the MTWP should continue following our methodology to understand the needs and challenges of other local businesses. To help the MTWP in continuing our methodology we have provided them with the following deliverables.

Five business profiles each focusing on a major issue of the region and what that certain business did to overcome that challenge (see table in Appendix B for detailed descriptions of each profile and the profiles themselves). These will be beneficial for not only the MTWP, but also the local businesses struggling with similar issues (The second deliverable is a business inventory. The inventory consists of every wood and tourism based business in the region that we could find. It includes their address, and contact information. If the MTWP choose to continue our methodology, the business inventory will serve as a great starting point for a possible phone survey (Appendix C). The final deliverable we have provided is a table of similar programs. This table includes the name of the program, description, similarities/programs being proposed, and differences. This will be beneficial to the MTWP because it will show them what these programs have done and how successful they have been (Appendix D).

5.3 Conclusion

Berkshire and Franklin counties are just two examples that represent a wide range of struggling rural areas in the world due to an increase in urbanization. The Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership has been developed in an effort to increase forest-based economic development in twenty one towns in northern Berkshire county, and Western Franklin county. In order to do this, they have voted on seven programs that would be implemented in the area once legislation is passed and the funding is received. For our project, we focused on 5 major businesses in the area that we believed would represent the other wood product and tourism-based businesses in the region. Through interviews, each business was asked questions ranging from their background, to their future plans, and also their views on the seven programs looking

to be brought to the region. Using their responses, we determined which programs would be the most beneficial, and other ideas the partnership had not thought about.

Based on the responses we got from the 5 businesses, we determined that many of the programs focused on the biggest concerns of the businesses. However, a forestry center, which was one of the major priorities of the partnership, received less enthusiastic responses. The idea of what the forestry center would provide received interest, but the physical location did not. That being said we recommended that the partnership wait for the right time to construct a forestry center, and for the time being focus on a virtual forestry center, and the other six programs. Outside the seven programs we recommended that they focus more on getting high speed Internet to the area, promote the area by hosting a regional fair, and hiring local or regional marketing specialist. After determining the needs of wood product and tourism based businesses in this region need most importantly, we believe the partnership and the EEA are closer to making a significant impact on a rural region in desperate need of economic stimulation.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Questions

Questions for 2-hour interview:

- When was the business established? How did it begin/ were there any major challenges when starting?
- Was there an end goal in mind when first starting?
- What is the market niche for your business?
- Has it grown since first opening?
- How many people do you employ?
- What are your clientele (or markets for your products for forestry businesses)?
 - locals/tourists?
- Are you pleased with where your business is at economically?
 - If no, what do you think is holding your business back?
- Are you pleased with the geographic area you are in? Why do you believe this area has been more successful/less successful than surrounding areas?
- What is your social media presence?
 - If none, have you made other efforts to attract more business?
 - What types of marketing have you used in the past if any?
 - If other types of marketing were used...was there an increase in business after such techniques?
 - If no marketing was used why not?
- What is your competition if any?
 - If there is competition, how are you trying to compete?
- Are there any resources/attractions/other businesses nearby that are helping your business?
- Are there factors that you feel are detracting from your business? Describe them.
- Has your business needed any loans?
 - If so was the effect positive or negative?
- Would technical assistance tailored to your type of business from experts be useful to your business?

(TOURISM BUSINESSES SPECIFICALLY)

- What are your goals for each season?
 - Which season/seasons do you receive the most business?
 - When do you get the least business (dead times)?
 - Have you made any changes to help stimulate those dead times/seasons? Have these changes been effective?

(BACK TO ALL)

- Where do you see your business in the next 5 years?
 - Do you plan on making any major changes to help grow?

- What are the challenges you face in implementing those changes?
- What type of program/programs might help your business be more successful?
- Are you aware of the MTWP and their goals?
 - If so are you concerned with any elements of the project?
 - Do you feel it would be beneficial for your business?
- How useful would the following programs, proposed for the Mohawk Trail Woodland Partnership be for your business?
 - A Forestry Center in a prominent location to educate visitors about forests and sustainable forestry and to be a center for public education about the ecological services forests provide and research and development on sustainable forestry and climate change. It would also provide support for tourism businesses as a visitor center and support for marketing efforts by providing a location to showcase local forest products.
 - Technical assistance to forestry and tourism businesses with business planning and marketing
 - A grant program for forest landowners to support sustainable forestry practices on private land
 - A revolving low-interest loan fund for forestry and tourism businesses to upgrade facilities/equipment and for new product development
 - A marketing program to promote natural resource based tourism in the region
 - A marketing campaign for locally-produced wood products, modelled on successful buy-local food campaigns
 - Grants to towns for infrastructure or municipal services to support tourism or forestry

Appendix B: Business Profile Chart

Table 5: Overview of Profiles

<i>Business</i>	<i>Theme/Challenge</i>	<i>Overcoming the Challenge</i>
Zoar Outdoor	Diversification – In order to run a successful outdoor center, the activities offered must be diversified over the years in order to cater to the different generations of guests.	Bruce has offered several activities such as cross-country skiing, and sea kayaking, but both were eventually eliminated. He has upgraded his zip lines, added lodging, diversified his staff, and wants to grow his online store.
Stump Sprouts	Sustainability – Lloyd and his wife needed a way to sustain their business since they are the only two employees, and cannot keep up with increasing business.	Hand built a lodge where guests can stay. Added solar power to lower energy costs. Limited marketing in order to keep up with all the business they get.
Kuklinski Woodworking	Distribution – Since Tom makes large specialty dining room tables, and coffee tables; he has a difficult time packaging them for distribution.	Gaining ecommerce capabilities to start selling small items such as cutting boards, and Zen meditation benches.
Giovanni’s Red Rose Motel	Marketing – Tourists have to be aware of what is in the area they are visiting and where they can safely spend the night. Most people find that information online which is why the Red Rose Motel needed to update their marketing platforms.	Invested in Main Street Hub from Austin Texas. They handle all social media accounts and other marketing platforms. They do a photo-shoot, respond to comments, post updates, etc.
Hall Tavern Farm	Competition – Struggles to find loyal consumers because other businesses offer discounts when people buy everything from them. Specialty service vs. multi-service providers	Networks with other businesses through the Chamber of Commerce in order to expand his customer base.

Appendix C: Business Inventory

Type of business	Business	Address	Phone	Email
Tourism: Art	Mass MoCA	1040 Mass MoCA Way, North Adams, MA 01247	(413) 662-2111	
Tourism: Art	Ann Brauer Quilt Studio	2 Conway Street Shelburne Falls MA 01370	413-625 8605	
Tourism: Attraction	The Bridge of Flowers	Bridge Street Shelburne Falls MA 01370		
Tourism: Biking	Thunder Mountain Bike Park	66 Thunder Mountain Rd, Charlemont, MA 01339		https://www.facebook.com/thundermountainbikepark/
Tourism: Biking	Village Bike Rentals	31 Park St, Adams, MA 01220	(413) 743-2453	villagebikerentals@gmail.com
Tourism: Biking	The Spoke	Colonial Plaza, 250 Main St, Williamstown, MA 01267	(413) 458-3456	https://www.facebook.com/spokebicycles/
Tourism: Brewery	Bright Eyes Brewing	111 Mass MoCA Way, North Adams, MA 01247	(413) 346-4460	
Tourism: Campground	country aire camp ground	1753 MA-2, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370	(413) 625-2996	
Tourism: Campground	Spring Brook Campground	Shelburne Falls, MA 01370		
Tourism: Campground	Shady Pines Campground	521 Loop Rd, Savoy, MA 01256		
Tourism: Campground	Historic Valley Campground	200 Windsor Lake Rd, North Adams, MA 01247		camping@northadams-ma.gov
Tourism: Campground	Mass Common Wealth - Environ	Mohawk Trail State Frst, Charlemont, MA 01339	(413) 339-5504	
Tourism: Campground	Mohawk Park Restaurant and Campground	559 tea street (rt 2), Charlemont, MA 01339		http://mohawkpark.net/index.php/contact-us/
Tourism: Campground	Savoy Mountain State Forest	260 Central Shaft Road Florida MA 01247	413-663-8469	
Tourism: Canoe	Salmon Falls Canoe	323 Shelburne Center Rd, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370	(413) 625-8555	salmonfallscanoe@gmail.com
Tourism: Canoe/Kayak	Berkshire Outfitters	169 Grove St, Adams, MA 01220	(413) 743-5900	
Tourism: Cross Country Skiing	Notchview Reservation	83 Old Route 9, Windsor, MA 01226	(413) 684-0148	
Tourism: Cross Country Skiing	Stump Sprouts	64 W Hill Rd, Hawley, MA 01339	(413) 339-4265	
Tourism: Festival	Williamstown Theatre Festival	P.O. Box 517 Williamstown MA 01267		
Tourism: Festival	Mohawk Trail Concerts	75 Bridge Street Shelburne Falls MA 01370	413-625-9511	
Tourism: Gift Shop	Mohawk Trading Post	874 Mohawk Trail, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370	(413) 625 2412	
Tourism: Gift Shop	Eastern Summit Gift Shop	344 Mohawk Trail, Drury MA 01343	(413) 663-6996	
Tourism: Golf	Waubeeka Golf Links	137 New Ashford Road, Williamstown MA 01267	(413) 458-8355	https://www.waubeeka.com/home
Tourism: Golf	Goodnow's Chip & Putt	1211 Mohawk Trail, Shelburne Falls, Ma 01370	(413) 625-6107	https://www.facebook.com/Goodnows-Chip-and-Putt-412440240672/
Tourism: Golf	Edge Hill Golf Course	88 Barnes Rd, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370	(413) 625-6018	
Tourism: Golf	Ashfiled golf			
Tourism: Hiking	The High Ledges Wildlife Sanctuary	Patten Road Shelburne MA	978-464-2712	centralproperties@massaudubon.org
Tourism: Hiking/Sightseeing	Natural Bridge State Park	McCauley Road , off Route 8 North North Adams MA 01247	413-663-6392 (May-Oct) 413-499-4262(Nov-Apr)	
Tourism: Hiking/Snow Mobile	Monroe State Forest	Tilda Hill Road Monroe MA 01350	413-339-5504	
Tourism: Historic Site	Quaker Meeting House	Maple Street Cemetery Adams MA 01220	413-743-1799	
Tourism: Hotels/Motels	Cozy Corner Motel	284 Sand Springs Rd, Williamstown, MA 01267	(413) 458-8006	info@cozycornermotel.com
Tourism: Hotels/Motels	Journeys End Lodge	61 Cobble View Rd, Williamstown, MA 01267	(202) 802-0880	acrlcrr@yahoo.com
Tourism: Hotels/Motels	Maple Terrace Motel	555 Main St, Williamstown, MA 01267	(413) 458-9677	stay@mapleterrace.com
Tourism: Hotels/Motels	Willows Motel	480 Main St, Williamstown, MA 01267	(413) 458-5768	http://www.willowsmotel.com/#login
Tourism: Hotels/Motels	The Williams Inn	1090 Main St, Williamstown, MA 01267	(413) 458-9371	sales@williamsinn.com
Tourism: Hotels/Motels	Rose and Goat Retreat	9 Moores Rd, North Adams, MA 01247	(413) 346-7776	rosegoat@bcn.net
Tourism: Hotels/Motels	Blue Heron Farm	Blue Heron Farm, 8 Warner Hill Road #1, Charlemont, MA 01339	(413) 339-4045	info@bluheronfarm.com
Tourism: Hotels/Motels	The Warfield House Inn	200 Warfield Rd, Charlemont, MA 01339	(413) 339-6600	http://thewarfieldhouse.com/contact-us/
Tourism: Hotels/Motels	Warfield House Inn	200 Warfield Rd, Charlemont, MA 01339	(413) 339-6600	
Tourism: Hotels/Motels	Cavalier Cottage Bed & Breakfast	236 E Oxbow Rd, Charlemont, MA 01339	(413) 625-2262	
Tourism: Hotels/Motels	Red Rose Motel	1701 MA-2, Charlemont, MA 01339	(413) 625-2666	
Tourism: Museum	Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum	14 Depot St, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370	(413) 625-9443	
Tourism: Orchard	Pine Hill Orchards in Colrain	248 Greenfield Rd, Colrain, MA 01340	(413) 624-3325	
Tourism: Orchard	Apex Orchards	225 Peckville Rd, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370	(413) 625-2744	
Tourism: Orchard	Bear Swamp Orchard	1209 Hawley Rd, Ashfield, MA 01330	(413) 625-2849	
Tourism: Outdoor Recreation	Overwatch Outpost in Charlemont	97 Main St, Charlemont, MA 01339	(413) 339-8800	
Tourism: Rafting	Crab Apple Whitewater Inc.	2056 Mohawk Trail, Charlemont, MA 01339		
Tourism: Rafting	Berkshire Whitewater	66A, Thunder Mountain Rd, Charlemont, MA 01339		
Tourism: Rafting	Zoar Outdoor	7 Main St, Charlemont, MA 01339		
Tourism: Theater	Double Edge Theatre	948 Conway Rd, Ashfield, MA 01330	(413) 628-0277	office@doubleedgetheatre.org
Wood: Antiques	Saddleback Antiques	1395 Cold Spring Road Williamstown MA 01267	413-458-5852	
Wood: Art	Salmon Falls Gallery	One Ashfield Street #9 Shelburne Falls MA 01370	413-625-9833	
Wood: Carpentry	Broadwell Carpentry Design	Williamstown, MA 01267	(413) 458-2400	jeremy@broadwellcarpentry.com
Wood: Carpentry	Harmony Woodworking	10 Harmony St, Adams, MA 01220	Stephen J. Dadak: 413-458-3837	undermountainjoiners@gmail.com
Wood: Carpentry	BANCROFT CUSTOM WOODWORKS	3223 Hancock Rd Williamstown MA 01267	Peter Gagliardi & Craig Boynton: 413-738-7001	
Wood: Carpentry	Adams Basic Storage	12 Harmony St, Adams, MA 01220	(413) 743-3837	
Wood: Carpentry	Carpentry Plus Much More	3 Oak Ln, Adams, MA 01220	(413) 743-1130	
Wood: Carpentry	Romer Tristan Carpentry and Woodworking	1207 Spruce Corner Rd, Ashfield, MA 01330	(413) 628-0040	
Wood: Carpentry	Berkshire Carpentry	708 Lanesboro Rd, Cheshire, MA 01225	(413) 743-0107	Woodmaster1@aol.com
Wood: Carpentry	Ovitt Carson Carpentry	94 Call Rd, Colrain, MA 01340	(413) 624-9620	
Wood: Carpentry	Scott Brockway	PO Box 152 Windsor MA 01270-0152	(413) 684-0417	
Wood: Carving	Dave Conklin Carving			DChainsawcarver@aol.com
Wood: Timber Harvesters	JW Excavation and Tree Service	40 Potter Rd., Charlemont	413-339-8319	
Wood: Wood Pallets	Slowski Wood Products	13 Bennett Galipo Dr Colrain, Massachusetts 01340	412-624-3415	

Wood: Ebay	47mohawk51	North Adams, Massachusetts, United States		
Wood: Etsy	DragWoodDesigns			
Wood: Etsy	TwigsAndLace			
Wood: Etsy	ImagineCNC			
Wood: Etsy	Travagos			
Wood: Etsy	IrishGirlsArt			
Wood: Flooring	Hall Tavern Farm	Burnt Hill Rd Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts 01370	(413) 625-9008	
Wood: Furniture Maker	Kuklinski Woodworking	1400 Mohawk Trail, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370	(413) 625-2872	
Wood: Harvester	Clark Farm & Logging	22 East Rd., Hawley, MA 01339	413-339-5517	
Wood: Harvester	Danek Excavating	39 Cross Rd., Rowe, MA 01367	413-339-4205	danekexcavating@aol.com
Wood: Logging and Lumber	Denison Logging and Lumber	Colrain, MA	(413) 768-9729	
Wood: Maple	Jennings Brook Farm	83 Beach Hill Road New Ashford 01237	(413) 458-8438	mjenning55@hotmail.com
Wood: Maple	Caproni Family Sugarbush	452 Walker Street North Adams 01247	(413) 663-7330	mcaproni@yahoo.com
Wood: Maple	Circle J Maple Syrup	48 Oleson Road, Florida 01247	(413) 663-7604	
Wood: Maple	Windsor Hill Sugar House	1155 Savoy Road Windsor 01270	(413) 684-1410	windsorhill5@yahoo.com
Wood: Maple	Olde Remington Farm	1301 Main Road Savoy 01256	(413) 743-8224	
Wood: Maple	Chickley Alp Farm	60 W. Hawley Road Hawley 01339	(413) 339-4313	ellen@chickley.com
Wood: Maple	Girard's Sugarhouse	57 Number Nine Road Heath 01346	(413) 337-5788	mgirard@simscoft.com
Wood: Maple	Smiths Sugaring	19 Sadoga Road Heath 01346		
Wood: Maple	Berkshire Sweet Gold Maple Farm	21 Rowe Road Heath 01346	(888) 57MAPLE	bsgfarm@peoplepc.com
Wood: Maple	Blue Heron Farm	8 Warner Hill Road Charlemont 01339	(413) 339-4045	info@blueheronfarm.com
Wood: Maple	Freeman Farm	20 Town Farm Road Heath 01346	(413) 337-4766	
Wood: Maple	South Face Farm Sugarhouse	755 Watson-Spruce Corner Road Ashfield 01330	(413) 628-3268	info@southfacefarm.com
Wood: Maple	Sunrise Farms	24 Heath Branch Road Colrain 01340	(413) 624-3210	
Wood: Maple	Hager Bros. Maple Farm	11 Merrifield Lane Colrain 01340	(413) 624-3200	
Wood: Maple	Mt. Massamet Sugarhouse	124 Ashfield Road Shelburne 01370	(413) 625-2673	rspencer@eaglebrook.org
Wood: Maple	Ridge Hill Maple Products/Sugar House	243 Graves Road Ashfield 01330	(413) 625-6086	jmrogers33@hughes.net
Wood: Maple	Cranston's Tree Farm	372 Baptist Corner Road Ashfield 01330	(413) 628-3911	
Wood: Maple	Edge Hill Sugarhouse	298 Barnes Road Ashfield 01330	(413) 625-6018	edgehill@edgehillgolfcourse.com
Wood: Maple	Gray's Sugarhouse	38 Barnes Road Ashfield 01330	(413) 625-6559	mgray@graysysugarhouse.com
Wood: Maple	Bree-Z-Knoll Farm	North County Road Leyden 01337	(413) 774-3757	
Wood: Maple	Davenport Maple Farm	111 Tower Road Shelburne 01370	(413) 774-3757	
Wood: Maple	Wheel-View Farm	212 Reynolds Road Shelburne 01370	(413) 625-2900	cwheeler@wheelviewfarm.com
Wood: Maple	Gould's Sugarhouse	570 Mohawk Trail Shelburne 01370	(413) 625-6170	
Wood: Maple	Chestnut Lot Farm	396 Main Poland Road Conway 01341	(413) 369-4266	
Wood: Maple	Browning Brook Maple	4 Nelson Road Colrain 01340	(413) 824-8794	
Wood: Maple	Red Roof Sugarhouse	209 S. County Road Leyden 01301	(413) 772-6222	
Wood: Maple	Graves Sugarhouse	80 Wilson Graves Road Shelburne 01370	(413) 625-9066	
Wood: Maple	Ed's Sugar Shack	72 S. County Road Leyden 01301	(413) 773-7619	
Wood: Maple	Country Maple Farm	72 S. County Road Leyden 01301	(413) 773-7619	
Wood: Maple	Stonagate Farm Sugarhouse	1264 Bardwell Ferry Road Conway 01341	(413) 369-4459	Danachevvv@aol.com
Wood: Maple	Boyden Brothers Maple	642 So. Deerfield Road Conway 01341	(413) 369-4665	boydenmaple@gmail.com
Wood: Mill	James S. Poplaski	730 Notch Road, Cheshire, MA 01225	(413) 743-8464	
Wood: Mill	Hicks Farm	Hicks Road, Charlemont, MA 01339		http://www.hickscommaze.com/contact-us.html
Wood: Mill	DBA West Road Wood Works	623 West Road, Ashfield, MA 01330		info@westroadwoodworks.com
Wood: Mill	Roberts Brothers Lumber Co., Inc.	1450 Spruce Corner Road, Ashfield, MA 01330	(413) 628-3333	ROBTLBR@YAHOO.COM
Wood: Mill	Charles Ransford	620 Daniels Road, North Adams, MA 01247		
Wood: Mill	Northern Landscape Service, Inc.	Notch Road, North Adams, MA 01247		
Wood: Mill	Highland Sawmill	13 Kreutzer Road, Peru, MA 01235		
Wood: Mill	D/B/A Harwood Lumber	101 Harwood Road, Savoy, MA 01256		
Wood: Sawmill	Clark Logging	110 Branch Hill Rd, Heath, MA 01346	413-337-6697	
Wood: Sawmill	Alan Spooner	Hawley, MA		
Wood: Studio	Shelburne Arts Cooperative	26 Bridge Street Shelburne Falls MA 01370	413-625-9324	
Wood: Thermal Analysis Instruments	Biomass Commodities Corporation	227 Adams Rd Williamstown, MA 01267	413-458-5326	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	Berkshire Wood Products	301 Route 9, PO Box 152, Windsor	413-822-7184	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	Christopher Brown	110 County Rd., Rowe	413-652-4235	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	John D. Brown Logging	P. O. Box 297, Windsor	413-684-2676	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	Danek Excavating	39 Cross Rd., Rowe	413-339-4205	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	John Eichholz	41 Main Street, Shelburne Falls	413-625-9582	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	Jayme Jurek Gay	171 Colrain Stage Road, Colrain	413-339-4073	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	Dennis A. Gould	230 Spruce Corner Road, Ashfield	413-628-4456	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	Allen Hicks Logging	PO Box 1005, Buckland	413-625-9629	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	Henry N. Kaiser	141 Route 8A South, Charlemont	413-339-4868	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	Pine Shadow Farm	36 South School House Rd., Leyden	413-774-5218	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	Savoy Hollow Enterprise	9 Mundy Terrace, North Adams	413-664-7508	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	T K Lumber	868 Main Street, Savoy	413-743-2104	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	Timothy Luczynski	P. O. Box 793, Cheshire	413-743-7894	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	Craig Lynde Logging	37 Avery Hill Road, Colrain	413-624-3677	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	S & N Logging	247 Zerah Fiske Road, Shelburne	413-824-0413	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	BTO Land Co. Inc	976 Notch Road, North Adams	413-822-0928	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	Pantermehl Land Clearing	P. O. Box 371, Ashfield	413-628-4777	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	James S. Poplaski Logging	730 Notch Road, Cheshire	413-743-9146	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	Sunny Side Acres Farm	86 Plainfield Rd., Hawley	413-339-9952	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	Berkshire Timber Consultants	1131 New Ashford Rd., Williamstown	413-281-4636	
Wood: Timber Harvesters	Daniel J Waters	309 West Hawley Road, Charlemont	413-339-8379	

Appendix D: Model Programs

Similar initiatives to the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership

Initiative	Description	Differences	Beneficial Programs
Southern Appalachian Working Group (SAWG)	explores the abundant forest resources in Western North Carolina and ways to meet local demands for those resources. (Land-of-Sky Regional Council, 2008)	It is an interesting and germane report prepared for the Southern Research Station.	They have marketing specialists and regional marketing specialists to match make forest landowners and local customers. (Land-of-Sky Regional Council, 2008)
National Heritage Area	commemorate, conserve, and promote areas that include important natural, scenic, historic, cultural, and recreational resources. (Vincent, 2013)	Lands that are designated by NHA stay in nonfederal ownership. (Vincent, 2013)	Managing federal areas as a part of National Park System is too expensive. Small federal investments in heritage areas have been successful in attracting funds from other sources. (Vincent, 2013)
South Mountain Partnership	a regional, landscape-scale conservation project in south-central Pennsylvania. (South Mountain Partnership, 2017)	This is a planning effort that coordinates the natural resource management of Federal, State, nongovernmental organizations, academic institutions and regional partnerships within a landscape, focusing on the conservation challenges.	Mini-Grants were intended to support small businesses that are related to the objectives of South Mountain Partnership. Since 2009, over \$215,000 worth of grants and \$485,000 worth of matching funds leveraged by the grantees have been awarded. (South Mountain Partnership, 2017)

Initiative	Description	Differences	Beneficial Programs
<p>Vermont Sustainable Jobs fund</p>	<p>Non-profit organization working with state government private sector businesses, and nonprofits to reinvigorate economy, society and ecology of Vermont. (Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, 2017)</p>	<p>It is a statewide initiative. (Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, 2017)</p>	<p>Vermont Forest Products Value Chain Investment Program was created to help Vermont forest product industry with technical support, and market development expertise.</p> <p>VT Wood Products Resource Manual contains information for finding and purchasing local wood products for consumers.</p> <p>Flexible capital for sustainable businesses is an investment fund that provides flexible risk capital to growing Vermont companies. (Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, 2017)</p>
<p>Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy (SAHC)</p>	<p>Since 1974, they have conserved over 70,000 acres of unique plant and animal habitat, clean water, farmland and scenic beauty of the mountains of North Carolina and Tennessee. (Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, 2017)</p>	<p>Keeping forests as forests is what both SAHC and MTWP want.</p>	<p>They work with landowners to find out a way to permanently protect and preserve the land. (Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, 2017)</p>

Appendix E: Authorship

Abstract - *All*

Executive Summary - *All*

Acknowledgements - *All*

Chapter 1: Introduction - *All*

Chapter 2: Background - *All*

2.1 The Role of Small Town Economies - Writer: *Nick*, Editor: *Ted*

2.2 How Berkshire and Franklin Counties are Threatened - Writer: *Ryan*, Editor: *Nick*

2.3 How Small Rural Town Economies are Threatened – Writer: *James*, Editor: *Ryan*

2.4 Strategies to Mitigate Threats to Rural Economies – Writer: *Ted*, Editor: *James*

2.5 Summary - *All*

Chapter 3: Course of Action - *All*

Objective 1 - Primary Writers: *Nick*, Editor: *All*

Objective 2 - Primary Writers: *James*, Editor: *All*

Objective 3 - Primary Writers: *Ryan and Ted*, Editor: *All*

Chapter 4: What We Discovered- *All*

Finding 1 - Primary Writers: *Nick and Ryan*, Editor: *All*

Finding 2 - Primary Writer: *Nick*, Editor: *All*

Finding 3 - Primary Writers: *Ryan and Ted*, Editor: *All*

Finding 4 - Primary Writer: *Nick*, Editor: *All*

Finding 5 - Primary Writer: *James*, Editor: *All*

Finding 6 - Primary Writers: *Ryan and James*, Editor: *All*

Finding 7 - Primary Writers: *James and Ted*, Editor: *All*

Finding 8 - Primary Writers: *Nick and Ryan*, Editor: *All*

Chapter 5: Recommendations and Conclusion - *All*

Recommendation 1 - Primary Writer: *James*, Editor: *All*

Recommendation 2 - Primary Writer: *Nick*, Editor: *All*

Recommendation 3 - Primary Writer: *Ryan*, Editor: *All*

Recommendation 4 - Primary Writer: *Ted*, Editor: *All*

Recommendation 5 - Primary Writer: *James*, Editor: *All*

5.2 Deliverables - *All*

5.3 Conclusion – *All*

Appendix – *All*

Appendix A – *All*

Appendix B

Zoar Outdoor - Primary Writer: *James*, Editor: *Ryan*

Stump Sprouts - Primary Writer: *Ted*, Editor: *James*

Kuklinski Woodworking - Primary Writer: *Ryan*, Editor: *Nick*

Red Rose Motel - Primary Writer: *James*, Editor: *Ryan*

Hall Tavern Farm – Primary Writer: *Ryan*, Editor: *James*

Appendix C - *All*

Appendix D - *Ted*