

**INNOVATIVE AND COORDINATED SOLUTIONS FOR THE HARDWOOD INDUSTRY.
THE HARDWOOD UTILIZATION CONSORTIUM**

Philip A. Araman

USDA Forest Service
Southern Research Station
Brooks Forest Products Center
Blacksburg, VA 24061-0503

Cynthia West

USDA Forest Service
Northeastern Forest Experiment Station
241 Mercer Springs Road
Princeton, WV 24740-9628

ABSTRACT

Many varied efforts have been underway to help the hardwood industry make more effective and efficient use of the hardwood resource while meeting market needs. The efforts range from training, extension, utilization and marketing research and development, to educational activities. The activities are disjointed and unorganized and individually struggling to maintain funding. To help overcome these problems we have formed the Hardwood Utilization Consortium. Our role is to improve hardwood resource viability through better utilization, technology, markets, cooperative extension and education in the eastern United States by collaboration to better utilize pooled resources, apply expertise and communicate needs. In this paper, we present the Hardwood Utilization Consortium as an innovative and coordinated solution for the hardwood industry.

INTRODUCTION

The hardwood industry consists of many small businesses. Likewise efforts to help these businesses efficiently use our hardwood resources while meeting our increasing market needs are limited and fragmented. The efforts range from training, extension, utilization and marketing research and development, to educational activities. The activities were disjointed and unorganized and individually struggling to maintain funding. We formed the Hardwood Utilization Consortium to help overcome these problems.

The Consortium has been in the formation phase for the last six months. We have been discussing ways to:

- Increase our services to customers;
- Formalize collaborative relationships to efficiently and effectively deliver a full range of services to customers; and
- Utilize and share current limited resources and combine expertise.

Our customers are the primary and secondary hardwood industries, landowners and resource managers, economic development agencies, extension specialists and agents, state foresters, and public agencies. We will focus on logging, primary processing, drying, grading, secondary processing, wood reuse, markets and economics.

We are committed to the efficient and effective use of hardwood resources as stated in the Consortium banner (Figure 1). As such, our role is to improve hardwood resource viability through better utilization, technology, markets, cooperative extension and education in the eastern United States by collaborating to better utilize pooled resources, apply expertise, and communicate needs.



Figure 1. The Consortium banner includes the logo and a statement of purpose.

The formal signing of a Memorandum of Understanding by the Charter Members took place at this Hardwood Symposium.

OUR OBJECTIVES

We plan to determine customer needs, focus activities, provide technology transfer and training, and secure long term support. More specifically our objectives are to:

1. Develop and test efficient and effective uses of hardwood resources to sustain forests and local communities;
2. Provide an effective delivery system of technology information and training;
3. Acquire long-term support for research and development, technology transfer, and education related to hardwood use;
4. Focus activities through the consortium; and
5. Determine customer needs.

THE CHARTER MEMBERS

The subregional leadership for the Hardwood Utilization Consortium is provided at both the federal and state levels by a group of cooperators. These cooperators are responsible for the majority of hardwood utilization, technology and marketing research, extension, and educational activities. They also have a history of cooperative activities, and are in a geographic proximity which facilitates consortium operations and activities. The charter members include:

USFS Northeastern Station—Utilization & Marketing Programs	Princeton, WV
USFS Southern Station—Utilization Program	Blacksburg, VA
USFS Northeastern Area	Morgantown, WV
USFS Region 8 S&PF	Atlanta, GA
Virginia Tech—Department of Wood Science & Forest Products	Blacksburg, VA
West Virginia University—Appalachian Hardwood Center	Morgantown, WV
Robert C. Byrd Hardwood Technology Center	Princeton, WV
National Hardwood Lumber Association	Memphis, TN

Together these members conduct research, transfer technology, provide extension services and provide education and training for customers.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Research and Development:	USFS Northeastern & Southern Stations; Virginia Tech; West Virginia University
Technology Transfer:	USFS Northeastern Area and Region 8 S&PF; National Hardwood Lumber Association; Robert C. Byrd Hardwood Technology Center; and the Research Partners
Education:	Virginia Tech; West Virginia University
Training:	National Hardwood Lumber Association; Robert C. Byrd Hardwood Technology Center

SPREADING THE WORD

Our most important charge will be dissemination of R&D results and general technology transfer, training and education opportunities through the members. We will present results at association and professional society meetings, at industrial fairs, special seminars, training events, and through the internet.

This Hardwood Symposium is an example of what we can do. We helped chair the program committee, officially started the Consortium with a formal signing of a Memorandum of Understanding, and authored 12 of the 23 papers given at the symposium.

We also developed a professional display and have used it at the Hardwood Symposium, the Richmond sawmill equipment show, Forest Service reviews and the recent international Forest Product Society meeting. We plan to use it at industry association meetings and other events such as the International Woodworking Fair-USA.

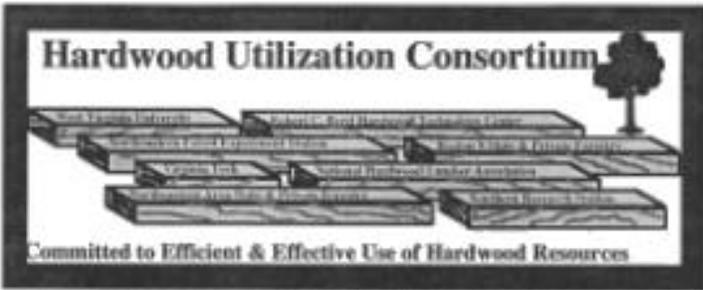
OUR HOME PAGE

As a service to our clients and anyone interested in hardwoods utilization, we have created a home page (web site) on the internet for the Hardwood Utilization Consortium. The header page shown in Figure 2 provides some information about the Consortium and provides a listing of the contents and links to member home pages. The web site can be visited at the URL, <http://www.se4702.forprod.vt.edu/consort/consort.htm>.

The consortium home page has detailed information on each member to include personnel, programs, latest publications, etc. We also have a section on upcoming workshops and presentations. These are listed by member and they are combined in a master list. The pages will be updated periodically to keep this information current. We also provide links to member home pages. This page has been functioning for only two months and we have already received many visitors.

DETERMINING NEEDS

One of our goals is to determine the training, research, extension, technology transfer and education needs for the our clients and develop programs to meet the most important needs. As part of this effort, a study on the research needs and priorities for hardwoods has recently been completed by consortium member, the National Hardwood Lumber Association. A paper on this effort is included in this proceedings and a copy of the complete report can be obtained from the National Hardwood Lumber Association or from another consortium member.



Hardwood Utilization Consortium

Committed to Efficient & Effective Use of Hardwood Resources

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Southern Research Station

Northeastern Forest Experiment Station

Virginia Tech

West Virginia University

Byrd Center

Northeastern State & Private Forestry

Region 8

NHLA

Last Modified: 6/17/96
Send Comments to Matt Winn: mattwinn@vt.edu

Figure 2. The consortium home page has links to lower-level pages and consortium member

CONTACT THE COORDINATORS FOR MORE INFORMATION

Philip Araman

USDA Forest Service
Southern Research Station
Brooks Forest Products Center-Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, VA 24061-0503

Phone: (540) 231-5341
FAX: (540) 231-8868
e-mail: paraman@vt.edu
Data General: P.Araman: R08F08D11A

Cynthia West

USDA Forest Service
Northeastern Forest Experiment Sta
241 Mercer Springs Rd.
Princeton, WV 24740-9628

Phone: (304) 431-2727
FAX: (304) 431-2772
e-mail: sidney@vtvml.cc.vt.edu
Data General: C.West:S24L11A

*PROCEEDINGS OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH
ANNUAL HARDWOOD SYMPOSIUM*

*Putting Research to Work
For the Hardwood Industry:
New Technology Available Today*

EDITED BY

DAN A. MEYER

NATIONAL HARDWOOD LUMBER ASSOCIATION



**High Hampton Inn
Cashiers, North Carolina
May 8-11, 1996**

