

Vital Forests | Vital Communities

Growing Minnesota's Advantage in a Global Economy

Grant Update

July 1, 2005

Minnesota Wood Campaign

Amount Granted: \$100,000

Grant Awarded: June 29, 2004

Purpose of the Grant:

The Minnesota Wood Campaign (MWC) is a joint effort of artists and manufacturers located in northern Minnesota, to develop opportunities to better compete in a rapidly changing world forest- and wood-products marketplace. This grant will help MWC provide technical assistance to member wood processing businesses to improve marketing practices and branding locally produced wood products in a four-county area adjacent to Itasca County.

Progress to Date:

The 65 (and growing) members of the Minnesota Wood Campaign made a major leap forward in their ability to generate awareness of and appreciation for northern Minnesota forest-based products during winter and spring 2005. With the grounding of several months of research and brainstorming, the Campaign's True North Woods™ brand was launched

As promotion of the True North Woods unfolded, the Campaign also focused on preparing the region's producers to maximize this opportunity to complement their business—both in the short and long terms. Through a series of workshops (conducted in conjunction with Minnesota Wood Education Project), one-on-one counseling and communications, Campaign members are better prepared to explore new markets, leverage their True North Woods affiliation (a certification brand), and to prepare for their own future marketing.

Behind the scenes, the legal and logistical infrastructure of the True North Woods brand was developed by the Campaign's board of directors. Now armed with 18 months of experience and insight, the board also has begun to develop a longer-term business plan, a process that will continue through summer.

Look for the Campaign's advertising to appear in regional publications during the fall of 2005, a significant presence at Goods from the Woods in September and, if you are in the Twin Cities this summer, the Campaign's standing exhibit at the Minneapolis Farmers Market (every weekend through October).



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