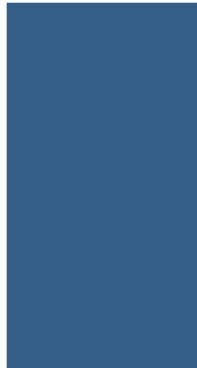


Annual Report 2002



Our Vision

To be a leader in developing people, businesses, and communities for a globally competitive region.

Our Mission

To help businesses expand their markets, generate employment, improve the local economy, and plan for the future development of the Northern Tier Region.



Chairman's Message



Dear Friends,

This past year has meant a great deal. The privilege to serve in any leadership capacity through an elected process should never be taken for granted. Not one moment has been without regard for that privilege.

The most impressive aspect however is the cooperative spirit that exists within our region. Many of the projects in our various counties require support of federal effort - whether through agencies, federally elected officials, state entities, or local elected officials seeking to support business and economic growth within our counties. When success is realized, the reward transcends through the public and private organizations and individuals who have benefited through the process, and although convoluted in design, it is streamlined by capable leadership within our organization.

I'm sure each county can reflect where their investments have derived and benefited their communities. I would like to share a couple of specific examples that I believe emulate what Tioga County is about. Partners in Progress, a program for the developmentally disabled, is one of our success stories. Initiated in 1996 and perhaps with history before that, the construction of a building this past year saw the dream finally realized. How did this come about? The ambition of private citizens and a large manufacturing entity provided an ideal arrangement for all levels of government to come together to provide life sustaining jobs and a feeling of self worth for the individuals involved.

Briefly, I would like to share with you some highlights of the amount of generated revenues that have come through our region. Through grant funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, NTRPDC administered several grant programs so funds could directly benefit businesses and communities throughout the region. In 2002, the Site Development Incentive Grant and the Small Business Training Grant programs awarded over \$51,800 in funding. The Loan Program packaged over \$1.7 million in loans creating 132 jobs. The region took on the state's "Stay Invent the Future" program by administering several programs to benefit youth in the Northern Tier.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as the chairman for the past year. As with the previous success stories, we should never rest on our laurels. We should continue find ways to enhance the communities in which we live. By that, I mean investing in our future. Isn't that what Northern Tier Regional Planning is all about?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erick Coolidge".

Erick Coolidge
Chairman

Director's Message



Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to present the 2002 Annual Report. The Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission is committed to improving the quality of life in our region. We take great pride in fulfilling our commitment. We take even greater pride in the cooperation and support that we receive from all of you. Your on-going initiatives within your respective communities facilitate our success. Without you as partners, our efforts would be futile.

This year resulted in difficulties as the economy suffered a decline. In times like these, our efforts become even more vital, and remaining cohesive as a region becomes imperative.

As indicated in this report, we were successful in obtaining "Stay Invent the Future" funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development this year. This program is designed to retain the region's youth and familiarize them with employment opportunities within the Northern Tier region. Once again, in cooperation with several of our many partners, we are able to implement several different components of the program. Please take the time to read the specifics of this program as well as the entire report.

I wish to extend my thanks to our staff and congratulate them on another great year. I also thank the Executive committee and particularly Chairman Erick Coolidge for their guidance and leadership.

Finally, a sincere thanks to all of you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin D. Abrams". The ink is dark and the signature is written in a fluid, personal style.

Kevin D. Abrams
Executive Director



**Wynken, Blynken, and Nod Fountain
The Green, Wellsboro**

BLAIR HOUSE
Photograph by Robert J. Blair

Full Commission

Bradford

William Farley
Rich Farr
Gary Goeckel
Joe Joyce
Janet Lewis
Frank Madden
Fred Robinson
Nancy Schrader
John Sullivan

Sullivan

Pamela Arthur
Fred Fiester
Craig Harting
Michael Hufnagel
Max Little
Norman Miller
Betty Reibson
James Rogers
Philip Snyder

Susquehanna

Sam Anderson
Calvin Dean
Joey Franks
Gary Marcho
William Ord
Joyce Rudzianski
Lee Smith
Justin Taylor
Robert Templeton

Tioga

Walter Barnes
Robert Blair
Erick Coolidge
Charles James
Fred LaVancher
Ted Nichols
Matthew Prosseda
George Wheeler
Jeff Wilson

Wyoming

Norman Ball
Peter Butler
Mike Castellano
Anthony Litwin
Thomas McCullough
Judy Mead
Richard Schwoebel
Paul Weilage
Ronald Williams



2002

Advisory Committees

Economic Development

Robert Blair	Charles O'Hara
Dan Close	James Rogers
David Cummings	Joyce Rudzianski
Raman Daga	Chris Smith
Fred Fiester	Justin Taylor
Michael Hufnagel	Anthony Ventello
Sharon Kaminsky	Richard Wienecke
Charles Mead	

Workforce Investment

Sam Anderson	William McDonald
Kim Barnes	Ted Nichols
Robert Blair	Daniel Olasin
Peter Butler	Brenda Roberts
Judy Cooper	Fred Robinson
Vance Coover	Gerald Schaffer
William Farley	Sherry Spencer
Kim Frank	Richard Stetz
Karen Hammer	Loren Stone
Craig Harting	Dave Sugarman
Sharon Herb	Dawn Swetland
Elaine Hickey	Sandy Voda
Paul Kreisher	Leo Walsh
Michael Lione	Terri Zimmerman

Export Development

Samuel Cerrato	Janet Lewis
Tim Charlesworth	Carolyn Madden
Erick Coolidge	Anthony Manorek
Roy Cummings, Jr.	Deb Mathers
Lael Egger	Roseann Paciotti
Karen El-Chaar	James Rogers
Robert Elsas	John Sepela
Gerald Ephault	Mark Toda
Michael Goskowski	Kay Ulrich
John Greiger	Kathi VanDusen
Michael Horvath	Keith Yurgosky
John Kizer	

Rural Area Transportation

Mike Castellano	Norman Miller
Erick Coolidge	William Ord
Calvin Dean	Betty Reibson
Kerry Gyekis	Raymond Stolin, Jr.
Michael Hufnagel	John Sullivan
Fred LaVancher	Robert Templeton
Anthony Litwin	Paul Weilage
John Logan	

Local Loan Review

Donald Abrey	Kevin Rimmey
Robert Blair	James Rogers
Thomas Chesnick	Richard Schwoebel
Fred Fiester	Richard Soden
Joseph Joyce	Mary Ann Waddington
Max Little	Ronald Williams
Thomas McCullough	Jeffery Wilson
Matthew Prosseda	

2002 Funding Sources



Federal

Appalachian Regional Commission		
Enterprise Development	\$285,000	
Local Development District	82,000	
ARC Intermodal	99,000	
U.S. Department of Commerce		
Economic Development Administration	52,000	
U.S. Department of Defense		
Procurement Technical Assistance	50,000	
U.S. Department of Transportation		
Federal Highway Administration	75,000	
U.S. Department of Labor		
Workforce Investment Act	2,575,000	
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	<u>1,198,000</u>	
Total		\$4,416,000

State

PennDot		
Rural Transportation Program	9,000	
Department of Community and Economic Development		
Enterprise Development	522,000	
Team Pennsylvania	167,500	
Entrepreneurial Development	73,000	
Stay Invent the Future	500,000	
PennSTEP	73,000	
Export Development	65,000	
Community Development Financial Institutions Fund	25,000	
Municipal Technical Assistance Program	<u>98,000</u>	
Total		\$1,532,500

Local

County Contributions	\$60,000	
In-Kind Contributions	<u>52,000</u>	
Total		<u>\$112,000</u>

Total Program Funds \$6,060,500

Loan Program

<u>Business Name</u>	<u>Loan Amount</u>	<u>Jobs Created</u>
<i>Bradford Forest Products Inc.</i>	\$300,000.00	40
<i>Carr's Furniture & Spas</i>	\$75,000.00	3
<i>Cole Foods d/b/a Kentucky Fried Chicken</i>	\$150,000.00	30
<i>Color All Technologies of NEPA</i>	\$20,000.00	3
<i>Cornerstone Forest Products</i>	\$100,000.00	30 (Retained)
<i>Deer Park Lumber Co., Inc.</i>	\$107,805.00	3
<i>The Endless Mountain Donut Co.</i>	\$100,000.00	16
<i>Robert T. Griffis & Sons, Inc.</i>	\$25,000.00	3
<i>Karishma L.L.C.</i>	\$300,000.00	2
<i>Mane Street Hair Co.</i>	\$25,000.00	3
<i>Metadyne Incorporated</i>	\$300,000.00	5
<i>North Country Woodworking, Inc.</i>	\$25,000.00	7 (Retained)
<i>Patterson Home Center</i>	\$100,000.00	7
<i>Sheryl Collins d/b/a The Plaza Diner</i>	\$25,000.00	9
<i>Tiffany's Restaurant</i>	\$30,000.00	3
<i>Wyalusing Ace Hardware Inc.</i>	\$100,000.00	5
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,782,805.00</i>	<i>132 Created, 37 Retained</i>



Endless Mountains Donut Company & Bakery



It's 1:00 am and it's time to make the donuts in Troy, Pennsylvania.

Soon the scrumptious aroma of baked goods will permeate outside the building and within a few hours the customers will fill the tables at Endless Mountains Donut Company & Bakery.

A quote worth repeating is "There is only one success – to spend your life in your own way." Jack Wheeler worked for years selling bakery goods from his office. While he was an accomplished sales person and well respected in the industry, it wasn't the way he wanted to spend his life. Something was missing for Jack and wife Carol. They had a dream to start a bakery, and the rest is history. On November 25,



Endless Mountains Donut Company & Bakery owners Jack and Carol Wheeler.

2002, the doors opened to the business on Main Street in a 125-year-old building. In just a few short months the business grew from a bakery and coffee shop into a restaurant serving breakfast and lunch to “standing room only” crowds during the day and offering upscale dining to private parties in the evening.

And there is another story of success. Two young people decided to join the company and make the quiet area of northeastern Pennsylvania their home. First, Jack's son Jason came on board to help manage the new business. Then, Jason's friend from New York, a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America saw an opportunity at the bakery. As chef, Will Haischer captivated customers with a variety of delectable menu items.

NTRPDC provided a loan in the amount of \$100,000 for start up capital to Endless Mountains Donut Company & Bakery, matched with owner equity and private financing from First Citizens National Bank. In just a few months, the business has made its mark on the area. The owner hints of upcoming expansion, along with bringing to the area his son James to round out the family company. The atmosphere of the popular restaurant is upbeat, friendly and apparently contagious, as customers are thrilled as they wait for their favorite table!



Jason Wheeler (left) and Will Haischer (right) of Endless Mountains Donut Company & Bakery.

Developing Youth Leadership

As students in the Northern Tier attend high school and post-secondary school throughout the region and surrounding area, many seek their futures outside the region. The main reason is a lack of awareness of career options and skills needed to take advantage of employment opportunities in the region. The Northern Tier Region took its first step toward addressing this issue with the implementation of a regional Youth Leadership Program. There are four programs now operating in the region. Tioga, Wyoming, and Susquehanna Counties have individual county-wide programs while Bradford and Sullivan County have combined for a single program.



Youth leadership programs acquaint students with their community's needs and resources while developing their interest and leadership skills. The opportunity to interact with one another and business and industry leaders helps them realize their own potential and creates an environment to build relationships that foster pride in their community and a sense of the possibility for a lasting career in this region.

Tioga County's Youth Leadership Program, administered by the Tioga County Development Corporation, is the model for the region-wide program. Students who are beginning to show leadership potential and interest in their community are selected through an application process. They must agree to commit one year starting in 11th grade to daylong sessions, outside, and evening assignments. By 12th grade, students will have the opportunity to apply leadership skills in their community and school. There is also an orientation session and a graduation ceremony the students must organize and conduct on their own.

Each county tailored its program to make it fit the needs of the youth and businesses in their county. The success of these programs has resulted in important buy-in needed from the school districts and local businesses. Every high school in the region has students participating. The donation of time, space and materials from area organizations and businesses is enormous.

The 2002 Youth Leadership program kicked off in the fall with teambuilding and orientation sessions. Tioga County held an ice cream social prior to the beginning of the school year and Bradford/Sullivan and Wyoming Counties both held the introductory sessions at the sites of rope courses and the Challenging Outdoor Personal Experience (C.O.P.E) program. The students spent the morning establishing trust and team-



work while completing a series of tests that culminated in ascending the 35-foot high ropes course. The students then walked a rope bridge before riding down a zip line to finish the day.

Susquehanna County held its first session at Montrose Bible College and, although there wasn't a high ropes course, completed the same leadership exercises as the C.O.P.E. course.

Each of the sessions, which cover various topics, requires an outside effort by students by reading advanced material, conducting interviews with relevant people, attending public meetings, etc. The students also use leadership manuals and spend time during each session discussing The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens by Sean Covey.

Funded through Pennsylvania's Stay Invent the Future initiative, a statewide effort to keep young people from leaving the state after graduation, the program is scheduled to meet once a month for the entire school year.

Tioga County Development Corporation is managing the program for the fourth year. The Central Bradford Progress Authority and partners from the Valley Leadership, Bradford County Action, YMCA, and others manage the Bradford and Sullivan County program. Tunkhannock School District manages the program in



Wyoming County while the Susquehanna County Office of Economic Development, Penn State Cooperative Extension and Trehab, Inc. manage the Susquehanna County program.

Students earn the trust of their peers while participating in the Challenging Outdoor Personal Experience program.

Export Program

Maintaining Resilience in the face of Rough Seas in International Waters

The combination of the national economic downturn and the looming threat of international conflict have heightened the challenges to global commerce. In spite of these troubling circumstances, now is the time to remain resilient and to redouble one's export efforts. The dollar continues to weaken in world currency markets, rendering American products less expensive to international buyers and more competitively priced. Therefore, the potential for export success is expanding even though the domestic economy lingers stagnate.

In the past year, the Northern Tier export program aided 62 companies with technical counseling,



L-R : Samuel Cerrato, International Trade Specialist, U.S. Department of Commerce; Dr. James Chan, Ph.D.; Gretchen Kukuchka, Export Development Program Manager

market research and expansion, trade events, and export education initiatives. Among the year's nine events and seminars, highlights include "How to Do Business in China: Pitfalls and Success Tips" by James Chan, Ph.D. and "Affording and Structuring your International Finance Transactions" presented by EX-IM Bank, Commonwealth representatives, and the Small Business Administration.

Business Opportunities in China Luncheon

Dr. Chan's seminar instructed ten companies to find new customers, formulate better pricing strategies, and protect intellectual property rights in China's rapidly growing economy. Additionally, Dr. Chan offered insights into navigating the cumbersome Chinese bureaucracy with ease and tips for evaluating potential in-country agents and distributors. Many attendees report that his seminar altered their strategies for doing business in China by directing them to invest more resources in relationship building while also decreasing their emphasis on traditional Western-style written contracts.

Export Finance Strategies

The export finance seminar permitted businesses and many local financial institutions the opportunity to network in the midst of learning how to negotiate international payment terms with their global buyers and foreign banks. At the same time, the attendees were informed about the federal and state finance resources available to assist small businesses expand into international markets through more liberal credit policies and by managing risk. Consequently, the attendees are ready to limit their exposure to the riskiest element of international transactions: foreign receivables and possible nonpayment due to commercial or political volatilities.

With its comprehensive battery of export assistance services, the Northern Tier Export Program stands prepared to help the region's businesses grow globally often without even leaving the region.



Procurement Program Impact

The Procurement Program assists businesses in selling their products or services to the federal and state governments and prime contractors.

In 2002, the program's clients attained \$4,408,908 in government sales with 92 contracts awarded.

Clients include:

- McCall Masonry
- HTM Precision Machining, Inc.
- Keystone North, Inc.
- OSRAM Sylvania, Inc.
- R&D Precision Tooling
- Safe & Snuggly, Inc.
- Spectrum Electrical Services, Inc.

Enterprise Development Summary

Results have been calculated from the activities of Northern Tier's Enterprise Development business assistance programs through December 2002.

- 86 business clients received direct assistance
- \$475,230,760 in sales was recorded by business clients
- 3,668 full-time jobs were retained by business clients
- 29 full-time jobs were created

In addition, almost 90% of businesses served relayed positive comments about the worth of the assistance they received.

Transportation



Long Range Transportation Planning

Developing a Long Range Transportation Plan is an integral part in helping to identify and prioritize project planning for the region's major transportation corridors. Gannett Fleming has been selected through a request for proposal process as the consulting firm for the project. Public input was solicited through the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee to identify the priority transportation corridors in Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, and Wyoming Counties which include the following Routes: US 6, US 11, PA 14, US 15, PA 29, PA 49, I-81, PA 87, PA 167, PA 171, PA 187, US 220, PA 328, PA 414 and PA 706.

2003 – 2006 Transportation Improvement Plan

The Transportation Improvement Plan for 2003-2006 was approved locally and by the State in July. This plan is updated every two years to ensure that the region's transportation issues are being dealt with in a timely manner.

A sample of approved projects include:

- 1) Bradford County: River Street Extension Project in Towanda area.*
- 2) Sullivan County: Center Street Bridge Replacement in Dushore Borough.*
- 3) Susquehanna County: PA 706 reconstruction from the Bradford County border to US 11.*
- 4) Tioga County: US 15/I-99 construction from the North Blossburg area to the New York State border.*
- 5) Wyoming County: Enhancement Projects –Tunkhannock Streetscape/Tunkhannock Borough, Iroquois Trail/Tunkhannock Area, College Ave/Factoryville Borough*



Community Development Program

The Community Development Program offers assistance with writing grant and loan packages for municipal infrastructure, recreation, historic preservation, and municipal services projects.

In 2002, 33 proposals were submitted for grants or loans totaling over \$5.1 million dollars in secured funding.

Through the Pennsylvania Small Towns Environment Program (PennSTEP) several communities were able

to obtain assistance in affordably developing water and sewer infrastructure. Canton, Dushore, New Milford, Westfield, and Tunkhannock all received grant funding to help install water or sewer lines.

Several workshops were held on topics such as building codes and historic preservation issues. Nearly 70 people participated in an event held in November, "Mastering the Board Game," a highly-regarded workshop that helps board and staff members clarify and understand their respective roles and to focus on their organization's purpose.

Using Geographic Information System Technology

GIS technology can be used for resource management, transportation planning, infrastructure analysis, emergency response planning, and site selection. This computerized system allows for detailed analysis by digitally overlaying geographic features such as wetlands, slopes, streams, land use, and soils.

For example, in 2002, the GIS program provided mapping and technical assistance to many municipalities for land use and transportation issues. GIS mapping is a powerful analytical tool for overall

county projects. Bradford County was assisted with their comprehensive plan mapping including digitizing tax maps and slope and aspect maps. Sullivan County received assistance in digitizing their tax maps for use with reassessment and for overall land use. Maps with socio-economic information and transportation data were developed along with site distances and view sheds for communication towers in Susquehanna County.



Municipal Technology Assistance Program

The Municipal Technology Assistance Program assists local governments with technology needs.

In 2002:

- *98 people received free training one-on-one or in classrooms*
- *23 new computers purchased at reduced price*
- *24 received hardware/software incentive grants*
- *47 technical assistance sessions on-site or via phone*
- *6 assisted with obtaining on-line access*
- *1 assisted with Web site development*

Rome Borough, Bradford County

"We are a small municipality and without your program of being able to get a computer for half price, we would not have been able to get a computer at this time. Thanks again for your assistance and I hope this program will be able to continue as it is a very valuable program and of need to municipalities."



Nelson Township, Tioga County

"We are utilizing the computer for preparing the minutes for our monthly meetings, correspondence, and have added QuickBooks to record and report the townships finances. We would not have been able to purchase a computer on our own given our limited budget. The services your organization provides to townships and boroughs are very much needed and appreciated."



Sullivan Township, Tioga County

"Small rural townships do not have the funding necessary to purchase equipment and train someone to use it. In the world today it is necessary for all townships to be computerized. Because of this program many townships have been given a chance to join the computerized world."



Noxen Township, Wyoming County

"Through this program, our small township was able to purchase a new computer system for use in our municipal office. It has proven to be an invaluable tool and is used by both the Township Secretary and the Treasurer for word processing, electronic filing, Internet research, maintaining records, payroll accounts, and generally keeping track of the Township's finances."

E-Commerce Business Assistance

A variety of electronic commerce trainings were held for businesses across the region including a 12-hour curriculum published by Penn State. The focus of the curriculum, entitled Access PA Main Street, was electronic business for small business. The classes were held in Bradford, Susquehanna, and Tioga Counties with thirty-five total attendees.

Website development training was also provided to businesses in Bradford County and a Microsoft Access class was held in Tioga County with thirty attendees total. In addition, over forty businesses were provided technical assistance including website assessment and development.



Valuable knowledge is gained in computer training courses held throughout the Northern Tier Region.

Team Pennsylvania

The Team Pennsylvania Business Calling Program reaches out to businesses through one-on-one interviews in which data is collected regarding issues, needs, criticisms and compliments. The information is entered into a statewide database where patterns and trends are tracked on many different levels.

Now in its fifth year, the program has proven to be an important tool for statewide economic development.

To date, 602 interviews have been conducted including 589 initial interviews, 93 second interviews, 17 third interviews and 3 fourth interviews, resulting in 418 referrals. These referrals have resulted in industry-specific equipment training, web page development, computer training, marketing skills, as

well as services from Northern Tier loan, export, and procurement programs. Trainings for Business Calling Program interviewers were held throughout the year to develop consistent interviewing techniques by making the participants more familiar with the survey and the referral system.

The Team Pennsylvania Business Resource Network, a web-based system that allows access to economic and community development information in any of Pennsylvania's counties and regions, is another aspect of Team Pennsylvania initiative. The website houses data on available industrial sites for those interested in locating in Pennsylvania. To date, the site contains 44 buildings and 27 sites available within the Region.

Site Development Incentive Grants

Sometimes good economic development projects are delayed because there may not be enough resources to pay for necessary site preparation. The cost is usually minimal but imperative to move forward or apply for additional funding.

Through a grant funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, NTRPDC developed the Site Development Incen-

tive Grant program to help fund the initial stage of economic development projects in the Northern Tier Region. Only economic development organizations or municipalities in the Northern Tier Region are eligible to apply.

In 2002, seven grants were awarded totaling \$25,800, which included site analysis, engineering, excavation, and environmental assessments.

Small Business Training Grants



Pictured left to right are Lee Smith, Susquehanna County Commissioner; Dawn Washo from Resource Environmental Management Incorporated; Laurie Lentz from NTRPDC; Susan Griffis McNamara from Robert T. Griffis & Sons, Inc.; Stanley Griffis from Robert T. Griffis & Sons, Inc.; State Representative Sandra Major; and Gary Marcho, Susquehanna County Commissioner.

Dawn Washo from Resource Environmental Management Incorporated attended a certification course to become a Pennsylvania licensed lead and asbestos inspector. The staff of Robert T. Griffis & Sons, Inc., a lumber and hardware store located in Montrose, participated in in-house training for an electronic business inventory program.

Through the Small Business Training Grant program, business owners with fifty or less employees are eligible for a matching grant up to \$1,500.00 for training. Expenses eligible for reimbursement include; registration, tuition fees, lodging, airfare and transportation cost. Businesses participated in training events that allowed them to learn about emerging trends and technologies that affect the way they do business.

In 2002, 30 training grants were awarded totaling \$26,086. This program is also funded through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

Testimonials:

"Endless Mountain Hair Design is a small beauty salon in the small town of Montrose, Pennsylvania. There are a lot of salons in this town with a lot of experience. The small business training grant helped us to attend a hair show to keep up with our competitors, with all the newest cuts and techniques as well as to give each one of our clients the best service possible." Patricia A. Troupe

Twig's Café participated in a class at the Culinary Institute of America. Jerry Bogedin wrote, "Working through Northern Tier for this educational grant was very helpful to our business. The staff was very helpful and answered all of our questions. Without the help of this grant we could not have participated in this training program. "

Vicki L. Schmidt, C. P. A. wrote, "The training grant awarded to me by Northern Tier gave me the opportunity to attend a four day Quick Books Seminar on Quick Books Technology and Quick Books consulting. This seminar has proved to be very useful as I move my business into the area of Quick Books consulting."

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About the Cover

The cover photo, taken in Tioga County, illustrates the scenic landscapes found throughout the Northern Tier Region.

The photograph was provided by BLAIR HOUSE, Photograph by Robert J. Blair