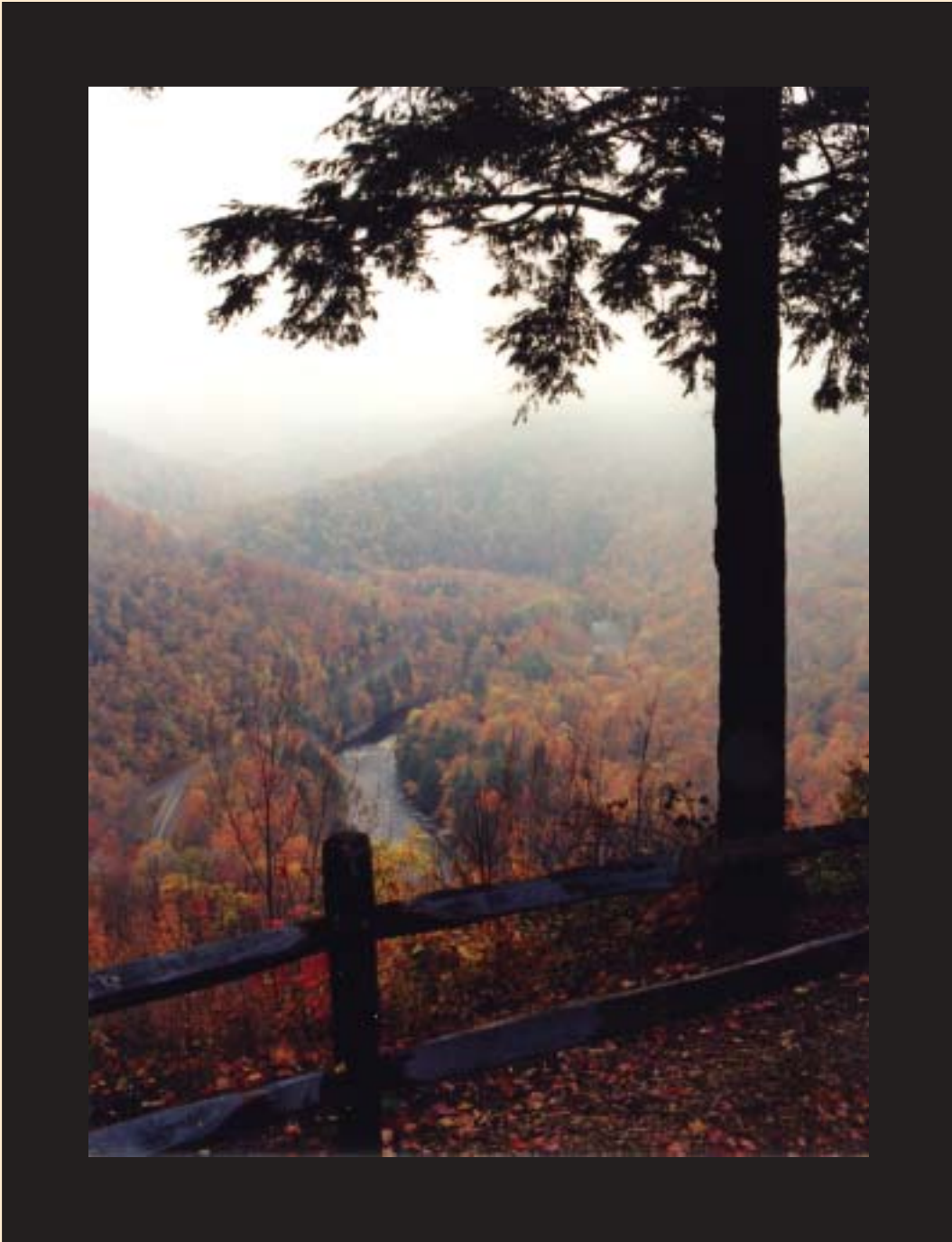
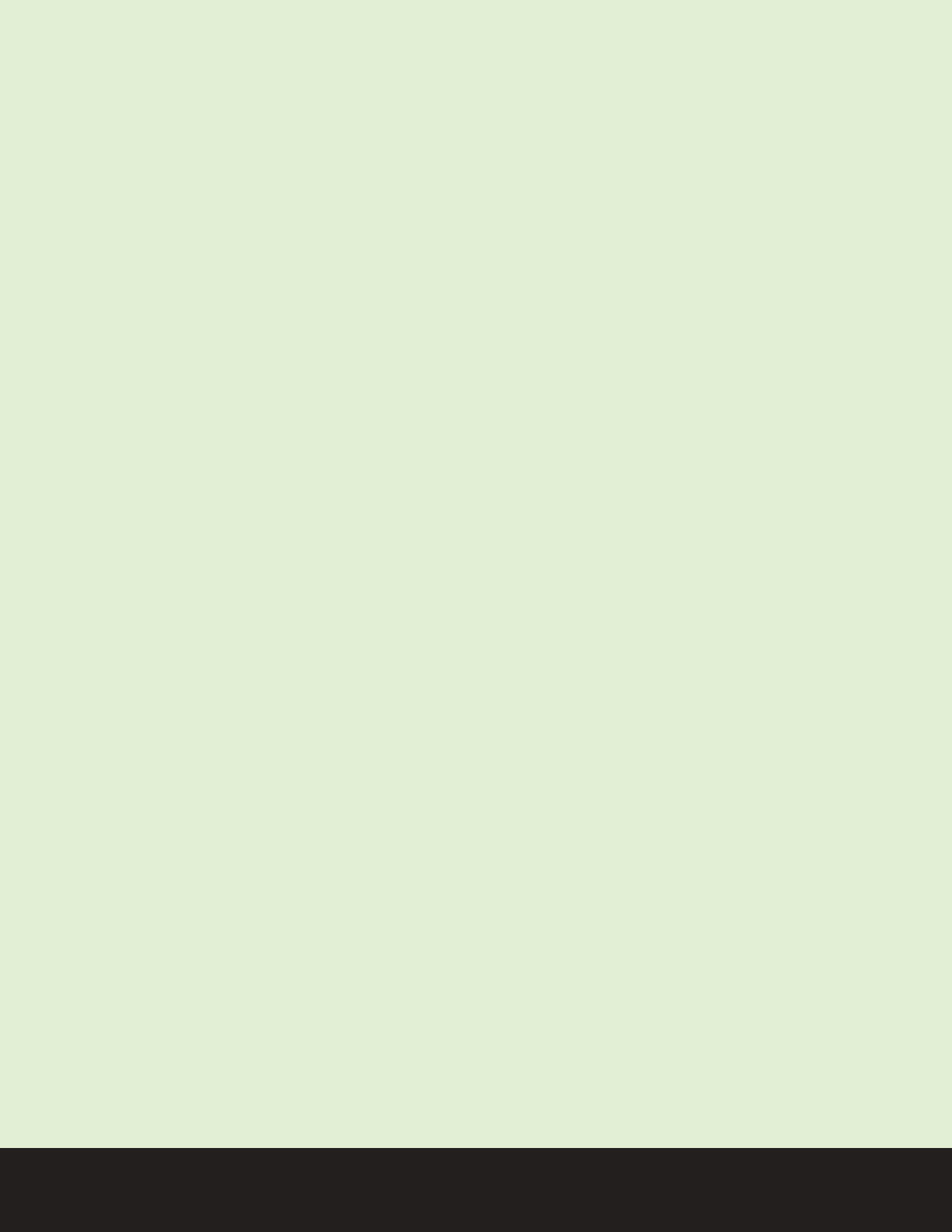
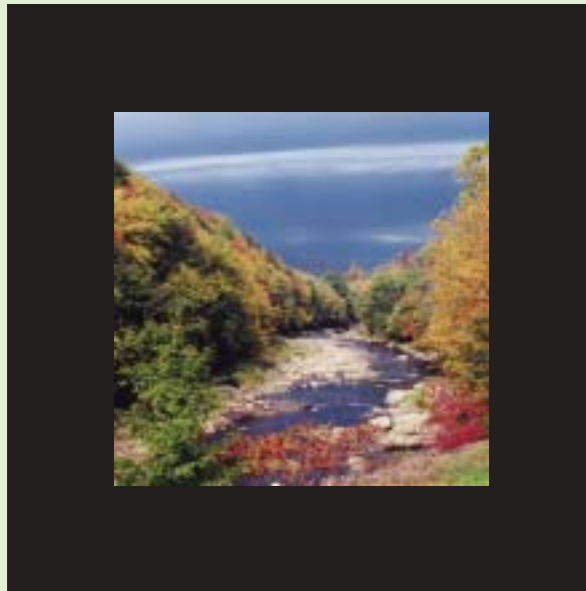


# Annual Report 2004







[2004 annual report]



## **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.



Dear Friends,

To the Northern Tier five county region I want to say "Thank You." It has been a privilege and an honor to serve this past year as chairperson of Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission. I would like to recognize all the work that goes on behind the scenes at NTRPDC by a very professional and talented staff, knowledgeable deputy directors, and a dedicated executive director.

An organization is only as strong as its leaders and supporters and the true strength is in its volunteers. NTRPDC is blessed with enthusiastic citizens who have stepped forward to serve on committees and are willing to give their time and talents to create opportunities that enhance our communities and businesses. These citizens serve on advisory boards to help make the region "business friendly." Other programs help Northern Tier businesses to develop skills and opportunities to market their products beyond the Northern Tier region.

Agriculture is a major economic player in Pennsylvania and the Northern Tier Region. Since Pennsylvania has expanded several economic funding sources to include agriculture, NTRPDC is now able to offer assistance to agricultural businesses within the region.

It has been a pleasure to work with my fellow commissioners. I appreciate the show of support and confidence they had in me this past year and their dedication, cooperation and leadership in serving the Northern Tier five county region and making it a better place to live, work, and play.

Respectfully Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Betty Reibson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Betty Reibson  
Chairperson



Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to present the 2004 Annual Report. 2004 was a challenging year in many different ways. From a positive standpoint, the Commonwealth's Economic Stimulus Package became available and enabled us to pursue new programs. Specifically, the First Industries Fund enabled the agricultural and tourism industries to access low interest loan funds. In addition, the Business in our Sites Program will enable local entities to upgrade vacant lands into "shovel ready" sites which, to date, has been a missing economic development tool throughout the Northern Tier Region.

Another challenge that once again surfaced in 2004 was the pending budget cuts of both state and federal programs utilized by NTRPDC. Once again, compliments of the efforts of our state and federal legislators, funding was restored, thus enabling us to continue our core programs.

2004 ended on a disappointing note. Several major employers, both in the region and in neighboring counties announced the termination of their operations, thus affecting approximately 450 employees in the western portion of the region. It is incumbent upon all of us to make every effort to assist those employees in obtaining sustainable employment in our five county region.

I wish to extend my thanks to our staff and congratulate them on another great year. I also want to thank all of our standing committees, the Executive Committee, and particularly Chairperson Betty Reibson for their guidance and leadership.

Finally, sincere thanks to all of you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin D. Abrams". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kevin D. Abrams  
Executive Director

## Full Commission

### Bradford

Paul Chacona  
Janet Lewis  
William Farley  
Sharon Kaminsky  
Doug McLinko  
Kevin Rimmey  
Fred Robinson  
Nancy Schrader  
Anthony Ventello

### Sullivan

Pamela Arthur  
Fred Fiester  
Wayne Gavitt  
Craig Harting  
Mike Hufnagel  
Norman Miller  
Betty Reibson  
Philip Snyder  
Richard Weinecke

### Susquehanna

Elizabeth Janoski  
Roberta Kelly  
Jeff Loomis  
William Ord  
Joyce Rudzianski  
Rick Soden  
Robert Templeton  
Maryann Warren

### Tioga

Erick Coolidge  
Kerry Gyekis  
Mark Hamilton  
Elaine Herstek  
Fred LaVancher  
Matthew Prosseda  
Sue Vogler  
George Wheeler  
Jeff Wilson

### Wyoming

Stark Bartron  
Peter Butler  
Mike Castellano  
Anthony Litwin  
Thomas McCullough  
Judy Mead  
Richard Schwoebel  
Paul Weilage

## 2004 Advisory Committees

### Economic Development

Pamela Arthur  
Dan Close  
Raman Daga  
Mike Hufnagel  
Sharon Kaminsky  
Julie Orloski  
Chris Smith  
Anthony Ventello

Robert J. Blair  
David Cummings  
Fred Fiester  
Elizabeth Janoski  
Charles O'Hara  
Betty Reibson  
Robert Templeton

### Rural Area Transportation

Mike Castellano  
Mark Hamilton  
Roberta Kelly  
Anthony Litwin  
William Ord  
Nancy Schrader  
Robert Templeton  
Paul Weilage

Wayne Gavitt  
Michael Hufnagel  
Fred LaVancher  
Norman Miller  
Clyde Robbins  
Raymond Stolin, Jr.  
James Weaver

### Workforce Investment

Brenda Abplanalp  
Kim Barnes  
Lori Bogadin  
Judy Cooper  
Karen Cosner  
Craig Harting  
Fred Jackson  
Tom Kurosky  
Chuck Lego  
Jody Neary  
Fred Robinson  
Gerald Schaffer  
Loren Stone  
Sherry Spencer  
Terri Zimmerman

Sam Anderson  
Robert J. Blair  
Pete Butler  
Vance Coover  
William Farley  
Elaine Herstek  
Paul Kreisler  
Janet Kovalich  
Josh McGroarty  
Brenda Roberts  
Karen Russell  
Dick Stetz  
Charles Stringham  
Sandy Voda

### Local Loan Review

Donald Abrey  
Carl Chambers  
Fred Fiester  
Anthony Litwin  
Thomas McCullough  
Kevin Rimmey  
Richard Schwoebel  
Jeffery Wilson

Robert J. Blair  
Thomas Chesnick  
Max Little  
Jeff Loomis  
Sheryl Potocek  
James Rogers  
Richard Soden

## 2004 Funding Sources

### Federal

Appalachian Regional Commission		
Enterprise Development	\$285,000	
Local Development District	85,000	
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	83,000	
U.S. Department of Labor		
Workforce Investment Act	2,089,000	
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	<u>1,900,000</u>	
Total		\$4,544,000

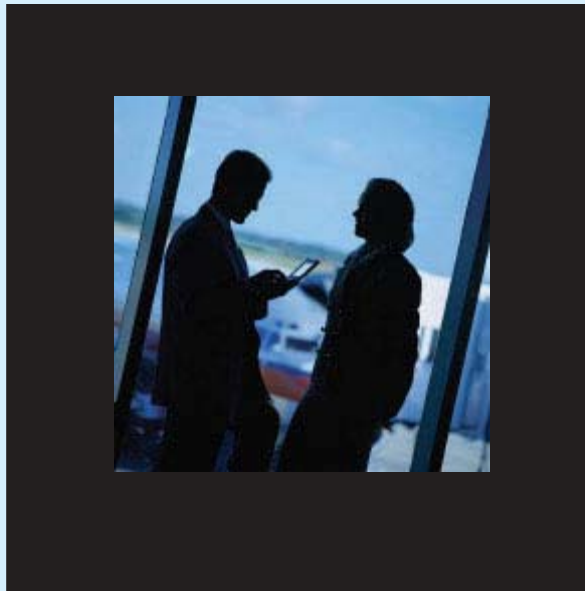
### State

PennDot		
Rural Transportation Program	10,000	
Transportation Studies	55,000	
Department of Community and Economic Development		
Enterprise Development	674,000	
Business Retention and Expansion Program	46,000	
PennSTEP	65,000	
Export Development	71,000	
KOEZ	60,000	
Municipal Technical Assistance Program	<u>71,000</u>	
Total		\$1,052,000

### Local

County Contributions	60,000	
Local Contributions	<u>60,000</u>	
Total		<u>\$120,000</u>

**Total Program Funds** **\$5,716,000**



## Business Retention in the Northern Tier



Business recruitment and job creation are important aspects of economic development. As important, or even more important, is business retention. Maintaining relationships with existing businesses helps identify future opportunities for expansion, identifies problems with the company or the community, and helps businesses that are at risk for downsizing or leaving. Small, rural communities like we have in our region are often formed around an industry and we are very dependent on them. It is important to maintain positive relationships so we can all deal with any inevitable change together.

NTRPDC works with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania through their Business Retention and Expansion Program. Partners at the local level in each of our counties reach out to businesses through one-on-one visits where data is collected through a survey, which is then entered into a statewide database where pat-

terns and trends are tracked on many different levels. The program has proven to be an important tool for statewide economic development.

- During this reporting period, 183 interviews were conducted.
- To date, a total of 1,036 visits have been conducted, resulting in 754 referrals to service providers.

These referrals have resulted in industry-specific equipment training, web page development, computer training, marketing assistance, as well as services from Northern Tier loan, export, and procurement programs. Trainings for Business Calling Program interviewers, also known as Business Liaisons, were held throughout the year to develop consistent interviewing techniques by making the participants more familiar with the survey and the referral system.



## 2003 Business of the Year Lübbering Corp



The 2003 Business of the Year, Lübbering Corp., was honored at the annual meeting held on April 15 at St. Basil's Hall in Dushore.

Kevin Abrams, Executive Director of NTRPDC, presented a plaque and \$2,500 check to owner John Estep.

Lübbering, located in Troy, Pennsylvania, custom engineers and manufactures precision attachments for power assembly tools in the automotive and aerospace industries so that assemblers can reach into areas that are difficult to access. Many of their attachments are critical for assembling the safety features of the automobile, or for allowing the operator to hold the tools in an ergonomic position. The workers that use them often have less than one minute to complete their task so the tools have to work well and last long.

John Estep started Lübbering after working twenty-five years at Ingersoll Rand in Athens. During that time, he was a team leader for product development and worked closely with Lübbering Corporation located in Herzbrock, Germany. As Ingersoll Rand began to reorganize, Mr. Estep realized that he would have to relocate in order to keep doing the work he enjoyed. Instead, he decided to take a chance and worked with Lübbering to create a North American division in 1999. Since then, Lübbering has grown to include Mr. Estep's wife, Nannette, as the Administrative Manager, and his brother Barry Estep and Mark West as Application Engineers.



John and Nannette Estep of Lübbering Corporation accept the "2003 Business of the Year" Award from Kevin Abrams.

- Lübbering has increased in sales by 550% since its inception.
- There are only five companies in North America that develop similar products.

"Lübbering is unique because they custom engineer each product. They have developed a reputation in their industry for their reliable, well-engineered products with very strong customer support and service." Said Jill Koski, Economic Development Program Manager at NTRPDC.

The Northern Tier Regional Planning & Development Commission sponsors the Business of the Year award each spring. The business is selected through a nomination process by the Economic Development Advisory Committee.

## Northern Tier KOZ Receives Enhancements



In 2004, NTRPDC received approval for additional enhancements to the Northern Tier Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ).

Through local efforts by the Central Bradford Progress Authority and the Susquehanna County Economic Development Department, 203 additional acres have been designated KOZ subzones, increasing the total KOZ acres in the region to 580.

Included in this enhancement are several parcels in Athens Township near Mill's Pride and the Valley Business Park that total 184 acres. There were also ten acres designated near the Towanda Airport and eight acres in Tuscarora Township.

In Forest City, two vacant buildings were designated. One 24,500 square foot building

is a former textile plant and the other 30,000 square foot building is a former supermarket.

The PA Department of Community and Economic Development developed the KOZ program in 1999 as a tool to revive economically distressed communities by creating virtually state and local tax-free zones throughout the commonwealth. Each parcel designated must meet certain criteria relating to economic conditions such as poverty level, housing, population loss, job loss and underdeveloped or deteriorated property. Each property must be approved through a resolution or ordinance through the county, municipality, and school district to receive the tax abatement, which is finally approved by the state.



## Government Contract Procurement Assistance Impact



The Procurement Program acts as a liaison in exploring subcontracting opportunities for businesses interested in selling their products to the federal or state government and prime contractors. Personalized counseling, technical assistance, bulletins, and updates regarding contracting information are also provided.

NTRPDC's Procurement Program Clients attained \$9,383,664 with one hundred sixty-one (161) contracts awarded in calendar year 2004.

### Procurement clients awarded contracts during the year include:

Nickels Tool & Model Shop  
Milnes Engineering, Inc.  
B&K Equipment Company  
HTM Precision Machining  
McCall Masonry  
OSRAM Sylvania, Inc.  
Gladding Braided Products, LLC  
The Milnes Company, Inc.  
Nickerson Construction  
Montrose Publishing, Inc.  
R&G Sheet Metal  
Spectrum Electrical Services, Inc.  
Safe & Snuggly, Inc.  
Thomas Magnetix, Inc.

## Small Business Training Expands Knowledge and Bottom Line



In 2004, 52 Small Business Training Grants were awarded totaling \$33,742. Through this 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 costs. Businesses participated in training events that allowed them to learn about emerging trends and technologies that affect the way they do business. Funding is provided through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

- "The Small Business Training Grant played a vital role in receiving specialized training for our employees. They were able to attend an Advanced Screen Printing training that increased our company productivity in this department by thirty percent.

This training allowed our company's profit to increase as well. Thank you!" Steve Johnston, President of Northern Tier Athletics, Mansfield PA.

- "The Small Business Training Grant allowed me to learn more sophisticated product price hedging techniques. These techniques allow Fleet Transport and Trading to more effectively compete with larger industry suppliers based outside of the Northern Tier Area." Scott Quigg, Fleet Transport and Trading Inc., Montrose PA.
- "The Training grant will help How-A-Mazing help teachers better meet their agriculture standards for Pennsylvania. I attended Penn State for AG in the Classroom and came home with so many resources I had to bring it home in a suitcase! Thank you Northern Tier!" Rick and Debbie Howard, How-A-Mazing Corn Maze, Wyalusing PA

## Site Development Incentive Grants



For the third year in a row, NTRPDC has provided funding for the initial stages of site development projects in the region. Eligible activities include feasibility studies, environmental surveys, and archeological and historical surveys. The cost of these activities 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 Incentive 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.

During the reporting period, ten grants were awarded totaling \$30,000, which included environmental surveys and feasibility studies.

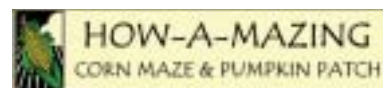
## Businesses Develop Websites through Technical Assistance and Grants



In 2004, 46 Small Business Internet Grants were awarded in the total amount of \$29,134. Also, 38 technical assistance sessions helped businesses with Internet related issues.

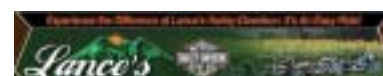
- [www.howamazing.us](http://www.howamazing.us)

"Northern Tier has been a tremendous help to starting a new business for How-A-Mazing Corn Maze. We received a grant for our website...Thank you Northern Tier." *Rich and Debbie Howard*



- [www.lancesharley.com](http://www.lancesharley.com)

"The internet business grant that NTRPDC awarded to us was very helpful in our website design. The grant helped us to upgrade our current website and make improvements we would otherwise not be able to accomplish. With the new look, the motorcycle sound effects, and a little flashing graphic, our customers experience the difference Lance's Harley-Davidson has to offer." *Kelly Chase*



- [www.caregiversworld.com](http://www.caregiversworld.com)

"Both the Caregivers World and Econoline Industries websites are now completed and we are very happy with them. We could not have done this without the possibility of your financial assistance..." *Patricia Webster*



### Websites Developed and/or Updated

Strugatz Art -----	<a href="http://www.strugatzart.com">www.strugatzart.com</a>	Mazars Cuisine -----	<a href="http://www.mazarscuisine.com">www.mazarscuisine.com</a>
Blanchard's Video Service	<a href="http://www.blanchlegalvideo.com">www.blanchlegalvideo.com</a>	Mountainhaus Kennels	<a href="http://www.mountainhauskennels.com">www.mountainhauskennels.com</a>
Class Act Fabrics -----	<a href="http://www.classactfabrics.com">www.classactfabrics.com</a>	Murus -----	<a href="http://www.murus.com">www.murus.com</a>
Corbett Motors -----	<a href="http://www.corbettmotorsinc.com">www.corbettmotorsinc.com</a>	Olde Church Emporium	<a href="http://www.oldechurchemporium.com">www.oldechurchemporium.com</a>
Dick Allyn Photography -----	<a href="http://www.dickallyn.com">www.dickallyn.com</a>	Painter's Meat Products -----	<a href="http://www.paintersmeats.com">www.paintersmeats.com</a>
Endless Mountain Donut Co.	<a href="http://www.thebakerycafe.com">www.thebakerycafe.com</a>	Petcare Baily's Original -----	<a href="http://www.Bailysoriginal.com">www.Bailysoriginal.com</a>
Gerard E. Shinn Construction	<a href="http://www.shinnconstruction.com">www.shinnconstruction.com</a>	Pure Pennsylvania -----	<a href="http://www.purepennsylvania.com">www.purepennsylvania.com</a>
Idlewild Ski Shop -----	<a href="http://www.idlewildskishop.com">www.idlewildskishop.com</a>	R & B Gifts -----	<a href="http://www.randbgifts.com">www.randbgifts.com</a>
Keystone Truck Caps -----	<a href="http://www.keystonecaps.com">www.keystonecaps.com</a>	S. McClain Stone Inc. -----	<a href="http://www.smclainstone.com">www.smclainstone.com</a>
L & M Comfort Footwear -----	<a href="http://www.lmfootwear.com">www.lmfootwear.com</a>	Satomi Mack Clothing Connections	<a href="http://www.rentdress.com">www.rentdress.com</a>
LB Printery -----	<a href="http://www.lbprintery.net">www.lbprintery.net</a>	Sawlog, Inc. -----	<a href="http://www.sawloginc.com">www.sawloginc.com</a>
Leona Meat Plant -----	<a href="http://www.leonameatplant.com">www.leonameatplant.com</a>	Seasons' Specialites -----	<a href="http://www.seasonsdecor.com">www.seasonsdecor.com</a>
Leona Meat Plant -----	<a href="http://www.allnaturalbeefco.com">www.allnaturalbeefco.com</a>	Sunset Valley Deer Farm	<a href="http://www.sunsetvalleyhunting.com">www.sunsetvalleyhunting.com</a>
Load Cell Central -----	<a href="http://www.800loadcel.com">www.800loadcel.com</a>	Tracey's Car Care -----	<a href="http://www.traceyscarmacare.com">www.traceyscarmacare.com</a>
Lucia's Needle Arts -----	<a href="http://www.flyingneedle.com">www.flyingneedle.com</a>	Tyoga Container -----	<a href="http://www.tyogacontainer.com">www.tyogacontainer.com</a>

# 2004 Annual Meeting Highlights



1 - Northern Tier Staff (L-R) Susan Coates, Cindy Lundy, Deb Mathers, Cindy Krise, Paulette Potter, Kim Barnes, Jill Koski, Melissa Fleming

2 - Kevin Abrams presents Employee Service Awards to (L-R) Deb Mathers 20 years, Paulette Potter 15 years, Melissa Fleming 5 years, Laurie Lentz 5 years, Brian Baker 5 years, Kerry Meehan 5 years



3 - John and Nannette Estep of Lübbering Corp accept the 2003 Business of the Year Award from Kevin Abrams.

4 - Guest Speaker Rick Peltz from ARC receives a thank you gift from Commissioner Betty Reibson



5 - Kevin Abrams presents outgoing chairman Jim Rogers with a plaque and a framed photo of the Annual Report cover

6 - Eagle Rock Winery provided wine tastings



7 - Senator Rodger Madigan receives a door prize

8 - Kevin Abrams presents five year service awards to advisory committee members Fred Robinson (L), Pete Butler (R)



A low interest loan from NTRPDC allowed Bryan and Elwin Fitch to expand Four Wynds Farm in Bradford County.



**F**rom down on the farm to the sky's the limit...the NTRPDC Loan Program worked with many businesses this year. From large to small, start up and existing, manufacturing and commercial, but none were as diverse as the two featured here.

Four Wynds Farm is located in Bradford County. Like many small farms, they knew they had to grow to survive. With the assistance of a low interest loan from the DCED Small Business First Fund, Elwin and Charlene Fitch were able to construct a new barn to accommodate a growing herd of cattle on the 250 acre Century Farm. This major expansion would enable them to bring on a partner. They found one close by; their son Bryan recently joined the family operation, making it a fifth generation dairy farm.

The development of cryogenic lasers with applications such as missile defense and the security of U.S. citizens and soldiers will bring an estimated 75 new jobs to Susquehanna County. Dr. David C. Brown, President of Snake Creek Lasers, LLC., was recently awarded a three million dollar Department of Defense contract for military research in the development of laser systems. In cooperation with the Governor's Action Team, NTRPDC assisted the company in obtaining an Opportunity Grant and a low interest loan to purchase new equipment. At Snake Creek the mission is simple... "to create a profitable, world class, high technology laser manufacturing, sales and distribution company right here in Hallstead, Pennsylvania."



Snake Creek Lasers, LLC obtained a low interest loan, enabling the purchase of new equipment and creation of 75 new jobs in Susquehanna County.



## Loan Program Impact

<u>Business Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Jobs Created</u>	<u>Jobs Retained</u>
Healthy Habits Inc.	\$100,000	5	
University Club of Mansfield	\$130,000	5	20
R&T Technologies	\$50,000	4	15
Deer Park Lumber Inc.	\$300,000	3	55
B&R Products Inc.	\$55,000	20	21
E.H.Hall Co. Inc.	\$200,000		156
ABC Montrose Corp.	\$75,000		62
Burman Collision Service	\$100,000	1	6
The Log Cabin Restaurant	\$157,500	10	13
Robert T. Griffis & Sons, Inc.	\$25,000		10
Endless Mountain Bakery and Café Too	\$200,000	10	12
Elms Restaurant LLC	\$110,000	3	5
Four Wynds Farms Partnership	\$200,000		3
Snake Creek Lasers	<u>\$200,000</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>3</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,002,500</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>381</b>

### NTRPDC Client Survey Results

Annually, we ask our business clients how satisfied they are with our services.

When asked about the **timeliness** of assistance, we received a **96%** approval rating. When asked about **quality** and **value** of service, clients responded with a **93%** approval rating.



Conservation Corps workers do repairs at French Azilum.

## Working Together to Develop Skills for the Future While Preserving Our Past



In a unique collaborative effort between workforce development, historic preservation, and community development, an important historical site in Bradford County is being improved; while at the same time young adults are receiving valuable skills training.

The French Azilum Historical Site is known for providing a refuge for a group of French exiles in 1793 and was built for Marie Antoinette. The construction workers on the site, who are 18-21 years old, are employed by the Pennsylvania Conservation Corps and receive guidance from Bradford County Action through the Workforce Investment Act. The crewmembers receive hands-on construction training at the job site as well as off-site skills development such as GED training.

The Conservation Corps workers, who began working at the site in July have

- replaced the cedar-shingle roof on the site's historical museum cabin,
- installed two handicap-access ramps, and
- repaired stone walls at the site.

They are also converting the wagon barn into a visitor's center. When the project is completed, the building will be heated and will be able to be used year-round. The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, which owns the site, is involved in order to insure the preservation of the original and historical features of the site. The upgrades to the site also are being funded by a federal Community Development Block Grant.



## Health Careers Week

November 8-12, 2004



Did you know that the demand for qualified workers in the field of healthcare is at an all-time high in Pennsylvania? The field of healthcare is extremely diverse and offers a variety of career opportunities.

Pennsylvania's third annual Health Careers Week began in the Northern Tier with an innovative webcast. Students from Elk Lake High School and Towanda Junior/Senior High School viewed a "virtual job shadowing" webcast which highlighted some of the exciting healthcare careers. The webcast finished up with a question and answer session with some of the healthcare professionals featured in the video. Later, local healthcare professionals were on hand to lead discussions and answer questions about health care careers.

On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, Elk Lake High School hosted 200 students from seven school districts in Susquehanna and Wyoming County for Healthcare Career Day. Students met with healthcare providers to learn more about their jobs and required training.

Healthcare providers from Allied Services, Endless Mountains Health Systems, and Tyler Memorial Hospital; together with the American Red Cross, U.S. military services, and private practitioners, began the day with a series of presentations detailing their particular specialty within the healthcare field. Following the presentations, students met with healthcare professionals in small group interviews.

The Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission, the Northern Tier



Students learn about training opportunities in health careers from a representative from Lackawanna College.

Industry and Education Consortium and The Trehab Center, Inc organized this event.

On November 10<sup>th</sup>, the Towanda Junior/Senior High School hosted a Health Career Fair. Approximately 100 high school students from six school districts attended. Health care providers from Memorial Hospital, The Guthrie Clinic and Greater Valley EMS were on hand to talk to students about their various healthcare professions.

Post-secondary educators from Mansfield University, Keystone College, Penn College North Campus, SCT BOCES, Wilkes University, LCCC, Lackawanna College, and the Arnot Ogden School of Nursing talked to students about training opportunities.

The students could take part in blood pressure screenings, massage therapy and view x-rays. There were demonstrations by EMT's as well. The Health Career Fair was a collaborative effort between the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission, Bradford County Action and the Towanda School District.

## Youth Leadership in the Northern Tier



There are many misconceptions about today's youth. Many adults believe they lack drive and direction, are unacquainted with solving problems on their own, and generally have a negative attitude about their future. Job seekers in the region complain about the lack of good jobs while employers say they must recruit from outside the area to fill these same good jobs.

The Northern Tier Youth Leadership Program, modeled after a highly successful program run by the Tioga County Development Corporation, is designed to sharpen the leadership skills of 120 high school juniors and to help them create a deeper understanding of the opportunities in their communities and therefore be more open to staying in the Northern Tier Region.

The opportunity to interact with one another and business and industry leaders helps them realize their own potential and builds relationships that foster pride in their community and a sense of the possibility for a lasting career in this Region.

The program includes at least thirty students from each county who are beginning to show leadership potential and interest in their community. The timeline is one year starting in eleventh grade requiring a commitment to nine daylong sessions, running almost ten months, outside and evening assignments. By twelfth grade, students will have the opportunity to apply leadership skills in their community and school. There are also orientation and a graduation ceremony the students must organize and conduct on their own.

Session topics include:

- valuing diversity and managing conflict;
- understanding business and economics;
- health and human services;
- teens and the law;
- communications;
- arts and entertainment;
- local, state and federal government; and
- quality of life.

Partners in the Northern Tier Youth Leadership Program include the Central Bradford Progress Authority, which oversees both Bradford and Sullivan Counties; The Trehab Center, Inc. covering Susquehanna County; The Tioga County Development Corporation managing Tioga County; and the Tunkhannock Area School District running Wyoming County.

Following are highlights from activities that have taken place throughout the Region in the past fiscal year:

- Bradford/Sullivan students attended a session hosted by Fred Robinson, a WIB member and certified Covey Leadership Instructor. The topic was *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*, by Sean Covey, which highlights the tough issues and life changing decisions teens face.
- Susquehanna County students worked with the Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) organization. They created a billboard with an anti-destructive decision message, which was placed on Interstate 81 in Susquehanna County.

- Tioga County students participated in communication, arts, and entertainment sessions held at a local arts and cultural center. Local artists gave presentations, then students viewed their art and were interviewed on a live radio show.
- Wyoming County students were able attend an event featuring the President of the United States. Students thought the trip was truly a once-in-a-lifetime event.

## PennStep Program Helps Small Communities Afford Infrastructure Upgrades



In 2004, the state proposed funding cuts for Local Development Districts. Thanks in part to our local legislators; funding was restored so that we can continue to use programs such as PennStep to help our communities.

Rural communities often lack the necessary financial and professional resources to bring their water and sewer infrastructure up to present day standards. The Pennsylvania Small Towns Environment Program (PennStep) is a small community assistance program funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

PennStep uses self-help techniques to reduce the cost of residential drinking water and wastewater projects. It requires communities to evaluate the parts of residential water or sanitary sewer projects they can do on their own and to work together as a community to complete these parts.

In 2004, NTRPDC provided \$55,000 in grants for projects in each of counties in the region.

- Towanda Borough in Bradford County was able to replace a waterline.
- Eagles Mere Borough in Sullivan County and the Tri-Borough Municipal Authority in Susquehanna County also each received a grant for sewer line replacement and extension.
- Elkland Borough in Tioga County received funding for a sewer line replacement to serve twenty-two residences, and Mehoopany Township replaced a waterline.



Through assistance from NTRPDC, Sheshequin Township in Bradford County received a \$25,000 grant from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development to help them purchase a multi-purpose truck to help maintain township roads and property.

## Municipalities Utilize Technology



The Municipal Technology Assistance Program offers municipalities, Council's of Government, and Authorities access to technical assistance and technology

grants. Last year, 87 hardware/software incentive grants were given out for a total of \$31,116. Also, 79 technical assistance sessions were given.



This regional map highlights in green the 132 out of 166 municipalities that have received either grants, technical assistance, or training since the program's inception.

- "Without the Hardware Software Incentive Grants, our small township would be unable to purchase software and a computer that we really need... Before we were able to buy QuickBooks, everything was done manually. This causes extra hours of work plus more of a chance of errors... These grants are a huge help. Thanks!" *Brenda Arnold, Nelson Township*
- "...thank you for all your assistance with purchasing the Dreamweaver software to build our website. The NTRPDC has been very supportive and helpful to our borough with many of our development projects. We appreciate the assistance and technical support." *Elizabeth Ratchford, Factoryville Borough*
- "Through your help the township has been able to keep up with the needs required to do the many functions required to maintain records for the townships and also to communicate through the internet with the various State and Federal agencies. NTRP has also provided training that is very badly needed in this area." *Janet Lundberg, Sheshequin Township*
- "It is a pleasure and a privilege to work with individuals as well as an organization that portrays and displays an attitude and spirit of professionalism. Thank you again for all that you have done to assist our municipality in running more efficiently." *Susan Lanza, Nicholson Borough*
- "We have utilized this program for the last 3 years. With municipalities being on such limited budgets, it would be difficult for us to budget for these items... This program has allowed us to keep pace with the ever changing technology. Paperwork at the municipal level has increased substantially over the last 5-10 years." *Gary Horning, Columbia and Armenia Township*

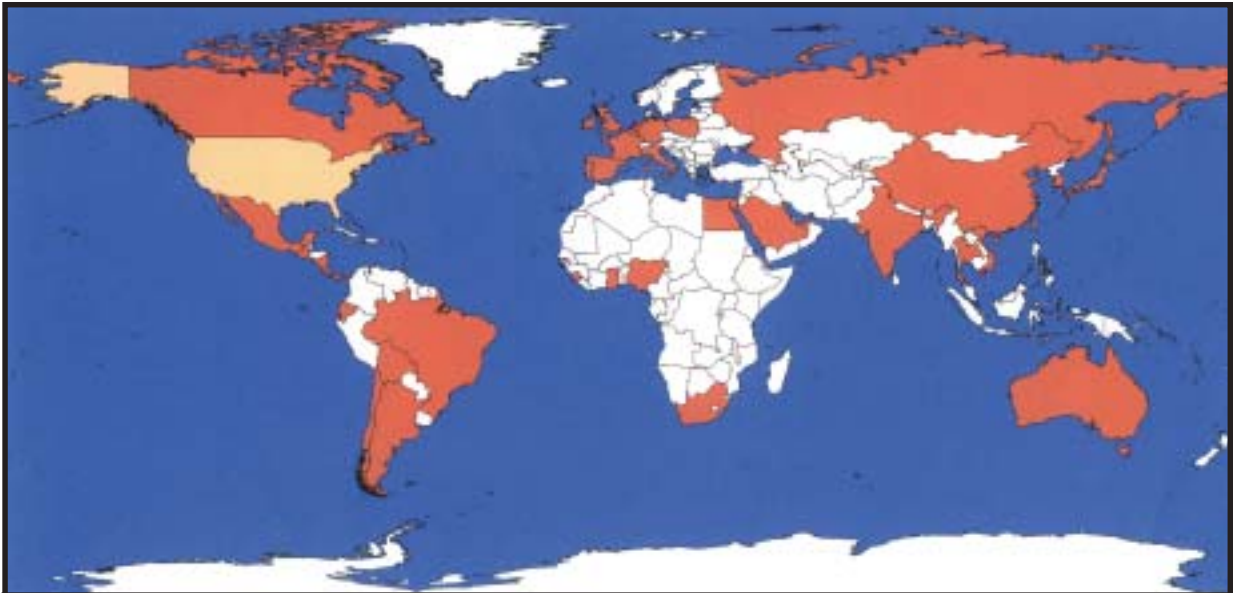


## R&T Technologies Reaches Export Milestone

R&T Technologies of Canton initially approached the Export program with no previous international sales. With the help of Northern Tier's market research, technical assistance, and two market access grants, the company achieved its first ever export sales early in 2004. Since that time, exports have grown to over 20% of annual sales and aided the company's threefold increase in employment. The upward trend is forecast to continue as additional contracts are secured in Southeast Asia and Canada. In recognition of its commitment to international sales as a critical component of the company's growth strategy, R&T Technologies earned the Northern Tier region Governor's Export Excellence Award.

R&T Technologies receives Governor's Export Excellence Award at NTRPDC quarterly meeting. Pictured from L-R: Scott Conrad, OIBD; Chad Rimbey, NTRPDC; Kevin Abrams, NTRPDC; John Terefencko, President, R&T Technologies; Mike Reed, VP Operations, R&T Technologies; Janet Lewis, Bradford County Commissioner.





In 2004, businesses in the Northern Tier Region exported their products to over 40 countries with assistance from NTRPDC.

## Success in South America for Troy Business



With the help of the respective Pennsylvania trade offices and Northwest Commission, the 2004 Brazil-Chile Mission provided a venue for machine tool, plastics, and powdered metal companies to develop potential customer relationships in two of Latin America's leading economies. Lübbing Corp. of Troy benefited from over two weeks

of appointments with the region's largest manufacturers in the automotive and aerospace industries. The Northern Tier Export program provided technical assistance as well as financial support through a market access grant. The mission will permit Lübbing to expand its exports beyond North America and one of the world's fastest growing markets.

# International Wood Buyers Seek Northern Pennsylvania Hardwoods



In collaboration with SEDA-COG's Export program, pre-arranged appointments were scheduled for hardwood suppliers from throughout the two regions. The event matched local lumber companies with buyers from China, Vietnam, Korea, Spain, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Mexico, and the United Kingdom. All of the participating buyers were pre-qualified by the Pennsylvania Overseas Trade Offices and recruited by the PA Hardwoods Development Council.



With modern technology and a workforce with generations of experience, Pennsylvania hardwoods have earned the highest respect of both the world market and savvy consumers.

Market Access grants are available for Trade Events, Export Training, and Global Standards Attainment.	<b>Export Development Assistance Results in Jobs, Increased Sales and Marketing, and Awards...</b>	
	<b>Market Access Grants Awarded in 2004:</b>	
	Lübbering Corp.	\$2,500
	Frontier Industrial Technology	\$2,500
	<b>Total Market Access Grant Funds Awarded since 2003:</b>	<b>\$21,360</b>
Sales Generated as a result of the awards:	\$3,582,993	
Jobs Created/Retained attributed to MAG's	72	



The I-99 corridor nears completion in Tioga County

## Rural Transportation Improvement Projects



Funding for improving our regional transportation system is very competitive due to limited funding. Each funding cycle, it is the Rural Transportation Advisory Committee's (RTAC) job to review and prioritize all projects and recommend them to the State.

This year, nine applicants had the opportunity to present their projects in a day long session to the RTAC. In the end, two projects were fully funded, two projects were partially funded and two projects were partially funded and sent on to the state for more funding.

The two fully funded projects included

- \$75,000 for improvements to the Sayre Train Station
- \$250,000 for Tunkhannock Streetscape improvements.

Partially funded projects included

- \$99,000 for the College Ave Streetscape in Factoryville

- the Laceyville Streetscape Phase III funded at \$337,000
- The Pine Creek Rail Trail was partially funded at \$50,000 and the D&H Rail Trail phase II was partially funded at \$70,000. Both were sent on to the state for additional funding.

## Transportation Planning

The region's short-term planning was approved this year with the 2005-2008 Transportation Improvement Plan. It is the planning and funding guide used to develop and construct transportation projects in the Northern Tier Region. The document is updated every two years to ensure that projects are continually moving forward.

The region's long-term planning was also approved with the NTRPDC Long Range Transportation Plan. This plan will help guide the programming of transportation projects for



the next twenty years within fifteen selected transportation corridors in the region. Project ideas were developed through public input.

## Equipment Shows

Last summer NTRPDC hosted the annual Equipment Shows throughout the region. Geared toward municipal personnel, these shows offer an opportunity to network, view all different types of equipment, and visit with vendors. The Susquehanna-Wyoming County show was held at the Harford Fairgrounds in Susquehanna County on July 29, 2004. Over three hundred people from nine different counties in Northeastern PA attended. The Bradford-Tioga County show was held at the Troy Fairgrounds in Bradford County on August 5, 2004 with over five hundred attendees.

## Completed Projects

In Tioga County, the I-99 corridor moved six miles closer to becoming a reality as a new section was opened from North Bloss to the Mansfield bypass. Drivers now have a safer and faster route to travel through Tioga County. Penn DOT Secretary Allen D. Biehler and Senator Rodger Madigan were on hand to give praise for the new highway and help in the ribbon cutting ceremony.

A project that has done an exceptional job at garnering money for a project and proceeding through to construction has been the Laceyville Streetscape project in Laceyville Borough, Wyoming County.

Laceyville is a small quiet town just off US Route 6 in Northern Wyoming County on the Bradford County line. This small town has



Vendors showcase their products at the annual Equipment Show.

been a bright spot in PENNDOT's Transportation Enhancement funding program over the last five years. With the support of citizens and local officials, this municipality has received three phases of funding totaling \$522,000.

- The first two phases improved the aesthetics of the downtown area for pedestrians and motorists.
- The final phase will be constructed in the near future, which will link the downtown to the Susquehanna River bridge.

From the project's inception, Laceyville pursued this project by working with a consultant to develop a design plan. Then in 2000, they received Transportation Enhancement funding through PENNDOT for new sidewalks and period lighting along their main street. In 2002 Laceyville received additional funding to continue developing the streetscape.

They are now going to receive more funding for a third phase to link the area surrounding Laceyville with the downtown. This story shows what a small rural town can accomplish when the citizens and officials in an area work together towards a common goal.

## 2004 Executive Board

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The cover photo is taken from High Knob Overlook, Worlds End State Park in Sullivan County. Rebecca Bagley provided the cover photo.

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