

In Maine, narratives of sustainability have emerged in response to a proposed national park to be located on forestland traditionally owned and managed by private forest products companies. These responses are evident in this case study of texts from 1994 to 2005, in which competing sustainability narratives are analyzed. The narratives detail how the past, present, and future of the state's forests have been constructed as depicting the forest as either (a) a reinvented sustainable landscape or (b) an unsustainable landscape with potential to be restored. Although sustainability is a concept and practice germane to both those proposing a new use for the land and those fighting such a change, sustainability narratives take different shapes—of progress or decline—depending on how humans are depicted in relation to the forest. Thus, competing narratives portray *progress* as a reinvented forest and *decline* as a yet-to-be restored forest. This study contributes to understanding environmental issues as contested sustainability and offers an empirical longitudinal study of the forms and content of competing sustainability narratives. In 2005, the focus of this conflict shifted away from the park proposal and toward an application by Plum Creek Timber to develop portions of 426,000 acres, some of which are located in the park's proposed region. A revised and approved version of Plum Creek's development plan is currently under appeal.

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