



Media Contact: Kim Drew, APR  
706.568.9504  
[kimdrewpr@gmail.com](mailto:kimdrewpr@gmail.com)

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**LUMBER INDUSTRY FIRST: NEW WOOD SPECIES INTRODUCED**  
***More Than Half of Norway Spruce Inventory Located in New York***

(Cumberland, ME) – Momentous news from the U.S. lumber industry: Effective immediately, Norway Spruce becomes the first major U.S.-grown, fully tested, softwood species to be tested and approved for construction use since the lumber testing process began in the 1920s. Norway Spruce was approved for use by the American Lumber Standard Committee (ALSC) on October 20, 2016. Complete information on Norway Spruce may be found at [www.nelma.org/norwayspruce](http://www.nelma.org/norwayspruce).

The Northeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association (NELMA), the lumber grading agency for the Northeast, announced today that Norway Spruce will join the already-existing SPF (spruce-pine-fir south) grading category, indicating the wood is approved for home construction applications such as wall studs, floor and ceiling joists, and industrial applications.

“This is a momentous occasion for the lumber and building industries,” said Jeff Easterling, president of NELMA. “The testing of a new species of this volume hasn’t happened in almost a century, and it’s been an exciting year as NELMA has worked to shepherd Norway Spruce through the approval process that allows it to be used as a mainstream construction material.”

**New York Impact**

With more than half of the country’s Norway Spruce inventory located in the state of New York, the impact of this action on the state has the potential to be beneficial for the environment and the economy.

“New York is sustainably managing state-owned forests to ensure their health and integrity. The volume of Norway Spruce on State-owned property exceeds 900 million standing board feet,” said New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Basil Seggos. “Utilizing forest best management practices, Norway Spruce will be a positive economic influence on New York State well into the next century and beyond.”

Timber harvesting in the state of New York brings in approximately \$250 million per year to forest landowners, a number expected to potentially rise as the tremendous amount of Norway Spruce inventory becomes available.

“The timing of this announcement could not be better. The Norway Spruce resource is maturing and we hope this catalyzes the development of new markets and an increased interest by existing facilities,” continued Seggos.

For complete information on Norway Spruce testing, history, positive impacts on state and regional economies, and what happens next with the species, please visit [www.nelma.org/norwayspruce](http://www.nelma.org/norwayspruce).

Founded in 1933, [NELMA](http://www.nelma.org) (Northeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association) is the not-for-profit rules writing agency for Eastern White Pine lumber and the steward of the lumber industry in the Northeast. NELMA is also the grading authority for Eastern Spruce, Balsam Fir, the Spruce-Pine-Fir (SPFs) grouping, and other commercially important eastern softwood lumber species. For more information, please visit [www.easternwhitepine.org](http://www.easternwhitepine.org) and [www.nelma.org](http://www.nelma.org). Find NELMA on Facebook at NELMA (Northeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association) and on twitter @inelma.

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