



Northeastern Area News Notes



May 24, 2007



From the Director's Desk

The Constant

The only constant in our world is change. That sounds like a contradiction, but all one has to do is look around to see the effects. Change happens! A hundred years ago, who would have thought that anybody could fly from coast to coast in 1 day? More importantly, who would have thought that producing energy to make that trip would become a critical national issue? It is all here and it is here now!

How do you deal with constant change? There appear to be three options—resist or ignore it, go along with it, or influence it. The natural reaction is to ignore it: “If I just ignore it, it will go away or maybe it won’t be as big a problem as everyone thinks it is.” That response reminds me of a sign I saw the other day: “Change is good—you start.” For some reason, many of us resist this thing called “change.”

Some prefer a laissez-faire, go-along response and accept whatever change occurs. And there are others who choose to grab hold of change and start looking for ways to make it benefit themselves, their family, their future, or their organization. Someone wiser than me noted we have to change to stay even and we must drive change to get ahead! There is no “right” or “wrong” response to change. Each of us makes the choice that seems best for us.

Change is very prevalent in government and the Forest Service today. I remember a few years ago when I sent in my first electronic Time and Attendance Record. We now have access to almost the entire Human Capital Management system via computer. And computers themselves represent a whole world of change. Do you recall mainframes and punch cards?

Change in the Forest Service is evident through Reinventing State and Private Forestry, The Forest Service Transformation, AgLearn, and a long list of other efforts. The message is clear. The Forest Service of 10 years ago is not the Forest Service of today, and today’s Forest Service is not the Forest Service of the future.

In the Northeastern Area, we are grabbing change by its proverbial horns. By conducting an organizational study of the Northeastern Area, we are gaining a better understanding of how we must engage the future and what trends are important. It is also giving us a good look at our talents and how best to use them.

We have crafted a new Strategic Plan for the Northeastern Area, and its content will drive our business and work plans in fiscal year 2008 and beyond. We are carefully taking input from the



States we serve and other sources to ensure that, at least for the next 5 years, we have a road map that will produce meaningful outcomes for our customers, our agency, and our Nation.

Our future vision begins with every individual in the organization. Simple efforts by individuals can make a big difference in how the Northeastern Area is able to approach the future of forestry in the Northeast and Midwest. Things like staying positive, being flexible, and accepting or driving change are the first critical steps to success.

An integral part of our vision is how each person's skills and abilities will contribute to our current as well as our future organization. See it as the beginning, not the end—an open rather than a closed door.

Finally, stay engaged with the changes that are underway. Being involved will eliminate the frustration of feeling out of control and will help give you ownership of the ultimate outcome. It is important that everyone provide input when requested. You know what you know better than anyone else, and the decisions about change will benefit from what you know!

Like a ship setting out to sea, it takes a complete crew to help ensure its arrival at the port of call. Change does not come from someone or somewhere; it is the constantly changing sea we cross that changes us. Together we will do it safely and well.

— Kathryn P. Maloney
Area Director

Newtown Square

Forest Service Assists New Jersey Forest Fire Service on Pine Barrens Fire

On May 15 a fire accidentally ignited on the McGuire Air National Guard Base, located 25 miles north of Atlantic City, NJ. The fire burned 17,000 acres of the New Jersey Pine Barrens near Warren Grove. Despite extreme fire behavior and occasional flames of over 100 feet, the New Jersey Forest Fire Service, with the assistance of an estimated 125 local fire department units, successfully protected 97 percent of the 2,500 homes threatened by the fire. Over 2,500 individuals were evacuated from their homes for 3 days. The Northeastern Area worked with the New Jersey Forest Fire Service and FEMA to provide a Fire Suppression Assistance Grant. This grant provided immediate funds to the State forestry agency to obtain and stage additional resources to help fight the fire, such as single engine tankers and fuel. In addition, the Northeastern Area provided advice to FEMA supporting a declaration that will assist homeowners to recover costs for damage to their homes. Congressman Jim Saxton requested a flyover of the area on May 19, and expressed gratitude to the firefighters for their hard work.



Durham Field Office

Lord of the Flies

During the week of May 14, Joe Elkinton (University of Massachusetts) released *Cyzenis albicans* flies at two locations in eastern Massachusetts in hopes of ending a persistent winter moth outbreak. *C. albicans* adult females lay their eggs on leaves where winter moth larvae feed. The larvae eat the fly eggs along with the leaves. The fly eggs hatch inside the winter moth larva, and the fly larvae kill the host after it pupates. *C. albicans*, which looks like a small housefly, is very successful at finding areas where winter moth larvae are numerous. Joe has been able to rear and begin releasing *C. albicans* with support from the Forest Service, APHIS, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. He hopes to have the same success experienced in Nova Scotia in the 1950s and in the Pacific Northwest in the 1970s. Not only has *C. albicans* had great success in the past, but it's very host specific—it won't attack even closely related inchworm species.



Cyzenis albicans, which resembles a common housefly, is a successful biological control of winter moth larvae. (Photo credit: Joe Elkinton)

Aerial Sketchmapping Refresher Workshop



Bernie Raimo welcomes attendees to the Aerial Sketchmapping Refresher Workshop in Portsmouth, NH.

Aerial sketchmappers and GIS specialists from the six New England States converged on Portsmouth, NH, on May 22 for a refresher workshop on the use of the digital aerial sketchmapping system and the aerial detection survey (ADS) database development process. The goal of the workshop was to improve the efficiency of the ADS process while increasing the accuracy of the data collected.



Forest Health Group Leader **Bernie Raimo** welcomed the 15 attendees and stressed the importance of the aerial survey information, referring to it as the “bread and butter” of the Forest Health Program. GIS Specialist **Tom Luther** gave a presentation detailing how information developed from aerial survey data is used in decisionmaking in support of a wide spectrum of program areas. Tom reviewed and clarified the ADS national standard protocols and database structure. Remote Sensing Specialist **Bill Frament** conducted a hands-on review of the digital sketchmapping system hardware and software, including project setup, and data collection and processing. The workshop concluded with a round-robin discussion of ground-checking protocols facilitated by Forest Health Specialist **Florence Peterson**.



Bill Frament sets up the digital aerial sketchmapping program for Paul St. Pierre (left) and Bruce Payton (right).

Morgantown Field Office

West Virginia Envirothon Competition Held at New Location



The West Virginia Envirothon teams gather on the steps of the Canaan Valley Lodge.

The 2007 West Virginia Envirothon, held April 26–27 at the Canaan Valley Resort, hosted teams of high school students from around the State. This annual competition gives students in grades 9 through 12 hands-on challenges that test their natural resource knowledge, skills, and problem-solving abilities. Tests were conducted outdoors, giving students a chance to work and learn in a real-world setting while being guided by environmental professionals. **Chuck Reger, Karen Sykes, Vicky Evans, Devin Wanner, and Toni Jones** participated in the 2-day event.

Students participated in training sessions the first day, followed by the competition the second day. Test topics included aquatics, soil, wildlife, forestry, and this year’s featured topic—alternative and sustainable energy. All teams gave brief presentations based on their response to a hypothetical scenario involving the use of alternative and renewable technologies to supply the electric needs of the Canaan Valley Resort. Following testing and the brief presentations, the five



teams with the highest score competed for first place by giving a full presentation on the featured topic.

The Shady Spring Biology Club took first place. Each team member won a \$1,000 scholarship. This team also has the privilege of representing West Virginia at the national Canon Envirothon this July at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, NY.

The West Virginia Envirothon is a cooperative effort of the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and 10 West Virginia State agencies and associations.

Forest Health Conducts Aerial Survey Flight on Allegheny National Forest

Forest Health Protection staff **Rick Turcotte** and **Tom Elliott** accompanied Lauren Miles and Don Scronek from the Allegheny National Forest (ANF) to conduct an aerial detection survey of conifer stands on the forest on April 24. The purpose of this survey was to look for evidence of *Sirex noctilio* and hemlock woolly adelgid within preselected conifer stands prior to leaf-out. The survey revealed that neither wide scale mortality nor discoloration were present in any of the conifer stands flown. Mortality and discoloration were easily detected in single-species stands, although sketching the exact location was often difficult. In stands with both hardwoods and conifers, this technique may have limited application because of the difficulty in visually determining single-tree and small-group mortality. Although point data were collected on discolored trees in these stands, the detection period is limited to the overlapping time span when trees are in a visible state and the time of year the flight is flown.



Discolored and dead red pines are evident in the Hearts Content Scenic Area on the Allegheny National Forest.

Based on the survey results, it is recommended that (1) the ANF continue to request aerial detection survey flights, and (2) susceptible conifer stands and other high-value areas be identified and closely inspected during the annual summer overview flight and by ANF field-going personnel. In addition, the potential for a fall flight should be explored, which may result in a better match between the detection of stressed (discolored) trees and the timing of the flight.

Predatory Beetles Released in New River Gorge National River



Forest Health Protection staff member **Karen Felton** went to the New River Gorge National River on May 1 to release 500 *Scymnus sinuanodulus* predatory beetles in the upper Wolf Creek area. Park biologist John Perez assisted with the release. This is the third type of

John Perez, a biologist from the New River Gorge National River, releases *Scymnus sinuanodulus* predatory beetles for hemlock woolly adelgid biological control.

predatory beetle released for hemlock woolly adelgid biological control in the park. Previous releases have included *Sasajiscymnus tsugae* and *Laricobius nigrinus* beetles. The successful establishment of a natural enemy complex for hemlock woolly adelgid is a long-term approach for maintaining the adelgid below damaging levels. Hemlock forests contribute greatly to the ecological, aesthetic, and recreational values of this park.

Exotic Insect and Disease Presentation on the Allegheny National Forest

Rick Turcotte and **Bill Oldland** presented a 1-hour program about exotic insects and diseases May 15 at the Marienville Ranger District on the Allegheny National Forest. The presentation covered the identification and biology of these exotic organisms as well as their potential impacts on forests. All district personnel attended the presentation as part of their annual safety meeting. In addition, Turcotte and Oldland visited the Tionesta Natural Area to review plans, find plots, and discuss data collection for the Forest Inventory and Analysis evaluation monitoring project beginning this summer.

Employees Make Presentations at Cheat Lake Elementary Science Day

Rick Turcotte, Bill Oldland, Frank Cromer, Tom Elliott, Adam Cumpston, and Toni Jones joined David Amrine from West Virginia University to present a science day at Cheat Lake Elementary. Five classes of first and second grade students each spent about 30 minutes engaged in activities involving the forest and forest animals. Approximately 130 students delved into creating leaf rubbings; aging trees; learning about the smells, tastes, and uses of forest trees; and viewing live forest insects and animals as well as pinned insects. A video camera and monitor provided a close up look at the interesting and strange world of insects. The presentations were well received by the students and staff, and a large number of them asked questions about forest trees, animals, and insects.

St. Paul Field Office

Planting DED-Tolerant American Elms in the Upper Mississippi Watershed

Plant Pathologist **Linda Haugen** continued a project to plant American elm trees tolerant to Dutch elm disease (DED) at sites in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa. Partners supporting the project include the Upper Mississippi River Forest Partnership, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center, and Luther College in Decorah, IA.

The plantings were an expansion of the project begun in 2005, when Dr. Jim Slavicek (Northern Research Station, Delaware, OH) brought 63 DED-tolerant American elm trees to establish demonstration plantings at these sites. A total of 93 more trees were added to the sites in April and May.

Restoring disease-tolerant cultivars in forests will allow them to naturally reproduce, carrying the genetic basis for disease tolerance into the natural forest population of American elms. These plantings will also serve as genetic reservoirs for future DED-tolerant elms as they adapt to local climate and soil conditions.



Schoolchildren Learn Lessons on the Green Streets of Chicago

The city of Chicago joined with State, Federal, and private partners to conduct an Arbor Day program for students in the Chicago Public Schools. This program supplied educational materials, guest speakers, and a chance for kids to get out of the classroom to plant trees.

Tom Dilley, Chicago Metropolitan Initiative Coordinator, visited several schools throughout the month-long program and was a guest speaker at the Ira F. Aldridge Elementary School on Arbor Day. More than 100 students and community volunteers planted 100 trees on the school grounds, and students headed home with a seedling to plant in their own neighborhoods.

The partnership includes 58 Chicago area public schools, the Forest Service, the Morton Arboretum, the National Arbor Day Foundation, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the Illinois Forestry Development Council, the Chicago Departments of Transportation and the Environment, Chicago Mayor Daley's Green Streets Program, and many other public and private organizations.



Students from the Ira F. Aldridge Elementary School in Chicago show their support for urban forestry during an Arbor Day event at their school.



Volunteers and community members planted 100 trees at the Ira F. Aldridge Elementary School in Chicago. The Arbor Day event culminated a month-long forestry education program in 58 Chicago public schools.

National Conference on Ecosystem Restoration

Teri Heyer, Watershed Planner, attended the Second National Conference on Ecosystem Restoration, April 23–27 in Kansas City, MO, and gave a presentation on defining priority forests to address the water quality and bird habitat issues in the upper Mississippi River basin.

The Mississippi River watershed was a key focus of many presentations, including one addressing how to “scale-up” and integrate restoration efforts along the Mississippi River basin. Scaling-up efforts in the Mississippi basin would require setting measurable restoration goals while garnering support from key partners to make these goals happen. Key messages about the Mississippi River basin were drafted for Federal and congressional leaders.

Reducing the size of the hypoxic zone in the Gulf of Mexico is one goal that has the potential to draw attention to land conservation efforts. The revised Hypoxia Action Plan from the U.S.



Environmental Protection Agency is due out later this year and may give watershed planners additional guidance for developing methods to reach that goal. The extent of the hypoxic zone in the gulf would have to be reduced by two-thirds in the next 8 years in order to meet the original goal. The Upper Mississippi sub-basin hypoxia team has been looking at the implementation and economic impacts of agricultural best management practices.

Web Cast Technology Brings State and Federal Foresters Together

Jill Johnson, Midwest Center for Urban and Community Forestry Coordinator, uses Web-cast technology to aid in exchanging information among State and Federal staff through virtual conferencing. Web casts allow groups to meet for discussions or presentations without leaving their home stations, and can be archived for future viewing.

Jill helped the State of Wisconsin host a Web cast in March in which over 80 participants in various locations joined in a presentation titled, “The Urban Forest: Mapping and Calculating the Benefits of City Trees.” In April, she invited counterparts from the Southern Centers for Urban Forestry and Wildland Urban Interface to “virtually” meet on an Urban Natural Resources Institute Web cast. The 1-hour presentation highlighted over 60 informational resources of interest to practitioners in the Northeastern Area and Southern Region.

In May, Jill conducted Web-cast training for Northeastern Area Urban and Community Forestry Program staff and managers of the Southern Centers for Urban Forestry and Wildland Urban Interface, and co-hosted a “Web Cast on Web Casts” for State urban forestry and volunteer/partnership coordinators. This session highlighted various Web-cast technologies available to the Forest Service and partners, oriented participants to the features available in Web-cast software, and instructed attendees on how to work with the Forest Service to utilize Web-cast capabilities for training a large number of people in their States. Owing to the popularity of this training, Jill will record another training session and make it available for download and viewing at any time from the Forest Service Web site.

Upper Mississippi River Forestry Partnership

Melinda Pruitt-Jones, Executive Director of Chicago Wilderness, recently met with the Upper Mississippi River Forestry Partnership (UMRFP) steering committee to exchange information and highlight achievements of the Chicago Wilderness organization. The UMRFP, a partnership of the Northeastern Area and the State Foresters from Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, and Indiana, is looking to expand the organization using the Chicago Wilderness as a model and to provide insight to take the UMRFP to the next level.

The steering committee was also briefed on the latest funded project through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Upper Mississippi Watershed Fund. Funds were awarded to the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy to set up demonstration sites to show how forest management can complement important bird habitat needs and to help adjoining landowners similarly manage their properties.



EDITOR'S NOTES

HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND!

Thank you to all who contributed to this issue.

DEADLINE!

The deadline for the next issue of the Northeastern Area News Notes is **COB Wednesday, June 20, 2007. Please e-mail articles to Deborah Muccio at dmuccio@fs.fed.us.**

Please remember:

- **Send text separate from photos and graphics.**
- **Include captions for all images.**
- **Do not place images in Word or PowerPoint.**

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