Northeastern Area News Notes

July 31, 2008

From the Director's Desk

"One Team, One Dream"

It's truly amazing what can be accomplished when the whole team, including each individual, puts its focus on a shared purpose—our dream. The energy, enthusiasm, and productivity of a fully functioning team are something to see and experience! The NA Executive Team is experiencing this phenomenon—just ask someone about our work in Morgantown on reforming the delivery of the stewardship program, or discovering what qualities inspire us to work our best as a team!

NA people are doing good things—*really* good things—working together. We are working toward shared agendas, making more progress in some issues than we ever thought possible. And we are going into these new frontiers of opportunity not alone, but together across NA, and across "boundaries" with the Eastern Region, Northern Research Station, Forest Products Lab, and importantly with our State partners as well.

Coordination across programs is becoming more and more frequent. We are integrating skills, energy, and resources where they matter most. The Offices of Communications and Knowledge Management are working shoulder to shoulder with Forest Health and Stewardship and other programs to deliver communication products and services of strategic value. Fire program managers are turning up the heat on the rest of us to recognize the opportunities to integrate fire and all our tools at the landscape level to achieve our goals!

We are working more closely on these important issues with agencies from Maine to Minnesota across our 20 States and the District of Columbia. We are building synergy with State and Private Forestry, other Forest Service branches, the Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters (NAASF), and nongovernmental organizations such as the National Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds. We are working on important issues and shaping national as well as regional agendas for shared purposes with focus and attention on reaching win-win solutions.

The truth is the Northeastern Area is and has been very productive. The other truth is we can be far more successful working as a team! The willingness to put NA objectives before those of an individual is part of what it takes to realize the power of true teamwork. We are becoming more and more influential, both within NA's borders and beyond. We are delivering good, relevant messages, and people are listening. More and more frequently we are changing opinions and behavior on regional and national scales.

The following are some outstanding examples of what I'm talking about:

- IWIMM exotic and invasive species efforts directly supporting NAASF goals
- 27 of 50 States supporting the "Don't Move Firewood" initiative, with more on the way
- Stewardship program revamping to best serve landowners across the landscape

- WERC competitive grants building cross-program linkages
- 48 of 50 States have joined our spatial analysis program to date

In a time when just about everything is being transformed in some way, NA, too, is changing—forging and supporting strong partnerships, delivering greater value for every Federal dollar, and committing to continued excellence, integrity, and credibility in all that we do. Now is the time for concerted action, for a focus on what is possible, and for each of us to reach out to the rest of the team and offer to help with our shared purposes.

One team, one dream—to achieve the greater successes by working together!

— Kathryn P. Maloney
Area Director

Sustainable Operations Tip of the Month

On a Sea Food Diet? (I see it, I eat it. . .)

Check this out to ensure that your food choices are healthy and environmentally friendly.

The Web site below is a great resource for those of us who love to eat seafood for both the interesting variety of tastes as well as the many health benefits associated with it, but are concerned by stories we hear about overfishing and habitat loss.

Many people are confused about which species are healthy eating choices and have low-level impacts when they are harvested. This site ranks many of the most commonly sold species by relative abundance; "incidental" impact on other species as a result of harvesting; and whether they are high in mercury, PCBs, or both.

It's easy to forget that every choice we make has implications far beyond what we may realize, such as sea turtles and fur seals getting caught up in long-line fishing operations. This Web site helps to bring that point home. Check it out at http://blueocean.org/Seafood/.

Newtown Square Headquarters Office

Using a Native Wasp to Search for an Invasive Pest

Northeast and Mid-Atlantic forest health managers are using colonies of the native ground-nesting wasp *Cerceris fumipennis* to search for the emerald ash borer (EAB), an invasive insect. Their goal is to monitor the wasp's natural predatory behavior as a means to detect EAB earlier.

The distribution of *C. fumipennis* ranges in the East from Southern Canada to Mexico and as far west as the Rockies. The insect can be found in areas of hard-packed soil and sparse vegetation, such as ballparks, campsites, and parking lots. Adult *C. fumipennis* provision their nests with metallic wood-boring beetles, including EAB.

The emerald ash borer, a native of Asia, has left more than 25 million ash trees in the United States either dead or dying in its wake. Its population continues to spread toward the Northeast through Pennsylvania and Ontario, and threatens the entire North American ash family. Efforts to eradicate or control the spread of the EAB population in the United States so far have proved especially challenging.

Canadian Food Inspection Agency researchers and others are training forest health managers how to locate and monitor *C. fumipennis* colonies. After the training is complete, participants plan to search for and monitor *C. fumipennis* wasp colonies in their respective States this summer and fall looking for EAB.

Participants come from all six New England States, as well as New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and West Virginia. The North Carolina Department of Agriculture is also conducting a search.

"The hope is that we will be able to catch EAB infestations early on, perhaps within the first year or two," said Maine Forest Service Entomologist Colleen Teerling. "If we catch it earlier, it will improve the possibility of eradicating the population."

The Forest Service Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry is providing funding, as well as coordinating training for the cooperative survey effort in New York and New England. NA is also developing an online database for States to submit their survey data and will help identify all beetles collected by the wasp.

Even as *C. fumipennis* promises to be effective for biosurveillance, it does not appear to show much promise in controlling the spread of EAB. "While the *Cerceris* wasp is an excellent biosurveillance tool, it will not be an effective biocontrol agent because EAB is so prolific," said Acting DFO Forest Health Group Leader Michael Bohne.

The project just getting underway has already received extensive media coverage. The story was picked up by the Associated Press in early July and has been run on 227 media outlets and Web sites so far in North America and Europe.

More information is available on the Internet at
http://www.na.fs.fed.us/nanews/archives/2008/archives08.shtm.

Countdown to 2010 Forest Legacy Project Competition

The FY2010 project selection process for the Forest Legacy Program (FLP) has been announced. The Area Director sent the Chief's call letter to the State lead agencies on June 27, 2008. All 20 Northeastern Area States participate in the FLP. States have been asked to submit a prioritized list of up to three projects to the Area Director by October 15, 2008. The national selection process is very competitive due to the significant number of project requests and the limited number of projects that can be funded in any year. The national selection panel meets in early January to discuss all applications. In preparation for the national panel, Forest Legacy Program Specialists **Scott Stewart** and **Neal Bungard** will be working with State partners during October and November to ensure that NA partner States are submitting complete and competitive

applications. To date, the Forest Legacy Program has conserved more than 1.6 million acres of forest land, the majority of which—1.1 million acres—are located in NA.

Durham Field Office

Urban Forest Emergency Response Training

Because trees provide important social, economic, and environmental benefits to residents in urban areas, dealing with downed and damaged trees quickly and providing critical information for response and recovery are important public issues. As evidenced by recent events, damaged trees left in the wake of natural disasters impact community resources, residents, budgets, and infrastructure. Local agencies sometimes find it difficult to respond to such incidents, and may not have the time or expertise to efficiently make tree damage assessments needed for efficient response work. Getting that critical information quickly is the objective of an Urban Forest Emergency Response project underway in the Northeastern Area.

A methodology developed by Dudley Hartel and Eric Kuehler of the U.S. Forest Service Southern Region's Urban Forestry South Office will be used as a model. Urban forestry, fire, and other staff of the U.S. Forest Service; State agencies; and the Massachusetts tree wardens will jointly develop the program in NA. Qualified foresters and arborists will be recruited and trained to assess damaged urban trees, estimate the tree debris to be removed, and evaluate the restoration work needed within the community.

The Urban Forestry South Office conducted a workshop about the process the week of July 15 in Virginia, which was attended by John Parry (DFO), Katie Armstrong (NFS), Henry Poole (Delaware Forest Service), Kate Forrer (University of Vermont Cooperative Extension), and Melissa LeVangie (Massachusetts Tree Wardens). Durham Field Office Group Leader Rob Clark has spearheaded the initiative. The training for the Northeastern Area is planned for early 2009 and, if successful, may be expanded in the future.

Building Science Literacy in Grades K-12 Using a Vertically-Integrated Scope and Sequence

Teachers collect ground cover data for a habitat study.

The New Hampshire Education and Environment Team (NHEET) hosted a summer institute for teachers to experience a vertically-integrated scope and sequence using the new State science frameworks. The sequence was designed to focus on science discovery and process skills in the early grades while introducing more content, skill reinforcement, and mastery each succeeding year. The vertical integration process within the sequence seeks to ensure that the teaching of these topics truly spirals student learning towards greater depth and complexity, without repetition from year to year.

The teachers were able to see how mastering process skills in the lower grades enables students to focus on content in the higher grades. They also learned how to prepare students and manage classes in outdoor settings. The teachers are now expected to become mentors and advocates for

science in their schools and districts by working with their administration to identify professional development needs to incorporate environmental sciences into their curriculum.

Funding for this program is through a Math and Science Partnership grant with the New Hampshire Department of Education. The NHEET team is a collaborative of NH Project Learning Tree, NH Water Education for Teachers, NH Wildlife in Learning Design, NH Fish and Game, NH Department of Environmental Services, the White Mountain National Forest, and NA Conservation Education.

Teachers use "The Fallen Log" activity from Project Learning Tree to learn about habitats.

Biosurveillance Training a Success

Field training session working with *Cerceris fumipennis*.

On Wednesday, July 30, NA employees Mike Bohne and Dennis Souto joined Colleen Teerling of the Maine Forest Service in Carlisle, MA, to lead a training session for 29 forest health specialists from Durham Field Office (DFO) States and APHIS. The training began with an indoor session at the Great Brook Farm State Park barn where attendees learned about *Cerceris fumipennis*, a ground-nesting wasp that can be used as an early warning system for the emerald ash borer's eventual arrival in the DFO area. Mike and Colleen gave excellent presentations about the wasp's biology and taxonomy, how and where to find colonies, and the data that needs to be collected this summer. Participants then traveled to Foss Farm where a large Cerceris colony was active on a beautiful afternoon. Attendees observed (and handled!) these nonstinging wasps, their nests, and their buprestid beetle prey live and close up. The training was deemed a success when the Rhode Island attendees reported that they found their first colony the next day! It is anticipated that attendees will find many colonies soon.

Cerceris fumipennis with a captured bronze birch borer.

Wood Education and Resource Center

Director's Management Review Held at Wood Education and Resource Center

Rob Kincaid shows review team members a finished product.

A Management Review of the Wood Education and Resource Center (WERC) was conducted June 10 through 12. Review team members included Northeastern Area (NA) Director Kathryn Maloney, Deputy Director Larry Mastic, Forest Health and Economics Assistant Director Jerry Boughton, Durham Field Office Field Representative Anne Archie, and State and Private Forestry Technology Marketing Unit Director Susan LeVan. Chuck Reger, NA Public/Legislative Affairs Leader, was present as an observer. WERC participants included Director Steve Milauskas, Deputy Director Ed Cesa, Management Analyst Linda Singleton, Administrative Officer Debra Hawkins, and Maintenance Manager Joe Branscome.

The review team examined the full spectrum of WERC's successes, activities, operating procedures, processes, and alignment with NA strategic objectives, as well as issues, challenges, and solutions.

The first day included an introduction of team members and staff along with a briefing and tour of WERC office, training, and manufacturing facilities. Rob Kincaid, President of Accurate Millworks, Inc., provided a guided tour of WERC's manufacturing facilities. Kincaid operates WERC's rough mill and shop under a special use permit and employs over 20 employees at the facility. The review included briefings and discussion with WERC staff and briefings by several WERC partners, including the West Virginia University Appalachian Hardwood Center, Anheuser-Busch (woody biomass boiler projects), Southeast Michigan Resource Conservation and Development Council, and Michigan Department of Natural Resources (emerald ash borer utilization projects). Project leaders representing Virginia Tech, the University of Minnesota, and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources also gave presentations.

Ed Cesa shows review participants results of a student furniture design competition conducted by North Carolina State University that promoted the use of less-valued hardwood species.

A number of very constructive findings and recommendations were identified that will help the Center's effective operations into the future. WERC staff will address these findings and recommendations through the development of an Action Plan.

Morgantown Field Office

Permanent Plot Establishment Training Session for *Sirex noctilio*

Dan Snider and **Nathan Sites** traveled to Bald Eagle State Forest in Snyder County, PA, on July 16 to conduct a field training session. They spent one-half day training personnel from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) how to establish permanent plots for Sirex impact monitoring. Training objectives included how to establish consistent site selection and plot layout, and standardize crew measurements when collecting initial tree data. The training session was attended by DCNR Forest Entomologists Houpiing Liu and Fengyou Jia as well as Field Technicians Sharon Thornton, Timothy Price, and Zachary Kane.

These foliage symptoms are attributed to *Sirex noctilio*.

Incident Command System Used in Plant Health Emergency Exercise

Rick Turcotte was in Harrisburg, PA, on July 15 to take part in a joint tabletop Incident Command System (ICS) exercise dealing with a plant health emergency. Turcotte's role in the exercise was as a co-planning chief. This was a training exercise to prepare Federal and State agencies for a multistate mock exercise planned for early August. The purpose of the July exercise was to provide Federal and State participants an opportunity to evaluate response concepts, plans, and capabilities in the event of a forest pest emergency. This exercise focused on emergency responder command and control, coordination, decisionmaking, notifications, and the integration of Federal and State assets necessary to protect forest resources using a unified ICS system.

As co-planning chief for the exercise, Turcotte was responsible for the collection, evaluation, dissemination, and use of information about the development of the incident and the status of resources.

Agencies involved in the exercise included the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, State and Private Forestry, USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Plant Protection and Quarantine, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

West Virginia Emerald Ash Borer Chemical Treatment Project

Chelsea Gibson, **Sam Forbeck**, and **Rick Turcotte** traveled to Fayette County, WV, July 1 to 3 to participate in an emerald ash borer (EAB) treatment project. This is a cooperative project with the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, USDA APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine, USDA APHIS Otis Methods Laboratory, and the U.S. Forest Service. During this trip, tree data were collected on 30 trunk-injected (Syngenta Tree-äge®) trees. Binoculars were used to sample the boles of the tree for signs of emerging emerald ash borer. In addition, foliage samples were collected from trees for chemical analysis. This is part of a 3-year project to examine the longevity and effectiveness of the insecticide against EAB.

Forestry Technician Sam Forbeck collects data on an ash tree selected for tree injection.

St. Paul Field Office

Wisconsin Study Shows Little Impact of Timber Harvests on Stream Health

Preliminary results from a study looking at the effectiveness of riparian buffers for preserving stream health following timber harvests were presented to the Wisconsin Best Management Practices (BMP) for Water Quality Advisory Committee. Information being collected at 15 harvest sites includes pre-harvest data, post-harvest data, and control data that includes a fish index of biotic integrity and habitat (instream and riparian). Six of the 15 sites have been harvested so far, and 1-year post-harvest data show no significant impacts of timber harvesting on stream health. This study will continue into 2009. **Teri Heyer** from the St. Paul Field Office is a member of the Wisconsin BMP advisory committee.

Urban Forestry BMPs for Invasive Species Kickoff Event Held in Wisconsin

Through a grant from the Northeastern Area, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is developing urban forestry best management practices (BMPs) for invasive species. BMPs are a set of voluntary management recommendations that provide guidance on incorporating invasive species considerations into routine urban forestry activities. The project includes recommendations on forestry, recreation, urban forestry, and right-of-way issues. The kickoff event for the urban forestry BMP track was held May 20 at the Wisconsin DNR South Central Region Headquarters.

Attendees of the Wisconsin DNR Urban Forestry Best Management Practices for Invasive Species conference learn to identify invasive plants during a walk around the DNR facility in Fitchburg, WI.

The event was attended by representatives from local, State, and Federal government as well as nongovernmental organizations and representatives from green industries.

Tree Hazard Workshop Assists Michigan DNR

Joe O'Brien and **Jill Pokorny** of the St. Paul Field Office sponsored a 2-day hazard tree workshop at the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in Empire, MI. Forest health specialists from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources assisted with the workshop, and attendees were given information about basic tree biology, identifying tree defects, the International Tree Failure Database program, preventing and correcting tree hazards, and setting up a viable hazard tree program for their unit. The workshop provided park managers with the tools to establish a viable hazard tree program.

New Products

Deer and Forests

Impacts of White-Tailed Deer Overabundance in Forest Ecosystems: An Overview has been posted on the Northeastern Area Web site at http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/special_interests/white_tailed_deer.pdf . The overview was written by Tom Rawinski, who would welcome comments related to this forest health issue (trawinski@fs.fed.us).

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Thank you to all who contributed to this issue.

DEADLINE!

There will be **no August News Notes. The August and September editions will be combined.**

The deadline for the next issue of the Northeastern Area News Notes is **noon**, **Wednesday, September 24, 2008**. **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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