



Northeastern Area News Notes



March 30, 2007



From the Director's Desk

Charting Our Future Together

I'm a person of my word, and I trust you are as well. Together, we understand the meaning of promises. I laid out a promise to you on March 8 when I announced the Northeastern Area (NA) organizational design study. I said we will position NA to deliver on our mission and responsibilities, now and in the future, with greater effectiveness.

We're doing a good job now, but the world has changed and continues to change. We have to adapt, or get left behind. The study is a tool in this process of adapting to ensure the future of the Area by ensuring our personnel and the organization of their work are designed to function well. I will use the study results and recommendations for that purpose. The promise I made to you implied a bargain too, though half of it will be yours to live up to. More on that in a moment.

If one takes an honest look around, there is evidence of change everywhere. The NA organizational design study goes hand in hand with many efforts underway during these times of flat or diminishing budgets and pressing resource demands. Other efforts like our strategic planning process, Investing Where It Matters Most, and the five-tier performance system stem from the changed accountability climate Federal and State governments operate under. These other efforts are very necessary things NA must do to deliver the results asked of us.

The Area is a healthy organization, and thankfully, we're just the right size to adapt swiftly to the changing environment around us. I want you to know that much consideration is given to the major decisions NA leadership, State foresters, and I make, both independently and collaboratively. The organizational design study is one of multiple, absolutely necessary steps we must take.

You may have concerns when hearing about the organizational study:

- "Who is being targeted by this study?"
- "Will I lose my job?"
- "Why are we doing this at all?"

All these questions are fair. None are unexpected. Some answers are simple—no one person, team, or work unit is being targeted; the study is an analysis of all of the NA organization. No one will lose their job as a result. Answers to questions like "Why do this?", I've touched on already. Other questions, and responses to them, are posted on NA's Intranet Web site. I encourage you to look there and to raise other questions you may have.



What is your part in this? Every NA employee is a stakeholder and each truly needs to “show up” and influence this study! Every employee and the 21 State Foresters we serve can contribute to the study. Active participation is a contribution, and contributions are helpful and appreciated. Please show up to participate, make a contribution, and be helpful.

The world is run by those who show up.
—Anonymous

Please take advantage of one or many of the opportunities you have to inform the study:

- Employees may participate in an on-line competency/skills survey.
- Focus groups with NA employees will be facilitated by Coray Gurnitz Consulting, NA’s contractor for this study, to gather process and work function information.
- Coray Gurnitz Consulting will interview each State Forester for their input into our service delivery and current organization.
- “Organizational Review Express Mailboxes” will be available in the three field offices, Grey Towers, and Newtown Square. The mailboxes let anonymous questions, suggestions, or comments about the study come forward.
- Employees can send comments or questions to Keith Tackett, communications coordinator for the study. Keith can be reached at ktackett@fs.fed.us or 610-557-4128.
- Up-to-date information and answers to questions (without reference to who asked them) will be posted to the [NA Intranet site](#) for everyone’s information.

Your input as well as other data will lead to the development of multiple recommendations on how NA could better organize and utilize the talents of its personnel to tackle today’s challenges and workload. These recommendations will be complete by the end of May, and I will decide what changes we will make. Some change may be possible this fiscal year, but more likely implementation will begin in FY 2008. Join in, contribute, and we’ll chart our future together.

— Kathryn P. Maloney
Area Director



Newtown Square

Emergency ALB Eradication Efforts in New York

Several members of the Newtown Square Forest Health Protection group spent the week of March 26 assisting with a multi-agency emergency invasive insect eradication project in New York State, which has been battling the Asian longhorned beetle since 1996.

Public Affairs Specialist **Judy Antipin** represented the Forest Service for 4 days as an Incident Command System Information Officer with the multi-agency Pralls Island Asian Longhorned Beetle (ALB) Eradication Project. Pralls Island is an 80-acre designated bird sanctuary that sits in a channel between New Jersey and the New York borough of Staten Island. Nearly 40 ALB-infested trees were discovered in a partial survey of the island in early March, leading APHIS to place a Federal quarantine on Prall's Island and Staten Island. The New York Department of Environmental Conservation (NY DEC) was designated the lead agency in an emergency project to remove the infested trees as well as several thousand ALB host trees on the island. The work needed to be completed before the start of the heron nesting season and the arrival of warmer weather that signals the emergence of adult Asian longhorned beetles. Other agencies participating included APHIS, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, and the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, which owns the island.

Forest Health Specialist **Noel Schneeberger** and Assistant Director **Jerry Boughton** worked from the Newtown Square office to secure qualified Forest Service chainsaw operators to participate in the tree removals. The removals are complicated by the fact that the site is



Judy Antipin waits with other personnel for boat transport to Pralls Island.



Pralls Island is a protected heron nesting site.



A chipper is hoisted from a barge onto the island.

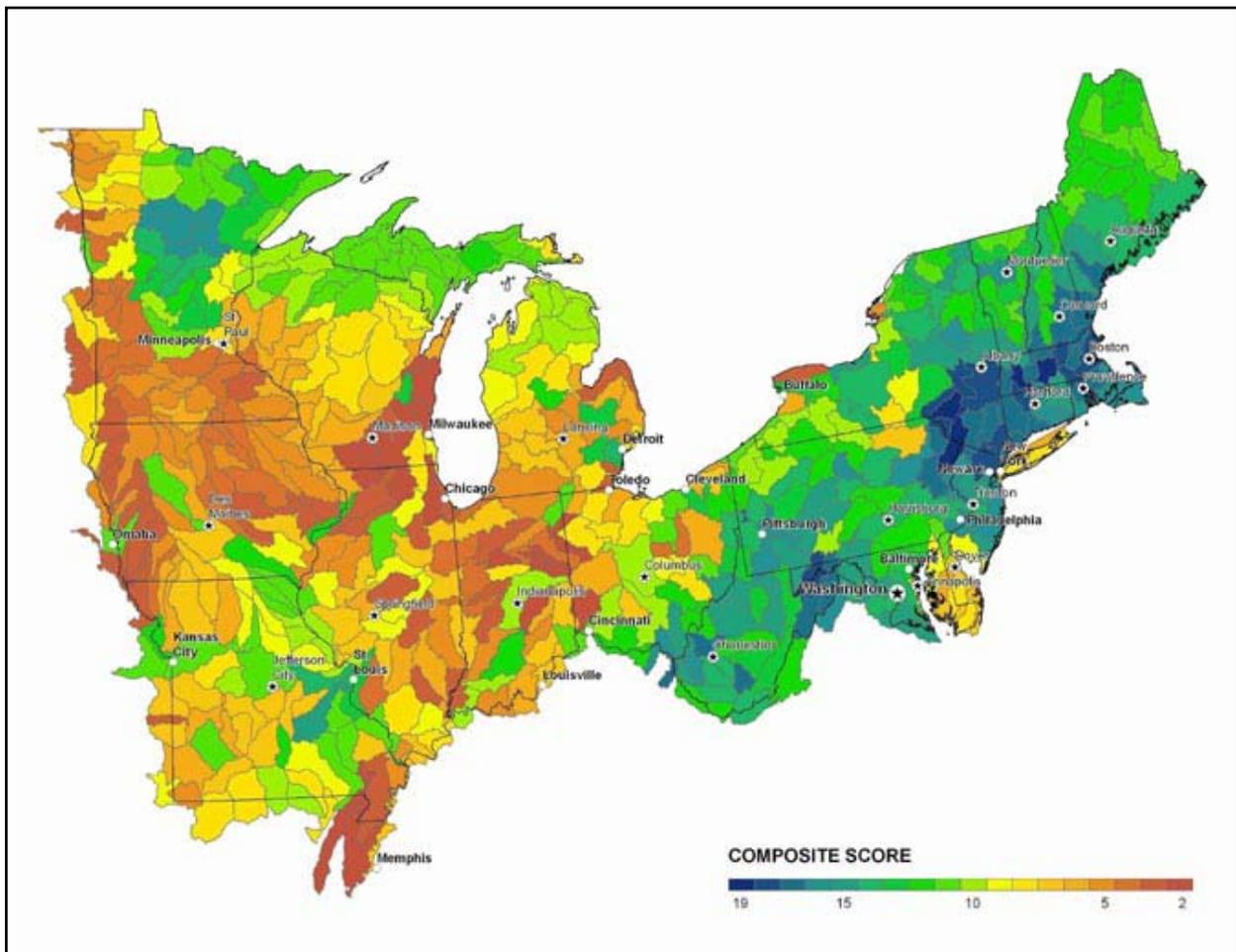


accessible only by boat. Equipment such as chippers, which were needed to dispose of the infested trees, had to be moved to the island via barges and lowered by cranes onto the shore. The status of the island as a Significant Fish and Wildlife Coastal Habitat for nesting herons caused some controversy among local advocacy groups, which required careful attention to public outreach messages and efforts. Judy worked with information officers representing NY DEC and APHIS to craft press releases about the eradication program. She and the other information officers also accompanied members of the local press on a police boat tour around the island to observe the activities.

On the second day of the operation, Judy spent most of the day on the island, following crews through the heavy brush as they cleared a path for the chippers and documenting their work and other incident operation activities with photos and video. The tree removals were expected to last at least 2 weeks.

Partners to Use Forests, Water, and People Assessment

Northeastern Area staff member **Al Todd** and **Martina Barnes**, with GIS analysis completed by **Rebecca Whitney** of the Durham Field Office, are close to completing an assessment of forests most important to surface drinking water sources. Project support was also provided by Paul Barten of the University of Massachusetts–Amherst as part of the Forest Service-funded WET Partnership. The Forests, Water, and People Assessment used existing and available GIS datasets



This map depicts watersheds in the Northeast and Midwest ranked by the importance (high to low) of private forest lands to the protection of surface drinking water supplies.



to quantify the key connections between forests, land use, water, and people across the Northeast and Midwest. Nearly 75 percent of the region's population, and over 3,000 community water systems, rely on surface water supplies that are protected by private forest lands. The assessment has identified nearly 12.3 million acres of private forests under development pressure in the region's water supply watersheds. A final report and maps will be posted on the NA and WET Partnership Web sites later this spring.

Supporting an ongoing partnership with the Trust for Public Land (TPL), NA staff identified complimentary efforts with TPL source water protection work. TPL has expressed its desire to utilize the NA assessment to (1) communicate the "forests to faucet" link and (2) prioritize forests in their land protection strategies. In particular, TPL will be using maps from NA's assessment to highlight the importance of forest protection in both their efforts in the Highlands region and their St. Paul "collar counties" water protection project.

Fire Department Wildland Fire Training Crosswalk

crosswalk—*n.* a path marked off on a street to indicate where pedestrians should cross (The American Heritage Dictionary, 4th ed., 2000).

As is typical of many professions, common words in the English language are often borrowed and the meaning becomes part of the lexicon—and sometimes meaningless to others. When the term *crosswalk* is used in the context of wildland fire training, the *pedestrians* are structural firefighters, the *street* is wildland fire training and firefighting position qualifications, and the *path* is a system that identifies equivalent positions between structural and wildland firefighting and the parallel training that will allow the structural fire community to obtain wildland fire competencies.

The crosswalk system developed out of a need identified in a report to Congress, *The Changing Role and Needs of Local, Rural, and Volunteer Fire Departments in the Wildland-Urban Interface* (June 2003). It was recognized that performance-based wildland fire training "delivery packages" targeting volunteer and rural fire departments needed to be developed. Subsequently, the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG), a multi-agency wildland fire-training coordination group, asked the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) to lead a pilot effort to crosswalk equivalent training offered by NWCG, State fire training agencies, and USFA's National Fire Academy.

Billy Terry, Associate Director, Fire and Aviation Management, was recently an invited speaker at Wildland Urban Interface 2007, an annual conference sponsored by the International Association of Fire Chiefs and partners. On March 6, Billy was a panelist in a training session on the Fire Department Wildland Fire Training Crosswalk—a project in which he serves on the steering committee representing the Forest Service. The training session provided an opportunity for both structural and wildland firefighters to learn how to utilize the crosswalk system and to apply the system in their local jurisdictions. Federal agencies will recognize firefighter qualifications in States or local jurisdictions that adopt the crosswalk to obtain wildland fire competencies. This, in turn, will allow local fire agencies to become part of the Federal or State unit's initial attack organization, helping to reduce costs and respond to local incidents.



Wood Education and Resource Center

Secondary Wood Products Industry Workshop Scheduled for April

The USDA Forest Service Wood Education and Resource Center (WERC) and Pennsylvania State University are cosponsoring a workshop titled “Improving Secondary Wood Products Industry Profitability Using Specialized Computer Programs.” The workshop will be held April 24–25 at the WERC facility in Princeton, WV. The instructors will discuss the different types of specialized computer programs that can help secondary wood products industries maximize yields and efficiency. Emphasis will be placed on simulation-based programs such as ROMI-3, which was developed by the Northern Research Station. Visit <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/werc/romi-3.pdf> for additional information.

Forest Service Evaluates Fiscal Year 2007 Competitive Grants

The Wood Education and Resource Center received 91 grant proposals for its competitive grant program in fiscal year 2007. For this year’s program cycle, \$1 million is available for projects that focus on enhancing opportunities for sustained forest products production for primary and secondary hardwood industries located in the eastern hardwood forest region. All proposals must contain matching funding. The submitted grant proposals requested a total of \$5.8 million, with \$7.2 million in matching funds. Nine Forest Service professionals are currently evaluating project proposals to determine those that will be selected for funding. For additional information, contact Ed Cesa at 304-285-1530 or ecesa@fs.fed.us.

Morgantown Field Office

New Field Representative Arrives in Morgantown

Bob Lueckel started his new position as the Morgantown Field Office Representative on March 5. Northeastern Area Director **Kathryn Maloney** selected Lueckel to replace John Hazel, who retired in January. Before transferring to Morgantown, Lueckel was the Forest Supervisor for the Ottawa National Forest in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. He has held other positions in the National Forest System, USDA Headquarters, and the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

“I am honored to be working for State and Private Forestry in support of the States and private landowners in the Mid-Atlantic region. The conservation programs and partnerships in this region are very important to the public we serve, and I look forward to meeting our many cooperators and building on the good and solid work that has been going on,” said Lueckel. He has been a member of the Society of American Foresters for 25 years and served as a community forester with the Peace Corps in Nepal.

Inaugural West Virginia Environmental Education Association Conference

West Virginia University’s Jackson’s Mill was the site of the West Virginia Environmental Education Association’s first annual conference on March 21. The conference was the vision of Eriks Janelins, director of the Oglebay Institute’s Schrader Environmental Education Center.



During his welcoming remarks, Janelsins stated that the idea of having an Environmental Education Association conference was only a dream just 12 months earlier.

Devin Wanner joined nearly 100 other attendees from Federal and State agencies, organizations, and schools that offer environmental education. The association's goal is for West Virginia to become a member of the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE).

NAAEE Executive Director Brian Day presented his association's *Guidelines for Excellence*, contained in four publications that set the standards for high-quality environmental education. Each publication was developed by a diverse team of professionals and received substantive reviews. Everyone present received a set of the guidelines.

Four concurrent sessions were offered during the afternoon: grant writing and Federal funding, NASA's GLOBE—an international environmental education program, environmental education curriculum guides, and “No Child Left Inside.” Wanner attended the “No Child Left Inside” session, which presented information related to Richard Louv's book *Last Child in the Woods*. Georgia Jeppesen from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service discussed national resources, program highlights, and future plans. Janelsins finished the session with examples of how schools, libraries, and nature centers have joined the “No Child Left Inside” movement.

Urban Ecology Collaborative Holds Second Annual Meeting

The Urban Ecology Collaborative (UEC) held its second annual meeting February 22–23 in Washington, DC. The UEC is comprised of urban natural resource managers representing Boston; New Haven, CT; New York City; Pittsburgh; Baltimore; and Washington, DC. The goal of the collaborative is to cultivate healthy, safe, and vibrant cities through collective learning about urban ecology and united action.

The collaborative is striving to develop a unique multi-city network for urban ecosystem research and restoration. Members are completing programs in education, urban forestry, and advocacy to address common urban ecosystem issues. They are also developing methods to standardize the programs, evaluate their effectiveness, and disseminate them to member cities.

The annual meeting focused on improving the UEC from “good to great” and included reports from the research and education committees, brainstorming sessions on short-term goals, and introductions to three new cities who may join the UEC: Providence, RI; Philadelphia, PA; and Wilmington, DE. Visit <http://www.urbanecologycollaborative.org/uec/> for more information.

Presentation at Spray Efficacy Workshop in Quebec, Canada

Entomologist **Amy Onken** attended and gave a presentation at the Spray Efficacy Research Group International (SERG-I) Workshop in Quebec, Canada, February 12–15. SERG-I is an association of pesticide suppliers and forest management, regulatory, and research agencies interested in forest pest management. The primary goal of SERG-I is to improve application technology and pest management methods associated with the use of pest control products in the context of integrated forest pest management. Members of SERG-I include the Provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec, and Saskatchewan; the Canadian Forest Service; and the USDA Forest Service.

SERG-I requested that Onken give a presentation about forest pest conditions in the United States during 2005 and 2006. Her presentation covered two topics—emerging insect and disease issues, and historical highlights. For the emerging insect and disease issues portion of her talk,



Onken discussed emerald ash borer, sudden oak death, Asian longhorned beetle, *Sirex noctilio*, and western bark beetles with special emphasis on the mountain pine beetle. The historical highlights portion included the gypsy moth, western spruce budworm, eastern spruce budworm, hemlock woolly adelgid, beech bark disease, Jack pine budworm, common European pine shoot beetle, and forest tent caterpillar.

The insects and diseases of historical significance were chosen because of their importance to forest health in both the United States and Canada.

Other agenda highlights included vegetation management; pest monitoring and decision support; development, testing, and regulation of forest pest management products; provincial reports of forest pest conditions in 2006; and advances and implementation of new technology.

The SERG-I meeting is an excellent forum for providing updates on forest pest management products (efficacy and development of alternative products), improvements in aerial application technology, and the environmental impact of products with respect to deposit and drift.

Employees Attend Pennsylvania Emerald Ash Borer Task Force Meeting

Rick Turcotte, Ann Steketee, Helen Butalla, Karen Felton, Bill Oldland, and Anne Cumming traveled to Carlisle, PA, on February 1 to attend an emerald ash borer task force meeting. Task force members include personnel from APHIS, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. The purpose of the meeting was to develop standards and guidelines to conduct emerald ash borer surveys. Several items were discussed, including what similarities exist in the data collected among different State and Federal partners, the need for a consistent protocol of core data, and a Web-based system that serves as a clearinghouse for collected data.

Forest Health Protection staff invited Ben Machin from Redstart Consulting to present a spatial analysis-based approach for directing pest detection surveys. This approach is based on the firm's work in Vermont with hemlock woolly adelgid. The group discussed the need for a systematic and coordinated methodology to direct surveys based on both risk and susceptibility. Steketee presented an example of how GIS can be used to direct detection surveys based on ranking risk and susceptibility using the 2006 Allegheny National Forest emerald ash borer survey as an example. The group also discussed the need to incorporate urban areas into detection surveys and the importance of these areas to emerald ash borer.

Four Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Presentations Made Since October

Entomologist **Brad Onken** has given four presentations about the hemlock woolly adelgid over the past several months. The first was given October 22, 2006, to 25 attendees from the Coopers Rock Foundation and a West Virginia University-sponsored Outdoor Adventures class. The presentation, an interpretive talk at Coopers Rock State Forest along the Virgin Hemlock Trail, covered the importance of eastern hemlock, threats and impacts of the adelgid and how to recognize it, and what the Forest Service is doing to protect the hemlock resource.

On February 4, Onken gave a presentation at the fifth joint meeting of the Maryland Department of Agriculture and Department of Natural Resources Forest Health at New Germany State Park, MD. This meeting has successfully brought together forest managers and forest health specialists



for updates and discussions on forest health issues. Onken discussed the 2006 accomplishments of the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Initiative and the outlook for 2007.

The following week Onken gave a presentation at the 11th Annual Forest Landowner's Conference at Allegheny College in Meadville, PA, to more than 100 landowners who actively manage their woodlands. Onken addressed the biology and life history of the adelgid, its impacts and distribution, the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Initiative, and detection and management.

On March 6, Onken gave a presentation at the Michigan Green Industry Association's 20th Annual Trade Show to more than 100 attendees in the tree health care business. Topics included hemlock woolly adelgid biology and life history, detection methods, its impacts and distribution, the threat to Michigan forests, management alternatives, and the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Initiative.

EDITOR'S NOTES

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, April 18**. 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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