



NORTHEASTERN AREA STATE AND PRIVATE FORESTRY NEWS NOTES



May 2010



From the Director's Desk

Building Awareness Across the Landscape: The Stewardship Project

How do we more effectively influence the stewardship of the Nation's forests while meeting Secretary Vilsack's call for an All-Lands approach? How do we dramatically accelerate the scale and pace of forest stewardship on both public and private lands? These are complicated questions with no easy answers. Especially in our neck of the woods, where nearly 50 million different people own 77 percent of the forest.

The statistics get more daunting when you look at the numbers of people, nationally and globally, that depend on our forests for public benefits such as clean air and water, carbon storage, recreation, wood products, and energy. The question gains even more complexity when you realize how few of these acres are under any kind of plan to keep them as forests into the future.

Fortunately, we have the will and capability to really make a difference! First of all, we have talented staff, both within the Forest Service and State agencies and within our partner organizations. These conservation leaders are working together on the Stewardship Project to find new ways to connect landowners, corporate entities, and the public with the future of our forests.

We are creating new approaches for sharing our message with a broader audience. A message that reflects what we know—that privately owned forests provide public as well as private benefits. A message that takes our rich heritage of woodland conservation and marries it to our understanding of the importance of people within a landscape, a place, or a natural setting. The Stewardship Project will result in tools, approaches, and strategies that will dramatically expand the reach and effectiveness of our current forest stewardship efforts, encouraging private forest stewardship through technical, financial, and public support.

Improvements in technology and the introduction of electronic social networking tools, such as smart phones, blogs, and Twitter, give us the capability to distribute information farther and faster. There are more options than ever for engaging communities of interest and stakeholders in forest conservation. Making the information relevant is key.

One component of the Stewardship Project focuses on how to more effectively communicate and connect people to the (public) benefits of forest stewardship. Another related component is how to engage communities of interest and local decisionmakers. These related efforts will help us more accurately identify what people in the Northeast and Midwest understand about forest stewardship and how we can more effectively use the communications tools at our disposal in



more robust and efficient ways. Communications and marketing professionals are key to identifying audiences, keeping our messages relevant, and determining the appropriate tools for message delivery.

The time has perhaps never been better than now! Healthy trees and forests offer solutions to a number of important social, economic, and of course, environmental issues. Renewable energy, green jobs, clean air and water... many items in the evening news relate directly back to our natural world and how it is managed. Healthy forests are more valuable than ever. Yet the average person may not make the connection between their neighbor's woodlot and the benefits produced. We have many "teachable moments." Emerald ash borer, Asian longhorned beetle, forest fires, drought, and other visible forest events are all opportunities to teach and inform the public about trees and forests and their benefits to people.

The Stewardship Project is a chance to capitalize on our collective strengths and make an extraordinary impact on the land. We have the will, knowledge, and skills to manage forests in a sustainable manner. We have the ability to optimize our effectiveness by working in partnership with other agencies and organizations. New technologies and social networking tools can enable us to reach more people more efficiently than ever before. Even more importantly, we have the opportunity to plant the seed of forest stewardship in fertile soil.

Trees and forests are rising to the forefront as solutions to critical social needs such as renewable energy, economic development, and green jobs. Let's take this opportunity and make a remarkable difference for our Nation's forests and people!

Respectfully,

Kathryn P. Maloney, Area Director



Sustainable Operations Tips for the Month

Make Your Own Worm Bin!

Fruit, vegetable, and other food scraps are incredibly nutrient rich – so don't lock them up for eternity in a plastic bag in a landfill, where they will never be able to decompose, return, and contribute to the incredible natural cycle of life! Vermiculture, or worm composting, allows you to compost food waste and create incredible, nutrient-rich compost for your yard, garden, or houseplants in 3-4 months – much faster than traditional composting methods!

Worm composting is also perfect for city or apartment dwellers, or for those who prefer not to have a larger compost pile in their backyard. Besides that, it is fun, easy, cheap (about \$25-30 to set up), and virtually odor free. You can also keep your bin inside, outside, in the garage, or in the basement.



Worm bin with ventilation holes and moistened bedding material.



Not only does worm composting **avoid greenhouse gas emissions** (by not transporting nutrient-rich waste to a landfill, and by avoiding methane emissions from anaerobic decomposition at landfills), but it also provides an excellent source of **nutrients for the garden**, which reduces the need for synthetic chemical fertilizers. Excellent worm composting instructions can be found here: <http://whatcom.wsu.edu/ag/compost/easywormbin.htm>.

Here's how to get started:

Materials needed:

- Plastic storage bin (anywhere from 8-16 gallons)
- Drill for making drainage and ventilation holes
- Newspaper or brown leaves – better yet, both
- Piece of cardboard roughly the same size as the storage bin lid
- One pound of red wiggler worms (available here: <http://www.unclejimswormfarm.com/>)

Instructions:

1. **Rinse bins** – If possible, wash bin with mild, natural soap and rinse well. If no mild soap is available, rinse bin with water. Ideally, let bin sit with water for 24 hours, then empty.
2. **Drill holes** – Drill about 30 evenly spaced ¼-inch holes at the bottom of the worm bin and another 10-20 ¼-inch holes in the lid; then drill about 10-20 ⅛-inch holes 4 inches from the bottom of the bins (along the sides) and about 20-30 ⅛-inch holes 2 inches from the top of the bin (along the sides). This ensures excellent drainage and ventilation.
3. **Prepare bedding** – Prepare bedding for the worms by shredding newspaper into 1-inch strips. Worms need bedding that is moist but not soggy. Moisten the newspaper by soaking it in water and then squeezing out the excess water. Cover the bottom of the bin with 3-4 inches of moist newspaper, fluffed up. If you have any old leaves or leaf litter, add that – it's more nutrient rich than newspaper! Throw in a handful of dirt for "grit" to help the worms digest their food.
4. **Add worms** – Welcome to your new home, wormies! Worms that are properly cared for will not try to escape (and they are EASY to care for!)
5. **Cover the bedding with cardboard** – Cut a piece of cardboard to fit loosely over the top of all the bedding, wet it, then cover the bedding with cardboard. This helps maintain the right amount of moisture in the bin.
6. **Place your bin in a well-ventilated area, and gradually start adding greater amounts of food scraps** – Choose the right location for the bin (good ventilation, no direct sunlight; in the winter, worms should be kept in a location with a temperature above 55 degrees). Add food scraps slowly at first – the worm population will multiply (or shrink) to keep up with the amount of food you feed them. Each week, add food scraps to a different section of the bin – the worms will migrate to the new food. Feed worms whatever suitable scraps you have 1-2 times per week. If you are going away, add lots of extra strips of bedding (slightly moistened newspaper) – worms can live on this alone for up to 3 weeks.



7. **Harvest the compost** – After 3-4 months of adding food, it will be time to harvest the casings! You can do this using several methods. You can make a second bin (just like the first – with new bedding, food scraps, etc.); remove the lid to the first, and place the second bin directly on top of the first. The worms will slowly migrate up (through the second bin’s drainage holes) to the second bin, and the first bin will contain only your compost! (Repeat this process every 3-4 months, alternating bins). Or, you can simply push the contents of the bin all to one side and add fresh bedding, food, and dirt (and spray with water) to the empty space. The worms will slowly migrate over on their own, and you can remove the finished compost. Or, you can actively harvest by scooping off layers of compost while wearing garden gloves – any method will work!



Stacked worm bins (for harvesting).

What to feed your worms:

Worms Like:

Breads, grains, cereal,
coffee grounds and filter,
fruits, veggies, tea bags

Worms do NOT Like:

dairy products, meat, fat,
oils

Troubleshooting:

Problem	Likely Cause	Solution
Worms are dying or trying to escape	Too wet	Add more bedding
	Too dry	Moisten the bedding
	Bedding is used up	Harvest your bin
Bin smells	Not enough air	Drill more ventilation holes
	Too much food	Do not feed for 1-2 weeks
	Too wet	Add more bedding
Fruit flies	Exposed food	Bury food in bedding, cover bedding loosely with piece of cardboard



Newtown Square Headquarters Office

Public Meetings Held for Highlands Regional Study: Connecticut and Pennsylvania 2010 Update

Public meetings were held in Pennsylvania on May 24 and Connecticut on May 26 to share key findings from the Highlands Regional study and to gather feedback from the public about the study. Participants at the May 24 meeting at Nolde Forest State Park in Reading, PA, included members of local land conservancies, regional conservation organizations, and the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry. Participants at the May 26 meeting at the University of Connecticut Extension Center in Torrington, CT, included members of local land trusts, conservation organizations, local citizens, and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.



Brad Ellison of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry speaks at the Highlands public meeting on May 24, 2010. (Photo by Karen Sykes)

Martina Barnes, Bob Lueckel, and Anne Archie, along with other NA State and Private Forestry staff, planned and facilitated both meetings. The study is available online for public comment at <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/highlands/regional/index.shtm> through June 18, 2010. The final study should be complete later this summer.

Morgantown Field Office

Morgantown Field Office Encourages Tree Planting

Morgantown Field Office employees individually wrapped 600 red pine, Norway spruce, Douglas fir, and Virginia pine seedlings for the 12th annual West Virginia University Children's Health Fair. The trees originated from the Clements State Tree Nursery, which is operated by the West Virginia Division of Forestry. **Sandy Fosbroke, Nancy Lough, Rick Turcotte, Yun Wu, Melissa Emerson, Devin Wanner**, and others took time out of their busy schedule to prepare for the health fair.

The fair was held May 12 at the Morgantown Mall. For the past 5 years, the Morgantown Field Office has used the health fair to teach children how important trees are to our health. **Chelsea Gibson, Will Harris, and Wanner** gave the evergreen trees to families for planting. In addition to handing out tree seedlings, they also shared information about native and invasive insects, fielded many questions about the insects on display, and talked about the emerald ash borer.

The Forest Service booth has become one of the destination spots of the fair. Many families that stopped by the display commented that the trees they received in previous years are doing well and getting noticeably bigger. Several fairgoers also asked about getting more trees to plant on



their property. Copies of the Clements State Tree Nursery order form were given to those individuals.

Several thousand people attended this year's health fair. Event organizer Stephanie Bock said, "Attendance is a testament to the high-quality (and fun!) activities that you provide at your booths each year. The community has come to expect a great fair, and each of you delivers year after year."

St. Paul Field Office

SPFO Represents Forest Service at Major Boy Scout Gathering

Dennis Haugen (SPFO Entomologist) and **Doreen Deutsch** (Administrative Assistant) assisted the Region 9 Urban Connections outreach program at StarCamp, a celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America. More than 11,500 Boy Scouts participated in StarCamp May 22 and 23 in Annandale, MN, in the largest gathering of Scouts in Minnesota history. The U.S. Forest Service booth featured fire fighting activities and messages. Children of all ages participated in simulated pack tests and fire fighting techniques. The booth was extremely popular for its hands-on activities that gave the Boy Scouts a taste of wildland fire fighting.



Bear poses with scouts at the StarCamp event.



SPFO Participates in Milwaukee Urban Forestry Training Program Kickoff Event

Gina Childs, Acting SPFO Field Representative, joined Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett to "kick off" the city of Milwaukee's Urban Forestry Training program on May 12. The event featured the new urban forestry crews hired by the city of Milwaukee and highlighted their technical skills in tree climbing and arboriculture.

This training program was made possible by a Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Civil Rights Grant to enhance diversity in urban forestry. The city of Milwaukee used this grant to target their recruitment of urban forestry crews to underserved neighborhoods in the city. Of the more than 900 applicants, the city selected 20 young men and women for this rigorous training. These recruits are halfway through their training. They are skilled tree climbers and are now learning the techniques of overall tree care and tree pruning. As they progress in their training, they will be matched with jobs in the City Department of Public Works, private tree care companies, and utility companies.



Acting SPFO Field Representative Gina Childs addresses attendees at an urban forestry kickoff event in Milwaukee.



Editor's Note

DEADLINE! The deadline for the next issue of the Northeastern Area News Notes is COB Monday, June 28, 2010. News articles submitted after this time and date will be published in the next month's edition. Please e-mail final articles to me, Nancy Lough at nlough@fs.fed.us.

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