



NEWS RELEASE

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Forest Service releases new tool for managing tree resources

MORGANTOWN, WVa.— U.S. Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell attended the Philadelphia International Flower Show to announce the release of i-TREE v4.0, a state-of-the-art software suite from the U.S. Forest Service. This suite includes i-PED (Pest Evaluation and Detection), a tool that provides a portable, accessible, and standardized way to observe trees for possible insect or disease problems.

“Exotic pests are frequently first introduced in urban areas where they are not detected until they are well established and have had harmful impacts on the health of host trees,” said Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Forester Anne Cumming.

Many communities inventory their urban trees to better understand the structure, function, and management needs of their urban forests, but these inventories often overlook evidence of pests or diseases.

“i-PED will help all those with their eyes on the urban forest—arborists, urban foresters, citizen scientists, and others—to observe, identify, and report the signs and symptoms of these and yet unidentified urban and community forest pests,” said Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program Manager Keith Cline.

i-PED provides a framework for systematically examining a tree for signs or symptoms of insects, fungi, or diseases. The goal of i-PED is to help urban forestry professionals and volunteers detect threats to the community tree resource.

“The earlier a pest or disease can be confirmed in an area, the sooner we can put management and control plans in place, if they are available,” explained Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Forest Health Specialist Dan Twardus.

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i-PED was developed by many partners, including the U.S. Forest Service, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry and Northern Research Station; Davey Tree Expert Company; Society of Municipal Arborists; University of Georgia Bugwood Network; Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; Cornell University; National Plant Diagnostic Network; Purdue University; University of California, Davis; University of Florida; University of Maryland; University of Vermont; and the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation.

Cline concluded, “The U.S. Forest Service and its partners are excited about the release of i-PED and this important step in developing a national, standardized system for monitoring long-term urban forest health.”

For more information about i-PED, visit <http://www.itreetools.org> .

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