



# Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry



## News Notes

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May 29, 2009

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### From the Director's Desk

#### **Communications: The Essential Element in Success**

I recall as a child a story about how some people wanted to build a tower in order to reach their god. However, the god had a different idea. As the construction of the tower progressed, he eliminated their ability to communicate. They had no words in common. There were no phrases that carried meaning. Misunderstanding was the norm and the project came to a screeching halt.

The lesson is very simple. Clear communications are essential to accomplishing any task. Without the careful use of words and phrases that are related to the particular audience, projects will fail, relationships will be stifled, and progress will suffer.

Using common key messages, expressing priorities clearly, not using acronyms, understanding the listener's background related to the subject, asking the right questions, and sharing information in the right tone will make all the difference between successful and failed communications.

Every employee in Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry is encouraged to constantly improve communication skills because communicating the mission of the Area both within and outside the organization is critical to accomplishing the job at hand and promoting State and Private Forestry in the Northeast.

Key messages based on the Area's Strategic Plan should be used at every opportunity. They help clearly communicate issues related to our forests and the environment, both with Area staff members and especially those outside the organization. Everyone should be familiar with them. Without these key messages, mixed communications will occur, and in the end, like the tower in the story, result in program and project failure.

Some of the Area's key messages include:

- Private timberlands make up only 76 percent of the forest land area in the Northeast, yet they provided more than 85 percent of the Nation's annual wood production during 2001.
- Proximity to natural area open spaces increases housing prices. Moreover, house prices increase with the size of the natural area.
- Management activities ensure that forests continue to provide benefits for present and future generations.



- The 20 States served by Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry have more than 40 percent of all forest-related employment (forestry, paper, and lumber-related jobs) in the United States.

The Area's Strategic Business Plan contains established priorities that help describe what will be accomplished in the future. These can further help in communicating programs and actions. Some of the priority actions for 2009 include:

- Source water protection pilot projects through a Forest to Faucet partnership.
- Develop an approach and strategy linking adaptation and mitigation of climate change.
- Devise a process by which biological diversity is assessed in States.
- Promote and develop green building opportunities.
- Develop rigorous analysis, messages, and knowledge transfer about the role of urban forestry in mitigating climate change, sequestering carbon, and controlling stormwater.

Having the right messages and information to share is only half the job. There are few key tips to remember when communicating at any level to help improve effective delivery.

- Avoid acronyms and meaningless words to improve understanding no matter with whom you are talking.
- Choose the best words to communicate the message to help assure understanding. Use words that create the right image in the listener's mind and don't distract or turn the listener away.
- Always consider the other person's situation as it relates to the topic. Will they use the information, act on the information, or have they had a bad past experience related to the issue? Any of these will determine the best method of communications.
- Ask questions to determine how the individual understands and perceives the topic. This allows time to think and determine the most pertinent information and best method of delivery.
- Finally, use the right tone and adjust that tone to fit the person and the situation. More potentially successful projects have failed because the wrong tone was used at the wrong time.

Keep in mind that using key messages, expressing clear priority actions, using understandable words, considering the listener, and using the proper tone can make a big difference in effectively sharing information. Like the old story of the tower, poor communications can bring progress to a screeching halt!

— Kathryn P. Maloney  
Area Director



## Sustainable Operations Tip of the Month

### *Energy Conservation*

**Whole-House Efficiency.** According to the U.S. Department of Energy, the average U.S. household spends about \$1,900 per year on home utility bills and, unfortunately, most of that energy is wasted! Taking a whole-house approach to energy efficiency will help you to harvest all that “low hanging fruit” to make the easiest energy consumption cutbacks, and then prioritize what may be next on your list in terms of cost effectiveness. For example, while it makes environmental and economic sense to buy a high-efficiency furnace (or central A/C), some of that efficiency will be lost if your windows, doors, attic, and ducts are not properly sealed. Therefore, consider spending the money that you may have spent on a variety of unrelated upgrades (furnace, refrigerator, and light bulbs) on a suite of similarly-themed upgrades (furnace, insulation, and windows) to maximize economic and environmental gains.



But, you say, who wants to think about furnaces when it's almost summertime...(and the living is easy....)? Fair enough! Well, here's a top ten list of ways to save energy and keep cool this summer, courtesy of Dominion Energy ([http://www.dom.com/customer/efficiency/res/summer\\_tips.jsp](http://www.dom.com/customer/efficiency/res/summer_tips.jsp)):

1. **Raise your thermostat to at least 78°.** Or raise it to 82° and turn on the ceiling fan. This is the best way to conserve energy.
2. **When you are away from home for more than 8 hours, raise the thermostat setting and you can expect to see a 1 percent savings for each degree of setback.** This will reduce the amount of energy used to cool your home while you're away.
3. **Keep shades closed when the air conditioner is on.** Sunny windows account for 40 percent of unwanted heat and can make your air conditioner work two to three times harder.
4. **Check and clean filters.** Cleaning and replacing air conditioning filters monthly allows the system to run more efficiently.
5. **Install ceiling fans.** Don't underestimate the importance of ceiling fans. Moving air over the body provides a cooling effect. The use of ceiling fans can mean savings of around 25 percent on cooling costs and can make the temperature seem 6-10 degrees cooler.
6. **Make sure ceiling fans are blowing down.** Most fans have a switch to change the fan direction. Make sure ceiling fans are blowing downward (in a counter-clockwise direction) to send air past your body.
7. **Run appliances with large energy use late in the evening.** Use the dishwasher and clothes washer late in the evening. When used during the day, these appliances produce additional heat, causing your air conditioner to work harder.

8. **Use cold water to wash dishes and clothes.** This will save on water heating costs.
9. **Unplug equipment not in use.** Electric chargers, televisions, and audio/video equipment use electricity and produce heat even when they are not in use.
10. **Turn off lights.** Turn lights off when exiting a room. Consider replacing incandescent bulbs with energy efficient compact florescent lights (CFLs). And remember to properly dispose of or recycle CFLs whenever possible.

## Newtown Square Headquarters Office

### Knowledge Blooms Alongside the Redbuds in Gettysburg

How much impact can a meeting room have on a meeting? In the case of the 2009 meeting of Forest Legacy Program Coordinators within Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry, it had a lot of impact. Rachel Billingham, Pennsylvania Forest Legacy Program Coordinator and the meeting's host, was able to secure the conference room in the newly completed visitor center at Gettysburg National Military Park for the 2½-day meeting held April 28-30. The room was ideal—participants were arranged around an enormous table so that they all were facing each other. This arrangement created an environment that fostered lively dialogue and discussion.

In addition to presentations and discussions, the meeting provided the opportunity for State coordinators to discuss upcoming and ongoing projects with Forest Service review appraisal staff. Ken Daw, R9 Regional Appraiser, and Susan Waller, Senior Review Appraiser, were in attendance. Kerry Wieber, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, commented, "It was great to have the opportunity to meet with Ken and Susan to talk about the Northern Great Lakes Forest Project, but it was hard to find a good time to step out of the room because everything on the agenda was so useful."

The full agenda and great setting resulted in a meeting that was, in the words of one participant, "...one of the best meetings I have attended."

### Chesapeake Executive Council Meets, Sends Message about the Importance of Trees



Jay Jensen, USDA Deputy Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment, addresses the Chesapeake Executive Council and gathered crowd at the annual meeting, May 12, 2009, at Mt. Vernon National Historic Landmark in Virginia.

Chesapeake Executive Council members charted a new course for the Chesapeake Bay's recovery at their meeting May 12, 2009, at Mt. Vernon by setting new short-term goals to reduce pollution to the Bay and dramatically accelerate the pace of restoration. Instead of pursuing a distant deadline, the seven Bay jurisdictions—Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia—will now focus on short, 2-year goals called milestones. The milestones announced at the 2009 Executive Council meeting are set to be met by December 31, 2011.

Watershed-wide milestones include:

- The rate of progress in reducing nitrogen will accelerate by 77 percent, for a projected reduction of 15.8 million pounds.
- The rate of progress in reducing phosphorus will increase by 79 percent, for a projected reduction of 1.1 million pounds.

By meeting these and future milestones, the Bay jurisdictions will put in place all pollution control measures necessary for a restored Bay no later than 2025.

"One of the most important things you can do to help the Bay is to plant a tree," said Virginia Governor Kaine. USDA Deputy Undersecretary Jay Jensen echoed this sentiment by professing that "Trees are the answer." On hand at the event were Virginia State Forester Karl Garrison and Sally Claggett, U.S. Forest Service Chesapeake Bay Liaison, to deliver a sapling of the Virginia State Tree, the Florida dogwood, to all attendees.

### **President Obama signs Executive Order for Chesapeake Bay**

On Tuesday, May 12, President Obama signed an Executive order creating a new Federal leadership committee to oversee the cleanup of the Chesapeake Bay ([http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Executive-Order-Chesapeake-Bay-Protection-and-Restoration/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Executive-Order-Chesapeake-Bay-Protection-and-Restoration/)). The announcement was made at the Chesapeake Executive Council meeting by EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson. Calling the Bay a "national treasure," Obama's order called for a renewed Federal commitment to ending the continued runoff of nitrogen, phosphorus, and other stormwater pollutants into the waterway that supports one of the most important fish and shellfish estuaries on the Atlantic Coast. The U.S. EPA will head the new oversight committee, which will work with six other Federal agencies to conduct oversight, enforce deadlines, and open more Federal resources to aid in the Bay cleanup effort. USDA is one of the six agencies responsible for reporting out on key challenges and recommendations in 120 days. Federal agencies will work extensively with the State governments of the seven Bay jurisdictions in preparing their reports and strategies.

## **Durham Field Office**

### **Massachusetts Tree Wardens Conduct Storm Training in March**



Massachusetts DCR Forester Alan Snow discusses storm damage with his training crew.

Some communities in Massachusetts had significant tree-related damage from ice storms that hit New England in December 2008. To assist these communities, the Massachusetts Tree Wardens' & Foresters' Association worked with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the U.S. Forest Service to conduct a 2-day workshop called *Evaluating Storm Damage to Urban Trees*. Tree wardens, arborists, and municipal staff from around the State learned about emergency management planning, maintaining trees for storm resistance, and working with utilities and contractors following a storm. A portion of the training addressed evaluating tree damage after a storm, which was based on two methods developed by the Forest

Service. The Urban Forestry Strike Team method was developed by the Forest Service and States in the Southern Region and is being introduced in New England and New York as a pilot project. This method trains and deploys crews to help communities assess damaged trees. The second method—the Storm Damage Assessment Protocol—was developed by Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry (NAS&PF). It provides a quick estimate of the cost of damage and cleanup. Forest Service employees Dave Bloniarz from the Northern Research Station and **John Parry** from NAS&PF in Durham assisted with the workshop. Donna Murphy from the Morgantown Field Office also attended.

## Earth Day Workday and Sustainability Plan in Durham

On May 4, the Green Team and The Employees Association of the Durham Field Office hosted an Earth Day Workday. Over a dozen Forest Service employees from the Northern Research Station and Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry worked together to beautify the grounds around the building. Tasks included removing invasive species, constructing a composting bin, pruning and mulching around trees and shrubs on the property, putting up a blue bird box, and planting perennials. The workers also enjoyed a potluck lunch.



Some of the work was based on a Sustainable Landscape Plan developed for the property by University of New Hampshire intern Laura Hanna, who worked with the Green Team this spring. We hope to implement more of those recommendations in the future. It was a great day to enjoy the outdoors and spend time with fellow employees.

Some of the many participants of the Durham Earth Day Workday take a breather during the event. Pictured from left to right are **Ron Page, Bob Evans, Jane McComb, Roger Monthey, Florence Peterson, and Laura Hanna.** Participants not pictured include **Dennis Souto, Margaret Miller-Weeks, Bob Smith, Jane Hislop, Deirdre Raimo, George Saufley, Angie Hammond, Mike Nichols, George Runde, Lindsey Rustad, Coeli Hoover, Yvonne Chainey, Rebecca Lilja, Sherri Wormstead, and John Parry.** (Photo by Glenn Rosenholm)

## Morgantown Field Office

### Training for Urban Forest Storm Preparedness Hosted in Delaware

On Friday, May 22, staff from the city of Wilmington Department of Public Works, Parks Department, and Delaware Center for Horticulture received urban forest storm preparedness training. The training was adapted from the work of several U.S. Forest Service employees: a session developed by **Lisa Burban** titled *Storms over the Urban Forests*, which was delivered in the Midwest; training delivered this year in the Northeast by John Parry; and components of the Arborist Strike Team concept developed by Dudley Hartel from the Southern Region.

**Donna Murphy**, Morgantown Field Office, and Henry Poole, Delaware Forest Service, delivered the training, which focused on four phases of urban forest storm preparedness—planning, response, recovery, and re-evaluation. Topic areas stressed safety, planning, rapid tree assessment during response, the FEMA 325 debris estimating process, tree risk assessment during the recovery, and urban forest health related to identifying tree damage and tree defects that contribute to storm damage.



Henry Poole (left), Delaware Forest Service, talks with Mark Sparagna, Park Maintenance Supervisor for the city of Wilmington (with daughter), and Gary Schwetz, Delaware Center for Horticulture, about how to determine rights-of-way widths when estimating prestorm costs using the Forest Service's Storm Damage Assessment Protocol.

A field session introduced participants to the Forest Service's Storm Damage Assessment Protocol. Participants spent time completing a prestorm assessment of a city street segment. The intention is that they will continue to assess more than 100 street segments throughout the city to obtain a 2 percent tree density sample that can then be used to estimate storm damage cleanup costs prior to responding to a natural disaster. Many of the strike team concepts were introduced with the understanding that Arborist Strike Teams can be created to respond not only at a national level, but at a statewide, regional, or even city level. It's all in the planning.

The training was funded by the Wilmington Office of Emergency Management and Delaware Forest Service, and hosted by the Delaware Center for Horticulture. For more information or to obtain copies of the revised presentations, contact Donna Murphy at [dmmurphy@fs.fed.us](mailto:dmmurphy@fs.fed.us).

## St. Paul Field Office

### American Elm: Still a Going Concern

On April 29, Chippewa National Forest personnel planted 700 American elms across three study sites in northern Minnesota. Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry plant pathologist **Linda Haugen** from the St. Paul Field Office participated in this project as well as at other American elm restoration demonstration sites in the Upper Mississippi Watershed.

These special elms are the progeny of crosses between two Dutch elm disease (DED) "tolerant" American elm cultivars and four selected "survivor elms." Dr. Jim Slavicek of the Forest Service Northern Research Station in Delaware, OH, performed the crosses and provided the planting material. Previous research indicates a high heritability of DED tolerance, giving hope that many of these progeny trees will carry DED tolerance from one parent and the ability to survive and thrive in northern climates from the other (local) parent. The trees will be cared for within fenced deer enclosures for several years, and then challenged with local inoculum of the DED fungus to determine which trees are tolerant to the disease. The trees that survive the testing and inoculation may become a future source of locally adapted DED tolerant elms, both from seed produced onsite as well as potentially from vegetative propagation if a few particularly promising trees are identified.



Dr. Jim Slavicek (left) discusses the Dutch elm disease tolerance study with Blackduck Ranger District employees while planting American elm trees on the Chippewa National Forest in northern Minnesota.

## Watershed Experts Examine Missouri's Lower Meramec River

National watershed experts, including Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry's **Teri Heyer**, were invited to Missouri May 11-15 to examine land use issues that are impacting drinking water supplies in the Lower Meramec River watershed. Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry, the Trust for Public Land, and the Open Space Council of St. Louis-Missouri are partnered on the project and were among the groups offering recommendations on addressing these issues.

A GIS analysis highlighted areas where management and/or protection of forest land are needed, areas where crop land or pasture could benefit from conservation activities, and areas where stormwater is a concern. This analysis was presented to local leaders who decided that land conservation, the impact of septic systems, and stormwater runoff were the most serious threats to drinking water.



From left to right: Cynthia Hagel (Education/Outreach Expert from the University of Minnesota Extension), Kelley Hart (Trust for Public Land), Steve Nagle (East West Gateway Council of Governments), and **Teri Heyer** (U.S. Forest Service) look at Fox Creek in Missouri, where rapid runoff from increased impervious surface in the watershed has been impacting the fish resource.



Bob Coffing from Friends of La Barque Creek points out macroinvertebrates, an indicator of good water quality in the creek.

## Chicago Area Earth Day Events



Pictured from left to right are Colin Maher (age 9, Schaumburg, IL); Nicholas Hamburger (age 11, Glencoe, IL); and Cody Kunz (age 10, Lyons, IL).

Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry's **Tom Dilley** joined Bob Benjamin from the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and Edith Makra from Chicago's Morton Arboretum to staff a booth at the Argonne National Laboratory Earth Day event in Chicago April 22. The group distributed information about invasive species and the value of urban trees, but were overwhelmed with public interest about the emerald ash borer and Asian longhorned beetle in the Chicago area. Well over 300 people from diverse backgrounds visited the booth, from Argonne Lab plant physicists to maintenance workers and students. Event participants were very interested and well informed about the borer

infestations and issues surrounding treatment options that are available to the public. Most walked away with a wealth of information and educational materials about invasive insects and forest health.

On April 23, DeVry, Inc., celebrated *Take Your Child to Work Day* during Earth/Arbor Week by offering a full-day program designed to show young people the value of conservation education and pique their interest about career opportunities in natural resource fields. The day included hands-on workshops aimed at stimulating children's creativity and demonstrating how it can be applied in their education and future careers. The courses included an urban forestry session provided by **Tom Dilley** of the St. Paul Field Office. Tom introduced the students to urban forestry, the value of trees, and invasive insects. Each student received a Colorado blue spruce tree that they transplanted into a pot in the classroom. They also learned how to mulch and take care of the seedling once they took it home.

### **EAB Infested Ash Wood Gets a Second Life**

Homewood Flossmoor High School students are drying Emerald Ash Borer infested wood using a solar wood drying kiln built from design plans from the Forest Service's Forest Product Laboratory.

Like many communities across the country the Emerald Ash Borer infestation in Homewood, Illinois has affected the tree population and diversity, as well as the local economy. Homewood Illinois head Forester Jim Tresouthick connected this idea with the Homewood Flossmoor High School staff and Gary Ham, a local portable mill operator. Ham processed the infested ash logs to meet quarantine specifications and donated the milled lumber to the high school. The school's industrial arts class constructed and operates the wood drying kiln and uses the lumber for industrial arts classwork and in school construction projects.



Gary Ham and his portable mill in Homewood Illinois.



The Homewood Flossmoor staff and students built the structure and are now drying the wood. From left to right: Kevin Thomas Department Chair Applied Academics, students Tom Lively, Ryan Milenkoff, Mike Ciccotelli, Ben Blaies and Industrial Arts teacher Mike Mikos.

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## EDITOR'S NOTES

**DEADLINE!** The deadline for the next issue of the Northeastern Area News Notes is noon, Wednesday, June 24, 2009. News articles submitted after this time and date will be published in the next month's edition. Please e-mail final articles to Deborah Muccio at [dmuccio@fs.fed.us](mailto:dmuccio@fs.fed.us).

**The Northeastern Area News Notes are published monthly by:**

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service  
Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry  
11 Campus Blvd., Suite 200  
Newtown Square, PA 19073  
610-557-4103  
<http://www.na.fs.fed.us/>

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