



NORTHEASTERN AREA STATE AND PRIVATE FORESTRY NEWS NOTES



December 2010

From the Director's Desk

Opportunity in the Moment!

Opportunity comes in many different forms. Sometimes it may not be in an obvious shape. For example, during the 2008 financial crisis, many people found opportunity within crisis. Those that could objectively look at the situation and had the foresight made millions of dollars as undervalued securities fell only to rally again in the following 2 years.

This is not unlike the current situation with our forest resources in the Northeast. Development pressure and social expansion have made “keeping forests as forests,” as one State Forester said, “An easy phrase to repeat, but a difficult goal to accomplish.” Social issues, economic problems, and natural resource issues facing our country could stifle the perpetuation of our forests, and negatively impact the air, water, recreation, and other forest products they provide. Opportunities exist to make positive changes but they may not be in an obvious shape.

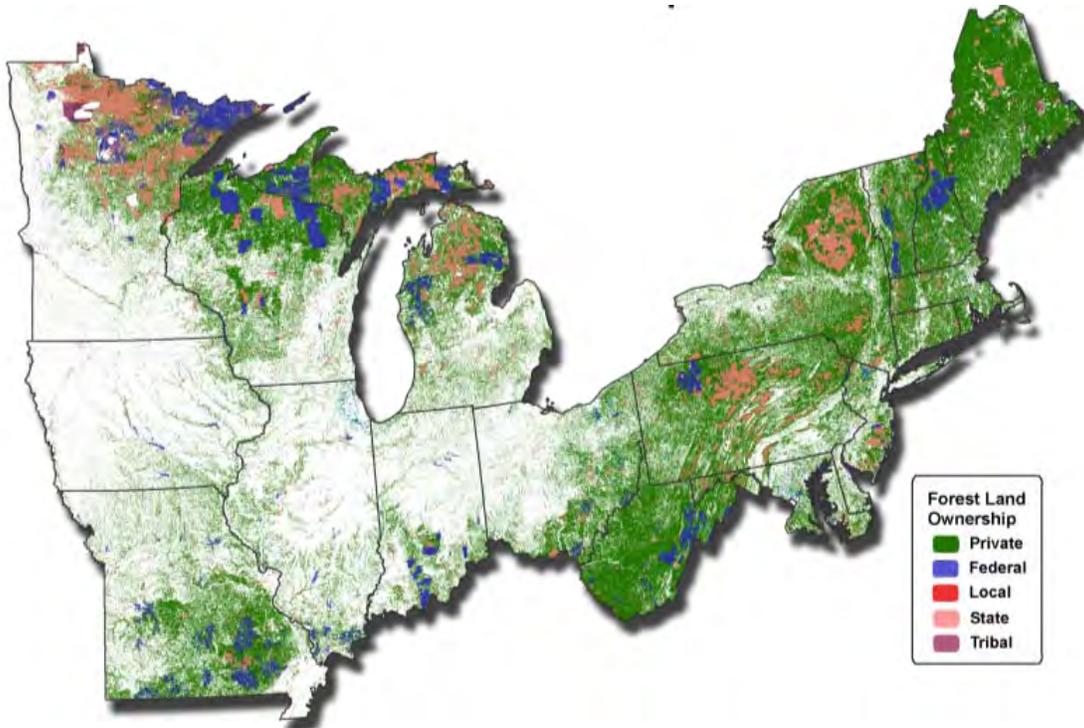
If one considers a map showing the forest lands of all ownerships and does not concentrate on the “colors” of the land, it is clear to see they all blend together. The shapes form landscapes, watersheds, and ecosystems that sustain us as a country and as a people. As employees of the U.S. Forest Service and State forestry agencies, members of conservation organizations, or interested individuals, it is our responsibility to participate in and support one another in protecting and perpetuating the Nation's forests.

The 2008 Farm Bill opened a new door by establishing the requirement that States assess their forest resources and develop a strategy to address both immediate and long-term needs. As the demand for housing slows, fuel prices rise, and the need to create jobs continues, opportunities appear to maintain and improve forests, create markets for biomass, and put people back to work conserving our resources. In short, now is the time to look for those unusual opportunities to make a difference. Even reduced budgets may provide incentives for creative management that will produce unexpected outcomes.

One State strategy delivered to the Secretary of Agriculture's desk described the benefits of studying the situation and creating a strategy in this manner. It “provides practical recommendations on how landowners; forest stakeholders; and Federal, State, and local governments can work together to sustain the many benefits and ecosystem services our forests provide.”



Most States are better prepared now than they were 2 years ago to move forward in a collaborative manner. Every forest resource agency, every conservation organization, and every individual now has a better understanding of the issues, and therefore, a greater opportunity at this moment to uniquely contribute toward moving beyond all boundaries in every area of Stewardship, Cooperative Fire Management, Urban and Community Forestry, Forest Legacy, and Forest Health. The employees of Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry are dedicated to working closely with the States and all our partners to seek out those opportunities that assure the future success of our Nation's forests even in the face of adversity.



Regardless of ownership, forests in the Northeastern and Midwestern United States collectively “form landscapes, watersheds, and ecosystems that sustain us as a country and as a people.”

With best wishes to all,
James Barresi, Acting Director

Sustainable Operations Tips for the Month

New Blanket Purchase Agreements for Office Supplies Provide Benefits

Beginning January 3, 2011, all Department of Agriculture office supply purchases must be made through Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) of the GSA Office Supply Federal Strategic Sourcing Initiative (FSSI) or through USDA's AbilityOne Supply Store, Paperclips Etc.



These new BPAs are easy to use and provide additional discounts to the negotiated prices already available on GSA's Schedule 75 for office supplies. They provide the Federal government with a fast and effective way to order, while ensuring prompt, cost-effective delivery and quality customer service. Additional benefits include:

- Ensuring compliance with applicable regulations, including the AbilityOne Program
- Fostering new markets for sustainable technologies and environmentally preferable products
- Simplifying data collection and enhancing transparency by enabling agencies to better manage spending and cost savings for office supplies

Highlights:

WHO MAY USE THE BPAs: Any USDA employee with a Contracting Officer's Warrant or the authority to acquire office supplies by purchase card may use the BPAs within purchase limits without the need for further authorization.

COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS: No additional competition is required. The GSA Office Supply FSSI BPAs were competed.

HOW TO ORDER UNDER THE BPAs: The BPAs can be accessed via GSA Advantage/USDA Advantage at www.usdaadvantage.gsa.gov. Click on the Strategic Sourcing BPAs link on the left side of the page to access a wide array of office supplies. If you are interested in obtaining green office supplies, you can view all available items under various environmental attributes within this aisle. For more detailed ordering information, please visit www.gsa.gov/fssiofficesupplies.

Newtown Square Headquarters Office

Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Welcomes Rob Witmer



Robert Witmer

Robert Witmer has joined Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry to lead the Office of Knowledge Management. Rob grew up in Greencastle in south-central Pennsylvania. He is a proud graduate of the Forest Technology Program at Penn State's Mont Alto campus. He also earned BS and MS degrees from Penn State. His Master's research focused on using tree shelters in the production of street trees. Rob continued his research in the nursery arena, studying water use of pot-in-pot nursery stock during production and establishment in the landscape while earning a PhD in horticulture from Virginia Tech. Following his doctoral work, Rob moved to Philadelphia to pursue a postdoctoral opportunity to study the control of two invasive plant species—Norway maple and Japanese knotweed—with the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia's extensive Fairmount Park System.



During college, Rob held a number of teaching and research assistant positions. For several years, his teaching of woody landscape plants upheld the high standards of his fine education. Rob was fortunate to assist in a wide variety of research projects in forestry, basic plant physiology, and ecology. Rob's work experience outside college is also quite varied—utility forester, nursery worker, arborist, and municipal tree plan writer. One highlight of his intern experience was a stint as a historical interpreter at the Cradle of Forestry in America (Biltmore Forest School).

Following his postdoctoral work, Rob worked as a silvicultural specialist and later as Chief of the Forest Resource Planning Section for the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry. As a State employee, Rob worked on a number of key projects, including FSC certification, the State's Forest Resource Assessment and Strategy, and Marcellus gas planning as well as a number of other important issues. Rob currently lives just outside Philadelphia in Wynnewood with his wife and family, including two young boys. Welcome, Rob!

Durham Field Office

Durham Green Team Starts Bike Loan Program in 2010

The Durham Green Team developed a bike loan program to provide bicycles to staff members for commuting to and from work or for riding to the University of New Hampshire campus, personal use, or for exercising on personal time.

Durham Field Office employees **Ray Scienzo, Lindsay Rustad, and Bill Frament** donated several bikes of varying sizes. The bikes have been inspected and tuned up by Bob Fitzhenry and come with safety equipment. Coincidentally, the University of New Hampshire built a paved trail from campus to the DFO building this fall to create a safe and easy route for riders. The hope is that this will help cut down on vehicle use, help people avoid the hassle of parking on campus, and provide exercise!



Tom Luther and Sherri Wormstead are ready to ride their bikes!



Morgantown Field Office

Forest Legacy Project Brings Together Three Branches of the U.S. Forest Service

Representatives from all three branches of the U.S. Forest Service joined the State of Ohio and other partners on November 17 to celebrate a multipurpose Forest Legacy project that elevated the national Forest Legacy Program above the 2 million-acre milestone.

Ohio Governor Ted Strickland celebrated the transfer of ownership of the privately owned 15,494-acre Vinton County tract to the State of Ohio. The project was Ohio's largest remaining privately owned contiguous forest block where forestry research has occurred for more than 50 years. The land will become Ohio's newest State Forest and Wildlife Area. The State Forest will provide public recreational opportunities and allow ongoing forestry research as well as sustained timber production.

Robert Lueckel represented the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry unit of the Forest Service. He acknowledged the 2 million-acre mark and explained that the Forest Legacy Program was successful because of its established high standards.

Robin Morgan represented the Northern Research Station. As Assistant Director, she oversaw the Forest Legacy Program while the Vinton Furnace project was funded and going through its acquisition process. Morgan spoke about the importance of the tract for research purposes.

Wayne National Forest Supervisor **Jo Reyer** also participated in the event. She recognized the input that the Wayne National Forest provided to complete the acquisition.



A Forest Legacy Program banner with U.S. Forest Service and Ohio Division of Forestry logos is displayed at the Vinton Furnace Experimental Forest in Vinton County, Ohio, during the celebration of ownership transfer from private hands to the State.



Linda Wilson-Singleton Accepts New Position

Linda Wilson-Singleton has accepted an extended detail position in the Chief Information Office. Singleton will serve as the Feedback Analyst on the Communications Team. She began her new position the first of this year and will be virtually located in the Morgantown Field Office. In her new position, she will help integrate and analyze customer feedback from multiple sources outside the Computer Help Desk (CHD) and work with the CHD to better integrate all sources of feedback. She will work closely with the Performance and Quality Management staff.

Singleton currently works as a Management Analyst for the Wood Education and Resource Center (WERC) in the Forest Service's Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry. She holds a bachelor's degree in economics from West Virginia University and an MBA from Waynesburg University in Pennsylvania.

Three Morgantown Employees Retire

Morgantown employees gathered to say farewell to **Janice Gottschalk**, **Roy Short**, and **Dave Feicht** upon their retirements at the end of 2010. Combined, these three employees had more than 60 years in government service.

The retirees were presented with gifts, and colleagues shared memories of working with them during their career. Short was complimented by several on the level of expertise he brought to facilities maintenance. Several contractors have commented over the past several weeks that Short has been the best facilities maintenance person they have worked with anywhere for a long time.

Gottschalk was also indispensable for keeping the office running smoothly. She shared a list of 10 things that she will never have to e-mail, say, or do again, including making the intercom request, "Roy Short, please report to the front desk." She went on to say that she will miss saying "thank you" to everyone for all the cooperation she received over the years from coworkers.

All three employees will be deeply missed for the level of dedicated service they brought to the office.



Janice Gottschalk prepares to read her list of 10 things she will never have to do again.



Small But Generous

The Morgantown Field Office completed its 2010 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). When the tallying was done, it pledged more than \$10,000 to charities. In addition to payroll deduction and one-time gifts, funds were raised through a chili cookoff, voting with money for favorite pet photos, sampling yummy food in the Forester's Food Fest 3, and selling candy bars. The additional funds were presented to the local chapter of the United Way.

Morgantown, WV, has 16 Federal agencies that participate in the CFC program. The Morgantown Field Office was the fourth largest contributor behind much larger agencies—the Department of Energy's National Energy Technology Laboratory, the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, and the Federal Bureau of Prison's Hazelton Federal Correctional Institution.

Tree Program Held at Cheat Lake Elementary

Will Harris and **Rick Turcotte** made a tree biology presentation at Cheat Lake Elementary. Second graders spent about one hour discussing tree biology and the ecological role of trees and the environment. The presentation was well received by the students and staff, and a large number of them asked question about trees, how they grow, and their importance.



Students at Cheat Lake Elementary listen to Rick and Will talk about the importance of trees.



Wood Education and Resource Center

Wood Education and Resource Center Accepting Applications for Cost-Share Demonstration Projects

The Wood Education and Resource Center (WERC) is accepting applications for cost-share demonstration project grants through February 1, 2011. The WERC grants support sustainable forestry and forest industry in the eastern hardwood region. In previous years about \$1 million has typically been divided among projects that help primary and secondary hardwood industries sustain the production of forest products. The final funding available will be determined once the Forest Service has received its official budget for fiscal year 2011.

WERC grants fund projects that strengthen the economic competitiveness of the forest industry. Businesses throughout the eastern hardwood forest region use the results of these projects to improve practices, expand market opportunities, and discover new product uses for renewable forest resources. Forest industry businesses are a major employer in many rural communities. Projects funded through WERC grants provide companies with knowledge and technology to expand their business and hire more employees.

“As with previous grants, these projects will help ensure the sustainability and health of our hardwood forests,” said WERC Director Steve Milauskas. “Additionally, projects created by these grants will make it more economical to harvest lower-value trees and allow us to take better care of our forests.”

Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations, State and local government agencies, institutions of higher education, tribes, and for-profit organizations. The average grant size is anticipated to be \$56,000 and may vary from \$10,000 to \$80,000. Federal funds must be matched at least one-to-one by the recipient.

Priority will be given to projects that accomplish one or more of the following:

- Maintain the economic competitiveness of primary and secondary hardwood industries.
- Increase knowledge and information about how the hardwood industry can contribute to the green building movement.
- Increase the knowledge, information, and promotion of how carbon sequestration (storage) by wood products can provide a competitive edge to a sustainable hardwood industry.
- Develop technology and markets to address urgent issues on a global or domestic scale, such as sanitizing wood packaging materials and developing markets for unexpected increases in wood volume from pest outbreaks or weather events.
- Increase the sustainable use of woody biomass to meet our Nation’s needs for energy and raw materials.

The application form and instructions are on the WERC Web site at www.na.fs.fed.us/werc. Participants can also apply electronically at www.grants.gov.



What's New on the Web

Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry — December 2010 Web Update

INTERNET

FY2011 NAS&PF COMPETITIVE ALLOCATION RFP

[Training PowerPoint for state use](#) – in Communications Toolbox section
[National State & Private Forestry Priorities & Objectives](#)

NEWS RELEASES

[Common Sense Prevails in the Show-Me State](#) – 11/11/10 ([photos](#))
[WERC Projects RFP](#) – 12/15/10
[Glimmer of Hope for Northeast Hemlocks](#) – 12/17/10

NEWS NOTES

[November](#)

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

[Project Archaeology: Investigating Shelter](#) – continuing education course for teachers
[Alaska Region Learning Center](#) – added link to R10's new Con Ed site

WOOD EDUCATION & RESOURCE CENTER

[Update Competitive Grants Process page for 2011](#)

Editor's Note

Some changes and a redesign of the newsletter are going to be made. More information about it will be sent out before the next deadline. In the meantime, please send any new articles to Vicky Evans at vevans@fs.fed.us. Thank you for contributing to and reading the NA News Notes.

The Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry News Notes are published by the:

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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