

# Planners' Pages

Spring/Summer 2005

## NFRPA Seeks to Strengthen Internal Network Through NAASF Web site

The Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters (NAASF) has a new Web site for internal communication that was developed and hosted by the Northeastern Area.

The NAASF Web site contains:

- Materials for previous and upcoming meetings
- Administrative docs. (bylaws and work plans)
- Calendar of events
- List of organizational decisions
- Discussion forum
- Links to forestry Web sites

NAASF has offered NFRPA Web presence on this new site. This provides NFRPA an opportunity to strengthen internal communication and highlight the work we are doing. NFRPA is the first State staff group eligible to use and test the functionality of this Web site.

Over time, the integrated Web site is intended to increase communication not only with NFRPA members but with partners, including NAASF and the eight State staff organizations similar to NFRPA. In fact, on behalf of the GIS professionals, Kurt Swartz expressed interest in this development and provided input on what functions they would like.

NFRPA members may request some changes to the Web-site features, but overall, the NFRPA portion of the Web site will have much of the same functionality as the NAASF site.

Like the NAASF Web site, the NFRPA site would be password protected and have no publicly accessible pages. All NFRPA members will be given access to the website. Stay tuned for more details.



*Teague Prichard, Wisconsin Bureau of Forestry*

*NFRPA 2005 Conference & GIS Professionals Meeting*

**Annapolis, Maryland**  
**October 17-19**

**The Impacts of Globalization on Forest Sustainability in the Northeast**

*Photo by Margaret Mangan, MD Forest Service*

NFRPA  
would like to say

**“Thank You!”**

to

Bill Moulton  
and  
Vermont Division of Forests

for hosting the  
2004 NFRPA meeting.

## President's Message

Once again NFRPA has gazed into the “crystal ball” in an attempt to take stock of the many forces impacting the forests of the 20 Northeastern and Midwestern States. Global issues continue to have implications for forest sustainability and management where we live. On February 16, 2005, the Kyoto Treaty went into effect, creating a worldwide market for the trading of carbon credits. Although the United States was not a signatory of the treaty, it is still likely to have wide-ranging impacts here. The treaty may even create a new paradigm for restoring, managing, and protecting forests, particularly in rapidly urbanizing areas of the Northeast.

The reach of global markets has impacts on almost every phase of forest management. Paper mills in the Eastern United States can now be fed from South American pulp instead of local pulpwood. Large buyers of paper and wood products are demanding that those products be certified. Forest industry giants like Georgia-Pacific, who once owned and managed millions upon millions of acres of forest land to feed their mills, now own virtually no forest land. Storied companies like Plum Creek Timber have morphed into real estate investment trusts.

Even our most isolated field foresters, in remote parts of our States, have had the terms exotic invasives, third-party certification, sustainability, carbon sequestration, and criteria and indicators slip into their lexicon. We have seen exotic insects like the emerald ash borer and the Asian longhorned beetle appear out of thin air and cause the destruction of millions of trees. Issues like global climate change, lack of oak regeneration, ubiquitous deer, and sudden oak death continue to loom large. It is in these days that the skills of forest resource planners are in the most demand. We will need our “crystal ball” and all our wily skills and understanding to divine how to manage and protect our forests within this ever-changing landscape.

With all this in mind, our annual NFRPA meeting will focus on “The Impacts of Globalization on Forest Sustainability in the Northeast.” We intend to look at market and demographic trends, international treaties, commodities and subsidies in the global marketplace, changes in land ownership, ecosystem services, and other related topics. This year our meeting will be held in historic Annapolis, Maryland, October 17–19, 2005. For the second straight year, at the request of NAASF, our annual meeting will include the State GIS professionals. We expect them to add energy and perspective to our meeting, much as they did last year in Vermont.

NFRPA is building a strong partnership with the GIS professionals. Representing NFRPA, I went with Kurt Swartz, NA GIS steering committee member, to the November 2004 NAASF meeting at Grey Towers to support their request to form an Area-wide GIS staff group (see page 3). For now, NFRPA is happy to support the GIS professionals as a work group associated with NFRPA and to host them at our annual meetings.

NFRPA is also in the process of formalizing its own relationship with NAASF. This process began with the results of the planners' survey in 2004 and was articulated in NAASF Resolution No. 2004–03 on Forest Resource Planning. We are currently working with NAASF to select a long-term (2- to 3-year term) State Forester Liaison with NAASF. We will work with the liaison to create a 3-year Plan of Action for NFRPA that will serve as a strategic document and help to clarify our relationship with NAASF.

An upcoming opportunity for NFRPA to communicate effectively both internally and with NAASF is through the new NAASF Web site (see page 1). Another Web site that is sure to become extremely popular with forest resource planners and other forestry professionals is the Northeastern Area forest sustainability indicators information system—an effort being led by Sherri Wormstead and Connie Carpenter, with the help of Delaware State Forester Austin Short, members of NFRPA, and others within the Forest Service (see page 6).

As you can see, 2005 is shaping up to be an eventful year. I wish each of you “all the best” in reaching your many objectives planned for this year. I hope that each of you will be able to join us in Annapolis in October for our Annual Forest Planners conference.

Respectfully,

*Jeff Horan*

*Chief of Forest Resource Planning and Analysis, Maryland DNR Forest Service*

## Highlights From the NFRPA 2004 Meeting

The 2004 NFRPA conference was held on the shores of historic Lake Champlain in Burlington, Vermont, September 12–15. The meeting had two primary purposes: to explore the theme “Forest Sustainability in a Rapidly Changing Environment,” and to provide a first-ever opportunity for forestry GIS (Geographic Information Systems) folks from the 20 Northeastern and Midwestern States to get together.

Because of the added GIS component, we hosted a record 60-plus participants and featured a program with more than 20 speakers. Highlights of the program (put together by program chair Jeff Horan) included Neil Sampson’s thought-provoking keynote talk on the social, economic, and forest industry changes that will shape forestry in this century, and Eric Palola’s retrospective on 10 years as a certifier.

The program also featured reports and updates from the NFRPA States, as well as from many of the State and Federal organizations that serve forestry planning interests in the region. This year the reports were focused on GIS issues as well as planning topics in order to highlight the interrelationship between planning and GIS.

The social high point was a dinner cruise on Lake Champlain on a beautiful fall evening, culminating with the presentation of this year’s Crystal Ball Award to Jon Nelson (see page 6) and the singing of the official song, “Oh Crystal Ball.”

As organizers, one of our primary goals was to explore the concept of creating an Area-wide forestry GIS organization. Tom Luther (USDA Forest Service,

Northeastern Area) did a great job facilitating the GIS sessions, and at the wrap-up the GIS participants selected Kurt Swartz of New York to represent them.

As host of the 2004 meeting, I want to express my appreciation for the opportunity to work with the energetic, fun, and committed people who make NFRPA the great organization it is. I look forward to the 2005 meeting in Maryland. Under Jeff Horan’s guidance, I can assure you it will be a meeting you won’t want to miss.

*Bill Moulton, Vermont Division of Forests*



*Cold Country* entertained and delighted on the dinner cruise.

Musicians (from left to right) are Con Hogan, Tony Washburn, Bill Moulton, Craig Whipple, and Jeannette Hogan.

*Photo by Justin Wormstead*

### A Note from the GIS Professionals

An outcome of the NFRPA meeting in Burlington, Vermont, in September 2004 was the initiative to organize the GIS staff of the Northeastern and Midwestern States to share technical experience, institutional knowledge, and information resources to support forest resource programs. It is recognized that State GIS staff need to organize, coordinate activities, and interact regularly to better accomplish job efficiencies, reduce redundant efforts, and collaborate on regionally significant issues. To accomplish this task, a steering committee was formed whose members are assisting with the formation process.

During the November meeting of NAASF, Jeff Horan (MD), current NFRPA president, and I presented the concept of creating a GIS association, and engaged the State Foresters in dialog on the benefits, challenges, and issues pertinent to this topic. Their response was highly supportive. They recognize the broad benefits to be achieved through regional collaboration; however, due to timing, budgetary items, and NAASF organizational issues, NAASF respectfully asked to defer the decision on forming a GIS association until 2005. NAASF is in the process of surveying all of its current staff groups in an attempt to formalize its relationship with each of them. Once that task is completed, the GIS professionals will have the opportunity to request the formation of a group. In the interim, it was recommended that the 2005 NFRPA conference be expanded to include GIS staff, and the conference program be structured to provide an expanded component for GIS discussions.

*Kurt Swartz, Forester and GIS Section Chief with NYS Department of Environmental Conservation*

# ***State Issues, Challenges, and Successes***

## **Rhode Island Updates Its Forest Resource Management Plan**

The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, in cooperation with Statewide Planning and other partners representing the environmental interests in the State, is in the process of updating the Rhode Island Forest Resource Management Plan. The last update was done in 1985 and guides State and local policies that impact forest resources.

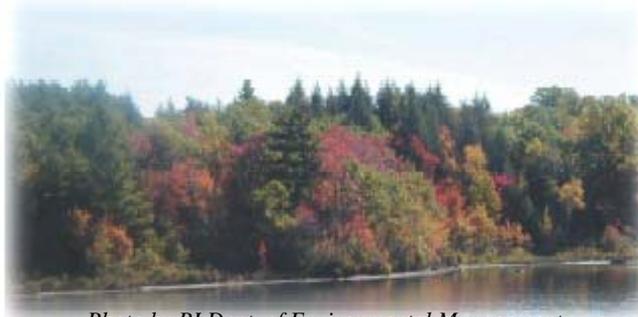
Private landowners own almost 60 percent of Rhode Island's forest land, and it is important that they have input into the planning decisions that will develop policies impacting the forest resources that they own.

Therefore, survey questionnaires were sent out to over 2,700 forest landowners with 10 acres or more in 13 rural communities identified in the 1988 Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program map delineating urban, suburban, and rural communities. The rural communities are defined as those with less than 500 persons per square mile or a developed land area of less than 25 percent.

Some of the preliminary findings from the 645 survey respondents are as follows:

- Fifty percent have owned their properties for more than 25 years.

- Fifty-one percent are enrolled in the Farm, Forest, and Open Space Tax program.
- Sixty percent own 10 to 30 acres of forest land.
- Almost 80 percent are concerned about the health of the forest.
- Eighty-two percent believe the State of Rhode Island should allocate funds to acquire or purchase the development rights to important forest lands.
- Fifty percent of the responses came from individuals in 3 of the 13 communities surveyed (Burrillville, Foster, and Glocester).



*Photo by RI Dept. of Environmental Management*

Greenwich Advertising, Ltd. has carried out key stakeholder focus group discussions to obtain more in-depth information on important forest resource issues. In addition, the Department of Environmental Management recently held a public

hearing on the Rhode Island Forest Resources Management Plan.

For more information see <http://www.planning.ri.gov/> or contact Bruce Payton at 401-647-4389 or [bpayton@ridem.necoxmail.com](mailto:bpayton@ridem.necoxmail.com).

*Bruce Payton, Rhode Island Division of Forest Environment*

### **Potential Revision to the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators**

The USDA Forest Service released the *National Report on Sustainable Forests–2003* (<http://www.fs.fed.us/research/sustain>) and the associated technical reports last year. The criteria and indicators of sustainability used in the report were developed in an international forum (the Montreal Process Working Group) in 1994. The 11 signatory countries will reconvene to review progress and discuss needed revisions to the indicator list in early 2006.

If you have suggestions for revisions to the list used for national scale assessment, you can comment on-line at <http://sustainableforest.dialoguebydesign.net>.

The results of the on-line dialog will be summarized and presented at the May meeting of the National Roundtable on Sustainable Forests.

*Constance Carpenter, USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry*

# Upper Mississippi River Forestry Partnership Accomplishments

*Samuel Osinde, Upper Mississippi Forestry Partnership Coordinator*



The USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Area and the State Foresters from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri,

and Wisconsin have joined in partnership to build a watershed-wide forestry effort in the Upper Mississippi River Basin. The Upper Mississippi River Forestry Partnership aims to focus activities, demonstration projects, and cooperative programs on key watershed forestry issues. The partnership is expected to increase the use of trees and forests to meet the overall objective of watershed protection in the Upper Mississippi River Basin. In addition, the partnership seeks to achieve a heightened awareness of the role and importance of trees and forests by agencies and organizations working in the basin.

The expected outcomes of this project can only be achieved over the long term. The partnership has made great progress on a number of issues.

During its first year, the Upper Mississippi Forestry Partnership has accomplished the following:

- Contacted a variety of Federal, State, and county agencies, and identified areas of collaboration for promoting forestry as a significant solution to water quality problems in the Upper Mississippi River.
- Developed a memorandum of understanding that targets commitment from signatories including the USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Area and the State forestry programs of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin.
- Finalized the Upper Mississippi River Forestry Partnership organizational chart. It establishes more clarity for the partnership for decisionmaking, with individual roles and responsibilities identified.
- Held three steering committee meetings to discuss the short- and long-term vision of the partnership. The steering committee is composed of officials appointed by each of the six partner States.
- Secured a \$300,000 grant from the USDA Forest Service, State and Private Forestry for improvement of migratory bird habitats in the Upper Mississippi River Basin. A request for proposals solicited grant applications from State, county, and nongovernmental organizations. A

committee reviewed and ranked applications, and awarded a total of 10 grants. The selected projects will provide excellent benefits to bird habitat, educational value for the Upper Mississippi effort, and a number of applied demonstration sites.

- Developed a final action plan for the Upper Mississippi for the next 5 years. This action plan states the mission, objectives, and actions that will expand forestry opportunities to benefit the Upper Mississippi and is being shared with stakeholders.
- Began mapping hotspots for water quality concerns and wildlife habitat restoration. The utility of the hotspot map will enable the partnership to prioritize activities and investments in areas with the greatest need and opportunity.
- Is developing a project portfolio, sharing the success stories fostered through the partnership.

Limited State budgets are a major challenge in this process. States are going through a difficult financial time and, as a result, out-of-state travel is very challenging for participation of all States in partner-oriented meetings. This has made it extremely difficult to organize an exchange visit for State personnel with successful projects like the Chesapeake Bay Program and the New York City watershed. Such exchange visits would shape the vision of the planning team and provide learning opportunities to the forestry partnership.



The Northeastern Area has provided outstanding support for the Upper Mississippi. It most recently has provided additional support by devoting a full-time position to the partnership, currently filled by Teri Heyer. Continued coordination will be achieved through the approved Forestry Innovation Grant for the period 2005–2007. The partnership will eventually need longer term financial commitment to enable longer term planning of activities and programs.

*Photos by Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources*

## Winner of the 2004 Crystal Ball Award

**Jon  
Nelson**

**Minnesota DNR  
Division of Forestry**

### *How did you become a forest planner?*

My parents should have suspected something when I chose games such as pin the red dots on the flip chart and musical nominal group techniques at my childhood birthday parties. In college, I chose a path less traveled by most forestry students, with a major in forest management and administration (i.e., more policy stuff than silviculture). After spending my first 3 years with the Minnesota DNR as a forest inventory specialist, I decided to make a jump to a 90 percent entry-level forest planning position in the central office. I've served in a wide variety of "planning" capacities ever since.

### *What do you think makes a great forest planner?*

Patience, persistence, objectivity, strong organizational knowledge, and an ability to see the bigger picture. The ability to distill and translate lots of information, a good network of peers, and a thick skin (as well as a thick skull) are pluses as well.

### *What challenges do you feel face forest planners now and in the future?*

- Distilling meaningful trends and conditions out of an ever-growing and overwhelming amount of data/information from a wide range of sources.
- Resolving conflicts between competing forest users/uses in an increasingly polarized environment.
- Giving meaning to "sustainable forestry" in the midst of changing standards, definitions, and public/consumer expectations.
- Remembering all of the verses of "Oh Crystal Ball."



**Crystal Ball Viewing Hours**—The Crystal Ball may be viewed slightly above eye-level (when standing) in the current award winner's office in St. Paul. Please note that persons 6'3" tall or taller must view the Crystal Ball from a sitting or kneeling position. Viewing hours are generally from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CST. To avoid long lines and delays, appointments are recommended and cash donations are encouraged. Special viewing hours may also be arranged with adequate notice for tour groups and traveling dignitaries.

### *Coming to you soon . . . Forest Sustainability Indicators Information System*

The commitment to monitor forest sustainability at State and regional levels has led the Northeastern Area, NAASF, and NFRPA on a collaborative journey to carefully select 18 base indicators of forest sustainability and supporting metrics and data sources. The Criteria and Indicators Steering Committee and Reporting Task Group, each made up of dedicated NFRPA members and NA staff, are finishing a process to select the graphs, maps, tables, and other information to report on the indicators at State and Area-wide scales and track trends over time. This will be available on-line through the forest sustainability indicators information system. On the contract side, requirements analysis and initial design for the system was completed by Network Specialty Group, Inc. The second phase of the contract should be awarded soon for development, testing, and deployment of the system. Although data for 85 percent of the metrics is being obtained from existing sources, stay tuned for a survey coming your way to collect data for just a few of the indicators. We plan a debut of the indicators information system at the 2005 NFRPA meeting in Annapolis.

*Sherri Wormstead, USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry*

#### **NFRPA 2005 Executive Committee**

*President*—Jeff Horan (jhoran@dnr.state.md.us)

*Vice President*—Matt Keefer (makeefer@state.pa.us)

*Secretary*—Susan Francher (sfrancher@dred.state.nh.us)

*Treasurer*—Larry Pedersen (pedersel@michigan.gov)

NA liaison—Constance Carpenter (conniecarpenter@fs.fed.us)

**Web site:** <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/sustainability>

Compiled and edited by:



USDA Forest Service  
Northeastern Area  
State and Private Forestry

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