

Landscaping Reduces Fire Risk

Creating a landscape that will make a home less vulnerable to wildfire is the key to reducing fire risk. By using Firewise landscaping, a homeowner can create a defensible space around a home which reduces the risk of fire spreading quickly.

Here are a few tips from the Florida Div. of Forestry and the Sarasota Co. Fire Dept., to reduce the threat of wildfire:

- Encircle the home with well-irrigated areas at least 30 feet on all sides, providing space for fire equipment in the event of an emergency. Plants should be limited to carefully spaced, fire resistant tree and shrub species.
- Remove highly flammable vegetation around the home
- Take out the "ladder fuels," the vegetation that links grass and tree tops. These fuels

can carry fire from the vegetation to a structure or from a structure to vegetation

- Keep trees and shrubs pruned. Prune all trees 6 to 10 feet from the ground
- Mow the lawn regularly.
- Dispose of cuttings and debris promptly, according to local regulations
- Keep a well maintained irrigation system
- Landscape with less flammable plants such as dogwood, redbud, sycamore, magnolia, oaks, red maple, Florida soapberry, wild olive and black cherry. Check with local nurseries and landscaping stores for other recommendations
- Keeping the home surrounding lean, clean and green may make the difference if confronted by a wild fire.

For further information on keeping a fire-wise surrounding contact the office of your State Forester.

NY Explores Biomass Power Plant

Catalyst Renewables, a Texas-based company, is exploring the possibility of building a power plant in Oneonta, New York that would burn wood chips to produce electricity. Company officials have said the project would cost about \$70 million to build and would eventually employ 20 people.

According to local news reports, the Oneonta City Planning Commission has been designated the "lead agency" for the project, although the common council will still have the last word on accepting the project. "Nothing's going to be slipping past anyone," said Fifth Ward Alderman Rodger Moran. "There's not a councilman here that's just going to accept it." Concerns expressed at the public hearing involved where the supply of wood fuel would come

from, where the ash would be disposed, how the city would handle increased truck traffic, and who would pay for any damage to public roadways.

According to Catalyst Renewables, the project is in the very early planning stages, and progress forward is entirely dependent upon funding from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA).

Source: Northeastern Logger's Assn. - June '06.

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Conservation Calendar

- **Sept. 17 - 21** - 84th Annual Meeting - National Assn. of State Foresters, Anchorage, AK. Contact: Dean Brown, 907/269-8476 or dean_brown@dnr.state.ak.us
- **Sept. 19 - 20** - Meeting the Challenge: Invasive Plants in PNW Ecosystems, Seattle, WA. Contact: Timothy B. Harrington, 360/753-7674 or tharrington@fs.fed.us
- **Sept. 20 - 22** - Maine Biomass & Biofuels Conference: "Towards Energy Independence for Maine," Bangor, ME. Contact: Bill Bell, 207/622-4443 or feedalliance@gwi.net
- **Sept. 24 - 28** - 14th National Non-Point Source Monitoring Workshop, Minneapolis MN. Contact: Tammy Taylor, CTIC, taylor@CTIC.purdue.edu
- **Oct. 1 - 5** - Society of Municipal Arborists Annual Conference, Asheville, NC. Contact: Jerry LaHaie at urbanforestry@prodigy.net
- **Oct. 10 - 12** - Advancing Renewable Energy: An American Rural Renaissance Conference, St. Louis, MO. Details on USDA & DOE websites
- **Oct. 25 - 29** - Our Woods: Wild & Working - 2006 Natl. Convention - Soc. Of American Foresters, Pittsburg, PA. Contact: SAF at www.safnet.org for details/program

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FORESTRY NOTES

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Finding a Way Out of the Woods

How a diverse grassroots group learned to resolve its conflicts, promote forest health, and work alongside a conservation district

Peter Griessmann is a forester who also breaks up logjams - ideological logjams, that is. Since August 2005, Griessmann has been the District Forester for the Stevens County Conservation District in eastern Washington State. Previously he had worked for 15 years for the Forestry Extension of Washington State University.

Peter was at WSU during the bloodiest years of the Timber Wars, which were dominated by extremists from both sides. It seemed that the Forest Service process, well intentioned as it was, just amplified disagreements. "By the time alternate plans were proposed," says Peter, "the battle lines were in place."

A Growing Problem

While people were arguing, crowded trees were dying. But Griessmann thought he saw a way out: Work through the conflicts first, then start the Forest Service process with a unified plan.

The same thought had occurred to others. Before long they founded the Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition (NEWFC), whose board included the co-owner of a lumber mill and an officer of an environmental organization.

The group was united in its initial goal: to reduce fuels in the Wildland Urban Interface

(WUI - pronounced "WOOee"). But its members needed to first resolve their own conflicts (and occasional tantrums). One big step in that direction came with the appointment of Rick Brazell as Forest Supervisor of the Colville National Forest.

Can't We All Just Get Along?

Brazell started by bringing in facilitators, who helped the Coalition to evolve a method of agreeing to disagree - so that the little sticking points wouldn't stop the larger process.

The NEWFC's new method came in handy on a fuels reduction plan called the Burnt Valley Stewardship Project. The group created an innovative document that showed how timber could be used to pay for thinning. (And as it happened, the tight rings of the milled timber allowed it to qualify for highly marketable applications like trusses.)

Productive Relationship

At about that time, Peter was hired as the first District Forester for the Stevens County Conservation District. Once there, he advocated for a continuing relationship with the Coalition. Fortunately, the group's members had started acting like grownups. For instance, its two biggest antagonists actually boarded a plane together to lobby for a new project in Washington DC.

Griessmann also showed the District that as a 501(c)(3), the NEWFC could apply for grants that the District could implement. In fact, one of the Coalition's latest projects is an innovative grant that would allow group members to act as monitors for Forest



District Forester Peter Griessmann

Service projects. As Griessmann explains, "More transparency should help eliminate the protests - and paralysis."

So does his experience provide any insights for other Conservation Districts? Yes: A diverse citizen's group by definition will focus on both the economy and the environment, two key goals of Districts. And then there's its 501 (c) (3) grant-developing ability.

But Peter advises starting with small projects in the WUI , and avoiding hot button topics like roadless areas. "It takes patience to get it off the ground," he adds. But in the end it's better for the trees. And it's better than a logjam.

Read the full-length version of this article by clicking here www.smallwoodnews.com, by Craig Rawlings, Smallwood Utilization Network, A division of the Montana Community Development Center.

Northeastern Area and NACD Renew Partnership

On July 24 Northeastern Area Director Kathryn Maloney and Field Representative John Hazel met with members of the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) during a combined meeting of the NACD Northeastern Region, Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, and the Pennsylvania State Conservation Commission in State College, PA. The meeting provided an opportunity for a ceremonial signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Northeastern Area and the Northeastern and

North Central Regions of the NACD. Signing for the Forest Service, Northeastern Area Director Maloney spoke about issues in common between the Forest Service and NACD, and the recognition by both parties of the unique opportunities to serve the public in a geographic area where a significant portion of the Nation's natural resources and population overlap. The MOU promises greater cooperation and information sharing between the Forest Service and NACD to provide greater program efficiencies and service to the public.



USDA Forest Service NA Director Kathryn Maloney (left) and NACD Northeastern Region Chair Patricia Sueck sign the MOU.

South Dakota

Nathan Kafer, forester with the SD Dept. of Agriculture and Judy Tschetter of the Beadle Conservation District, traveled to the area schools during Arbor Week to distribute black walnut trees to the third grade students. The history of Arbor Day was shared with the students as well as tips on how to plant the tree.

Kafer asked students what the four major industries in South Dakota might be and how trees would be tied in with each one. The industries are

tourism, agriculture, logging and mining. Also, discussed were what products are available from trees. Students could readily see just how important trees can be in their own lives. Tschetter shared a brochure on the black walnut tree telling the mature size, what it likes for growing conditions, etc.

Kafer and Tschetter also visited the Wolsey, Hitchcock, Iroquois and Pearl Creek Colony Schools. Ron Klock with the Huron Parks and Rec. Depts. visited the Huron Schools including Holy Trinity and James Valley. In this way all third grade students within Beadle County received a tree.

Contact: Beadle Conservation District, 605/352-2998.

Branching Out

COFE Conference Focuses on Worldwide Forest Engineering

The theme of the 2006 Council on Forest Engineering was international both in theme and in fact. Organizers Han-Sup Han (Univ. of Idaho) and Woodum Chung (Univ. of Montana) put the theme: "Working Globally - Sharing Forest Engineering Challenges and Technologies around the World" to practice by making an extra effort to attract engineers from the global arena to the Cour d'Alene, Idaho conference.

Their work was rewarded by having 40 of the 117 attendees from outside the US, when there are normally only a handful of international guests. Countries represented included Turkey, Chile, Switzerland, Japan, France, China, and Korea. Logging practices from Japan, Korea, Turkey, Switzerland, Iran and Ethiopia were presented, ranging from using mules in Turkey to using helicopters in BC.

The first keynote speaker, Hans Heinimann, Professor of Forest Engineering, Zurich, Switzerland, discussed Forest Engineering from a macro level, considering the competitive climate, customer demand for new products, creativity and innovation, distribution of resources, technology, and environmentally sound processes. He encouraged the audience to think of forestry in terms of a global system, using computer technology and the internet to standardize transaction processes.

The study and use of a various technology was further emphasized by many session speakers. The results of research using computer algorithms to evaluate and plan the most efficient logging road networks were presented by Hendrik Stander of the Oregon State Univ., Marco Contreras of the Univ. of Montana, Hideo Sakai of the Univ. of Tokyo and Amanda Hamsley of the Univ. of Georgia. Jung Stuckelberger, demonstrated

how to use computer programming to redesign road plans when there are multiple factors, such as logging, endangered species, and wetlands, competing within the same space.

Taking technology into the forest for efficient use and handling of timber was also a reoccurring theme. Glen Murphy of Oregon State Univ. explained new technology employing near infrared (NIR) to predict wood density using saw chips from harvesters/processors; while Jingang Liu, West Virginia Univ., showed how an optimal tree bucking system could work based on the results of using 3D modeling on tree-stems on site. Jeff Halbrook, Business Bureau of Economic Research (MT), presented the idea of using mastication as a fuel reduction alternative, how different sized pieces are better in different forests and the costs associated with using the equipment in different terrain, total acreage and residual tree density.

COFE is an international organization founded in the 1970s to "foster the development of forest engineering in industry, government, and in university teaching, research, and extension programs to promote the best methods of managing and operating forests; to serve the forestry profession on matters of policy in the area of forest engineering; and to disseminate technical information on forest engineering subjects." Next year's conference will be held in Mont Tremblant, Quebec, about an hour north of Montreal, with the theme "Sustainable Forest Operations: The future is now!" Updated information will be available at <http://fec2007.feric.ca/> Source: Nora McDougall-Collins, Smallwood Utilization Network, 406/728-9234 x207 or NoraMcDougall-Collins@mtcdc.org.

Maine Energy, Landowner Groups Plan Biofuels Conf.

Leaders of major energy and landowner organizations in Maine announced plans for a statewide Biomass and Biofuels Conference to be held in Bangor, September 20-22, 2006.

This Conference, subtitled "Towards Energy Independence for Maine" is designed to create awareness, particularly among small and mid-sized farmers, including woodlot owners, of opportunities for production of fuels for the emerging biofuels market, from biodiesel to ethanol.

The Maine Biomass/Biofuels Conference, to be held at the Bangor Ramada Inn, will provide an overview of biomass technologies, including the potential for canola, switchgrass, poplar, and willow as fuels. Successful models from other states and regions will be outlined, such as the Fuels for Schools program in Vermont, and farmer-owned ethanol plants in the Midwest. Maine's place in the biomass future will be addressed by major participants in the emerging industry, including the University of Maine Forest Bioproducts Research Center, the Fractionation Development Center, the Maine Energy Investment Corporation and Maine's Office of Energy Independence.

The Conference is organized and hosted by the Maine Association of Conservation Districts, which represents the thousands of conservation-minded landowners who are cooperators of Maine's sixteen Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Sponsorship support is being provided under the NACD's Dept. of Interior Woody Biomass Cooperative Agreement and the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Other organizations wishing to provide speakers and support should contact William Bell, Maine Association of Conservation Districts, feedalliance@gwi.net, 207/622-4443.

FACTOID

For every ton of wood a forest grows, it removes 1.47 tons tons of carbon dioxide and replaces it with 1.07 tons of oxygen

Farm Bill key topic at '06 FRC, NASF joint meeting

The NACD Forest Resources Committee held its annual meeting in Nevada City, California on August 1-3. The group set its annual list of priorities and resolutions, and made formal nominations for the annual NACD awards to be presented in Los Angeles in February. The committee also held a joint meeting with the National Association of State Foresters Resources Management Committee on Wednesday.

Two topics that were largely discussed at the three-day event were the 2007 Farm Bill and ecosystem services.

On Wednesday, the group was treated to a tour of the Sierra Pacific Industries sawmill in Lincoln. The mill is located on 240 acres and employs 350 people. During any given day shift Sierra Pacific produces, dries and ships one million board feet of lumber.

The group also got a close look at the 16-mile fuel break being developed by Nevada County Resource Conservation District (see full story in Forestry Notes Special Report, May 2005). Steve Eubanks of the Tahoe National Forest also gave the tour insight on National Forest management strategies.

Later that evening Bill Horvath was recognized at a barbecue for his outstanding contributions to the NACD Forest Resources Committee.

Dave Vertin, who hosted the event, completed his three-year term with the committee. Vertin will be replaced by Douglas Rushton of Washington State. Rushton is a registered forester, active in SAF issues in

his state and works for the Water Resources Division of the Washington Department of Ecology.

Said Committee Chair Charles Holmes, "We appreciate everything Dave did for this committee, including organizing this wonderful week in Nevada City. We're now excited to work with Doug and look forward to receiving his input."

(Right) Employees rely heavily on new age technology to monitor logs being processed at the Sierra Pacific sawmill. (Below, left to right) Committee Advisor Fred Deneke and members of the NACD Forest Resources Committee: Sonny Jones, Ray Chaffin, Steve Hobart, Dan Dixon, Rick Reimer and Committee Chairman Charles Holmes.



Forestry Notes Briefs

Manual on Urban Watershed Forestry

The Center for Watershed Protection (CWP), in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Area S&PF, has produced a three-part manual on using trees to protect and restore urban watersheds. The contents of the manual are the result of extensive research, as well as two design workshops held in early 2004 that focused on using trees for stormwater treatment and planting trees in the urban landscape.

Part I - "Methods for Increasing Forest Cover in a Watershed," Part II - "Conserving and Planting Trees at Development Sites" and Part III - "Urban Tree Planting Guide" are available in PDF format and can be downloaded at www.cwp.org/forestry/index.htm. Hard copies of the manual are scheduled to be released in late 2006.

D.C. Protects It's "Green Lungs"

A 25,660 acre swath of green in the Washington metropolitan region will go on being the area's "green lungs" after an agreement was signed to protect the land and form a comprehensive Forest Stewardship Plan. The agreement between the Agricultural Research Service, the state of Maryland, and adjacent agency owners creates Baltimore-Washington Partners for Forest Stewardship. The woods have been used to develop a theory that determines how much forest is needed for various species to survive. National and international bird-count techniques have also been developed there. Located in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, the land has been considered a historic forest in Maryland.

Source: American Forests, Spring 2006.

Ancient Oak Discovered in Gravel Pit

According to an Associated Press report, a mill in Edinburg, IN is now treating some of the chocolate-colored wood from a large oak tree dug up last summer in a gravel pit near Brownstown, IN that could be 6,000 years old. Much of its root crown and bark still intact. Radio carbon dating tests will substantiate its age. Anthony Swinehart, associate professor of biology at Hillsdale College in Michigan, has estimated its age at 6,000 years. According to Swinehart, the tree was approximately 300 years old when it was probably uprooted and deposited by a glacier during the last Ice Age. Some of the wood will spend weeks in a kiln, while other parts will be shaved into veneer.

Source: Forest Products Journal, June 2006.