



Montana Acts as a Model in the Carbon Trade Market

Farmers and ranchers in 28 Montana counties will serve as a test market for carbon trading. By keeping carbon in the ground through various practices – such as no till, forestry, and grassland applications – eligible landowners will be able to sell credits to companies looking to offset their carbon emissions. The program was announced in early April and, according to Ted Dodge of the National Carbon Offset Coalition, roughly 20 farmers and ranchers have already signed up.

Most of the initial signups have been through no till, said Dodge, because the process for certifying the forestry practice is a little more involved and will take time to develop. But Dodge said that he believes there will soon be several options for farmers and ranchers to take advantage of, including methane and range applications, and he sees Montana's program serving as a springboard for the rest of the country.

"Once people see that it's real in Montana, I think it's going to take off. It's just a matter of getting out there and showing landowners what we have," said Dodge. "The reaction so far has been favorable ... of course the price is low in this voluntary market."

Carbon credits are measured in units equal to one metric ton of carbon. Under current prices, a farmer whose operation has been verified by a third party could earn a few hundred dollars for 100 acres.

For the program to grow and gain national attention, many believe those incentives need to grow. Dodge said the carbon market needs a healthy push from policy makers in Washington for this to be accomplished.

"We really think it's going to take a federal mandate for this to work the way we think it will," he said.

Conservation districts and RC&Ds can play a big role in helping the market realize its full potential by getting the word out to landowners and engaging in policy discussions, said Dodge, who has put on several workshops with districts around the country.

"I'd like to see the RC&Ds and conservation districts get more involved," he said. "There's a big role for them down the road, and not just as third party verifiers."

For more information on this program, visit the National Carbon Offset Coalition Web site at <http://www.ncoc.us>, or contact Ted Dodge at 406/723-6262, or email him at ted.dodge@ncoc.us.

Invasive Plants Mean Business!

Time and again, private conservation lands across the nation are being transformed by plant invasion. It seemingly happens overnight; we suddenly realize that a single plant -- vine, shrub, grass, forb, or tree -- is taking over our forest, woodlot or CRP lands. These plants are called invasive plants and they mean business! If not stopped, invasive plants can cause loss of productivity, biodiversity, recreational activities, and the very features we cherish about these forests. However, with knowledge and expert advice, landowners can prevent or control these invaders.

Not all weeds are classified as invasive plants, which share certain characteristics that make them dramatically and stubbornly invasive. Invasive plants have arrived from another continent without the natural predators and pathogens that kept them in check. They thrive in disturbed and extreme site

conditions and reproduce abundantly by diverse means. Most have thorns or chemicals that make them unpalatable to most animals. Some even produce chemicals toxic to other plants to overcome competing native plants. No wonder these superweeds can rapidly transform forests and rangelands. Here are two invasive plants that illustrate some forest impacts:

Cogongrass

A pasture grass from Asia, cogongrass infests approximately one million acres of forest, grasslands and wetlands in the Southeast. Cogongrass chokes understory vegetation with its thick impermeable net of roots, and converts a forest into a tinderbox with its extremely flammable leaves and thatch. Cogongrass comes back even stron-

The Joint Fire Science Program (JFSP) Biomass Removal Roundtable has supplied an executive summary this month from its recent discussions with JFSP clients. Another summary is planned for release this fall.

We encourage all of our readers to take a close look at the suggestions made in the summary, and to



seek out possible partnerships for future projects.

Those interested in more information about the JFSP Biomass Removal Roundtable or

future opportunities can contact Communication Director Tim Swedberg at 208/387-5865 or email him at timothy_swedberg@nifc.blm.gov.

Insert



Severe infestation of cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*) in a longleaf pine upland in central Florida (photo by James H. Miller, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org).

Ohio

A Forest Marketing and Emerald Ash Borer informational meeting was held in late April in Bremen, Ohio, reports the Hocking Soil and Water Conservation District.

Branching Out

The Meeting's purpose was to help producers make timber marketing decisions given that the killing Emerald Ash Borer is marching south

through Ohio, a state already infested by tree defoliating Gypsy Moths.

Participants were instructed on identifying the Emerald Ash Borer and Gypsy Moth and areas infested by these invasive pests. Possible protection, prevention and curative measures for landscape trees were covered. However, the main focus of the meeting was on marketing of ash and oak timber that eventually may be weakened or killed by these insects. A discussion followed on the "softness" of the ash-wood market because of a "flooded" market and transportation restrictions. Because the entire state of Ohio is under federal

(APHIS) quarantine, it is anticipated that the long range management strategy for many Ohio woodlands will preclude ash trees from making marketable timber. The meeting concluded with speakers identifying various forest-management and marketing strategies.

Jason Garey, district wildlife specialist/forester believes that the borer will not be eradicated. Foresters and woodland owners, undoubtedly, will have to develop management plans to convert stands of ash trees to other species less desirable to the Emerald Ash Borer. This will be a challenge since various oak species, a favorite food of Gypsy Moths, are well suited to the soils of the Hocking Soil and Water Conservation District and other Ohio regions.

More than 20 people, mostly forest owners, attended the meeting. The meeting was sponsored by Ohio State Extension, Hocking Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources-Division of Forestry.

For detailed information, contact Jason Garey, Hocking SWCD, 740/385-3016 or Mark Rickey, Ohio Division of Forestry, 740/774-1596.

Mount Wachusett Biomass Generator Now Producing Power

Installation of a new micro biomass cooling, heating and power system at Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) in Gardner, Mass., was completed in mid-December and has begun producing power. The 50kW wood-chip fueled unit was developed by Community Power of Colorado (CPC). It uses downdraft gasification technology to produce a clean producer gas to power a GMC gasoline engine and generator. While fueled at MWCC by wood chips, the CPC system can be fueled by other biomass sources, including switchgrass, pellets or agricultural products.

The MWCC system is part of a year-long research project to demonstrate the feasibility of providing clean CHP energy with less emissions of carbon monoxide, sulfides and other pollutants, and reducing the use of fossil fuels including natural gas. For information about the system, contact Rob Rizzo at MWCC at 978/630-9137.

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ger after wildfire, converting forests into a savannah where tree seedlings can no longer establish. It eliminates wildlife habitat and is poor forage for livestock.

Scotch and Related Brooms

Woody shrubs from Europe, brooms infest millions of acres of forests and grasslands in the Northeast and Pacific states. Dense thickets of broom form when seeds germinate in disturbed areas, crowding out forage for livestock and wildlife. Brooms are highly flammable and impede reforestation. Long-lived seeds in soil can germinate after decades under shade to occupy harvested areas.

Unfortunately there are many other invasive plants with serious impacts to forests. Fortunately, you can protect forests through knowledge and vigilance.

First, join forces with concerned citizens. Invasive plants know no property boundaries. There are state and local coalitions almost everywhere to assist in coordinated weed management. You can learn which invasives to watch out for and how best to eradicate them. Sometimes the best prevention is helping neighbors eradicate their invasives before they spread.

Second, protect uninfested forests by keeping invasives out. Human and animal activities are primary paths for invasive plant introduction. Before entering forests,

remove seed and mud containing plant parts from clothes, vehicles, equipment, pets and livestock. Risks of new infestations will be greatly reduced.

Third, know the enemy. Watch for unfamiliar plants in your forest, especially in openings, roads, and disturbed areas. State and local (SWCDs and RC&Ds) experts can help with identification.

Fourth, search and destroy! Early control is the most effective and least costly strategy. No one control method is a cure-all; develop optimum local control tactics with help from state and local experts.

Conservation Districts are Involved

Several Conservation Districts are involved with invasive plant initiatives. Some conduct their own programs; others join with organizations or agencies whose mission is to eradicate these foreign weeds. A few examples:

- The Homer Soil and Water Conservation District of Alaska has been, and continues to be a leader in increasing awareness of managing invasive plants that are rapidly becoming a problem on the Kenai Peninsula. It provides information to residents and helps them make responsible choices. The district developed several publications on the subject with the latest titled "Responsible Landscaping Pocket Guide" that give alternatives to invasive ornamental plants for southwest Alaska.

- Michigan's Marquette County Conservation District focuses on invasive plants in the upper peninsula (U.P.). The district helped develop and distribute a comprehensive database of identified invasive species locations throughout the U.P.

- Soil conservation districts in Colorado cooperate with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the State Weed Coordinator to eradicate invasive weeds. Listings of these invaders have been developed and made available to help with their elimination.

- Montana conservation districts cooperate with the Center for Invasive Plant Management to bring programs to schools through the "K-12 Teaching Resources."

- New York's Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program documents invasive plants moving into and spreading throughout the Adirondack Park. The area's conservation districts play a key role in the process, getting the word out on methods of eradication.

The USDA Forest Service, Forest Health Protection provides financial support to invasive plant management organizations across the country. Many states have state-wide programs, and there are many county agencies and local coalitions too. Browse the links below to find assistance in your area.

For more information, visit <http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/unitedstates/main.shtml> and its accompanying links.

Mid-Rotation Pine Management Benefits Landowners, Wildlife

When it comes to competition, athletic fields are not the only arenas in Mississippi. The state's three million acres of plantation pine are sites of fierce competition for available sunlight and nutrients.

Undesirable hardwoods in the understory of the plantations compete with pines and wildlife, said Mississippi State University (MSU) forestry professor Andy Ezell.

"Forest managers know that managing competition is essential for timber production, but it's often overlooked that undesirable trees in pine plantations impact wildlife habitat," Ezell said.

Ezell, along with wildlife and fisheries scientists Steve Demarais and Wes Burger, have studied how thinning, selective herbicide use and prescribed burning can improve both timber production and wildlife habitat quality.

"Wildlife populations are influenced by the structure and composition of plant communities, so specific habitat requirements of targeted wildlife species must be understood and emphasized in planning," Demarais said. "Conditions that limit sunlight and nutrients for pine production also degrade habitat quality for these wildlife species."

Midrotation thinning allows sunlight to reach the understory for several years, and the sunlight improves wildlife habitat on the forest floor. A pine plantation reaches the midrotation period in about 15 years.

The heavier the thinning, the longer sunlight can promote wildlife habitat. Dense,

undesirable hardwoods capture sunlight and compete for resources with pines. Removal of undesirable hardwoods with the selective herbicide imazapyr eliminates this problem. In addition, prescribed fire eliminates the pine straw litter and promotes germination of beneficial plant communities.

The MSU research also found that midrotation removal of dense, undesirable hardwoods significantly increases pine height and diameter growth.

"The responses are not immediate, but after four years the combination of herbicide and fire increased pine basal area by 29 percent compared to untreated plots," Ezell said.

Initial results indicate that fertilization provides a better pine growth response than hardwood control. However, long-term studies indicate that pine growth resulting from midrotation herbicide applications and prescribed burning surpasses growth spurred by fertilization.

The research also found that midrotation treatments benefit the deer population by improving the food supply.

"An inadequate supply of high-quality forage is the habitat factor that most frequently limits antler quality in the Southeast," Demarais said. "Correcting this limiting factor is the key to improving deer habitat quality in managed midrotation pine stands." The cost of producing high-quality protein with the midrotation treatment regime is one-third the cost per pound com-

pared to food plots.

Food plots produce more protein per acre so they should continue to be used, but producing quality forage under managed pines is the key to optimizing deer and timber products, Demarais added.

The open forest structure created by thinning, herbicides and prescribed fire stimulates the development of a lush understory composed of native grasses, legumes, forbs and shrubs.

"This open forest structure provides essential habitat for many pine-grassland bird species," said Wes Burger.

Midrotation stands managed with a midrotation treatment regime support more individual birds, more bird species and more species of regional conservation concern, including turkey, bobwhite quail and non-game species, Burger added.

"Many of these species have exhibited long-term population declines in Mississippi because of fire exclusion and the loss of open pine-grasslands," Burger said. "Active pine management with midrotation treatment practices can reintroduce the characteristics of natural pine-grassland habitat for these species."

Foresters and wildlife specialists agree that midrotation practices, result in a win-win situation for Mississippi's forest landowners and its wildlife.

For more information, visit the Mississippi State University Web site at www.msstate.edu.

Vermont College to Convert to Wood Power

Bennington College in southern Vermont announced plans to convert its utility plant to use wood-chip fueled heat. The system would generate 85 percent of the heat used by the college, reducing the college's oil consumption from 440,000 gallons to just 32,000 gallons, the amount needed to heat the buildings not connected to the central heating plant.

Construction of the \$2.5 million chip-fueled boiler began this spring, with the system expected to be operable next winter. Chips to fuel the new system will be sup-

plied by local logging and sawmill operations and are renewable energy sources. College officials estimate the new heating system will pay for itself within seven years.

The chip-fired heating system will be the third installed in Bennington, as the town has a wood chip gasifier system operating at Mount Anthony Union Middle School, and has another being installed at Mount Anthony Union High School.

Contact: William Tronsen, Director of Facilities Management, 802/440-4868 or tronsen@bennington.edu.

Tree Farm System Seeks Award Nominees

Each year, the American Tree Farm System and BASF seek nominations for the Outstanding Achievements in Sustainable Forestry Award to recognize individual achievement in the pursuit of sustainable forestry in the United States. The award, which includes a \$5,000 cash prize, is presented at the National Tree Farmer Convention, which this year will be held in Madison, Wis. in October.

Nominations for the award are due by Friday, August 10 and should be sent to: BASF Outstanding Achievements Award, American Tree Farm System, 1111 Nineteenth Street, NW, Suite 780, Washington, D.C. 20036.

For additional information on how to apply, visit www.vmanswers.com or www.treefarmssystem.org.

Share Your Successes!

Conservation Districts and RC&D's have many success stories of their efforts in managing and protecting forest resources. Why not share them with readers of "Forestry Notes"? Mail your stories to Editor Tom Quink at 319 Robalo, North Port FL 34287, or email tandtquink@aol.com.



Free Forestry Seminars on the Internet

Cornell University's ForestConnect program continues the nation's first Webcast seminar series for private forest landowners, foresters and forest enthusiasts. Webcasts use standard Internet connections to allow forest owners to enjoy and participate in live presentations in the comfort of their home, public library or local office. Webcasts are the third Wednesday of each month with live presentations at noon and again at 7 p.m. Each presentation is approximately 30 minutes with time for questions and answers.

Forest owners and enthusiasts with a broad variety of interests will be served by this initiative. Presenters are technical experts from the area of forestry and natural resources. Participants must pre-register once, without charge, at <http://www.ForestConnect.info>. Email notification of Internet URL details will be sent to all reg-

istrants prior to each seminar.

The ForestConnect 2007 Internet Seminar Series is designed for forest owners and forest enthusiasts from New York and the Northeast, but will interest most forest owners. Funding is provided through the Cornell University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cornell University Cooperative Extension and the USDA Renewable Resources Extension Program.

Topics and Dates:

- Aug. 15: Timber Sale Arrangement - Payments and Contracts
- Sept. 19: Small-Scale Firewood Production
- Oct. 17: Creating Vernal Pools for Wildlife (tentative)
- Nov. 21: Natural Regeneration in Your Hardwood Forest
- Dec. 19: Don't Degrade Your Woodlot

Michigan State University Offers Information on Emerald Ash Borer

Michigan State University has announced the availability of a new DVD/CD package with information and educational resources on the Emerald Ash Borer. The package includes information from several sources in addition to the University, including Purdue and Ohio State Universities, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Michigan and Ohio Departments of Agriculture and Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources.

Contents of the package include resources to help individual property owners as well

as local governments to identify ash trees and the Emerald Ash Borer larvae and beetles and to communicate with the public and local news media, as well as regulatory information, bulletins and public service announcements. Since their first discovery in Michigan in 2002, Emerald Ash Borers have established themselves in Ontario, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, and have killed more than 20 million ash trees.

For information about the packet, contact the Michigan State University Bulletin Office at 517/353-6740.

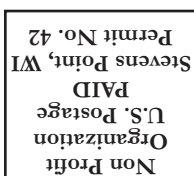
Conservation Calendar

- **Aug. 5-8** – NACD's Northeast Region Meeting, Mystic, Conn. Contact: NACD's Rich Duesterhaus, 202/547-6223
- **Aug. 6-8** – NACD Forest Resources Committee Meeting, Show Low, Ariz. Contact: Fred Deneke, 928/443-4546 or fjdeneke@yahoo.com
- **Aug. 26-28** – NACD's Southeast Region meeting, Williamsburg, Va. Contact: Phyllis Vandever, 601/941-8251
- **Sept. 9-11** – NACD's Southwest & Pacific Regions Meeting, Park City, Utah. Contact: Jeremy Peters, 202/547-6223
- **Sept. 10-12** – Investing Globally in Forestland – International Forestry, Portland, Ore. Contact: Michelle Docy, conferenceworldforestry.org or 503/226-4562
- **Sept. 15-19** – Society of Municipal Arborists Annual Conference, Hollywood Beach, Fla. Contact: www.urban-forestry.com
- **Sept. 16-20** – 2007 National Assn. of State Foresters Annual Meeting, San Antonio, Texas. Contact: Brenda Mooney at 979/458-7302 or bmooney@tfs.tamu.edu
- **Oct. 11-14** – 14th National Tree Farmer Convention, Madison, Wis. Contact: Amy Yambor, 202/463-5172 or ayambor@treefarmssystem.org

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news deadline - 5th day of the month

Note: The fifth of each month will now serve as the deadline for accepting editorial submissions. Next month's deadline: August 5



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FORESTRY NOTES

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