

Termite Trouble in the South

In Texas, a recent investigation of coastal trees felled by Hurricane Rita suggests that upwards of 40 % of large trees marked for landfills were infested with Formosan subterranean termites.

These particular termites, accidentally introduced to the U.S. from Asia sometime after World War II, are found in the southern Gulf Coast states, southern California, and Hawaii, where it is the state's premier pest. The termites have become a serious threat both to structures and living trees. In New Orleans, the termites infest an estimated 20 to 25 percent of the city's trees; annual control estimates exceed \$100 million.

Often it takes a natural disaster - like a hurricane or tornado - to allow officials to understand the amount of internal damage the Formosan termites have inflicted on trees, consuming large amounts of their heartwood and weakening their structural integrity.

Federal programs such as Operation Full Stop in New Orleans are attempting to develop area-wide management programs

for the termites, but legal and legislative measures are needed. Texas, for example, does not have a quarantine policy. There are no remediation or containment policies for the removal and disposal of trees infested with Formosan subterranean termites. Without that, landfills and recycling and distribution centers could unwittingly speed the pest's spread.

State and local officials need to develop strategies now to assess their urban and native forests for the termites and those states already infested need to consider increasing the amount of money they spend for policy and research.

More information is available on the Formosan subterranean termite by visiting the following websites:
[Http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/br/fullstop](http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/br/fullstop) or
www.ars.usda.gov/is/br/fullstop and through Texas A&M University:
<http://termites.tamu.edu/Formosan.html>.

Sources: James W. Austin and Grady J. Glenn, Texas A&M University department of entomology.

New Life for Katrina Trees

Hundreds of uprooted live oak trees are just one of the many devastations caused by Hurricane Katrina, but this cloud may have a silver lining. The timber will be put to use in restoring one of the world's last wooden whaling ships, the Charles W. Morgan, according to Quentin Snediker, shipyard director at Mystic Seaport in Connecticut. Live oak was the best timber for ship building in the era of these wooden vessels because of its durability, density, and curves that perfectly suit the ship's form.

Snediker was at first hesitant to ask residents of the Gulf area, who had suffered so much to donate their uprooted trees. But many hurricane victims contacted him on their own, hoping to see something positive spring from the catastrophic losses inflicted by the storm.

"The fact that we are able to salvage the material from the storm brings a little bit of good in light of the terrible human tragedy," says Snediker.

Contact: Mystic Seaport, 860/572-5317.

Conservation Calendar

- **Oct. 3- Nov. 4** - Natl. Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Education Conf., Denver, CO. Contact: Judith H. Leraas Cook, 360/376-5023 or leraascook@aol.com
- **Oct. 10 - 12** - Advancing Renewable Energy: An American Rural Renaissance Conference, St. Louis, MO. Details on USDA & DOE websites.
- **Oct. 12** - Working Together for the Landscape of Tomorrow (Invasive Spp. Mgt.), Wallingford, CT. Contact: Donna Ellis, 860/486-6448 or donna.ellis@uconn.edu
- **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.
- **Nov. 7** - Woodland Invasive Spp. Identification & Control, Rhinelander, WI. Contact: Amy Marquardt, 800/551-2656 or amy.marquardt@fistausa.org
- **Nov. 7 - 9** - Shortleaf Pine Symposium, Springfield, MO. Contact: David Gwaze, David.Gwaze@mdc.mo.gov
- **Nov. 13 - 17** - 3rd International Fire Ecology & Management Congress, San Diego, CA. Contact: Detlee Decker, 509/335-2811 or ddecker@wsu.edu

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FORESTRY NOTES

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When it Comes to Forest Management, Aesthetics Matter

On the list of items that influence the way foresters and other land management professionals do their jobs, aesthetics is likely to be low on the list. However, according to Robert L. Ryan, a landscape architect at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and author of the recently released USDA Forest Service report, "Social Science to Improve Fuels Management: A Synthesis of Research on Aesthetics and Fuels Management," land managers may want to keep it somewhere near the top.

"Aesthetics matter," Ryan said. "The public judges forest management by how it looks, and if they don't like what they see, they consider it to be bad management."

Ryan synthesized a large body of research pertaining to forest management and aesthetics produced over the course of the past 40 years and found that, (1) although beauty resides in the eye of the beholder, there is a consensus about what the public considers a "scenic forest," and (2) there are several strategies that land managers can use to conduct fuels management activities while maintaining a forest's scenic beauty.

Among the aspects of a scenic forest are:

- The presence of large, mature trees
- An open forest structure that allows for visual access through the understory
- A limited amount of thinning
- The absence of down wood (or slash)

In addition, the results of low-intensity prescribed fire were found to improve scenic beauty, although the short-term effects



Members of the NACD Forest Resources Comm., NASF Resources Mgt. Comm. and guests view an aesthetically pleasing forest near Nevada City, CA.

of fire-dead wood and scorched trunks-were deemed unattractive.

To get around the discrepancy between what the public perceives as beautiful or scenic and what land managers find pleasing (or at least acceptable), the report offers several strategies that managers can use to both manage hazardous fuels and scenic beauty:

- Involving the public in the planning process
- Using multidisciplinary teams when planning fuels management projects
- Planning the location of treatments to avoid scenic areas
- Using thinning to enhance visual access in the understory
- Removing woody debris and slash after thinning

- Providing information about fuels management through signs and brochures that explain the management activity and offer a timeframe for regeneration

Although the aim of his research is to help land managers incorporate public attitudes regarding forest aesthetics into their management efforts, Ryan stresses that his objective is not to limit the use of certain land management techniques that may diminish the scenic quality of forests.

"This is not necessarily an either/or situation," he said. "In most instances there is a way to accomplish both forest management goals and maintain scenic beauty."

Ryan also noted that managers need not

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Woody Biomass Grant Announced

The USDA Forest Service, State and Private Forestry, Technology Marketing Unit, located at the Forest Products Laboratory, requests proposals for forest product projects that increase the use of woody biomass from national forest system lands. The woody biomass utilization grant program is intended to help improve forest restoration activities by using and creating markets for small-diameter material and low-valued trees removed from forest restoration activities, such as reducing hazardous fuels, handling insect and diseased conditions, or treating forestlands impacted by catastrophic weather events. These funds

are targeted to help communities, entrepreneurs, and others turn residues from forest restoration activities into marketable forest products and/or energy products.

Pre-application deadline is close of business November 3, 2006 and the full application deadline is close of business January 2, 2007.

Source/reference - Federal Register: September 6, 2006 - Volume 71, Number 172, Notices on Pages 52523-52525. For details visit the Federal Register Online via GPO Access, [wais.access.gpo.gov] [DOCID:fr06se06-46]

NWTF's Operation Oak

Trees are an integral part of good wildlife habitat and a must for preventing soil erosion and maintaining good water quality. The National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service have partnered to encourage private landowners to plant tree seedlings on their property through a program called Operation Oak.

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California

“How to Manage the Vegetation on Your Property” is a new 12 page brochure published in June 2006 by the Nevada County Resource Conservation District (NCRCD) and the Nevada County Forestry Committee in Grass Valley, CA.

Branching Out

The brochure, aimed at private landowners, explains various techniques for reducing brush and unwanted vegetation on one's

property. The brochure's contents aim to increase forestland and grassland health and, simultaneously, reduce the severity of wild-fires in order to protect soil, water and air quality as well as enhance wildlife habitat and plant communities.

Fire used to move naturally throughout these forests and grasslands about every ten years. Lightning induced fires kept brush from growing out of control and competing with other plants and trees while thinning dense, young stands of trees. Some plants

depend on fire to stimulate their germination and growth.

With the increase of home building in rural and forested areas, natural or man-made fires are now suppressed to save human lives and structures. As a result, heavy accumulation of dead vegetation exists. Brush and trees have grown very dense and tall. With overcrowding these species are competing for sunlight, water and soil nutrients to survive. Many plants and trees are weakened as a result and lose their ability to withstand diseases. Therefore, it becomes the task for humans to mimic nature and manage the vegetation as naturally as possible. There is need to reduce the amount of vegetation and tree density in these forests to improve their health and to safeguard people and property. This also means understanding the type of wildlife present and the type of habitat they require for food, shelter, nesting and protection.

Some areas still allow “controlled” or “prescribed” burns but they should be done by a professional and only on permissible burn days. Due to air quality concerns and

the increase of home building, there are fewer “burn days” allowed and permits may be required.

The brochure discusses the following:

- Reducing or modifying the vegetation on one's property
- Creating defensible space around the home - it's the law!
- Pros and cons of methods for removing unwanted vegetation
- Annual management and maintenance of vegetation
- Various considerations when removing vegetation
- Planting the correct species for the available space; planting trees under power lines that will not exceed 25 feet in height.

Conservation Districts desiring a copy of the brochure should contact Lisa Osterholm of the NCRCD at 530/272-3417. The brochure was made possible through a generous education grant from the Charitable Contributions Program of Pacific Gas & Electric Company.

EAB Spreads, USDA Offers Control Funds

The emerald ash borer, a deadly pest that threatens to wipe out Michigan's ash tree population, has now been detected in northern Illinois. The tiny metallic-green invasive bug has already killed more than 7 million of Michigan's trees and has been found in parts of Indiana and Ohio.

Michigan has launched a \$36.5 million program designed to exterminate the beetle, which is native to Asia and probably arrived in Detroit via ship. Illinois officials say they will now enact a response plan that has been in the works for two years, beginning with surveying the area to determine the extent of damage.

Victoria Porath of Sterling Heights, Michigan, has the last ash tree on her street after the city cut down all the other ones in her subdivision. “It was devastating,” she told the Detroit News. “The trees were here for the 27 years we've lived here, and they were all gone in an afternoon. It broke my heart.”

Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns announced in July the availability of an additional \$7.6 million in emergency funding for emerald ash borer (EAB) eradication efforts in Illinois and Wisconsin.

The funds will be used to conduct an intensive survey program and quarantine affected areas in Illinois to prevent additional EAB spread. The USDA's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is preparing an interim rule for publication in

the Federal Register to implement a quarantine to prevent the movement of host materials (nursery stock, firewood, etc.) out to the area. The quarantine may be expanded if additional areas are found to be infested.

In addition to the survey, regulatory, and control activities, these funds will also support an aggressive outreach and education campaign to enlist the support and cooperation of homeowners and businesses.

Earlier this year, USDA provided an additional \$7.5 million of emergency funding to states with established EAB programs and quarantine areas. Ohio received \$2.4 million, Michigan \$3.5 million and Indiana \$300,000. USDA also provided funding to neighboring states, including Illinois, Kentucky, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Wisconsin, for additional EAB

New Wood Pellet Center in Massachusetts

In a move designed to rapidly enhance wood pellet fuel availability in the northeast, New England Wood Pellet LLC has begun construction of a \$1.5 million wood pellet bagging and distribution plant in Palmer, Massachusetts. The plant will be operational by September. The company has a five-year agreement with British Columbia pellet manufacturer, Houston Pellet Inc. to import by bulk rail about 82,500 tons of premium wood pellets annually (enough fuel to heat over 27,000 average homes.).

The new facility will employ about eight



Emerald Ash Borer

surveys. In total, since 2003, USDA has dedicated \$101 million to the EAB program efforts across the country.

To read a press release from the USDA about the expenditure, visit the agency's website.

For additional information about the ash borer, visit the Emerald ash borer information website at www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/eab.

people. Demand for wood pellets has increased significantly in response to increases in oil, propane and natural gas prices in recent years. Consumers are also showing increasing preference for clean burning, “carbon neutral,” renewable energy products. New England Wood Pellet's Jaffrey New Hampshire facility produces over 80,000 tons per year, all of which has been fully allocated to dealers through 2007.

Source: Greg Cox, 413/339-5526 or gcox@crocker.com.

NWTF, SWCDs Help NH Landowners Improve Habitat

New Hampshire landowners recently received help enhancing almost 2,000 acres of wildlife habitat from the National Wild Turkey Federation's New Hampshire state chapter.

The NWTF New Hampshire state chapter cost-shared mast (fruit and nut) producing trees and shrubs for 31 landowners to plant late fall and early winter food sources for wildlife. The packages, offered through the New Hampshire County Soil & Water Conservation Districts, consisted of 63 mast producing trees and shrubs that normally would cost \$175, but through the NWTF cost share, each package only cost landowners \$100.

"This cooperation between the Conservation Districts and the NWTF has led to statewide habitat improvements that would not have happened otherwise," said Doug Little, NWTF regional biologist for New Hampshire. "This cost sharing program stretches habitat dollars further in New Hampshire."

The tree packages contained 10 each of black chokeberry, black haw, hazelnut, Rose Carolina and Roselow Sargent crabapple trees, along with five winterberry, four crabapples, two mountain ash and two serviceberry trees.

These trees and shrubs provide food to wild turkeys, grouse, deer, songbirds and

other wildlife during the colder months of winter when it is needed.

The NWTF New Hampshire state chapter has spent more than \$40,000 through its Hunting Heritage Super Fund to enhance wildlife habitat in the Granite State.

This program supplements the NWTF's Operation Appleseed program. Through Operation Appleseed, volunteers plant crabapple trees to provide late winter food for wildlife. Almost 30,000 crabapple trees have been planted in the Northeast since 2000 through Operation Appleseed.

For more information about the NWTF, Operation Appleseed or New Hampshire's habitat projects, call (800) THE-NWTF.

Swift Killer Strikes Florida's Groves Aesthetics ... cont. from pg 1

Just as Florida citrus growers were learning to adapt their groves to fight citrus canker disease, a deadly new plague is threatening to destroy the industry. Citrus greening, a bacterial disease carried by insects, weakens trees and forces fruits to drop before they are ripe. The fruit is indigestible, and the tree rapidly dies. Growers are still not sure how to control the infection, which was first found in the United States last August, and now has spread to all urban counties in southeast Florida.

According to Reuters, Florida growers have contacted citrus farmers in São Paulo, Brazil, where they have been fighting off

the disease since 2004.

Brazilian citrus farmers said controlling the epidemic was possible but only through aggressive measures such as constant, careful scrutiny of the groves, immediate removal of sick trees, and the persistent use of pesticides.

Juliano Ayres is a scientific manager of Brazil's Fundecitrus, which works to protect groves against disease and warns Florida growers to take the infection very seriously. "Ninety percent of researchers say that greening is the worst disease you could have," he told Reuters. "Either you do the control, or you lose your grove in seven to 10 years."

Source: American Forests, Summer 2006.

NWTF Operation Oak ... cont. From pg 1

NWTF is hoping that conservation districts can get the trees to member landowners.

Operation Oak is a regional habitat program focused on the following states: GA, FL, SC, NC, AL, TN, KY, VA, AR, LA, MS, MO, IA, IL, PA. Each state will receive between 10,000-15,000 tree seedlings that will be available to landowners FREE of charge. These native tree seedlings are grown under a specialized nursery protocol at the Flint River Nursery in Georgia. The result is a large, vigorous seedling with high survivability, high growth potential, and the potential to produce mast in about 10 years. Each state will receive seedlings that are native to their state. For example Florida seedling selections include white oak (*Quercus alba*), water oak (*Q. nigra*), live oak (*Q. virginiana*), and persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*). Along with producing food for wildlife, trees will combat soil erosion and improve water quality.

The roots on these seedlings are very large and will require a hand-held or tractor

mounted auger for planting. Participants are also required to pick-up their seedlings from a centralized location in the state. Pick-up locations and dates will be finalized in November and trees will be available in February or March. Applications will be reviewed and seedlings will be provided to as many interested landowners as possible.

If your Conservation District is interested in participating in Operation Oak this year contact Kay Morris with the NWTF at (803) 637-3106 for your application. Applications must be received on or before November 1, 2006.

apply the strategies contained in his report to an entire forest. Rather, he suggests that managers break the forests under their care into "management zones" and use the aforementioned strategies in those areas where the public is more likely to encourage management activities.

Ultimately, said Ryan, the key is to involve the public in the process of forest management.

"It's hard to see something from another's perspective so it's important to involve the public in the planning process," he said.

This report is the latest in a series of USDA Forest Service publications exploring the social aspects of hazardous fuels management. The report is available online from the Forest Service at www.ncrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/gtr/gtr_nc261.pdf.

For more information, contact Robert L. Ryan, associate professor, Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning, 109 Hills North, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003-4010; (413) 545-6633; rlryan@larp.umass.edu.

This article by Joseph M. Smith originally appeared in the June 2006 issue of *The Forestry Source*, which is published by the Society of American Foresters. Smith is editor of *The Forestry Source*.

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.

