

## House Passes Invasive Tree Bill

The House of Representatives last week passed the Salt Cedar and Russian Olive Control Demonstration Act, HR 2720, by voice vote

The measure, introduced by Representative Steve Pearce (R-NM), will require the Secretary of the Interior to establish a demonstration program to assess the level of species infestation as well as the potential water savings resulting from species control and eradication.

Salt cedar and Russian olive are both

harmful species that consume large amounts of water, increase soil salinity, lower the potential water that soil can hold and increase fire frequency. It has been estimated that the salt cedar (tamarisk) species can absorb up to 800 billion gallons per year more than the native cottonwood, willow and mesquite it has replaced.

The control of these species will help to improve resource-rich riparian areas, improve habitat for fish and wildlife and reduce the risk of fire.

## USDA-NAC Updates Website

The USDA National Agroforestry Center (NAC) just released an updated web site ([www.unl.edu/nac](http://www.unl.edu/nac)). Besides an easy-to-navigate new look there are two new features: an agroforestry image gallery and a NAC blog that covers agroforestry related news and issues. The updated site brings NAC research papers and those supported by NAC into one location for easy access and review. The site also meets W3C accessibility standards for users with disabilities.

While there are many image galleries on the web, NAC's agroforestry image gallery is the first that is dedicated to agroforestry in the United States. After scouring thousands of slides, NAC brings together only the best slides in this online image gallery. Now it doesn't matter if you're in an Alabama field office preparing a presentation on silvopasture, an Oklahoma NRCS State Office writing a press release, or a Forest Service Regional Office preparing a briefing paper, you can get high quality agroforestry images to promote agroforestry. Image files are available in various resolutions for Powerpoint presentations,

web sites, and even high resolution for printing.

NAC's blog will be updated frequently with web links of newsworthy and interesting agroforestry-related research, education, and information from around the country. Web users can also subscribe to a newsfeed, which uses RSS 2.0, to receive automatic updates on NAC's Blog.

"NACD has been a strong partner with the USDA National Agroforestry Center over the years, so we wanted you to know about our new web design and new features on the web," says Richard Straight, Agroforester for the USDA Forest Service - NAC. He continues, "Please contact me with any suggestions or glitches that you may come across. As you know, when launching any new product there always seem to be a few gremlins that aren't discovered until things go public. Thank you for your diligent conservation work. We look forward to working with NACD and districts in the future."

Contact Straight at 402/437-5178 x 24 or [rstraight@fs.fed.us](mailto:rstraight@fs.fed.us)

## Conservation Calendar

- **July 9 - 11** - NACD North Central Regional Meeting, Cleveland, OH. Contact: Beth Mason, 317/738-3849
- **July 22 - 26** - 2006 Soil & Water Conservation Society Annual Conference, Keystone, CO. Contact: Kristin Smith, 336/370-3362 or [Kristin.smith@gnb.usda.gov](mailto:Kristin.smith@gnb.usda.gov)
- **July 23 - 27** - NACD Northeast Region Meeting & 59th PACD/SCC Joint Annual Conference, State College, PA. Contact: Molly Burns, 717/238-7223
- **Aug. 1 - 3** - Annual NACD Forest Resources Committee Meeting, Nevada City, CA. Contact: Fred Deneke, 928/443-5456 or [fjdeneke@yahoo.com](mailto:fjdeneke@yahoo.com)
- **Aug. 1 - 3** - NACD South Central Regional Meeting, Corpus Christie, TX. Contact: Tamara Daniel, 514/869-4986
- **Aug. 2** - The 29th Council on Forest Engineering field trips: Smallwood Harvesting/Util; Fuel Reduction; Small Diameter Sawmill, Coeur d'Alene, ID. Contact: Han-Sup Han, 208/885-6600 or [hanh@uidaho.edu](mailto:hanh@uidaho.edu)
- **Aug. 27 - 29** - NACD Southeast Region Meeting, Asheville, NC. Contact: Phyllis Vandevere, 601/859-3440
- **Sept. 11 - 13** - Who Will Own the Forest? Summit, Portland, OR. Contact: Sara Wu, 508/488-2130

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# FORESTRY NOTES

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## Ecosystem Services

Forests are essential to clean water, our most precious natural resource. About two-thirds of the nation's scarce water resource originates on forests, which cover about



**Charles Holmes**  
Chair - NACD Forest Resources Comm.

one-third of the nation's land area. Well-managed urban and rural forested watersheds provide a wide array of environmental, economic and recreational benefits that improve the quality of our lives. When applied on a watershed basis, forests and forestry practices

can provide low cost, long term solutions to environmental problems.

Within the next 25 years, the Forest Service estimates that more than 44 million acres of private forests in the Lower 48 States will be at risk of development. When these lands are converted to developed uses, the ecosystem services they provide can be greatly diminished, and in certain cases may be lost entirely. Markets for ecosystem services offer hope that private lands will remain forested and well-managed. For example, downstream water users might pay upstream landowners to keep their lands forested. Forest landowners might also be able to receive credits for carbon storage or creation of wildlife habitat, as well as receiving fees for hunting, fishing, and camping. Such payments, combined with income from traditional forest products, just might tip the balance in favor of conserving ecosystem services for future generations.

In this month's issue of Forestry Notes you'll notice we inserted the latest quarterly issue of Wildland Waters. Give it a read to find out more about our nation's watersheds and the benefits they provide to society. As we look ahead toward the 2007 Farm Bill and beyond, efforts are just beginning by the Forest Service and other agencies, such as NRCS, to develop approaches to understand, quantify, and market the ecosystem services provided by good stewardship on the part of landowners.

## New Mexico Forest Restoration Principles Announced by Diverse Task Force

In an unprecedented collaborative effort, 13 organizations jointly announced the release of the New Mexico Forest Restoration Principles that will reduce conflict and legal challenges for forest harvesting projects in New Mexico. In May, the New Mexico Biomass Evaluation Task Force announced its 18 principles for the design and implementation of forest restoration projects that would produce small-diameter wood used to fuel biomass power plants and other wood utilizing facilities. The 18-member diverse task force spent almost a year developing the list of principles.

A few of the principles include:

- reducing the threat of unnatural crown fire
- protecting and maintaining watershed and soil integrity
- preserving old or large trees while maintaining structural diversity and resilience

The group was formed after Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) approached the USDA Forest Service in 2004 about ways to secure a large scale supply of woody material for use in biomass burning power plants in the State. PNM estimated they would need about 7.7 million tons of biomass over a 30-year plant life for a single 35 mega-watt plant. This equates to about 260,000 tons per year, or 735 tons per day. Removing an average of 20 tons of bio-

mass per acre and still leaving an intact forested landscape could result in about 35 acres per day or 10,000 acres per year being treated.

The amount of biomass fuel needed for the PNM project presented a potential challenge since people have differing views on how the land management agencies should remove fuels, reduce the wildfire threats to communities, and still leave healthier forests in a more natural state. Use of these principles would reduce controversy and potential legal challenges for forest restoration projects of this magnitude, while ensuring that both ecological and economic goals are met.

"The long-term viability of any biomass utilization plant depends on buy-in from people who care deeply about forest lands in New Mexico," said Todd Schulke, who represented the Center for Biological Diversity. "The agreement embodied in the Principles is unprecedented in my experience."

Said New Mexico State Forester Butch Blazer, "It's my belief that because of the Task Force's work, we will see significant reductions in time lost due to the kind of red tape that can affect these kinds of fuels reduction projects in New Mexico. I also believe these could be used by other southwestern states."

The New Mexico Forest Restoration Principles can be found at [www.fs.fed.us/r3/spf](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/spf), Blazer can be contacted at [ABlazer@State.NM.US](mailto:ABlazer@State.NM.US).

## SmallWood '06 Conference Impressive

The awareness of using woody biomass for energy and the technology to do so continues to increase. This was demonstrated during the recent SmallWood 2006 meeting in Richmond, Virginia. In May, over 250 people gathered to listen, discuss, and explore possibilities during 56 presentations on all aspects of utilizing the small dimension material that is so abundant in our forests.

Almost half of the presentations directly addressed the use of woody biomass in supplying energy in some form. Many of the other presentations included the potential use of small wood as biomass as part of the solution to overstocked stands at risk.

As Steve Walker, CEO for New England Wood Pellet company, pointed out "One third of the nations energy is used to produce heat, whether in production or just heating a home. Wood is a natural supplier of heat, and can be liquefied or otherwise processed to supply energy."

Congressman Bob Goodlatte, USDA Under Secretary Mark Rey, and Virginia Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Bob Bloxom all emphasized the role that woody biomass can play in addressing the nations energy needs and forest stands at risk. As

## New Hampshire

Milford Awards were presented at the 60th Annual Meeting of the Hillsborough County Conservation District on April 20, 2006.

Jon Nute, County Forester, recognized the John H. Morison family of Upland Farm in Peterborough, as Tree Farmer of the Year. John Morison and his son attended the event to accept their award, along with their forester, Dan Reed.

## Branching Out

Parts of the Upland Farm property have been in the family for more than 250 years.

In 1955, Upland Farm enrolled 518 acres of the present 763 acres into the Tree Farm program. Accomplishments in the last 50

## First Municipal Forester Institute Held in California

During February in Lake Arrowhead, CA, the Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) Program provided financial support for the first Municipal Forester Institute. Seventy-seven urban forestry professionals from the United States and Canada attended this intensive six-day leadership institute. The Institute was organized by the Society of Municipal Arborists, the International Society of Arboriculture, the California Urban Forests Council, and the National Tree Trust. A cadre of urban forestry professionals from these partner organizations, as well as UCF, non-profit organizations, and state and municipal forestry agencies, created the Institute and curriculum and taught the bulk of the sessions. The Institute focused on developing leadership and program management skills instead of "hands-on" urban forestry and arboricultural techniques covered by many other conferences and workshops. The Institute partners and instructional team have already begun planning the 2007 Municipal Forester Institute.

## SmallWood '06 Conference Impressive ... continued from pg 1

awareness continues to increase, it is hoped that the potential use of wood biomass for energy is a subject that will continue to be part of the policy discussions as we approach work on the next Farm Bill and energy legislation.

This was the first conference focused on small wood to be held in the East. Beginning in 1996 these bi-annual meetings help share new technologies and success

years involved 19 timber harvests, which allowed for the removal of lower quality trees and the release of the better quality trees to grow faster and get sunlight to the forest floor to establish seedling regeneration. Resulting from an experiment in 2001, 33 acres were planted with 25,000 White pine, Norway spruce, Balsam fir, Hybrid larch, Siberian larch and Tamarack. A tour of the farm was held on Saturday, June 17th at 9 AM.

The family, over the past 50 years, employed the same consulting foresters (New England Forestry Consultants) to manage the property. "This means that they have excellent records, income and costs, and they know specifically how productive their forests are on a yearly basis and can reliably predict future values," says Nute.

## USDA Announces HFRP Funding

USDA Undersecretary Mark Rey recently announced \$2.3 million in funding for the Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP), established by the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003. Last year, NACD, joined by several groups, lobbied in support of funding for the program.

HFRP will focus on habitat recovery for the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker in the Lower Ouachita River Flatwood region of Arkansas, the Canada lynx in the northern boreal forest of Maine and the gopher tortoise in the longleaf pine ecosystem along the gulf coast of Mississippi.

Interested landowners must develop a restoration plan that includes conservation practices necessary to restore and enhance

## USDA Releases Farm Bill Forum Comments

During the last week of March 2006, the USDA released a summary of the public comments received during the department's farm bill listening tour across the country last year. The summaries will be used as the basis for USDA's policy review and analysis for the 2007 farm bill. The comment summaries are categorized in 41 topic papers which include background data, summaries

of opinions expressed, and suggestions made by those who submitted comments. Some of the topics include agricultural concentration, dairy policy, conservation, food safety, payment limits, production controls, specialty crops and rural tax policy.

The USDA Farm Bill Forum Comment Summaries can be viewed on the USDA Web site at <http://www.usda.gov>.

"As you know, a lot of Tree Farmers are doing it like a hobby, but these people from the beginning treated it as a business that had to pay its way," he notes.

Besides the forest management part of the property, they also lease a gravel operation to a big local contractor and also have some water wells that they wholesale water by tanker truck to a bottled water manufacturer. The tank truck driver can pick up the water any time he wants. He has a key to let him unlock the well head and the meter on the well pump automatically records the volume and sends this information by phone line to the water company as well as the farm manager.

Contact: Kerry Rickrode, District Mgr., 603/673-2409 x 4 or [kerry.rickrode@nh.nacdnet.net](mailto:kerry.rickrode@nh.nacdnet.net)

forested habitat for species listed as threatened or endangered, or species that are candidates for the threatened or endangered species list. NRCS will implement the program.

Additionally, eligible land must be privately owned land that will: protect, restore and enhance habitat and aid in the recovery of a threatened or endangered species; improve biological diversity, or increase carbon sequestration.

More information can be found at: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/HFRP/ProgInfo/?HFRPPProgramInfo.html>.

To find out how much was allocated to your state for this program, contact your NRCS state conservationist.

small wood products, and recycling and reusing antique timbers and urban trees to name a few.

Look for the next conference on woody biomass and become aware of the potential use of small wood products and help improve the markets for small wood.

Contact: Doug Williams, NACD consulting forester, 304/724-1209 or [DEWilliams@frontiernet.net](mailto:DEWilliams@frontiernet.net).

## Task Force Recommends NEPA Updating

There is no dispute that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 has been the cornerstone of US environmental law since it took effect on January 1, 1970. Whether or not the 36-year-old law should stand as is or be modified to better address new environmental challenges and relieve resource management agencies from what some have called “analysis paralysis” is open to debate, reports the Soc. of American Foresters (SAF).

During the past year, the House Resources Committee Task Force on Improving the National Environmental Policy Act held hearings in Washington, DC and in several locations around the country to listen to suggestions for revising NEPA. The task force includes 20 House members - 11 Republicans and 9 Democrats - and is chaired by Rep. Cathy McMorris (R-WA).

The task force released a list of 22 recommendations, including 13 amendments to NEPA. Among those recommendations were:

- Establishing clear criteria for the use of environmental impact statements (EISs), environmental assessments (EAs), and categorical exclusions (CEs);
- Setting mandatory timelines for the completion of NEPA documents: 18 months for completing an EIS, 9 months for an EA;
- Limiting EISs to an average of 150 pages, with a maximum of 300 pages for complex projects;
- Requiring that appellants in citizen lawsuits must be involved throughout the NEPA

process to have standing in an appeal and must demonstrate that the evaluation was not conducted using the best available information and science;

- Requiring that “reasonable alternatives” analyzed in NEPA documents be limited to those that are economically and technically feasible; and
- Requiring consideration of the environmental impact of not taking an action on proposed projects during analyses of project alternatives.

The task force also suggested that the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) develop several new regulations, including:

- Giving more weight to comments from local individuals and groups and less weight to comments from outside groups and individuals who are not directly affected by that proposal;
- Clarifying which types of future actions are appropriate for consideration under cumulative-impact analysis; and
- Encouraging more consultations with stakeholders.

Mike Mortimer, a professor of law and policy at the State University College of Environmental Science and Forestry-Syracuse, gave testimony before the task force on behalf of SAF and said that the need for unambiguous criteria for the use of EISs, EAs and ECs is crucial.

Mortimer rejects the notion that, because NEPA is a landmark environmental law that was written 35 years ago, we should not

revise it.

“I don’t agree with that premise, because we’ve had a lot of changes since NEPA was enacted,” he said. “A number of substantive environmental laws have since come into play - the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, the National Forest Management Act, and others - that have substantive standards. To say that NEPA was perfect 35 years ago and that we now can’t touch it is very shortsighted.”

Abigail R. Kimbell, regional forester for the USDA Forest Service’s Northern Region said that it is important to consider NEPA, and other laws such as the National Forest Management Act in the context of the time in which they were created.

“These laws came about at a time when many folks were anxious to slow down the extraction of natural resources from public lands. Those same laws are in force today, when our focus is on landscape restoration, not on extraction,” she said. “These laws are now slowing down restoration, and we’re not sure that is what the American public wants.”

For information regarding the House Resources committee report and NEPA, visit the Resources Committee website at <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov/nepataskforce.htm>, or contact Steve Wilent, the Society of American Foresters, 301/897-8720.

## NACD-Supported Forest Bill Passes US House of Representatives

The House passed H.R. 4200, the Forest Emergency Recovery and Restoration Act, on a 243-182 vote. The bipartisan bill would allow the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to quickly begin recovery projects on national forest land after disaster strikes, such as fire, hurricane, disease and/or insect infestation.

The NACD-supported measure would also provide tools for non-federal land managers by enhancing agencies’ cooperative authority to help prepare cross ownership assessments of damages and needs following catastrophes when asked, which includes assistance in preparing Community Wildfire Protection Plans. H.R. 4200 also would authorize and fund research on restoration projects to provide sound peer-reviewed science to inform future management decisions.

NACD worked with staff from the House Committees on Resources and Agriculture to build bipartisan support for the legislation. The association also successfully worked with a coalition of groups to pass the bill, including Society of American Foresters, National Assn. of State Foresters, National Assn. of Counties, American Forests & Paper Assn. and others.

NACD applauds the work of Congressman Greg Walden (R-Ore.) and those members who worked to get the bill through the House. The next steps are to work with the Senate to pass a companion bill this year. Senator Gordon Smith (R-Ore.) has introduced a similar measure.

For details of HR-4200, contact the NACD Government Affairs Grassroots Coordinator, 202/547-6223.

## Rep. Goodlatte Seeks Forest Owner Input

Thoughts on The ’07 Next Farm Bill House Agriculture Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte, (R-VA), reaffirmed his interest in forest resources and assured that forestry issues would be part of the next farm bill. Speaking at the national SmallWood 2006 conference in Richmond on May 16, he encouraged forest landowners to participate in the ongoing Agriculture Committee field hearings and website that are set up to hear from farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners. There is a new web-based feedback form at [www.agriculture.house.gov/inside/feedbackform.html](http://www.agriculture.house.gov/inside/feedbackform.html). This is similar but not the same effort as last year’s USDA listening sessions. The Chairman said that this is a great opportunity to foster forestry in the next Farm Bill and this was a good way to hear what landowners are thinking. He also said that there would be time later to hear from forestry groups in Washington, DC.