

THE CHIEF'S DESK
PEOPLE, PLACES AND THINGS
April 4, 2014

Taking care of our environment is everyone's job!

WO: Deputy Under Secretary Butch Blazer keynote speaker

Deputy Under Secretary Blazer recently presented a keynote speech at the National Environmental Justice Conference and Training Program in Washington, D.C. The Forest Service had two panels of speakers highlighting the Conservation Education program's outreach to the Hispanic Community and the urban outreach efforts of the Federally Employed Job Corps Alumni. The Environmental Justice Board is chaired by Associate Deputy Chief for NFS Tony Tooke and representatives from each Deputy Area. [Conference proceedings](#) will be posted soon.

Actress Christina Hendricks supports sustainable forest management

Research & Development Associate Deputy Chief Carlos Rodriguez-Franco and National Forest System's Peter Gaulke, U.S. representatives to the Montreal Process, were instrumental in the development of sustainable forest management public service announcements. Actress Christina Hendricks put her star power behind some [public service announcements](#) promoting Sustainable Forestry and the [Montreal Process](#). The Montréal Process Working Group was formed in 1994 as a bold, intergovernmental response to the pressing need for sustainable forest management.

Plain Writing Act

In 2013, with a strong contribution from the Forest Service, USDA got one of the highest scores in Government for plain writing. The Plain Writing Act of 2010 requires all Government writing for the public to be in [plain language](#), and each year we report to Congress on how well we are doing. In 2013, USDA earned an "A" for implementing the law and a "B" for living up to the spirit of the law.

R1: *Untrammeled* film to debut in celebration of Wilderness 50th

Untrammeled is an inspiring 27-minute [film](#) about passing the torch for wilderness to the next generation. On April 8th, at 7:10 p.m., the film is scheduled to premiere in conjunction with the University of Montana Wilderness Institute's Wilderness Issues Lecture Series, in Missoula, Mont. The film was produced by the Northern Region, in partnership with Back Country Horsemen of Montana, local outfitters, Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center and others.

R2: Rocky Mountain Region celebrates wilderness anniversary

On June 7, the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, the Nebraska National Forests and Grasslands have scheduled a National Trails Day, "Hike for Wilderness." It involves an interpretive hike to 7,794-acre Soldier Creek Wilderness established in 1986 in Western Nebraska. The wilderness was a timber reservation for nearby Fort Robinson and provided pasture for cavalry horses.

R3: Tonto National Forest takes steps to eliminate deadly birds hazards

The Cave Creek Ranger District took action to prevent future death of birds and other small wildlife that become trapped inside vent pipes on toilet buildings and port-a-potties. District

employees and a Forest Service volunteer designed, fabricated, and installed wire mesh screen covers for vent pipes on 32 toilet buildings and installed commercially produced drain caps to cover the vent pipes on port-a-potties. The district encourages forest units to take similar preventative steps.

Coconino National Forest talks about watersheds

Representatives of the Flagstaff Watershed Protection Project (FWPP) recently staffed an information booth at the Flagstaff Home and Garden show to share fire prevention and fire ecology, progress in the National Environmental Policy Act planning process and next steps. The FWPP is a 15,300 acre fuels reduction project aimed at reducing the risk of severe fire and post-fire flooding to critical Flagstaff watersheds. The project is supported by a \$10 million bond approved by city voters in 2012. The FWPP draft environmental impact statement is anticipated for publication this month.

Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands and Kirtland Air Force Base conduct tour

The Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands and Kirtland Air Force Base staff recently invited the public to tour several military training sites on the Magdalena Ranger District. During the tour, Pararescue/Combat Rescue Officer School staff described the types of exercises that they conduct, designed to provide students the realistic training environment to prepare them for combat rescue operations if they are deployed overseas.

R4: Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest presents program highlighting careers

The Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest Special Emphasis Program Manager for People with Disabilities recently presented a program to the Cache Employment and Training Center in Logan, Utah. The presentation included several topics designed to increase awareness of employment programs available through the Forest Service.

R5: Revolutionary land deal helps preserve culture and traditions

Pacific Southwest Region is part of an innovative effort bringing government and conservation groups together in safeguarding 78 acres of forested wetlands in the Yela Valley on Kosrae, Micronesia. While conservation easements are relatively common in the United States including Hawaii, this is the first conservation easement outside of the Americas. The conservation easement was purchased with a grant provided by the U.S. Forest Service and the David and Lucille Packard Foundation and is held by the Kosrae Island Resource Management Authority.

Forest water restoration and replenishment volunteer project

On April 5, volunteers from Coca-Cola's Southern California facilities and other collaborators will assist the Angeles National Forest in the removal of invasive plants in Big Tujunga Canyon, at the Wildwood Picnic Area. This area was heavily impacted by fire and was nominated by the National Forest Foundation as a "Treasured Landscapes conservation campaign site." The combined efforts of these organizations will help restore watersheds that supply local communities

R8: White-Nose Syndrome Discovered in Bats in the Bankhead National Forest

The Forest Service is working closely with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Alabama Department of Conservation, Alabama A&M University, Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study, and others to reduce the spread of White-Nose Syndrome. Two bats recently

collected from the Bankhead National Forest in Alabama tested positive for the deadly disease characterized by white fungus on the muzzle and wings of hibernating bats. Cave closures on Southern National Forests since 2009 have been in place for this reason.

Project CAPTURE launched

Forest Service geneticists, ecologists, and other experts convened recently to build a national framework for a three-year tree conservation project, Conservation and Prioritization of Trees Under Risk of Extirpation. The framework is built on a regional work project, Forest Tree Genetic Risk Assessment System, written by Kevin Potter of the Southern Research Station and Barb Crane, Regional Geneticist. The experts are currently working on Phase 1 of the new project.

R9: Superior's award winning volunteer program

The [Superior National Forest](#) awarded three individuals the Eastern Region Honor Awards for their exceptional contribution to the Forest. Mark Toot, LaCroix Ranger District, received the Employee Award for outstanding commitment to the success of the volunteer program for the past 10 years. Norma Malinowski, volunteer, was awarded an Honorable Mention in the Individual Volunteer category for her extraordinary work in support of the wildlife, botany, and non-native invasive species programs across the Forest. Jim Obidowski, Campground Host on the Laurentian Ranger District, was awarded an Honorable Mention in the Campground Host category for his friendly assistance to the public at the Pfeiffer Lake Campground.

Two wilderness areas make top 20 for spring!

The [Superior National Forest's](#) Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) (#13) and the [Mark Twain National Forest's](#) Devils Backbone Wilderness (DBW) (#20) were listed in a recent blog by The Wilderness Society, "[20 Best Wilderness areas to visit in spring.](#)" The BWCAW was highlighted for its late season tranquil and affordable ice fishing opportunities; while the DBW was highlighted for scenic picnics, with the dogwood, redbud and serviceberry trees in bloom and the North Fork White River.

R10: Salmon forest exhibit opens at Mendenhall

A Salmon Forest, a permanent new exhibit based on the science and photography behind the award-winning book, *Salmon in the Trees*, opened recently at Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center in Juneau. On hand for the ceremony were several Forest Service officials from the Alaska Region office and the Tongass, as well as author/photographer Amy Gulick, who gave two lectures at the well-attended public event.

NA: Botanist wins award

Botanist Tom Rawinski was presented the Integrity in Conservation award from the New England Society of American Foresters annual meeting in Nashua, N.H. Tom was recognized for his work on building collaborations and consensus around the overabundance of white-tailed deer and the deleterious impact of deer browsing on native vegetation and forest regeneration.

USDA's Chesapeake working land conservation strategy discussion

State & Private Forestry Chesapeake Liaison Sally Claggett led a panel discussion on the [Chesapeake Working Land Conservation Strategy](#) at the Maryland Environmental Trust Land Conservation Conference in Adamstown, Md. recently. Session participants discussed how to

move the strategy into an action agenda addressing opportunities and constraints for increasing land conservation and improving water quality in Maryland. Panel members were partners from USDA NRCS, American Farmland Trust, and Maryland Forest Service.

SRS: Fire management and quality of bat habitat workshop

The Consortium of Appalachian Fire Managers and Scientists is sponsoring a two-day workshop April 30 – May 1, in Mammoth Cave, Ky., to synthesize and share new findings about the relationships between prescribed fire, insect prey availability, canopy structure, bat foraging, and roosting areas. The workshop is for land managers and scientists across the Appalachians and Oak Woodlands Consortia. The focal study of this workshop evaluated bat habitat both before and after hibernation in Mammoth Cave National Park and was funded by the Joint Fire Science Program. Registration is required for the workshop.

NRS: Scientist writes American Journal of Public Health lead editorial

Erika Svendsen, a research social scientist with the Northern Research Station's New York City Urban Field Station, wrote the [lead editorial](#) for the April edition of the American Journal of Public Health.

RMRS: Station produces special issue, *Science You Can Use Bulletin*

Rocky Mountain Research Station produced a Special Issue of the *Science You Can Use Bulletin*, titled, [Our Relationship with a Dynamic Landscape: Understanding the 2013 Northern Colorado Flood](#). Our collective ability to understand and learn from these events, in Colorado and elsewhere, can influence social choices, policies, and management into the future.

PNWRS: National engineering leadership team learns about Juneau Lab

Assistant station engineer Rob Avila and Pacific Northwest Region architect Howard Cotner recently presented a summary of their work on the station's new Juneau Forestry Sciences Laboratory to the National Engineering Leadership Team. The Juneau Lab is an office and research facility that was officially opened in May 2013 and that achieved LEED "Gold" status, the second-highest designation, in December 2013. Among its sustainable and energy-efficient features is the extensive use of wood—including in its floors, interior finishes, wood trusses, siding, and house posts at the main entrance.

Scientist teaches decision-support course

Research forester **Keith Reynolds** is teaching a one-month course on the use of decision support systems for forest management as part of the curriculum of the [Erasmus Mundus Master of Science in Mediterranean Forestry and Natural Resources Management](#) course, which is coordinated by the University of Lisbon's School of Agriculture.

PSWRS: Research station participates in local Ocean Day festival

Pacific Southwest Region's Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry recently participated in the 7th annual Mālama Kanaloa (Ocean Day) Festival, a marine and coastal resources awareness celebration hosted by the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. Station staff highlighted connections between land and coastal/ocean resources, offered native seedlings for people to pot and take home, provided touch and smell activities with various native plant species, and hosted a display that focused on insect pollinators found in Hawai'i.

Scientist presents watershed research at regional public meeting

Pacific Southwest Research Ecologist Dr. Carolyn Hunsaker recently presented findings from her Kings River Experimental Watersheds research and discussed forest management practices and water yield at Regions public meeting, Sierra Cascades Dialog 12 on Water, in Sacramento, Calif. The Sierra Cascades Dialog sessions are an integral part of the planning process for the region's upcoming Forest Plan Revision.

Press Announcements

Chief Tidwell testifies on the President's proposed FY2015 budget.

In testimony Wednesday before the House Appropriations Committee, Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Subcommittee, U.S. Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell cited three key areas of focus for the FY 2015 President's Budget of \$4.77 billion for the Forest Service: restoring resilient landscapes, building thriving communities, and managing wildland fires.

Secure Rule Schools

Secretary Vilsack announced [secure rural](#) school payments with more that \$300 million to be distributed to 41 States and Puerto Rico.

Press Interviews

None

Executive News

None

Personnel News

Donna Alwine has accepted the position of Region 6 Director of Budget & Finance in Portland, Ore. She is currently the Budget Policy Analyst for General Services Administration in Washington, D.C.

John Heibel III has accepted the position of Region 5 Deputy Director Engineering in Vallejo, Calif. He is currently the Supervisory Civil Engineer on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest in Redding, Calif., (Region 5).

Steve Lohr has accepted the position of WO-NFS National Partnership Office Director in Washington, D.C. He is currently the Forest Supervisor on the National Forests in Alabama in Montgomery, Ala., (Region 8).



Footprint Area of the Month: Green Purchasing

Action Item of the Week: Purchase 100% recycled paper

Use EPA's [Recycled Content \(ReCon\) Tool](#) to estimate life-cycle [greenhouse gas \(GHG\) emissions](#) and [energy impacts](#) from purchasing with varying degrees of post-consumer recycled content. This tool allows users to estimate the GHG emissions and energy

benefits of purchasing office paper with different percentages of recycled content. Emissions and energy impacts are calculated using a [life-cycle perspective](#). For more information on green purchasing and Forest Service Sustainable Operations, visit the [SusOps Demonstration website](#).



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