

## FOREST COMMUNITY NEWS: THE *NATIONAL* PERSPECTIVE

No. 5

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### FROM THE EDITORS...

While October ended on a scary note (with Halloween, that is!), November may lend optimism to some of the politically inclined in the form of local elections. Hopefully, we will see a strong cadre of community forestry supporters among the elected. November is also the “mad dash” month where the rush is on to get things done before the winter holidays descend. No doubt many of you have busy schedules for the coming month. Hopefully, this issue of *FCN: The National Perspective* will help keep you up to speed (and maybe even ahead of the curve!) as you scurry to finish up the year’s work.

Good luck and stay warm.

### FROM CAPITOL HILL...

#### **POST-DISTURBANCE RESTORATION**

Rep. Tom Udall (D-N.M.) has introduced legislation to promote pro-active planning and collaboration to accelerate the approval of forest rehabilitation projects following uncharacteristically intense disturbances. The bill, entitled the National Forests Rehabilitation and Recovery Act, authorizes the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to carry out five collaboratively created pilot projects dealing with post-disturbance rehabilitation.

Federal forest land communities can apply to participate in the pilot program by meeting a number of different criteria, with specific consideration given to communities that have a proven track record of working in a collaborative manner to resolve natural resource issues. This bill includes independent, third-party monitoring of the forest areas following rehabilitation operations to track the short-term and long-term impacts of logging, replanting, stream restoration, road removal, and/or other rehabilitation activities. *Excerpted from a press release from Rep. Udall’s office.*

#### **BUDGET**

The Senate has begun debate on an FY 06 budget reconciliation package that was approved by the Budget Committee. In total, the package would produce a net savings of \$39.1 billion over 5 years through spending cuts. The package would cut almost \$4 billion in mandatory spending from Agriculture programs, including \$1.05 billion in conservation spending cuts over the next 5 years to the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the Conservation Security Program, and the Conservation Reserve Program. The reconciliation package also calls for generation of \$2.5 billion in revenue from Alaska’s Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The budget resolution passed earlier this year also called for \$70 billion in tax cuts over the next five years, although such a tax package has not been released yet. The House Budget

Committee is expected to begin its markup of spending cuts in early November and to vote in early to mid-November.

The fiscal 2006 budget resolution, H Con Res 95, is an original resolution establishing the congressional budget for the United States government for fiscal year 2006, revising appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2005, and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2007 through 2010.

## **APPROPRIATIONS**

The Senate is expected to vote in early November on the \$101 billion Agriculture Appropriations Conference Report (HR 2744). The bill includes funding for cooperative forestry research (McIntire-Stennis funding) and forestry extension at levels enacted in fiscal year 2005. The bill also includes a \$2 million increase for NRCS' conservation operations, which funds technical assistance to private landowners, and a \$2 million increase for National Research Initiative funding. The House approved the Report on October 28, 2005. Once the Senate approves the bill, it will go on to the President for his signature.

## **PROPERTY RIGHTS**

The House is expected to vote in early November on HR 4128, which would discourage local governments from using the power of eminent domain to take property for economic development purposes. The legislation is in response to the recent Supreme Court decision that significantly broadened the power of eminent domain (*Kelo v. City of New London*). Visit <http://thomas.loc.gov/> for more information.

## **FROM THE ADMINISTRATION...**

### **COOPERATIVE CONSERVATION**

Following the recent White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation in St. Louis, the President has formed a Task Force on Cooperative Conservation. The Task Force will compile ideas generated at the conference for improving local participation in environmental management and law and will oversee the integration of Cooperative Conservation principles into the hiring, training and rewarding of Federal employees. Also worth noting is that the National Association of State Foresters signed up to work with USDA and other agencies in promoting the ecosystem services that forests deliver to citizens nationwide. For more information about the Summit and the Task Force, go to [www.conservation.ceq.gov](http://www.conservation.ceq.gov)

### **VOLUNTARY CONSERVATION PROGRAMS**

On October 14<sup>th</sup>, Agriculture Deputy Secretary Chuck Conner announced the release of nearly \$1.7 billion in funding for voluntary conservation Farm Bill programs on working lands. In part, this funding, which will go into effect in fiscal year 2006, will support the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in its efforts to help farmers and ranchers make sound conservation decisions that improve soil, water, air, and wildlife habitat

on privately owned working lands. Fiscal year 2006 allocations include \$1.345 billion in financial assistance and \$337 million for technical assistance for NRCS voluntary conservation programs. Additional information on these conservation programs is available at [www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs). Landowners who want specific information on program participation should contact their local USDA Service Center or NRCS office, listed at <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app> or in the telephone book under Federal Government, U.S. Department of Agriculture. *Excerpted from a USDA press release.*

## **HURRICANE RECOVERY**

- The Forest Service has begun an environmental assessment on the DeSoto National Forest in Mississippi using authorization under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) for a project designed to allow salvage logging, road maintenance, and temporary road construction. The Forest Service decided to use a categorical exclusion in this case, allowed for under HFRA, because of the amount of potentially hazardous fuel created by Hurricane Katrina. *Excerpted from E&E Daily.*
- The President sent a spending reallocation request to Congress on October 28<sup>th</sup>, asking lawmakers to shift \$17 billion of the \$60 billion allocated in September to FEMA's disaster relief fund for Katrina and Rita recovery efforts. The President asked for the shift of funds to cover EPA and Army Corp of Engineers expenses as well as to provide \$410 million to help farmers, ranchers, and forestland owners recover and rehabilitate their lands. Congress has not committed to making these changes but is discussing them. For more information visit <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/10/20051028-6.html>

## **TIMBER SALE APPEAL**

In late September, a Forest Service appeals officer ordered officials in Montana's Kootenai National Forest to put a stop to a timber sale in grizzly habitat, forcing the agency to take a closer look at the logging's effect on wildlife. The agency's appeal reviewing officer found the Forest Service did not adequately consider the effects on wildlife from a 350-acre logging project. Another reviewing officer found the agency "failed to adequately analyze cumulative effects" of a second logging project that involved harvesting 1,860 acres and the construction of six temporary roads. In both cases, those findings were subsequently upheld. Kootenai National Forest Supervisor Bob Castenada indicated that agency officials have not decided whether they will need to conduct a supplemental environmental analysis to address the shortcomings of the original decisions. *Excerpted from Land Letter.*

To download a copy of the decision on the appeal, visit [www.fs.fed.us/r1/planning/final\\_appeals/kootenai/northeast\\_yaak\\_ts\\_rod\\_215\\_05\\_0041\\_a.pdf](http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/planning/final_appeals/kootenai/northeast_yaak_ts_rod_215_05_0041_a.pdf)

## **INTERIOR DEPT. ASST. SECRETARY STEPS DOWN**

The Interior Department official who oversees the Bureau of Land Management, Minerals Management Service and Office of Surface Mining resigned October 28<sup>th</sup> to return to private

law practice. Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Rebecca Watson will join the law firm of Hogan & Hartson after serving for over three years at the Department. *Excerpted from Greenwire.*

## **FARM BILL FORUMS**

The Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Johanns, is continuing the series of listening sessions around the country to hear from stakeholders on the Farm Bill, which is up for reauthorization in 2007. Family forest issues and other forestry issues that were part of previous Farm Bills will be discussed.

Farm Bill Forums hosted by Rural Development Under Secretary Tom Dorr:

- Nov. 12, Kona, Hawaii, 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. (HST), Sheraton Keauhou Hotel,
- Nov. 16, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (EDT), venue TBD

For the full schedule of the forums see:

[www.usda.gov/wps/portal/lut/p/s.7\\_0\\_A/7\\_0\\_1UH?contentidonly=true&contentid=2005/10/0431.xml](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/lut/p/s.7_0_A/7_0_1UH?contentidonly=true&contentid=2005/10/0431.xml)

## **OTHER NATIONAL NEWS...**

### **HURRICANE RECOVERY**

Timber companies are rushing to reach the millions of trees knocked down by hurricanes Katrina and Rita before they start to decompose, making them less valuable as lumber and adding to the region's risk of catastrophic wildfire. State officials estimate the value of the fallen trees at about \$900 million in Louisiana and \$2.4 billion in Mississippi, but forestry experts have said the Gulf Coast's timber-processing capacity cannot handle all of the estimated 21 billion board feet downed by the storms.

The region's processing facilities have been scaled back in recent years, and the storms have made it difficult to bring plants back into operation. But the industry is trying to step up to the task. Atlanta-based Georgia-Pacific Corporation plans to restart two of its idled plants, and Weyerhaeuser Company is hiring more contractors to clear damaged forests in Louisiana and Mississippi. *Excerpted from Greenwire.*

## **IN THE COURTS...**

### **ROADLESS**

Twenty environmental groups filed a lawsuit on October 6<sup>th</sup> asking a federal judge to restore the Clinton-era Roadless Area Conservation Rule that prohibited roadbuilding and development in 58.5 million acres of the national forests. The lawsuit filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California says the Bush administration's repeal of the Clinton rule, and the subsequent new rule requiring governors to petition the

Agriculture Department for roadless protections on national forests in their states, violates the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act. The plaintiffs want a judge to void the Bush plan and subsequently reinstate the Clinton rule. *Excerpted from Greenwire.*

To download the complaint, visit [www.earthjustice.org/news/documents/10-05/Roadless\\_Complaint\\_10\\_6\\_05.pdf](http://www.earthjustice.org/news/documents/10-05/Roadless_Complaint_10_6_05.pdf)

## **APPEALS**

A group of environmental organizations has appealed several aspects of a federal judge's July ruling regarding the Forest Service's use of categorical exclusions to the 9<sup>th</sup> U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. The environmentalists' appeal does not challenge the decision of Judge James Singleton of the U.S. District Court in Anchorage requiring the Forest Service to put categorically excluded projects out for public comment, notice and appeal that has caused much controversy. Instead, the plaintiffs challenged aspects of Singleton's original July *Earth Island Institute v. Ruthenbeck* ruling in which he sided with the Forest Service in upholding regulations limiting administrative appeals and allowing the use of economic factors to accelerate salvage logging.

The Bush administration has also appealed Singleton's ruling, which Western Environmental Law Center attorney Matt Kenna said spurred the plaintiffs' appeal. *Excerpted from Greenwire.*

To view Judge Singleton's July ruling, visit [www.fs.fed.us/emc/applit/includes/eiivdp2.pdf](http://www.fs.fed.us/emc/applit/includes/eiivdp2.pdf).

## **CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS & OTHER EVENTS**

**Practices and Programs to Conserve Wildlife Habitat, November 10, 2005, New Paltz, NY.** The goal of this workshop is to provide workshop participants with on-site, hands-on examples of successful management practices undertaken by private and public landowners who wish to protect or enhance and conserve important habitats for wildlife. It is open to private landowners and natural resource management professionals. Contact Angela Tallarico at 518-622-9820 or [amt18@cornell.edu](mailto:amt18@cornell.edu) or see [www.forestrycenter.org/calendar.cfm?refid=77103](http://www.forestrycenter.org/calendar.cfm?refid=77103)

**Forest Restoration in the Eastern United States: A Conference to Focus on Public and Private Forest Lands, November 10-12, 2005, Black Mountain, NC.** The goals of this conference are to raise awareness of regional forest restoration issues and to build a regional Restoration Network that provides a venue for communication among conservationists, practitioners, community foresters, agency personnel, and scientists. The conference will feature mini-seminars and discussions on key restoration issues, provide tools for the implementation of restoration projects, and offer opportunities for networking. For more information, contact Nikki Smathers at 1-828-252-9223 or [nikki@safc.org](mailto:nikki@safc.org) or see [www.safc.org/resources/easternrestorationconferencehome.htm](http://www.safc.org/resources/easternrestorationconferencehome.htm)

**Prairie Rural Action, November 14-15, 2005, Fargo, ND, Fargo Civic Center.**

Organizations and individuals throughout the Great Plains are joining together at this meeting to promote new nonpartisan approaches and policies for revitalizing rural communities. For more information, go to [www.prairieruralaction.org](http://www.prairieruralaction.org).

**Western Forestry Leadership Coalition Fall Meeting, November 14 – 16, 2005, San Diego, CA.**

The meeting is designed to focus strategic issues and take collective efforts to the “Next Level.” If any members haven’t already made reservations and registered, please contact Bob Carnes for meeting information ([bcarnes@fs.fed.us](mailto:bcarnes@fs.fed.us); (303) 445-4362).

**ACEEE Forum on Energy Efficiency in Agriculture, November 14 – 16, 2005, Des Moines, IA.**

The Forum will highlight energy efficiency technologies, policies, and actions that can contribute to increased viability and sustainability of farms, ranches, and the rural business community. For more information, visit <http://aceee.org/conf/af05/af05index.htm> or contact Rebecca Lunetta at (302) 292-3966 or [rlunetta@comcast.net](mailto:rlunetta@comcast.net).

**2005 National Conference on Urban Ecosystems: November 17-18, 2005, Charlotte, NC.**

The USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry program is offering Minority and Underrepresented Registration Scholarships for this conference. The Forest service will award three scholarships for each state, as well as three each for Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Pacific territories. The scholarship deadline was July 30, 2005; however, after this date, the scholarships will be awarded to those who are eligible as available on a first come, first served basis. For complete information and application, visit the American Forests Conference Website at [www.americanforests.org/conference/schMinority.php](http://www.americanforests.org/conference/schMinority.php).

**Ecological Approaches to Forestry: Celebrating Ten Years of the Forest Guild**

**December 1-3, 2005, Santa Fe, NM.** This conference will feature an opening address by former Secretary of the Interior, Stewart Udall; reflections of the founding members of the Guild on the significance of the organization and the challenges faced in silviculture, science, policy, and community forestry; concurrent sessions on technical issues; regional discussion forums; and more. For more information, contact Barbara Hoehne at (505) 983-8892 ext.20 or [meeting@forestguild.org](mailto:meeting@forestguild.org) or see [www.forestguild.org/annualmeeting05.html](http://www.forestguild.org/annualmeeting05.html).

**Forest Guild 2005 Annual Meeting: December 3-4, 2005, Santa Fe, NM.**

Ten years ago, when a handful of foresters were introduced to each other in Santa Fe, New Mexico, a new force came together in forestry. The 2005 annual meeting returns to the place of the Guild's conception to celebrate the founding and to explore changes in the forest management environment since the gathering in 1995. For more information, visit [www.forestguild.org](http://www.forestguild.org).

**Midwest Invasive Plants Symposium, December 14-15, 2005, Kansas City, MO.**

The Midwest Invasive Plant Network will hold its annual meeting this year in association with the North Central Weed Science Society's Annual Meeting in Kansas City, Dec. 12-15, 2005. NCWSS will provide a reduced two-day registration fee for those wishing to attend December 14-15 for the Midwest Invasive Plants Network annual meeting and invasive

plant talks. Contact Katherine M. Howe at 317-951-8818 or [khowe@tnc.org](mailto:khowe@tnc.org) or see [www.ncwss.org/meeting/2005/info05.htm](http://www.ncwss.org/meeting/2005/info05.htm)

**Energy for a Sustainable and Secure Future, January 26-27, 2006, Washington, DC.**

The National Council for Science and the Environment's 6th National Conference on Science, Policy and the Environment: Energy for a Sustainable and Secure Future will take place January 26-27, 2006 at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, DC. The conference will serve as a forum for over 800 leaders in environmental science and engineering, policy and government, corporations and civil society, and education to identify opportunities for science and technology to improve the decisions that define our energy future. It will also be an opportunity for networking across traditional boundaries. Visit [www.ncseonline.org](http://www.ncseonline.org) to register and get program updates, details on the exhibition, poster session, and sponsorship opportunities, and information on travel and lodging. Register by November 18, 2005 to receive a discounted rate.

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- The USDA Forest Service is requesting proposals for projects that restore forest health and increase the use of woody biomass removed from or near National Forest System and Bureau of Land Management forestlands. Individual awards will be between \$50,000 and \$250,000. Pre-applications are due December 1, 2005. For more information, visit [www.fpl.fs.fed.us/tmu/grant/biomass-grant.html](http://www.fpl.fs.fed.us/tmu/grant/biomass-grant.html).
- The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has organized a Citizen-based Monitoring Partnership Program that will fund and support citizen-based monitoring programs involved in the monitoring of aquatic and terrestrial plants, animals and their habitats. Available funds for 2006 total \$100,000. Non-profit organizations, tribal organizations, academic institutions, conservation organizations, and local governments are eligible for consideration and are encouraged to apply for partnership program funding for work to be completed during this spring and summer field season. Eligible activities include training or methods development, monitoring, and data sharing or conversion. For more information, contact Erin Crain at 608-267-7479 or [Erin.Crain@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:Erin.Crain@dnr.state.wi.us) or see [www.forestrycenter.org/headlines.cfm?refid=76799](http://www.forestrycenter.org/headlines.cfm?refid=76799).
- The Roundtable on Sustainable Forests is looking for public input on the National Report on Sustainable Forests as part of the organization's Multiple Perspectives Project. The project website, <http://www.sustainableforests.net/perspectives/>, allows visitors to access and provide feedback on the many papers that comprise the report. The authors will present their papers and a response to the on-line feedback at the Multiple Perspectives Workshop and Roundtable Meeting, to be held December 13-14, 2005, in Washington, DC. The final papers will be published in a special electronic publication of the Society of American Foresters in 2006. This site will remain open until 5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time, Friday, November 19. For more information contact Steve Ambrose at [sambrose.fs.fed.us](mailto:sambrose.fs.fed.us) or (303) 445-4370.

## RESOURCES

### GUIDES

- The Forest Service and the National Forest Foundation have put together a manual titled **“Partnership Guide: The Power of People Working Together.”** The guide is a tool to help Forest Service employees, experienced partners, and first-time or potential partners work together more effectively and efficiently. The guide answers common questions about the agency's policies and procedures, helps partnerships anticipate potential hurdles, and provides contacts and other resources for more specific guidance. To view the guidebook, visit [www.partnershipresourcecenter.org/resources/partnership-guide/](http://www.partnershipresourcecenter.org/resources/partnership-guide/).
- In response to an increasing demand for wood certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the Rainforest Alliance has created a **“SmartGuide to Green Building Wood Sources.”** The guide, which was created to facilitate access to FSC-certified wood products, includes information compiled from a number of sources including FSC, SmartWood and Metafore databases, individual source interviews and company Web sites. To download the guide, visit [www.rainforest-alliance.org/programs/forestry/trees/activities/pdfs/green\\_building.pdf](http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/programs/forestry/trees/activities/pdfs/green_building.pdf)
- The Forest Service recently published the second edition of its **“Forest Stewardship Program National Standards and Guidelines.”** The purpose of the Forest Stewardship Program is to encourage the long-term stewardship of private forestlands by helping landowners more actively manage their forests and related resources. These standards and guidelines are intended to assist State and Territorial partners implement and achieve program outcomes. To download the document, visit [www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/library/fsp\\_standards&guidelines.pdf](http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/library/fsp_standards&guidelines.pdf).

### FACTSHEETS

- The Local Government Commission has created a factsheet titled **“Livable Communities and Urban Forests.”** This document includes discussions on the economic, environmental, and public health and safety benefits of trees in communities. Moreover, benefits for each topic are described and tips are provided on how local governments and organizations can improve the tree canopy in their communities. Resources for further information are also included. To download the factsheet, visit [www.lgc.org/freepub/PDF/Energy/livcomm\\_urban\\_forests.pdf](http://www.lgc.org/freepub/PDF/Energy/livcomm_urban_forests.pdf)
- **Rural America At A Glance, 2005** is a six-page brochure that highlights the most recent indicators of social and economic conditions in rural areas for use in developing policies and programs to assist rural areas. The brochure is the fourth in a series of reports that uses current social and economic data to highlight population, labor market, income, and poverty trends in rural areas. This brochure provides information on key rural conditions and trends for use by public and private decision-makers and other stakeholders in efforts to enhance the economic opportunities and quality of life for rural people and their communities. To download this publication, go to <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EIB4/>.



## **NEWSLETTERS/UPDATES**

To sign up for American Forests' 'Policy News and Updates' or 'Farm Bill Listserve', please e-mail Laura Schweitzer at [lschweitzer@amfor.org](mailto:lschweitzer@amfor.org).

## **GENERAL RESOURCES**

**American Forests.** Visit their website at [www.americanforests.org](http://www.americanforests.org)

**Communities Committee of the Seventh American Forest Congress.** Visit their website at [www.communitiescommittee.org](http://www.communitiescommittee.org)

**National Network of Forest Practitioners.** Visit their website at [www.nnfp.org](http://www.nnfp.org)

**Pinchot Institute for Conservation.** Visit their website at [www.pinchot.org](http://www.pinchot.org)

**The National Community Forestry Center,** Northern Forest Region, offers numerous community forestry-related documents available for free downloading. Check it out at [www.ncfcnfr.net](http://www.ncfcnfr.net)

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

To subscribe (or unsubscribe) to *Forest Community News: The National Perspective*, please email Paige McClanahan ([pmcclanahan@pinchot.org](mailto:pmcclanahan@pinchot.org)).

Questions and suggestions should be emailed to Paige McClanahan and/or Laura Schweitzer at American Forests ([lschweitzer@amfor.org](mailto:lschweitzer@amfor.org)).

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