

FOREST COMMUNITY NEWS: THE NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

No. 8

February 6, 2006

FROM THE EDITORS

It is January in Washington, DC. This means that the second session of Congress is gearing up. We can also expect to see the President's 2007 Budget Request come out soon. Stay tuned to FCN for the latest on the National Policy buzz...

FROM CAPITOL HILL

BIOMASS

The House Resources Committee Subcommittees on Forests and Forest Health along with the Energy and Mineral Resources will hold a joint oversight hearing on February 8, 2006, on the effects of high energy costs on jobs and the potential for expanded use of biomass for energy. For more information, visit <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov/welcome.htm>.

BUDGET

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee will hold a hearing on February 15, 2006 to review the Administration's FY 2007 Budget request and discuss its FY 2007 budget report to the Senate Budget Committee. For more information, visit http://energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Hearing&Hearing_ID=1523.

FARM BILL

The House Agriculture Committee will hold the first in a series of field hearings on the Farm Bill on February 6 in Fayetteville, North Carolina and February 7 in Auburn, Alabama. The hearings are designed to gather insight from a variety of interests on the implementation of the 2002 Farm Bill and desired improvements and modifications. For more information, visit <http://agriculture.house.gov/hearings/schedule.html>

NEPA

On December 21, 2005, the House Resources Committee's NEPA Task Force culminated months of hearings and deliberations with the release of 22 potential alterations to the National Environmental Policy Act. NEPA, enacted in 1970, requires the federal government to consider alternatives to actions on public lands and provides for public participation in the decision-making process. Among the proposed changes by the Task Force are restricting the parties who have standing to file lawsuits under the Act, instituting deadlines for environmental studies, limiting the alternatives that agencies must consider, amongst others. Task Force Chairperson Congresswoman Cathy McMorris (R-WA) has

announced that the task force will not propose legislation before receiving both member and public comments. The Task Force will accept additional public comments until February 6, 2006. The comments must be specific to the recommendations or findings of the report. For additional information on how to comment please see page 2 of the Task Force. For more information on how to submit comments and to see the report, visit <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov/nepataskforce.htm>

CONGRESSIONAL CALENDAR

109th Congress, 2nd Session, 2006 Legislative Schedule

January 18	Senate Convenes
January 31	House Convenes
February 20 - 24	Congress Not in Session
March 20 - March 24	Congress Not in Session
April 10 - April 23	Congress Not in Session
May 29 - June 2	Congress Not in Session
July 3 - July 7	Congress Not in Session
July 31 - September 1	Congress Not in Session
October 6	Target Adjournment

For the House schedule, visit www.house.gov/house/2005_House_Calendar.shtml

For the Senate schedule, visit www.senate.gov/pagelayout/legislative/two_column_table/2006_Schedule.htm

FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

ROADLESS AREAS

The Forest Service has issued an interim directive that limits roadbuilding, logging, and other development in inventoried roadless areas in national forests. The interim directive, which will expire on July 16, 2007, is meant to give states time to consider petitioning the Department of Agriculture (USDA) for permanent protection of roadless lands. The Bush administration's roadless rule allows governors to nominate inventoried roadless areas for continued protection. If the Secretary of Agriculture accepts the petition, the USDA and the state would work together to create a state-specific rule, which would then be subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

To view the interim directive, visit www.fs.fed.us/im/directives/fsm/1900/id_1920-2006-1.doc.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION

On November 28, 2005, Joshua Bolten, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and James Connaughton, Chairman of the President's Council on Environmental Quality, issued a policy memo on environmental conflict resolution (ECR). The statement directs agencies to increase the effective use of ECR and to build their institutional capacity for collaborative problem solving. The statement includes a definition of ECR, a description of basic principles for agency engagement, and a list of strategies that may be used to reach policy objectives.

For more information, visit www.ecr.gov/n_pos200512.htm. To download a copy of the memorandum, visit www.ecr.gov/ombceq.htm.

NEW LEADERSHIP AT DOI

Interior Secretary Gale Norton named Matthew J. Hogan as a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks. Hogan will serve in the capacity of Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks until President Bush nominates and the Senate confirms a successor to Craig Manson. Hogan served as Deputy Director for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the past four years.

To read the DOI press release, visit www.doi.gov/news/06_News_Releases/060119.htm.

BLM HERBICIDE USE

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced that it is extending until February 10, 2006 the public comment period on its proposed methods for treating and managing vegetation on the public lands that it manages. The public comment period had originally been slated to close on January 9, 2006. The public is invited to comment on the BLM's environmental analysis of proposed vegetation treatments, which are aimed at controlling the spread of noxious and invasive plants on BLM-managed lands in the West.

To read the BLM press release, visit www.blm.gov/nhp/news/releases/pages/2006/pr060109_eis.htm

To read the documents under review, visit www.blm.gov/nhp/spotlight/VegEIS/

BLM NEPA REVISIONS

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has published a set of draft revisions to Chapter 11 of the Department of the Interior's Departmental Manual, which guides the agency's implementation of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The proposed revisions, which appeared in the Federal Register on January 25, 2006, include 11 new categorical exclusions, some of which relate to post-disturbance logging. Three of the proposed exclusions are identical to current Forest Service exclusions that were included in the Healthy Forests Initiative. Public comments on the proposal will be accepted until February 24, 2006.

To read the BLM press release, visit
www.blm.gov/nhp/news/releases/pages/2006/pr060125_nepa.htm.

To read the draft revisions, visit
<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20061800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2006/E6-775.htm>

OTHER NATIONAL NEWS

POST-FIRE LOGGING

According to a recent study conducted by researchers at Oregon State University (OSU), some forests are better left to recover on their own following fires instead of logging or replanting them. The researchers, who studied the aftermath of Oregon's Biscuit Fire in 2002, found that cutting down dead trees killed more than two-thirds of the seedlings and left more wood on the ground to fuel future fires. The study, which was published in the journal *Science*, generated some controversy at OSU, where several faculty members voiced their opposition to the authors' findings.

For more information, see www.csmonitor.com/2006/0110/p02s02-sten.html or www.oregonlive.com/newsflash/regional/index.ssf?/base/news-13/1138351142122030.xml&storylist=orlocal.

FSC-CERTIFIED FORESTLANDS in the U.S.

The total area of forestland in the U.S. under Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification has increased dramatically, as Scientific Certification Systems has completed its assessments of 3.75 million acres of Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) forestlands and 4.8 million acres of Minnesota DNR forestlands. Like other multi-use forestlands, the Minnesota and Michigan DNRs must balance the sometimes-conflicting goals of protecting forestland while supporting economic and recreational opportunities. By engaging in this voluntary certification process, both DNRs submitted to third-party examination of their forest management practices.

For more information, see www.greenbiz.com/news/news_third.cfm?NewsID=30151.

CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS & OTHER EVENTS

Forest Landowner Conference, February 11, 2006, Erie, PA. Participants in this conference will learn about trees and shrubs; explore different woodland management options; receive valuable updates on diseases and insects; and network with forestry professionals and other woodland owners. To register or get more information, contact Warren County Cooperative Extension at (814) 563-9388 or see www.cas.psu.edu/cgi-bin/calcium.pl?CalendarName=RNR&Date=2006%2F2%2F1&Op=ShowIt&NavType=Absolute&Amount=Month&Type=List.

Managing Forestlands Sustainably: Workshops in Ecological Forestry, February 13-16, 2006, Newton, GA. This three-day course is designed for public, for-profit, and non-profit private organizations that have an interest in managing southeastern fire-maintained woodlands for multiple objectives including timber harvesting, wildlife enhancement, and sustaining or restoring native diversity. The course will involve a mixture of classroom and field-based teaching approaches. For more information, contact Kevin McIntyre at (229) 734-4706 or Kevin.McIntyre@jonesctr.org or see www.osiny.org/conservationforestry/ga_forestry.htm.

Community Tree Leadership Forum, February 27-March 1, 2006, Nebraska City, NE. A 2 ½ day training focused on strengthening non-profit organizations dedicated to urban and community forestry. Six core modules: Individual gifts and grantwriting, marketing urban forestry, advocacy, and public policy for urban forests, collaboration & partnership, volunteer management, and standards of excellence and accountability. The conference is free, sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service. For more information, contact the Arbor Day Foundation at (402) 474-5655 or email conferences@arborday.org.

Southwest Partnership Event, March 21-22, 2006, Sedona, AZ. The second annual Southwest Partnership Event will be held in Sedona, AZ. This two-day event is an opportunity for Forest Service employees, partners, and potential partners to discuss common interests, explore successful partnerships, and develop new partnerships. Dale Robertson, retired Forest Service Chief, will be a keynote speaker. To review the agenda and register for the event, visit www.fs.fed.us/r3/partnerships/.

Helping the Wood Products Industry Profit from the Next 10 Years, April 11-12, 2006, Princeton, WV. The domestic wood products industry currently faces significant challenges, which have been magnified by rising foreign competition and related economic impacts on the primary and secondary sectors of the hardwood industry in the Eastern United States. The USDA Forest Service, Wood Education and Resource Center (WERC) and Dovetail Partners are offering a workshop to help the industry constructively respond to these challenges. The workshop will include presentations from innovators in the industry with examples of implementation of strategic thinking and repositioning, new leadership models, mass customization, LEAN manufacturing, and other approaches. For more information, contact Dovetail Partners at (651) 762-4007 or info@dovetailinc.org or see www.dovetailinc.org/wercworkshop.html

OPPORTUNITIES

- **Sudden Oak Death** monies are available from the USDA Forest Service. Proposals are due February 24. Contact sfrankel@fs.fed.us or www.fs.fed.us/psw/programs/sod/.
- **The Timber Harvesting and Transportation Safety Foundation**, a part of the Forest Resources Association, has announced its 2006 grant program. Grant money will be awarded to fund the development of training materials for use in workshops that seek to improve logging and transportation safety. The minimum 2006 grand award will be \$500; the maximum will be \$5,000. Special projects that merit consideration at a higher

level will also be considered. **Proposals are due March 1, 2006.** For more information, contact Steve Jarvis of the Forest Resources Association at sjarvis@forestresources.org.

- Through its **Wilderness Stewardship Challenge**, the **National Forest Foundation** will provide matching grants of up to \$50,000 to nonprofit partners to implement ecosystem restoration projects that directly benefit Wilderness Areas in the National Forest System. **Proposals are due March 3, 2006;** decisions will be made in April. For more information, visit www.natlforests.org/wilderness_stewardship_info.html.
- USDA's **Natural Resource Conservation Service** is making available \$38 million in grant money for cooperative conservation projects. State and local governments, non-governmental organizations, tribes, and individuals may apply for the following grants:
 - **Cooperative Conservation Partnerships – proposals due March 7, 2006**
(www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ccpi/)
 - **Conservation Innovation Grants – proposals due March 20, 2006**
(www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/index.html)
- **The National Forest Foundation's Community Assistance Program** is accepting applications from newly forming organizations for grants of \$5,000 to \$15,000. Funds may be used to cover a variety of needs, including basic start-up and operating costs, materials and equipment, technical assistance, training, community outreach, obtaining 501(c)(3) status, program development, nonprofit management skill-building, and communications. **Proposals are due April 28, 2006;** decisions will be made in June. For more information, visit www.natlforests.org/consp_05_cap.html.

RESOURCES

The following is a list of items—Web sites, books, reports, etc.—that have come across our desks over the past month and that we thought you might find useful or interesting. Have a look!

ARTICLES

- The Forest Service has issued two documents that are meant to help forest landowners file their taxes this year. One document, which features a list of frequently asked questions, examines the most common situations that taxpayers face when calculating Federal income tax on their timber holdings. The second document provides a list of tax tips for forest landowners.
 - Download the FAQ's at www.na.fs.fed.us/stewardship/pubs/FITOT2005.pdf
 - Download the tax tips at http://sref.info/news_items/newsitem_12.15.2005

REPORTS

- The Northwest Environmental Forum has published a report titled **“Ecosystem Services Markets.”** The term "ecosystem services" refers to indirect ecosystem functions such as water purification, flood control, carbon sequestration, climate regulation, and soil and nutrient cycling, as well as recreation or aesthetics-associated tourism. The paper reviews examples of existing markets for ecosystem services in the United States and internationally, focusing on forestlands.

Download the report at

www.nwenvironmentalforum.org/ForestForum/topicpapers/tp12.pdf

- The Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences has announced a new report that documents the impact of changes in timberland ownership in the Northeastern United States. The report, titled **“Changing Forestland Ownership Patterns in the Northern Forest and Implications for Biodiversity”** looks at the impact of ownership changes on biodiversity and implications for sustainable forestry across Northern New York, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine. To download the report, visit www.manomet.org/pdf/ForestOwnerChangeReport.pdf

- Catherine Mater, a Senior Fellow at the Pinchot Institute for Conservation, has written an article, titled **“The New Generation of Private Forest Landowners: Brace for Change,”** that describes her recent research on the interests and motivations of the offspring of current forest landowners.

To download the article, visit

www.pinchot.org/publications/pinchot_letter/winter_2005.pdf.

To download a PowerPoint presentation that explains some of the study’s findings, visit

www.pinchot.org/policy_change/offspring_presentation_2005.pdf.

BOOKLET

- WoodWorks and Cooperative Development Services have published a 12-page booklet titled **“A Farmer's Guide to Woodland Management.”** The purpose of the booklet is to help woodland owners manage their woods sustainably. Among other things, the booklet explains how to recognize the value of your woodlot, know when to hire a forester, profit from do-it-yourself logging, and benefit from involvement with other woodland owners.

To download a copy of the booklet, visit

www.cdsus.coop/farmers_guide_to_forestry.pdf.

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.

To sign up for The Pinchot Institute's quarterly publication, *The Pinchot Letter*, send an email request to subscribe@pinchot.org. The document is available both electronically and in hard-copy format.

GENERAL RESOURCES

American Forests. Visit their website at www.americanforests.org

Communities Committee of the Seventh American Forest Congress. Visit their website at www.communitiescommittee.org

National Network of Forest Practitioners. Visit their website at www.nnfp.org

Pinchot Institute for Conservation. Visit their website at 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

CONTACT INFORMATION

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

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

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