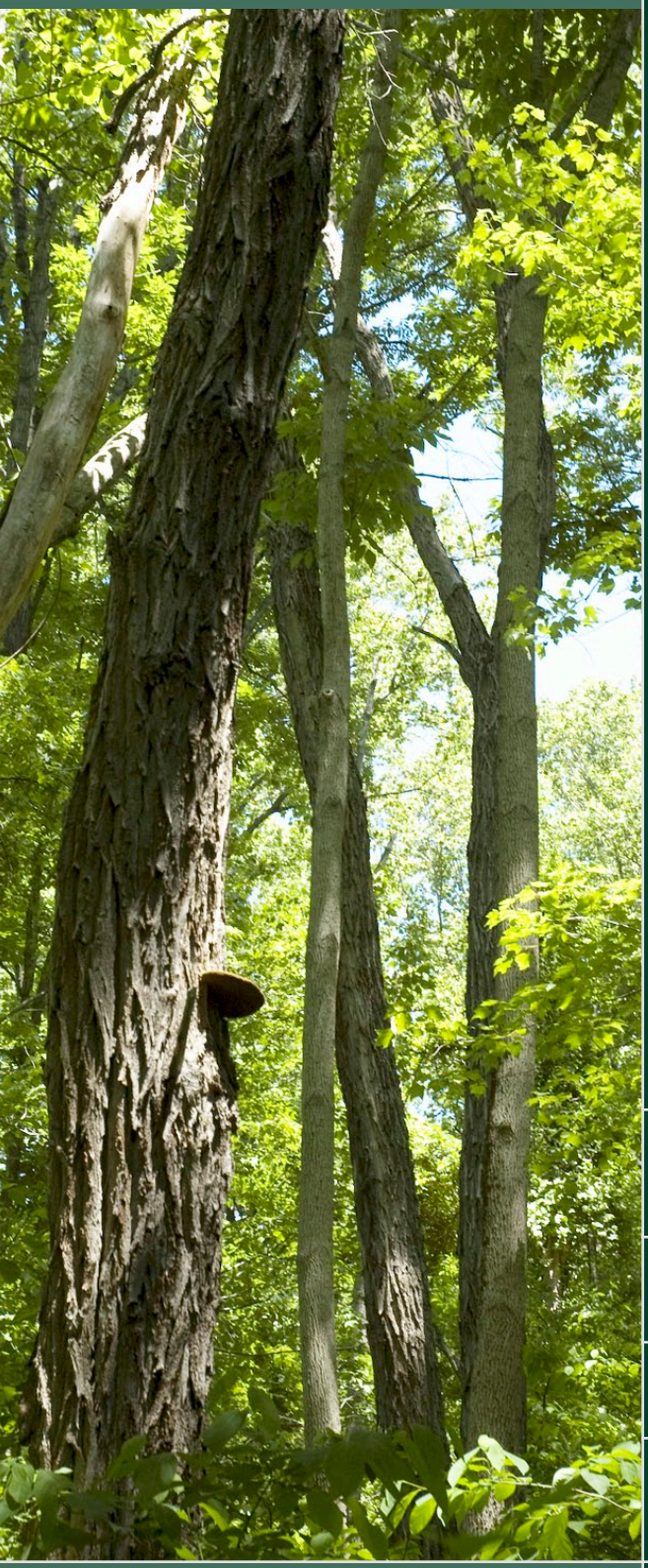

The Year in Forestry

State and Private Forestry in the Northeast and Midwest

Fiscal Year 2007

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

Northeastern Area
State and Private Forestry
Newtown Square, PA 19073

NA-IN-02-08A

August 2008

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary 1

Introduction 5

About the Northeastern Area 6

- The Forests We Care For and the People We Serve 6
- Mission and Vision 8
- Criteria and Indicators of Forest Sustainability 8
- Strategic Plan 9
  - Goals and Objectives 9
  - Management Principles 9

Fiscal Year 2007 Program Accomplishments 10

- Strategic Plan Goal 1: Promote Sustainable Forest Management 10
  - Forest Legacy Program 10
  - Grey Towers National Historic Site 12
  - Landowner Assistance Programs 14
  - Forest Health Protection Program 17
  - Watershed Forestry Program 21
- Strategic Plan Goal 2: Enhance the Capacity of Forests to Provide Public Benefits 24
  - Urban and Community Forestry Program 24
  - Wood Education and Resource Center 27
  - Cooperative Fire Protection Program 29
  - U.S. Army Environmental Center 31

Strategic Business Plan for Fiscal Year 2008 32

Appendix 33

- A. Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry (NA) Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives with Sustainability Indicators Adopted by the Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters (NAASF) 33
- B. Program Investments 34

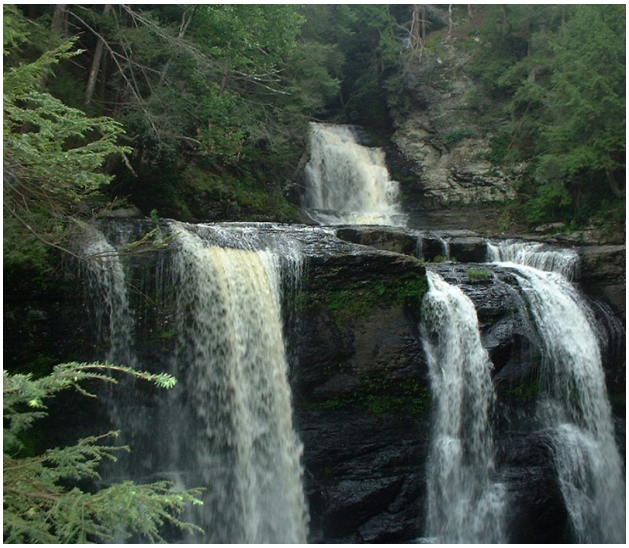
Executive Summary

The Forests We Care For and the People We Serve

The Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry (NA), a unit of the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, covers a 20-State region and the District of Columbia. The region is home to 41 percent of the nation's people and 23 percent of its forests. Private landowners hold nearly 130 million acres, including forest land owned by almost 5 million family forest land owners.

Overall, Northeast and Midwest forests are healthy and productive. The landscape continues to produce more forest growth than the amount harvested. Most of the region's plants and animals are thriving, and key tracts of important forest land are being permanently protected for environmental benefits. Nearly 600,000 people work at jobs directly connected to forests.

Millions of acres of State and private forest land provide public benefits that citizens and visitors alike depend upon. These forests protect drinking water and provide recreational opportunities, forest products, cleaner air, and the chance to encounter wildlife. Many of these forest benefits are irreplaceable, yet nearly 3.8 million acres of forest were lost to development between 1982 and 1997, with another 12 million acres projected to be lost by the year 2030.



Our Accomplishments

The Northeastern Area's mission is to encourage and support sustainable management of the region's non-Federal forest land. In Fiscal Year 2007, the Northeastern Area and its State partners supported management and protection activities on an additional three quarters of a million acres of private and State forest land. In addition, programs provided education, technical assistance, and financial assistance that influenced the management of millions of acres more in rural forests and communities.

Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Selected Program Accomplishments Fiscal Year 2007	
Stewardship plans prepared	9,076
Acres under new or revised stewardship plans	728,365
Acres under stewardship plans (all years)	7,296,241
Technical assists to landowners	53,202
Acres owned by landowners receiving educational services	6,444,521
Rural fire departments assisted	3,305
Communities assisted--State fire assistance (includes National Fire Plan)	11,513
Acres surveyed for forest health	233,892,851
Communities involved in Urban and Community Forestry programs	3,525
Population in communities with active Urban Forestry programs	71,586,661
Per capita program cost in assisted communities	$0.09

The cornerstones of these programs are expert knowledge and analysis, scientific information, fruitful partnerships with States and other cooperators, and a focus on value for every Federal dollar invested. Competitive grants are typically matched on at least a one-to-one basis.

Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry On-the-Ground Accomplishments Fiscal Year 2007		
Program	**Activity** [1]	**Acres** [2]
Fire	Fuels reduction in the wildland-urban interface	92,900
Fire	Management on military lands; U.S. Army Environmental Center	25,000
Forest Legacy	Permanent protection	68,900
Forest Health	Pest treatments	525,000
Watershed	Permanent protection	2,200
Watershed	Riparian buffers	5,000
Total		719,000

[1] Does not include surveys, inventories, or technical assistance, which would add more than 235 million acres to the total.

[2] Rounded to nearest 100.

Many examples of successful cooperative efforts to protect and restore forests stretch across the Northeast and Midwest, often from work occurring over a number of years. The Forest Legacy Program, which helps States and other partners acquire important forest land or conservation easements from willing sellers, has helped to permanently protect more than 1 million acres since it began a little more than a decade ago. The Federal cost has averaged just 48 percent of the property's value over the life of the program, well under the 75 percent stipulated by regulation. These acquisitions would not have been possible without the cooperation of hundreds of conservation-minded organizations and citizens.

Urban and community trees are vital to the economic, social, and environmental health of cities and towns. They sequester carbon, reduce air pollution and storm water runoff, and conserve energy—"environmental services" worth hundreds of millions of dollars. In Fiscal Year 2007, more than 74 percent of the region's population benefited from Urban and Community Forestry Program services. After hearing about a U.S. Forest Service study that pegged the annual environmental value of New York City's trees at more than $122 million, Mayor Bloomberg announced a goal to plant 1 million new trees over the next decade.

The following table illustrates accomplishments and shows some of the ways that programs benefit the region.

Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Sample Activities and Benefits				
Program	**Program Investments** *(millions)*	**Challenge or opportunity**	**Sample activities**	**Sample results and benefits**
Urban and Community Forestry	$10.3 in FY 2007 $10.5 in FY 2006 $10.9 in FY 2005	9,066 communities potentially eligible* 121 million citizens in 20 States and DC	Assisted 3,525 communities Volunteers contributed 491,000 days of service Served communities with 74% of population in Northeast and Midwest	NYC's trees provide $122 million in environmental services yearly. Several mayors, including Bloomberg, launched tree-planting and canopy cover initiatives for conservation and reduction of carbon dioxide and particulates
Fire Management (Cooperative Fire Protection and National Fire Plan)	$21.1 in FY 2007 $20.1 in FY 2006 $18.1 in FY 2005	62.8 million acres in wildland-urban interface 15,138 volunteer fire departments 11,323 communities potentially eligible**	Prescribed fires on 90,100 acres in wildland-urban interface; mechanical treatment: 2,805 acres (National Fire Plan) 3,305 departments assisted 13,490 trained in Incident Command System	Dramatic reduction in wildfire risk with treatments in wildland-urban interface Enhanced rapid by volunteer fire departments Fire/disaster preparedness enhanced
Forest Health Management	$28.0 in FY 2007 $26.8 in FY 2006 $25.4 in FY 2005	234 million forest acres Asian longhorned beetle Emerald ash borer (EAB) Hemlock woolly adelgid Gypsy moth Sudden oak death	Detected new EAB infestations in Pennsylvania and West Virginia Risk mapping completed in all 20 States Supported invasive insect or disease treatment on 524,572 acres Worked with USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to develop and release potential biocontrol for Sirex woodwasp	Slowing the spread is three times more cost-effective than monitoring and treating infested areas Virginia EAB spot infestation eradicated Risk maps help managers set priorities for monitoring and treatment, and predicting spread of forest pests Developed promising natural control for Sirex, which threatens U.S. pine species planted worldwide
Forest Stewardship	$15.1 in FY 2007 $12.1 in FY 2006 $11.5 in FY 2005	Number of potentially eligible landowners: 3.9 million Potentially eligible acres: 114.8 million	All 20 States have completed Statewide spatial analysis assessments for air, water, forest, stewardship property Stewardship plans written for 737,000 acres	States can identify, map, and serve high-priority natural resources Nearly a third of acres served—over 234,300 acres—were in priority areas Stewardship plans, studies say, lead to better environmental outcomes
Forest Legacy	$23.3 in FY 2007 $29.0 in FY 2006 $27.6 in FY 2005	3.7 million forest acres converted to non-forest uses or lost to development between 1982 and 1997	Conservation easements or fee purchases completed on nearly 69,000 acres	Protected values include critical wetlands in Vermont, protection of Appalachian trail section in Maine, and drinking water in New York

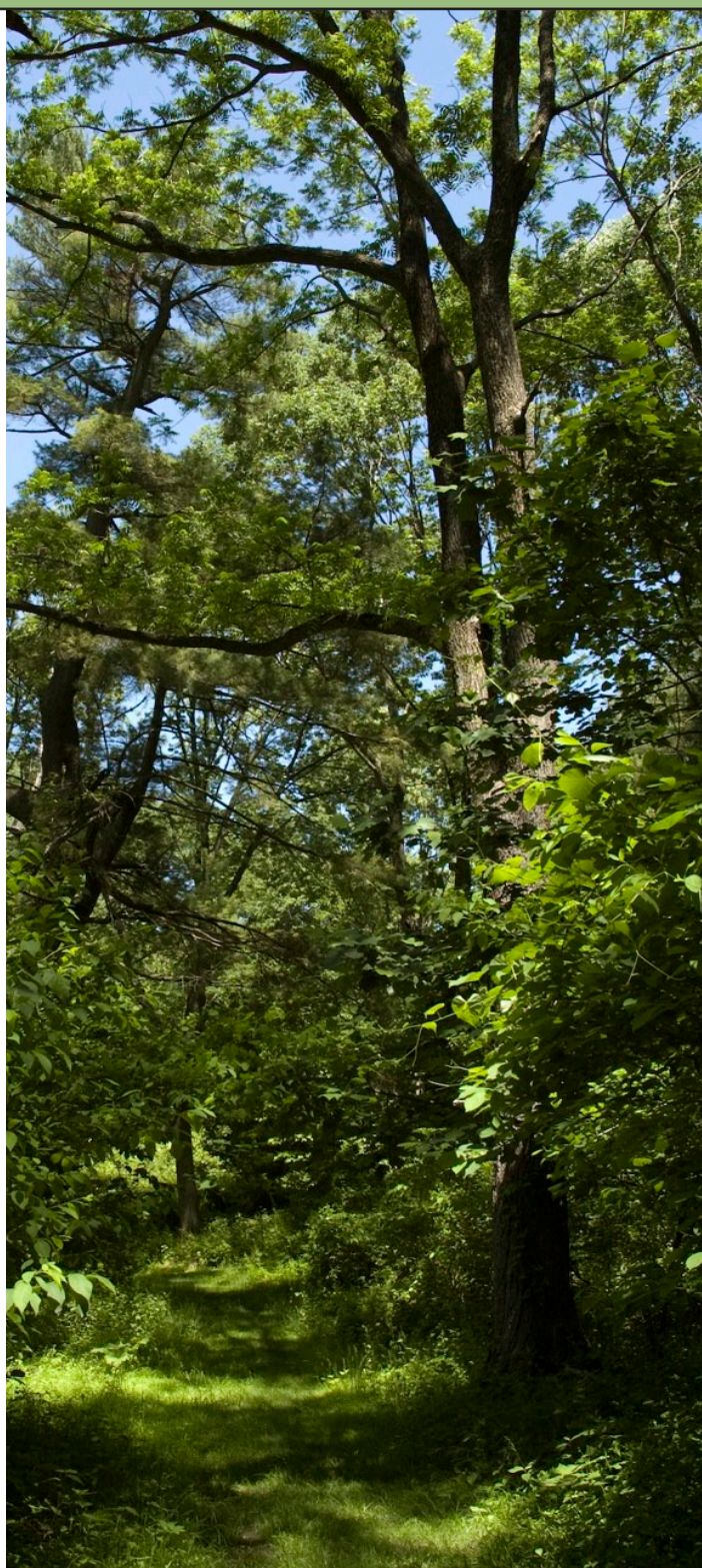
* Communities with population over 1,000.
** Includes communities with population under 1,000 and unincorporated places.

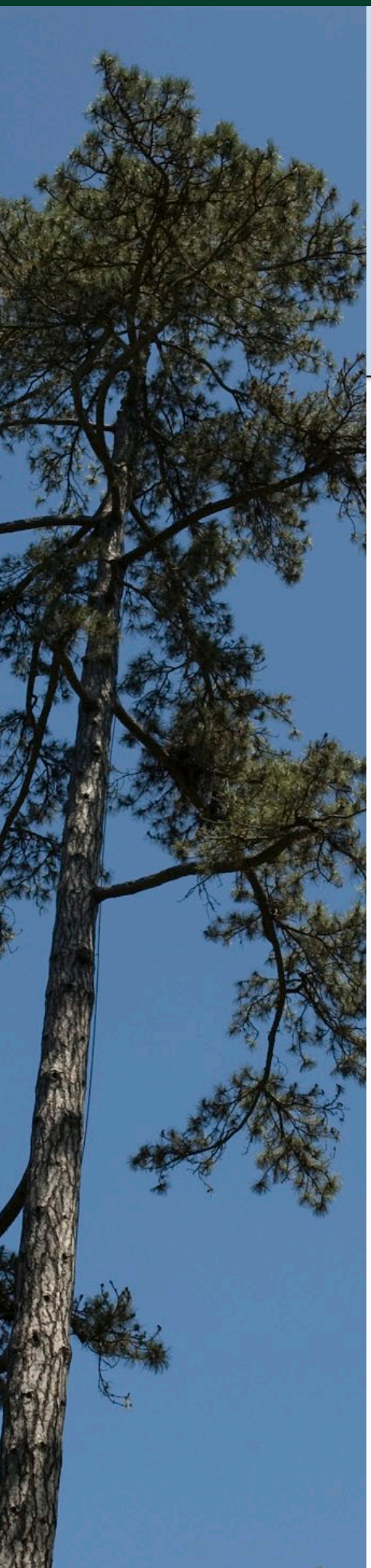
Introduction

To truly appreciate the accomplishments of an organization, it is necessary to know the context in which it operates. The first part of this annual report for the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry describes the context for its 2007 accomplishments. Included are background on the population and natural resources in the region; challenges to the sustainability of those resources; international criteria and indicators of forest sustainability; and how the Northeastern Area's mission, vision, and strategic plan address them.

The second part of this report describes key accomplishments in 2007, by strategic plan goals and specific programs.

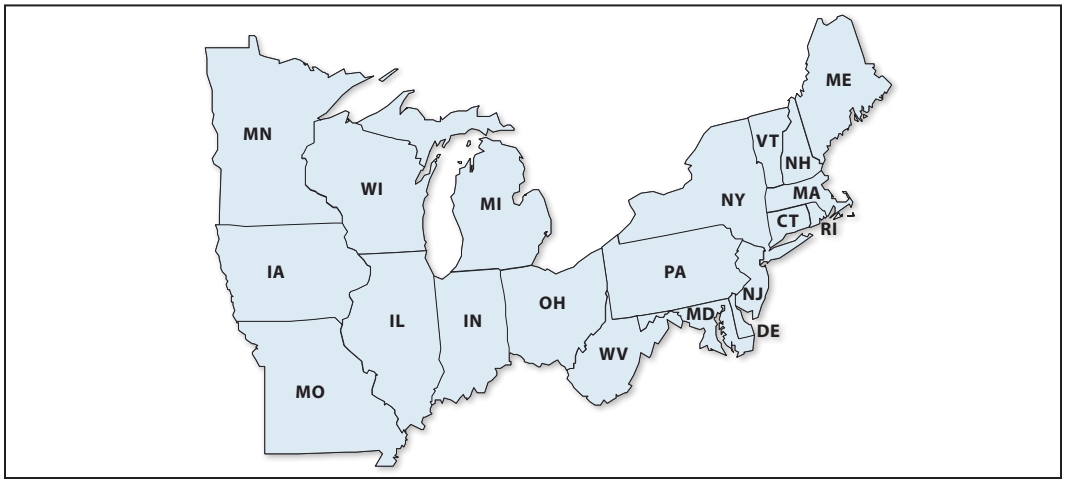
Finally, this report introduces the Northeastern Area's Strategic Business Plan for Fiscal Year 2008.





About the Northeastern Area

The Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry is a unit of the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Northeastern Area (NA) works in partnership with State forestry agencies, Tribal governments, and other public and private entities to influence sustainable management, protection, and use of urban and rural natural resources. Programs enhance air and water quality, protect communities and forests from wildfire, and contribute to the overall quality of life. Matching contributions from partners and from thousands of volunteers add millions to the dollar value of Federal investments. The headquarters office is located near Philadelphia, PA.



The Northeastern Area's role is to …

- Provide financial support and professional expertise to private forest landowners, nonprofit groups, tribal nations, communities, and States.
- Protect and enhance forest health on both Federal and non-Federal forest lands.

The Forests We Care For and the People We Serve

The Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry serves a 20-state region and the District of Columbia, which are home to 41 percent of the nation's people and 23 percent of its forests. The region has a rich economic and cultural history that is closely tied to its natural resources. Native Americans lived in balance with the region's lush forests, pristine waters, and abundant wildlife for thousands of years. When Europeans arrived, they came in part for the rich natural resources long depleted from their home countries. They cleared land for farming and grazing, shipping millions of logs back to Europe. Sawmills and factories sprung up along the region's rivers.

Northeast and Midwest Forests: Fast Facts

Acres of forest land	172,039,000
Acres of family forest	93,866,000
Family forest owners	4,785,000
Forest-based employment*	584,000

*Does not include related businesses such as ecotourism.

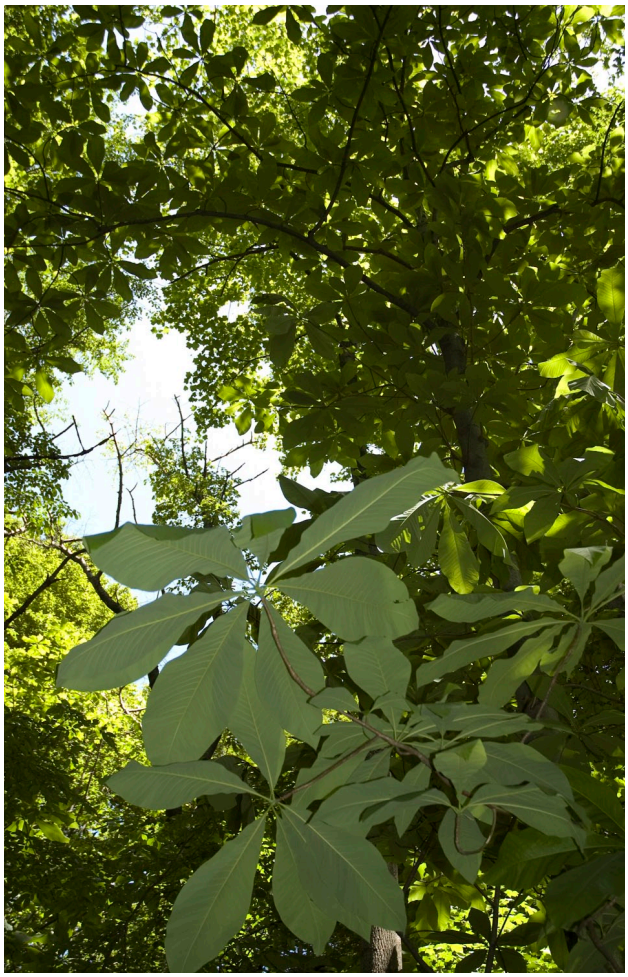
By the late 1800s, conservation-minded citizens realized that the nation's natural resources were in peril. Around the turn of the 20th century, the Federal government created the Division of Forestry (now Forest Service) in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, whose first Chief, Gifford Pinchot**,** hired a cadre of foresters to travel the country urging landowners to adopt sound forestry practices. States created forestry agencies, many formed initially to quell devastating wildfires that plagued the region.

During most of the last century, the country gained forested acres, primarily due to the abandonment of agricultural lands. Now, the amount of forest land is beginning to decline because of development and land use change, in some locales at an alarming pace. Nearly 3.8 million acres of forest were developed between 1982 and 1997. According to projections, another 12 million acres could be converted by the year 2030. With baby boomers nearing retirement and their parents reaching old age, what will happen to their land? Will they and their heirs resist the siren call of developers and high land prices? In a region with about 74 percent of its forest lands in private ownership, some 130 million acres, this is a critical question. The publication, A Snapshot of the Northeastern Forests, contains more information about the region's forests.

Strong action is needed to conserve forest resources. In addition to forest loss, development causes *fragmentation,* a patchwork of ever-smaller forest parcels intermixed with developed land. Small, isolated parcels have less value for wildlife habitat, water protection, and other environmental benefits. Foreign insects and diseases are reaching the United States with increasing regularity. Some could potentially eliminate entire species of trees. Wildfires are placing lives and property at greater risk as development edges into rural lands, creating a danger zone called the rural-urban interface. Cheaper foreign wood, much of it harvested by low-income workers, and with few environmental controls, is driving domestic companies out of business and limiting income that many landowners need to properly manage their forests. Global climate change poses an unprecedented threat: one can only speculate about the forest that will exist 100 years from now.

Mission: Lead and help to support sustainable forest management and use across the landscape to provide benefits for the people of the 20 Northeastern and Midwestern States and the District of Columbia.

Vision: We will make principled decisions that help sustain natural resources and maintain public trust. We will honor existing partnerships and nurture new relationships dedicated to the needs of society and the land.



Mission and Vision

The Northeastern Area is committed to promoting and enhancing forest sustainability. Three factors are likely to constrain the ability to deliver mission-critical services in the foreseeable future:

- **The Northeast and Midwest's population will continue to grow, expanding into forestland adjacent to communities.**

  By 2050, the region's population is expected to top 137 million. Areas with a population density of at least 500 people per square mile are projected to increase by 133 percent.

- **The Federal Government's capacity to provide public services will decline as statutory obligations increase.**

  The Government Accountability Office (GAO) projects that Federal spending for obligations such as Social Security and interest on the national debt will exceed today's *total* Government spending in just 30 years. Funding for most discretionary public services, including natural resources, is likely to decline.

- **Most of the conditions contributing to global climate change will remain, dramatically altering forest landscapes.**

  Widespread ecological impacts on Northeast and Midwest forests are likely; some 42 percent of existing forest communities will be affected by mid-century.

Criteria and Indicators of Forest Sustainability

In 1995, scientists, foresters, and environmentalists from 12 nations developed 7 criteria and 67 indicators of forest sustainability for temperate and boreal forests. Sustainability means the ability to meet today's needs without sacrificing the needs of future generations. The Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters and the Northeastern Area jointly adopted the 7 criteria and selected 18 indicators to monitor conditions in the Northeast and Midwest. Information is collected and will be available on line and analyzed regionally every 5 years. The criteria and indicators are included in Appendix A.

Strategic Plan

During Fiscal Year 2007, Northeastern Area leaders updated the strategic plan, setting direction for 2008 to 2012. Each goal, objective, and strategy in the plan was developed with clear links to the criteria and indicators. The Strategic Plan Update contains two goals and three management principles.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1—Promote sustainable forest management. Goal 1 sets four strategic objectives to reduce forest fragmentation, support forest management, maintain sustainable timber harvests, reduce tree mortality from damaging agents, and protect and improve critical watersheds.

Goal 2—Enhance the capacity of forests to provide public benefits. Goal 2 includes four strategic objectives to help U.S. forestry sector businesses become more competitive in the marketplace, capitalize on woody biomass for energy, protect communities at risk from wildland fire, and improve the quality of life in metropolitan areas through tree and forest planning and management.

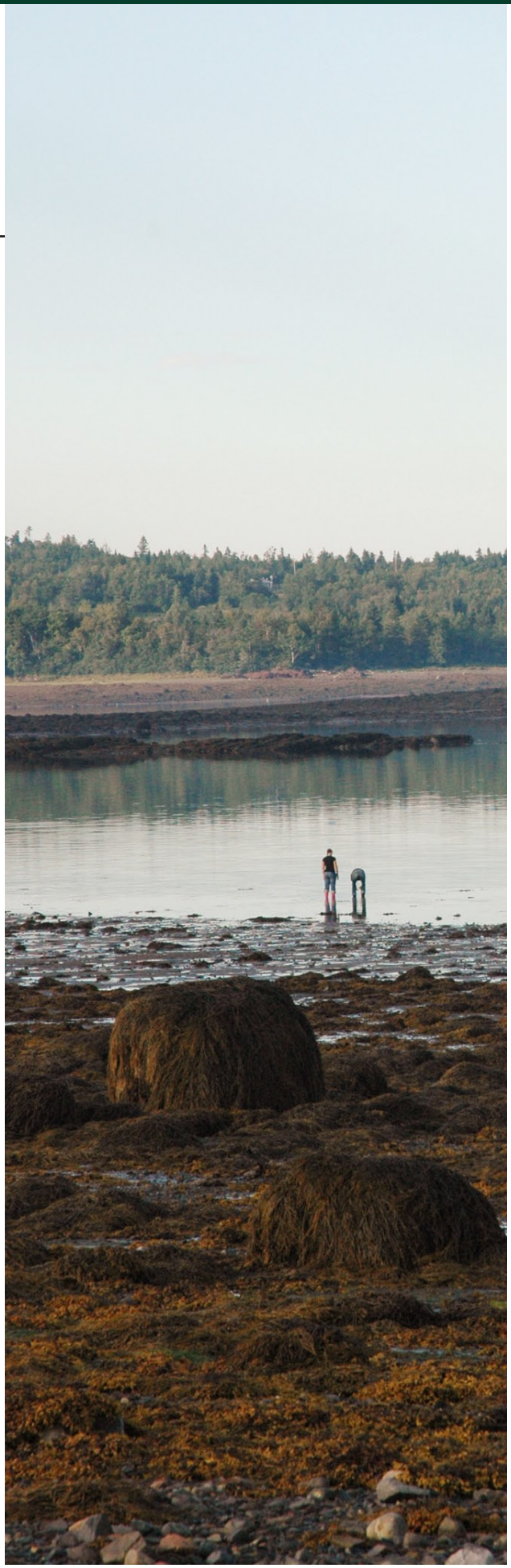
The goals and objectives are used to organize accomplishments in this report.

Management Principles

1. The Northeastern Area ensures that it has the right tools and right skills to continue to provide effective public service to partner organizations, through constant and consistent evaluation of its organizational capacity.

2. The Northeastern Area enlists the diversity of the American population to strengthen program delivery, and to promote and sustain a conservation ethic.

3. The Northeastern Area promotes public support for sustainably managed forests by building credibility and trust with its partners, cooperators, and stakeholders.



Fiscal Year 2007 Program Accomplishments

Northeastern Area programs are delivered in cooperation with States and other partners. Major program areas and selected accomplishments are summarized on the following pages, showing how they are related to the goals and objectives in the Strategic Plan Update, 2008-2012. For ease of reading, numbers in the text have been rounded. Northeastern Area investments in programs are shown in Appendix B.

Strategic Plan Goal 1: Promote Sustainable Forest Management

Forest Legacy Program

Strategic Plan Objective 1A: Conserve the biological diversity of high priority forestland at risk of conversion and fragmentation.

Description

Fragmentation and loss of forest land is threatening economic, environmental, and social well-being. Rising land values increase the cost to hold and manage land. Economic incentives for selling land are strong.

In concert with State and local governments, nonprofit groups, and willing landowners, the Forest Legacy Program protects important forests threatened by development. States that elect to join the program prepare an Assessment of Need (AON) and create Forest Legacy Areas—regions with important forests that are under particular threat. Federal, State, or local governments negotiate with willing landowners, buying the right to permanently restrict development. The Federal government may fund up to 75 percent of program costs; at least 25 percent comes from private, State, or local sources.

Most tracts are protected with conservation easements: landowners sell the right to develop the land, but continue to own, use, and pay taxes on its remaining value. Landowners develop and follow a Forest Stewardship Plan to ensure sustainable management. When owners prefer to sell their land outright, States or nonprofit groups usually take ownership.

Accomplishments

More than 1 million acres of important forest land in the Northeast and Midwest have been conserved since the Forest Legacy Program began.

In Fiscal Year 2007, conservation easements or fee acquisitions were completed on 24 tracts in 12 States, totaling nearly 69,000 acres. The Federal cost was just over $23 million, well below the required 75 percent maximum. Highlights of the year's acquisitions include these:

- Delaware: A 330-acre fee purchase will be added to the Redden State Forest to maintain one of the state's last remaining large blocks of forest land.
- Indiana: A tract of almost 1,400 acres was protected, adding to other protected parcels to conserve more than 2,300 acres of important watershed and cultural resources.
- Iowa: A 140-acre central hardwood forest protects the north fork of the Maquoketa River and borders Searyl's Cave State Preserve in eastern Iowa.
- Massachusetts: The State's effort to protect critical open space got a big boost: Five Forest Legacy projects totaling over 500 acres were completed across Worcester County. The protected land safeguards watershed and forest upland that also contribute to scenic vistas.
- Maine: The State protected close to 41,000 acres along the Appalachian Trail or within its view. The land will continue to be managed for forest uses, protecting the trail and user experiences.
- Minnesota: Three tracts totaling more than 2,400 acres were protected, one by the new Minnesota Forest Legacy Partnership, a public-private coalition formed to keep the State's Northwoods intact. The project was the group's first.
- New Jersey: An appraisal that met Federal standards was the final hurdle for a project that closed several years ago with loaned State funds. The tract will enhance water quality in streams and wetlands and preserve wildlife habitat for State threatened and endangered species.
- New Hampshire: Two tracts totaling over 900 acres were protected. One is close to Concord, the State capital, offering a remote experience to residents of a highly populated area.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP)
Completed Projects, Fiscal Year 2007

State	Acres protected	Value of interests	FLP payment
Delaware	328	5,200,000	2,956,000
Indiana	1,363	1,205,000	1,040,000
Iowa	215	271,000	87,000
Maine	40,688	12,720,000	6,434,000
Massachusetts	518	1,817,000	915,000
Minnesota	2,427	2,520,000	1,115,000
New Hampshire	924	3,220,000	2,512,000
New Jersey	1,200	1,440,000	1,440,000
Pennsylvania	1,91	4,016,000	2,216,000
Rhode Island	101	570,000	498,000
Vermont	1,418	1,002,000	772,000
Wisconsin	18,511	9,180,000	3,056,000
Total	**68,884**	**$43,161,000**	**$23,041,000**

Trees provide critical ecological services to cities, cooling and filtering polluted air and stormwater, and capturing particulate matter.

- New York: A complex negotiation for a 31,000-acre conservation easement met program standards in 2007. The easement protects important wildlife habitat and drinking water supplies for several communities, including Rome and Oneida. Public access and sustainable management of quality timber will continue.
- Pennsylvania: The State's first completed Forest Legacy project is almost 1,200 acres owned by the descendents of Gifford Pinchot, the first Chief of the U.S. Forest Service and the "Father of American Forestry."
- Rhode Island: A project of over 100 acres protects forest land along a ridge visible from as far away as Massachusetts and the waters of the Sakonnett River and Narragansett Bay.
- Vermont: Two projects closed totaling more than 1,400 acres. One is an important 400-acre wetland in the northern part of the State. The other links two State ownerships in the middle of the State, encompassing timber land and ecologically important areas.
- Wisconsin: An extensive conservation easement transferred to the State will buffer the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, and the Wolf River State Fisheries Area, and contain portions of the National Scenic Ice Age Trail.

Grey Towers National Historic Site

Strategic Plan Objective 1B: Sustain the productive capacity of privately owned forest land

Description

Grey Towers National Historic Site, set on 102 acres in Milford, Pennsylvania, was the home of Gifford Pinchot, founder of the U.S. Forest Service and its first chief. The Pinchot family donated the French chateau mansion to the public, and President John F. Kennedy dedicated it as a national asset.

As the first and only national historic site administered by the U.S. Forest Service, Grey Towers has unique historic and physical features that make it ideal for promoting conservation and the Pinchot legacy. With the help of public and private partnerships, Grey Towers offers education and interpretation, leadership development and conferencing, and historic preservation.

Accomplishments

Leadership and Conference Center

The Conference Center hosted 2,000 attendees, up 20 percent from last year. Streamlined business procedures and new programs, such as two leadership development programs called Leadership Legacy and Staff Officers, helped boost attendance. For time-challenged meeting-goers, the staff developed and offered a *Pinch of Pinchot*, a shorter version of programs about the Pinchot legacy.

The number of participants in non-Forest Supervisor Council programs rose by about a third, from 124 to 169. The Forest Service National Policy Seminar and Senior Leader Programs had successful sessions, and target audiences for Senior Leader Coach Training were expanded.

Grey Towers also hosted the second Edgar Brannon Fellow and hosted several details for Forest Service employees.

Interpretation and Conservation Education

- Educated 13,000 visitors about Pinchot's conservation legacy, a 13 percent increase from last year.
- Delivered conservation education programs to more than 1,700 children, including eight additional secondary education-level audiences.
- Leveraged resources by coordinating three programs with community initiatives to support regional tourism.
- Strengthened the James Pinchot Conservation and the Arts legacy, expanding programs to include photography, film, music, and landscape painting programs.
- Increased the number of public programs from 31 to 44, reaching 1,000 more visitors.
- Developed and delivered six new specialty tours on specific topics of interest.
- Improved visitor experiences by creating and displaying a variety of exhibits and placing historic photos in the museum and conference spaces.
- Held the third annual Festival of Wood, which garnered higher attendance, more partners, and greater Northeastern Area involvement. More than 3,000 people viewed sustainable forestry-themed exhibits, demonstrations, crafts, music, and children's programs.

Financial Improvements

- Raised contributions 21 percent to nearly $89,000 including nearly $65,000 for the Grey Towers Fund;
- Saved more than $15,000 by recruiting student interns directly from regional colleges and universities and expanding the volunteer program;

Grey Towers hosts the annual Festival of Wood.

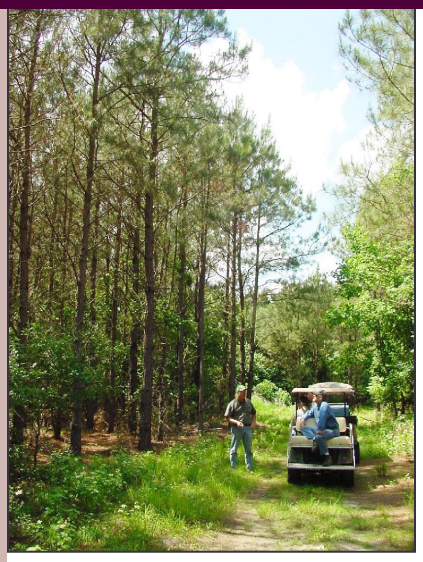
- Raised gross income from the Interpretive Tower Shop to over $20,000 in partnership with the Eastern National Forests Interpretive Association.

Partnerships

- Assisted community members with the start-up of a new support group, Grey Towers Heritage Association.
- Shared resources with the National Park Service, Delaware Water Gap, through a memorandum of understanding and operating agreement.
- Implemented the Mortimer Horticulture Internship, the Edgar Brannon Fellowship, and the Conservation History education program in partnership with the Pinchot Institute for Conservation.
- Strengthened relationships with regional arts and conservation organizations.
- Provided services and space for the New York – New Jersey Highlands Study Program and for Forest Service Information Technology operations.

Site Management, Facilities and Preservation

- Completed several improvements: utility upgrades, expansion of the deer fence, swimming pool terrace rehabilitation, and the final stage of the visitor services project.
- Made initial steps toward the "greening" of Grey Towers.
- Enhanced preservation and access to archives by cataloguing a large donation of Gifford Pinchot papers; inventorying and reorganizing archives; updating the historic library database; transcribing 50 percent of oral history interviews into electronic files; and digitally scanning historic exterior and interior photos of the mansion and outbuildings.



Landowner explains the timeline in his Stewardship plan for the loblolly pine stand.

Resource specialists completed new Forest Stewardship Plans on 737,000 acres, bringing the 10-year total to 7,296,241 acres under written plans.

Landowner Assistance Programs

Strategic Plan Objective 1B: Sustain the productive capacity of privately owned forest land

Description

The collective decisions of nearly 5 million private forest landowners directly influence the environment and quality of life. Private owners hold about 75 percent of forests in the Northeast and Midwest, compared with about 57 percent for the nation as a whole. Besides recreation, wood products, and wildlife habitat, the region's 170 million acres of forest offer other benefits: they protect drinking water quality, add oxygen to the atmosphere, and store carbon that would otherwise fuel global climate change. While some benefits could be provided from other sources at great economic cost, others are irreplaceable.

Many factors are placing forest values at risk: sprawling development, poor farming or logging practices, wildfires, invasive plants and animals, neglect, even well-intentioned but misguided land management.

Landowner Assistance Programs promote sound forestry on private lands. Two programs are available to assist private landowners: the Forest Stewardship Program and the Forest Land Enhancement Program.

The Forest Stewardship Program promotes forest management for multiple benefits. With guidance from professional foresters, landowners set management objectives and recommended actions in a Forest Stewardship Plan. Landowners who have these Plans leave twice the number of trees for tomorrow's forest, do a better job of enhancing wildlife habitat, and earn twice the income from timber sales when compared with landowners without plans.

Created under the 2002 Farm Bill, the Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP) offers educational, technical, and financial assistance to landowners for sustainable forest management. States develop a State Priority Plan, sharing up to 75 percent of the cost of activities such as thinning overgrown forests or improving wildlife habitat. Landowner interest in the program remains high.

Accomplishments

The Program staff, cooperating with States and other partners, is actively involved in maintaining, caring for, and protecting the region's forest resources.

Spatial Analysis Project (SAP)

Until recently, private landowners were assisted on a first-come, first-served basis. While many landowners and their forests benefited from services, it was difficult to target limited resources to forest landscapes in greatest need, or to assess the program's overall results. The GIS-based SAP is in its sixth year. States can now identify and map important forest lands, including tracts with Forest Stewardship Plans, allowing them to target resources to the most environmentally important areas.

Nearly a third of the total acres receiving landowner assistance were located in priority areas.

All 20 States served by the Northeastern Area have completed SAP Statewide assessments.

Twelve States have mapped the location of properties with Stewardship plans and have developed a database of Historic Stewardship Plans (those in existence and still current as of the mapping date). With this data, States can track and display Forest Stewardship Plans under development, where they are needed, and where and to what extent they are connected to one another. Seven more States are currently developing their Historic Stewardship Plan database.

SAP is changing the way States deliver the Forest Stewardship Program, set priorities, and staff their organizations. Several are using their statewide assessments to direct information to landowners in important forest resource areas, or those with high potential to benefit from Forest Stewardship Program services. One State reorganized its workforce to better align with high-need lands, using SAP results as one of the key criteria.

The Northeastern Area showcased a regional composite of the statewide assessments at a national SAP Summit poster session, receiving an award for Best Technical Information. At the end of Fiscal Year 2007, States served by the Northeastern Area were the only ones able to contribute to a regional report on Important Forest Resource Areas as defined in the Forest Stewardship Program National Standards and Guidelines, and per national Forest Stewardship Program performance requirements.

Web-Based Data Entry Tool (WebDET)

An outgrowth of the Spatial Analysis Project, WebDET is a national data entry and report writing application. A joint effort of the Northeastern Area and the Colorado State Forest Service, it will allow foresters to create electronic maps and Forest Stewardship Plans, maintain a standardized database, and report accomplishments via the Internet, without the need for desktop GIS software or software expertise.

National information resource specialists are managing the WebDET project in cooperation with Northeastern Area specialists and national program managers. In Fiscal Year 2007, WebDET moved to the U.S. Forest Service National Information Technology Center, where it was extensively tested. As one of the first major computer applications in the new U.S. Forest Service hosting environment, it is helping to hone agency information technology processes. WebDET's primary users are State forestry agencies and private consulting foresters rather than in-house users. As such, it is breaking new ground in the areas of security, access, and networking needs. WebDET is expected to be fully available to interested States in Fiscal Year 2008.

A desktop version of WebDET, WinDET was developed, tested, and released to users for final testing in September 2007. States that choose to use the product can write a Stewardship Plan, recording spatial and other attributes as it is approved and uploaded to WebDET.

Proper care of trees at an early age contributes to their long term viability.

Making a Difference on the Land

- Massachusetts, Iowa, and Delaware completed Pilot Stewardship Plan Monitoring projects. All States served by the Northeastern Area are expected to begin monitoring in 2008.
- Tree planting and other reforestation activities were completed on more than 100,000 acres, providing cleaner water and air, wildlife habitat, timber, and other values.
- Management activities enhanced more than 10,000 acres of wildlife habitat. Landowners created food plots, saved den trees, controlled deer damage, established shrubs to attract birds and other animals, and improved biodiversity.
- Landowners improved 40,000 acres of forests for timber production and completed professionally prescribed harvests on more than 148,000 acres.
- Private consultants handled more than 8,400 referrals to oversee timber sales, generating about $12.6 million ($1,500 per referral) in income.
- The Northeastern Area provided tax and estate planning information to more than 85 tax preparers, landowners, and professional foresters, saving landowners an average of $1,000 to $2,500 on their tax bills. As tax preparers and forestry consultants work with new and existing clients, total tax savings will continue to grow.

Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP)

Cost-share funds are an important motivator for some private landowners who otherwise could not meet their objectives. Landowners responded strongly to the availability of FLEP cost-share funds, receiving payments of more than $2.1 million for completed work. Projects included creating forest management plans on more than 62,000 acres and completing forest stand improvement on almost 19,000 acres.

Fragmentation, Parcelization and Intergenerational Land Transfer

Forestland is often subdivided and developed as it passes from one generation to the next. This is a significant problem because a majority of the region's landowners are over age 55. Families may not be equipped or ready to ensure that their wishes for the land are respected. The "receiving" generation may see selling the land as a desirable—or the only—option. The Northeastern Area and its partners launched an information campaign, preparing a Web site and a convention display with handouts. The staff attended several major national meetings, exposing landowners to the tools available to safeguard their forest legacy for the future.

Northeastern Area Stewardship Program Accomplishments, Fiscal Year 2007

Stewardship Activities	
Landowners assisted	53,202
Landowners educated	57,913
Stewardship acres	728,365 acres
Stewardship priority acres*	234,302 acres
Stewardship plans	9,076
Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP) Activities	
FLEP Cost-Share	$2,076,375
FLEP Technical Assistance	221,104 acres
FLEP Education	6,444,521 acres

*Priority set via the Spatial Analysis Project

Forest Health Protection Program

Strategic Plan Objective 1C: Maintain the health and vitality of forest ecosystems at risk from potentially damaging agents.

Description

Protecting forests from damaging pests, both native and exotic, requires constant vigilance. Damaging exotic forest pests are invading the region with increasing frequency, and are likely to worsen with the continued growth of global trade.

The Forest Health Protection Program provides expertise in entomology, pathology, pesticide use, risk assessment, and invasive plant management. It also provides cost share funds for treatments when necessary. The staff provides direct service to National Forests, other Federal landowners, and Tribal governments. Services reach State and private lands via partnerships with State and local governments.

Program components and accomplishment highlights include survey and monitoring; technical assistance; technology development; information transfer; prevention, suppression, and restoration; and invasive pests.

Accomplishments

Survey and Monitoring—Detects new pest introductions early, monitors and assesses forest insects and diseases annually, and assesses long term forest trends to evaluate the overall condition of forest resources. In 2007 …

- Surveyed nearly 234 million acres for forest pest damage, highlighting areas in need of intervention. Gypsy moth outbreaks continue in the mid-Atlantic States, with extensive defoliation expected in 2008.
- Conducted special surveys on Federal lands, in 14 States for emerald ash borer (EAB), and in 15 States for Sirex woodwasp (SWW). EAB was newly detected in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and at two sites in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Woodwasp infestations were confirmed in two Pennsylvania counties and one Michigan county.
- Completed risk mapping for 20 major forest pests, an important new tool for setting forest pest management priorities.

Technical Assistance—Provides core forest entomology and pathology expertise, especially where leadership, coordination, and state-of-the-art solutions are needed. In 2007…

- With State forest organizations, started development of best management practices for managing invasive pests.

A group of Wisconsin municipal foresters visited Illinois to learn about Emerald Ash Borer eradication efforts there. NA's Tom Dilley gave a presentation at the workshop.

Technology Development—Creates methods and applications based on the latest research and technological advances. In 2007 …

- Provided equipment and training for Digital Aerial Sketchmapping in Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts, allowing States to produce more accurate, efficient pest detection surveys.

Information Transfer—Provides advice and information for land managers on new technologies and best practices to promote forest health. In 2007 …

- Exhibited at several national conferences, presenting invasive pest and forest health information to 3,000 attendees. Arborists and other green industry professionals work with trees every day, and can be important resources for detecting new pests.

Prevention, Suppression, Restoration—Financially assists States, tribal governments, National Forests, and other Federal land managers to prevent or mitigate adverse effects from insects and diseases. In 2007 …

- Supported treatments for gypsy moth, hemlock woolly adelgid, or oak wilt on over 523,000 acres. Demand for suppression funds is growing dramatically as populations rise. Oak wilt treatments are needed to protect oak forests in the Lake States.
- Conducted pesticide training and certification of 45 employees on two National Forests. Demand is growing as National Forests devote more attention to invasive plants.

Invasive Pests

Nearly all nationally significant invasive forest pests entered the country through the region. Activities cut across all program components.

Efforts to quarantine and eradicate the Asian longhorned beetle (ALB), a wood boring insect, began almost immediately after it was first detected in the United States in 1996. Efforts are concentrated in Chicago, New York, and New Jersey.

- Provided staff and technical assistance to APHIS at Prall's Island, New York, site of newly discovered infested trees.

NA FHP provided program personnel for the ICS team responding to the Prall's Island Emergency ALB Eradication Project, on an island in a waterway between New York City and the state of New Jersey. Judy Antipin served as an Information Officer for the project and FHP also supplied two certified chainsaw operators.

- Supported the New York ALB hotline for swift reporting of suspected ALB sightings by the public. Public awareness helps the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) gain access to private property for ALB inspections.
- Produced a widely distributed DVD and CD training package with Rutgers University Extension. The training is targeted toward early detection of invasive species harbored in wood packing material from freight shipments.

Emerald ash borer (EAB), an Asian insect, has killed millions of ash trees in the United States and Canada. Discovered in and around Detroit, MI, in 2002, it has since been found in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois; and this year, in western Pennsylvania and West Virginia. A small infestation in Maryland and Virginia was traced to a 2003 nursery shipment. The Virginia infestation was eradicated, but spot treatments are continuing in Maryland. EAB has also been found in a several locations in Ontario, Canada, most recently outside of Toronto. The Forest Health Protection Staff …

- Participated in the national EAB management team to facilitate an effective, coordinated response to the insect. Members include the Forest Service, APHIS, State plant pest regulatory officials, and university scientists.

- Participated in a regional EAB communications team with APHIS and interested States to develop and distribute information and key messages to the public. Pennsylvania and West Virginia joined the team in 2007, as did the high-risk States of Minnesota and Wisconsin.
- Provided financial assistance and guidance to the national EAB Web site. Outreach has increased public awareness and reporting of suspected EAB sites.
- Provided technical assistance to Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Maryland for eradication and control of newly detected EAB infestations.
- Supported technology development with multiple partners, yielding better survey methods (traps and lures), chemical controls, and potential biological controls; developed an EAB spread model to aid in managing spot infestations.
- Cooperated with APHIS in the continuing development of a 5-year EAB biological control work plan. Potential natural enemies were released in Michigan.

Sirex woodwasp (SWW) is native to Europe, Asia, and northern Africa. It has caused major damage to North American pine species planted around the world. First detected in upstate New York in 2005, experts believe all U.S. pine species are at risk. In 2007, activities included these:

- Participated on the national Sirex management team composed of Forest Service, APHIS, State Foresters, and State plant pest regulatory officials, and on the interagency Sirex science panel.
- Evaluated the impact on pine stands, tested insect management regimes, improved trap tree and trap technologies, and assessed possible biological controls on nontarget species.
- Cooperated with APHIS to develop and implement effective biocontrol agents. In New York, experts released a nematode on a controlled basis. Additional releases and evaluations are set for 2008.

The gypsy moth entered the country in the mid-1800s. It is found in 19 States from Maine to Wisconsin, and south from Illinois to North Carolina. Management requires multi-partner monitoring and aerial treatment to slow its spread, reduce damage, and eliminate isolated infestations. Specific actions included these:

- In 2007, managed treatment of nearly 528,000 acres in six States. In Ohio, almost 1,500 acres were treated to eradicate an isolated infestation. The USDA national gypsy moth management program has reduced or prevented damage on more than 60 million newly infested acres since 2000.
- Prepared the draft supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) for the national USDA gypsy moth management program. The final SEIS will update the 1995 EIS.
- Supported environmental assessments, project-specific tasks, safety and security plans, training, on-site project monitoring, and follow-up evaluations. Such planning supports cost effective treatments, targets high priority areas, and safeguards human and environmental health.

A University of Delaware student and members of Brandywine Valley Conservancy learned about biological control of mile-a-minute weed during a field trip organized by Michelle Frank, NA FHP pesticide coordinator in June 2007. Photo by Keith Tackett.

Hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA), which infests eastern and Carolina hemlocks, appeared in the United States in 1924. It occurs in all or parts of 15 eastern states. In 2007, the Forest Health Protection Staff …

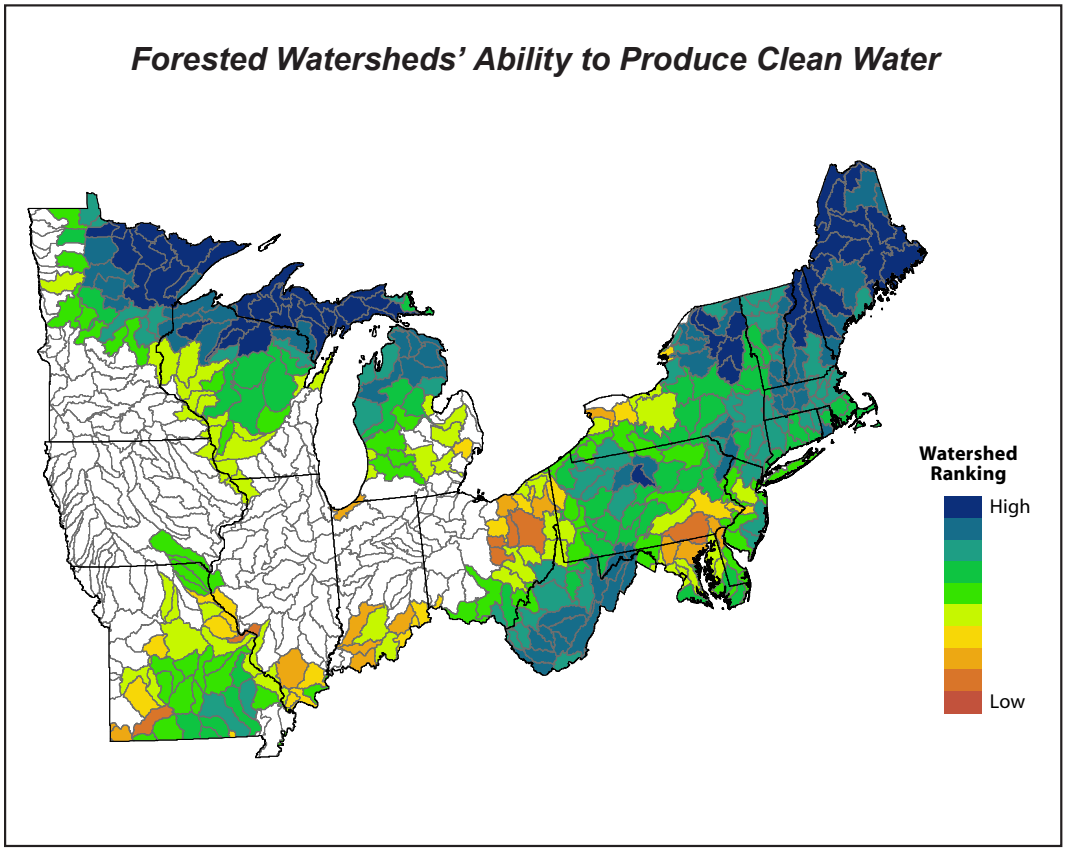
- Trained Federal and Nature Conservancy cooperators to use stem and soil treatments to protect hemlock in high value areas.
- Led the inter-regional HWA initiative: updated the HWA Web site; chaired the HWA Coordinating Committee; and coordinated activities among the three branches of the Forest Service in the region.
- Coordinated the rearing, release, and evaluation of new HWA predators, which may provide long-term biological control.
- Supported continued monitoring of HWA populations and predator releases in the affected states.

Forest Health Protection
Acres treated for pests

FY 2007

States and District of Columbia	Acres treated
Connecticut	0
Delaware	875
Illinois	7,602
Indiana	32,685
Iowa	0
Maine	14
Maryland	51,512
Massachusetts	170
Michigan	0
Minnesota	0
Missouri	0
New Hampshire	15
New Jersey	41,497
New York	80
Ohio	208,610
Pennsylvania	67,859
Rhode Island	0
Vermont	0
Wisconsin	100,585
West Virginia	11,938
Washington, DC	1,130
Total	524,572

Watershed Forestry Program



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry.

Strategic Plan Objective 1D: Protect and enhance the health of watersheds

Description

More than 52 million of the region's citizens drink water from forested watersheds. The Watershed Forestry Program provides technical and financial assistance to encourage restoration and sustainable management of watershed forests.

Three-quarters of northeastern watersheds do not fully meet water quality or fisheries goals. Managing and restoring trees and forests is a viable, cost-effective way to restore impaired streams and watersheds, protecting the clean water people depend upon. The economic and environmental value of "ecosystem services," such as providing clean water, are rarely considered in private and public decisionmaking about forest land.

Accomplishments

In Fiscal Year 2007, the Watershed Forestry staff supported and led projects in 13 states. Working with State and Federal agencies, communities, and nonprofit groups, the staff demonstrated ways to use trees and forests to protect water and avoid costly restoration. Thousands of volunteers joined in the effort to revitalize and protect their local watersheds.

Chesapeake Bay Program

- In partnership with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, provided 14 conservation and restoration grants to non-profit partners totaling $400,000. More than $1.5 million in contributions augmented the Federal funds.
- Completed urban tree canopy assessments for 8 cities; 21 more communities committed to completing assessments of their own. Three cities formally adopted tree canopy expansion goals to improve air, water, and public health.

Potomac Watershed Partnership

- Produced the first State of the Nation's River Report documenting water quality and land use trends and giving a report card for protection and restoration efforts.
- Launched a partnership with the Frederick County, MD, School District to assess, develop, and enhance tree cover at 16 schools. The schools will establish their own tree nurseries for future plantings, and involve teachers and students in creating outdoor classrooms.
- Potomac Conservancy and its partners secured conservation easements on close to 2,200 acres of land, the second highest annual total since its land protection program began in 1994. The agreements protected almost 14 miles of stream or river frontage, including critical forests, raising the total amount of protected land to over 11,000 acres.

New York City Watershed Forestry Program

- Completed Watershed Stewardship plans for more than 100 private landowners who collectively own more than 15,000 acres of forest land.
- Funded over 200 Best Management Practice demonstration projects, including timber bridges and erosion control on forest roads.
- Created 3,700 acres of new riparian forest buffers in cooperation with agricultural landowners.

Highlands Conservation Plan for New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania

- Completed an assessment of water supplies, land use patterns, and future growth trends in the Connecticut and Pennsylvania Highlands. The project also identified priority lands for conservation and hosted several stakeholder meetings to share results and set priorities for action.

Communicate the Role of Forests in Watershed Health

- Supported Growing Native more than 5,000 volunteers collected 20,000 pounds of native hardwood seeds to be grown for future restoration plantings. The group has gathered over 90,000 pounds of seeds in the past 5 years.
- Funded the Schoolyard Habitat program, part of the U.S. Forest Service More Kids in the Woods national campaign, bringing more than 100 students from inner-city Baltimore middle schools to the woods to learn about streams, forests, and watersheds.
- Supported a Watershed Forestry Institute project to educate 140 teachers about forestry and water quality. Teachers from 10 New York City schools participated as part of the Green Connections program.
- Worked with the West Virginia Envirothon Committee to organize and conduct the State's annual Envirothon competition. Developed water ecology exams, presented a hydropower mini-training session, and guided students in water sampling, identifying aquatic species, and conducting stream assessments.

Improve Management Practices to Protect Watersheds and Drinking Water Supplies

- Designed a Workshop called Watershed Health Applications Technology: Innovating Forestry, based on the Urban Watershed Forestry Manual. More than 100 foresters, engineers, and watershed specialists attended workshops in Maine, Maryland, or Indiana. The Center for Watershed Protection is assisting with the development of a Web-based version.

- Implemented the Watershed Forest Management Information System (WFMIS) in cooperation with water supply managers in the city of Boston, MA, and Hartford, CT. The information will help water suppliers make better decisions about complex source water protection and forest management issues.
- Launched a 2-year community-based project to protect the drinking water of the Meramec River east of St. Louis, cooperating with the Trust for Public Land, Open Space Council, and the East-West Council of Governments. Next steps include identifying priority lands for conservation, local planning, and extensive outreach to watershed stakeholders.

Restore Streams and Impaired Watersheds

- Planted trees along 410 miles of streams and shorelines, bringing the 10-year total to more than 5,700 miles of riparian forest planted in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia.
- Implemented a riparian buffer training program for field professionals in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and monitored survival and growth of 100 riparian forest planting sites. Survival rates averaged 75 percent across the watershed.
- Established six riparian buffer demonstrations in the Missouri Ozarks, reaching nearly 12,000 residents via literature or workshops.

Bring Ecosystem Services to Market

- Created a model for a regional, multi-credit ecosystem marketplace for the Chesapeake Bay region called the Bay Bank and secured public and private funding and stakeholder support to begin development.
- Initiated the development of a spatial land registry, an online mapping and analysis tool to help private forest landowners determine their eligibility for participation in ecosystem markets.
- Supported the Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Environmental Protection Agency on Nutrient Trading, to develop pilot projects in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, address incentives and barriers to trading, and assess the applicability of forestry practices in nutrient trading.

Quabbin Reservoir: Boston's unfiltered water supply is protected by forest lands that have been sustainably managed for over 40 years.

Strategic Plan Goal 2: Enhance the Capacity of Forests to Provide Public Benefits

Urban and Community Forestry Program

Strategic Plan Objective 2D: Maintain and enhance the benefits that communities within metropolitan areas derive from their forests and trees

Description

The trees and forests close to home provide environmental services that enhance public health and community well-being. The region's community trees and forests sequester carbon, mitigate air pollution, reduce storm water, and help conserve energy: services worth hundreds of millions of dollars. The estimated replacement cost for community trees, not considering their functional benefits, has been pegged at roughly $1 trillion!

The Urban and Community Forestry Program supports and encourages …

- Citizen initiatives to create and maintain a natural environment
- "Smart growth" practices to minimize the loss of valuable trees and forests
- Monitoring and management practices that contribute to urban forest health

Program assistance is commonly used to …

- Establish and maintain local tree care programs, including hiring and training arborists
- Complete inventories and management plans
- Implement tree protection laws and policies
- Adopt new technology to improve resource assessment and management at the state, regional, or local level

Accomplishments

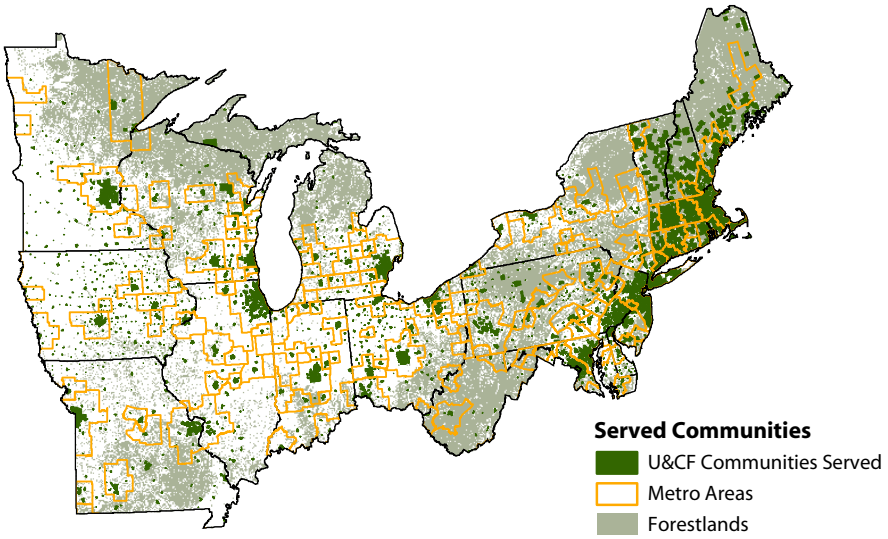
In Fiscal Year 2007, State forestry agencies reported that nearly 71.6 million residents—more than 74 percent of the region's population—benefited from the program's technical, financial, or educational services. More than 3,500 communities received assistance to establish and maintain local tree care programs, including hiring and training arborists, completing inventories and management plans, implementing tree protection laws and policies, and supporting civic organizations and nonprofit groups. Volunteers contributed 490,000 hours towards program goals and objectives.

Tools and Technology

There is greater local commitment in the region to enhancing the benefits provided by community trees and forests. This is the result of more than 15 years of Federal investment in local organizations, and the tools and technology needed to assess and document the condition, extent, and ecological and social value of the forests where people live.

Several mayors announced goals to expand tree cover in their communities as an important step towards achieving broader carbon reduction and energy conservation goals. With strong nonprofit and corporate backing, led by the Home Depot Foundation and the Conference

Metropolitan Areas and Communities Served in 2007



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2007. Strategic Plan Update for Fiscal Years 2008 – 2012. NA-FR-02-07. Newtown Square, PA: Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry. p. 30.

of Mayors, Indianapolis, Boston, Des Moines, and Philadelphia each pledged to plant at least 100,000 new trees in the next decade. After a U.S. Forest Service study valued the environmental value of New York City's existing street trees at about $122 million annually, or $5.60 for every dollar spent in planting and maintenance, Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced an exciting goal: to plant 1 million new trees over the next 10 years. The announcement was made alongside Bette Midler, founder of the nonprofit New York Restoration Project, and U.S. Forest Service Chief Abigail Kimball, and included a $1.5 million check presented by the Home Depot Foundation.

The "i-Tree" suite of urban forest assessment software is exceeding expected demand by more than four-fold. Requests for the free application are averaging 150 per month. Communities across the region are using the simple street tree inventory package and tree benefits calculator (STRATUM). Training and software has been provided to more than 90 trainers, consultants, and community foresters.

Defining and Meeting Threats

To cope with growing threats from pests and natural disasters, the Northeastern Area and its State partners have focused on forest resiliency and agency preparedness. Nearly a dozen events targeted consultants and managers who influence community response to storms and insect attack. Educational materials and training guides captured lessons learned during ice and wind storms and the spread of emerald ash borer across Michigan, Ohio, and now Indiana, Illinois, and Pennsylvania. Forums stimulated urban wood utilization ventures, improvement of storm water management, and expansion of forest insect and disease surveys and monitoring into urban areas.

In the aftermath of 17 Federal disaster declarations in Missouri with severe storm damage to trees, the State re-focused its technical and financial assistance to response and recovery, resulting in 12 new community tree inventories and management plans. Wisconsin held several emerald ash borer summit meetings, covering the latest information on biology, identification, management, surveys, and firewood rules, and to develop plans from lessons learned in other states. The Northeastern Area developed and tested a potentially powerful new tool for i-Tree that will allow managers and community volunteers to compile and report identified pests as part of the Forest Service early detection and rapid response network.

Partnerships to Enhance Technology Transfer

To place technology in the hands of key State and local partners, the Northeastern Area has teamed up with the Northern Research Station to develop

Hunts Point, Bronx: Trees create more safe and pedestrian friendly environments that generate higher rents and retail income.

Urban and Community Forestry Accomplishments Fiscal Year 2007	
Percentage of the region's communities managing urban resources	45.21%
Number of active communities	3,525
Population in communities assisted	71,587,000
Per capita cost in communities assisted	$0.09

products and leverage our capacity to engage and inform. Together we developed and marketed Web-based seminars for participants to network and discuss new products and research without leaving their offices. Several hundred practitioners have been steady participants. The same technology is enabling the nonprofit network Alliance for Community Trees to ramp up and share innovations rapidly across their network. Similarly, the Vermont Community Forestry Program increased participation in its innovative Stewards of the Urban Landscapes (SOUL) training fivefold by using dispersed Vermont Interactive Television rather than centralized meeting locations.

The Northeastern Area placed its program manager with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 3 (Mid-Atlantic) for 3 months. The Forest Service was able to share its new urban forest and watershed assessment tools and techniques build new relationships with EPA Research, Air and Water Permitting and Enforcement, and Environmental Innovations. The staffs identified specific opportunities to continue collaboration in storm water control and green infrastructure communication, financing, and development in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. All have potential to strengthen Federal and State cooperation and response across the landscape.

Future Focus

In 2008, the Forest Service plans to begin breaking down the barriers to delivery of urban and rural forestry programs. Urban forest inventory and assessment work will continue to replicate and catalyze successful efforts in setting tree cover goals in communities across the region. In addition, we will work to increase the number of communities accessing our tools and technology to enhance their urban trees and natural resources.

Wood Education and Resource Center

WERC awarded $1.6 million in grants in Fiscal Year 2007

Description

The Wood Education and Resource Center (WERC), formerly the Robert C. Byrd Hardwood Technology Center, is located in Princeton, WV. The Center fosters interaction and information exchange within the forest products industry to enhance and sustain forest products production in the country's eastern hardwood forest region. The Center serves 35 States that have hardwood forests. WERC's goals are to …

- Improve the knowledge, skills, and productivity of forest products industry workers and managers
- Increase communication, cooperation, and collaborative problem solving within the forest products industry
- Improve the efficiency of forest products manufacturing and wood utilization

Accomplishments

Strategic Plan Objective 2A: Promote and encourage the viability of forest-based industries

Changes at WERC since 2005 have improved program and project management, productivity, and use of the facility. Relationships with the industry and other partners have grown and improved.

WERC funded 24 competitive projects totaling $1.6 million. These grants help the forest industry compete in an increasingly global marketplace. Approved projects use urban wood, make use of trees affected by the emerald ash borer (an invasive insect), and utilize woody biomass.

WERC Facilities. Accurate Millworks, a private company, successfully competed to lease 50,000 feet of WERC space in late 2006. The company operates the Center's rough mill and manufacturing facility, producing wooden window coverings and moldings from local hardwoods. The company adds value to the harvested wood and potentially displaces products imported from overseas. These economic benefits ripple out into the community, besides bringing revenue to WERC that can be used to benefit

This "Train the Trainer" workshop on log bucking was put on by the Ohio Forestry Association through a grant from the Wood Education Resource Center (WERC). The grants are part of WERC's Hardwood Value Improvement Program and they help bring specialized training to loggers and harvesters working in their local areas.

WERC added a biomass coordinator to focus more attention on the potential for using woody biomass for energy in the Northeast and Midwest.

other businesses. The company added employees this year, bringing the total number of workers to more than 20. The company plans to increase production and add more jobs in the future.

Other WERC activities include these:

- **Ongoing Projects.** Invested $5.9 million in 93 ongoing projects in 24 States. All projects are either supported by or conducted by the wood or forest industry.
- **Log Quality Evaluation System.** The West Virginia University Appalachian Hardwood Center partnered with WERC to develop a Web-based system that allows sawmills to evaluate lumber grade yields and profitability from low and high quality logs processed at their mills.
- **Marketing Guides.** Through partnerships with Virginia Tech and the Adirondack North County Association, two new how-to marketing guides were prepared: one for sawmills and related businesses, and the other for businesses that manufacture semi-finished and finished products from hardwood lumber. The guides are designed for both start-up and established businesses.
- **Electronic Commons.** Technologies such as chat rooms, videoconferencing, and "Webinars" can be effective, cost-efficient communications and training tools. In cooperation with Northern Initiatives of Marquette, MI, and the Eastern Region (R9) of the U.S. Forest Service National Forest System, WERC is demonstrating the utility of these advanced technologies. The Center for Technology in Government (CTG) at the State University of New York is capturing lessons learned to share electronically with others contemplating a similar effort.
- **Training Information Systems.** Many wood products industries have limited time and funds available for training. Time spent away from the job needs to be time well spent. In cooperation with Limestone Bluffs RC&D, WERC is developing an automated information system to match potential trainees with needed training. Users will be able to enter specific criteria and automatically receive an email when training that meets their criteria is available. The software is currently in development.
- **Seminars and Training.** WERC conducted several workshops and seminars for wood products and forest industry leaders and managers. Topics included domestic and global competitiveness and export, cutting manufacturing costs, labor and workforce issues, new software programs, exporting, pallet sanitization, and industry survival techniques. WERC encourages its grants recipients to hold a seminar or workshop at the center to facilitate information exchange, networking, collaboration, and technology transfer within the industry.

Strategic Plan Objective 2B: Help the Northeast and Midwest to meet their needs for renewable energy, to reduce greenhouse gases, and to conserve energy.

- ***Woody biomass*.** Low quality wood—including wood waste—is a viable source of renewable energy, potentially reducing the nation's dependence on fossil fuels. Besides being a source of energy, using wood that might otherwise go to waste adds market value, increasing income for the landowner, the harvester, and the processor. End users often save money on their energy bills too. WERC awarded competitive grants to six biomass utilization projects totaling almost $401,000 and raising the 2-year total to more than $1 million.

Cooperative Fire Protection Program

Strategic Plan Objective 2C: Help communities at risk from wildland fire protect lives, property, and natural resources

Description

During 2007, wildfires raged across the country, and firefighters and equipment were nearly exhausted by August. Nationally, more than 76,300 fires burned about 8.3 million acres at a Federal cost of $1.4 billion. Well over 400 homes were destroyed by October 1. When *damage* to homes and related structures is included, the number of homes affected jumps into the thousands.

In the Northeast and Midwest, nearly 200,000 acres of forest were damaged by wildfire, an increase of 40,000 acres over the previous year. Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio, New Jersey, and West Virginia were hardest hit as a drought gripped the region. State forestry agencies and volunteer fire departments fought most of the fires.

In May, more than 2,500 homes were threatened as flames shot a hundred feet high, burning 19,000 acres just south of Atlantic City, New Jersey. FEMA issued a disaster declaration as firefighters battled the flames. The fast-moving fire damaged 30 homes and destroyed 5. When rain finally intervened, firefighters gained the upper hand.

The Big Rivers Compact stresses prevention, and when wildfires strike, a strong, rapid response to keep fires small. The program has several components, which are shown along with accomplishment highlights for Fiscal Year 2007.

Human carelessness or arson caused nearly 92 percent of the wildfires reported in the 20 Northeast and Midwest States.

Number of fires and acres burned Northeast and Midwest

Year or average	Fires	Acres
FY 2006	13,951	142,118
FY 2007	11,700	198,760
10-year average	9,026	76,805

Public and private lands intermingle throughout the Indiana Dunes area which makes fuel buildup an added threat to communities.Photo: Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry.

Accomplishments

State Fire Assistance offers grants and technical assistance to States and local fire organizations to…

- Boost wildland firefighting capacity
- Reduce fire hazards by actions such as removing excess fuels
- Target programs to hazardous areas
- Acquire small equipment

Volunteer Fire Assistance targets cost share grants to communities with fewer than 10,000 people. Funds help to …

- Acquire fire and safety equipment
- Train volunteer firefighters
- Organize new departments in unprotected communities

In 2007, the Northeastern Area, cooperating with State forestry agencies …

- Trained more than 13,000 volunteers in Incident Management and wildland fire suppression
- Assisted in the formation of six new fire departments
- Provided assistance to over 3,300 fire departments
- Awarded grants totaling $3.7 million to more than 1,700 departments

Federal Excess Personal Property and Fire Fighter Equipment Programs

- The Northeastern Area obtains million of dollars in firefighting equipment each year, and loans or passes title to State forestry agencies and partners, including rural fire departments. The authority to award full ownership and title began in 1995. Currently $269 million in equipment—primarily trucks and some aircraft—are on loan to State and local firefighting agencies.

In 2007 …

- Loaned $9.7 million in firefighting equipment to agencies.
- Transferred $13.8 million in equipment in eight States under the new Fire Fighter Equipment Program. Other States are expected to enroll in 2008.

Prescribed fire was used in Delaware to control hazardous invasive fuels near the town of Lewes. Photo courtesy of the Delaware Department of Agriculture.

Aviation Management supports the use of fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters in firefighting and other natural resources missions. The program …

- Provides safety inspection and oversight for projects deploying Federal Excess Personal Property aircraft.
- Manages aviation missions for forest damage assessments, aerial photography, and pesticide applications.
- No aviation accidents were reported in 2007. All contract and State aircraft were inspected and aviation equipment standards maintained, supporting safety on all aviation operations.

Forest Fire Compacts

The Program helps to support several multi-State and Canadian Province fire protection compacts. These compacts have "mutual aid" agreements, which pledge personnel and equipment to members in the event of a catastrophic wildfire.

Compacts in the 20 Northeast and Midwest States include the Big Rivers Compact, the Great Lakes Compact, the Northeastern Forest Fire Protection Compact, and the Mid-Atlantic Compact.

Cooperative Fire Protection Program Accomplishments

Fiscal Year 2007

State fire assistance—communities assisted	2,761
State fire assistance—communities assisted—National Fire Plan	8,752
Volunteer fire assistance—rural fire departments assisted	3,305

- The compacts conducted two Wildfire Academies and helped sponsor numerous other activities, training more than 1,000 firefighters.
- Strengthened relations with Canada via the compacts, especially in the Northeastern Compact, where the Newfoundland-Labrador Province applied for membership

National Fire Plan (NFP)

Congress first funded the National Fire Plan in Fiscal Year 2001 to provide more resources for reducing hazardous fuels, controlling wildfires, restoring burned landscapes, and assisting communities. In Fiscal Year 2007 …

- Completed prescribed fires on more than 90,000 acres, reducing hazardous fuels near at-risk communities
- Treated more than 2,800 acres by mechanical means to reduce hazardous fuels
- Delivered more than 330 community protection plans, risk assessments, or equivalent
- Completed more than 4,800 prevention and community education programs
- Close to 2,800 communities benefited from programs, including training, rural water supply enhancement for fire suppression, and defensible space and Firewise activities in high priority watersheds.

U.S. Army Environmental Center

Description

The U.S. Forest Service Northeastern Area has an Interagency Agreement with the U.S. Army Environmental Center to assist Military Services to provide training, enhance mission readiness, and improve natural resources through forest stewardship. Military lands are managed to balance realistic training with ecosystem conservation.

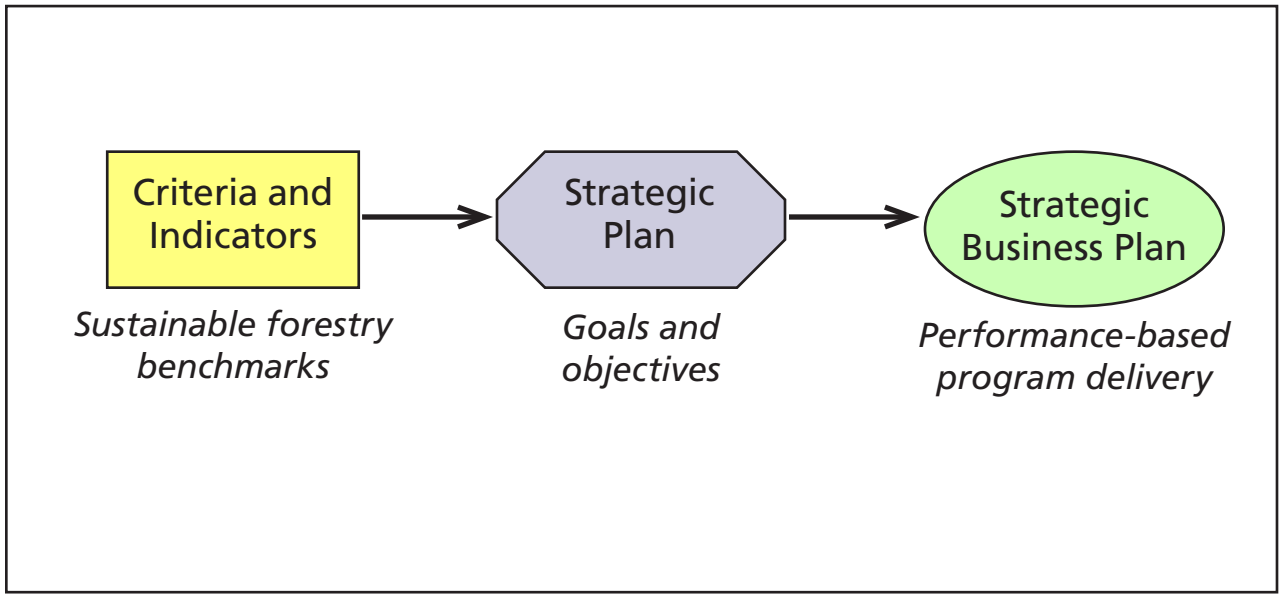
Accomplishments

- Changed the name to the U.S. Army Environmental Command (USAEC), better reflecting Department of Defense intent to improve environmental standards on all military installations.
- Provided a four-person Military Liaison Working Group to provide forestry, fire, and natural resource advice to military headquarters and more than 70 installations. Stationed around the country, the Group oversees and administers agreements and projects.
- Completed Wildland Fire Management Plans for 105,000 acres at Clear Air Force Base, Alaska, Cannon Air Force Base in New Mexico, and for National Guard Installations in Missouri and Nebraska. The team also worked on the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado.
- Developed fire use plans and conducted prescribed burns for more than 25,000 acres on military installations in New Hampshire, New York, Mississippi, and Florida.

Strategic Business Plan for Fiscal Year 2008

Fiscal Year 2008 marks the beginning of an important transition in how the Northeastern Area approaches its work and reports its accomplishments. Increasingly, organizations need to cross traditional program lines to address complex natural resource issues. Growing ecological knowledge is fostering a greater appreciation of how forests, wildlife, water, air, soil, and the environment in general are connected—and how humankind in turn is connected to natural resources.

The Northeastern Area developed a Strategic Business Plan in 2007, to be implemented in Fiscal Year 2008. The performance-based plan will create a more effective, efficient organization to meet the natural resource and fiscal challenges of the future. Investments will be directed to those actions that most effectively meet goals and objectives, while allowing managers to set and evaluate performance.



The Strategic Business Plan links to the Criteria and Indicators through the Strategic Plan. Criteria and indicators, and the Strategic Plan goals and objectives are listed in Appendix A.

Appendix

A. Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry (NA) Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives With Sustainability Indicators Adopted by the Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters (NAASF)

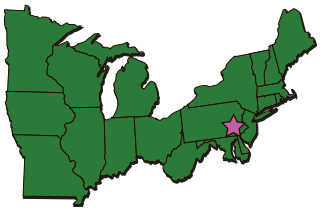
NA STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	NAASF-ADOPTED INDICATOR
GOAL 1. PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT	
1A. Conserve the biological diversity of important forest land at risk of conversion and fragmentation.	1. Area of total land, forest land, and reserved forest land 3. Extent of forest land conversion, fragmentation, and parcelization 15. Forest ownership, land use, and specially designated areas
1B. Sustain the productive capacity of privately owned forest land.	5. Area of timberland 6. Annual removal of merchantable wood volume compared with net growth
1C. Maintain the health and vitality of forest ecosystems at risk from potentially damaging agents.	7. Area of forest land affected by potentially damaging agents
1D. Protect and enhance the health of watersheds.	9. Area of forest land adjacent to surface water, and forest land by watershed 10. Water quality in forested areas
GOAL 2. ENHANCE THE CAPACITY OF FORESTS TO PROVIDE PUBLIC BENEFITS	
2A. Promote and encourage the viability of forest-based industries.	12. Wood and wood products production, consumption, and trade 14. Investments in forest health, management, research, and wood processing 16. Employment and wages in forest-related sectors (private sector metric)
2B. Help the Northeast and Midwest to meet their needs for renewable energy, to reduce greenhouse gases, and to conserve energy.	11. Forest ecosystem biomass and forest carbon pools 12. Wood and wood products production, consumption, and trade (bioenergy metric)
2C. Help communities at risk from wildland fire protect lives, property, and natural resources.	7. Area and percent of forest land affected by potentially damaging agents (wildfire metric)
2D. Maintain and enhance the benefits that communities within metropolitan areas derive from their forests and trees.	1. Area of total land, forest land, and reserved forest land (urban forest metric)
MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES – PROVIDE EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVICE	
1. The Northeastern Area ensures that it has the right tools and right skills to continue to provide effective public service to partner organizations, through constant and consistent evaluation of its organizational capacity.	16. Employment and wages in forest-related sectors (U.S. Forest Service employees metric)
2. The Northeastern Area enlists the diversity of the American population to strengthen program delivery, and to promote and sustain a conservation ethic.	
3. The Northeastern Area promotes public support for sustainably-managed forests by building credibility and trust with its partners, cooperators, and stakeholders.	

B. Program Investments

Investment in State and Private Forestry Programs by the Northeastern Area
Fiscal Years 2005 to 2007

Program	Dollars in millions		
	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
Forest Health Management			
Forest Health Management-Federal lands	7.6	7.8	9.3
Forest Health Management- Cooperative Lands	17.8	19.0	18.7
Subtotal Forest Health	**25.4**	**26.8**	**28.0**
Cooperative Fire Protection			
State Fire Assistance	6.9	6.9	7.4
Volunteer Fire Assistance	2.3	2.3	2.3
National Fire Plan	8.9	10.9	11.4
Subtotal Fire	**18.1**	**20.1**	**21.1**
Cooperative Forestry			
Forest Stewardship	11.5	12.1	15.1
Urban and Community Forestry	10.9	10.5	10.3
Forest Legacy	27.6	29.0	23.3
Economic Action Programs	7.8	3.4	0.2
Subtotal Cooperative Forestry	**57.8**	**55.0**	**48.9**
Other			
Grey Towers	2.3	2.3	1.9
Forest Health Technology Enterprise Team	1.3	1.6	1.0
Reimbursables	2.8	1.4	2.1
Subtotal Other	**6.4**	**5.3**	**5.0**
Total all programs	**107.7**	**107.2**	**103.0**

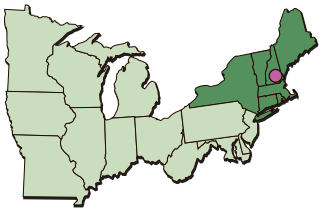
Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry USDA Forest Service



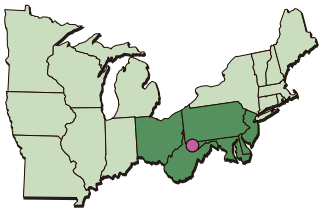
Headquarters Office

11 Campus Boulevard, Suite 200
Newtown Square, PA 19073
610-557-4103

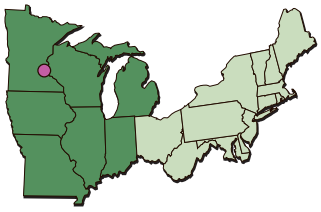
Field Offices



Durham, New Hampshire
271 Mast Road
Durham, NH 03824
603-868-7600

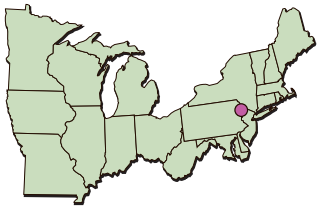


Morgantown, West Virginia
180 Canfield Street
Morgantown, WV 26505
304-285-1541



St. Paul, Minnesota
1992 Folwell Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108
651-649-5243

Grey Towers National Historic Site



151 Grey Towers Drive
Milford, PA 18337
570-296-9634

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