

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service
Eastern Region



Protect ecosystems across boundaries

Connect citizens to the land

A photograph of a vast, green landscape with rolling hills and a few trees under a cloudy sky. A large, light-colored oval is superimposed over the center of the image, containing the title text.

US Forest Service, Eastern Region
THE YEAR IN REVIEW
2006

Walk the talk for sustainability

Revolutionize effectiveness and efficiency

Be an employer of choice



Randy Moore
Regional Forester

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We entered our second century of service in 2006 and began a new approach to forest management in the Eastern Region. By March 2007, each of our national forests and tallgrass prairie will have newly revised forest management plans, thanks to the public who worked with us to develop realistic objectives enabling us to protect our valuable resources while providing for the citizens who value these lands.

During this past year, we began implementing our new Vision, "Courageous Conservation." This Vision continues our legacy of restoration and creates a framework for a sustainable future. After reading through this report, my hope is that you will have a better understanding of how our work is aligned with the goals of Courageous Conservation.

Partners will play an increasingly important role in our new Vision. New – and longtime – partners stepped forward this year to help us with projects that provided clean air and drinking water, recreation opportunities, and helped sustain plant and animal life.

In February 2006, we joined together with the National Football League (NFL) at the Super Bowl in Detroit to share our message of cleaning the air by capturing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Through our Urban Connections program, we worked with the NFL to plant thousands of trees that will absorb millions of tons of carbon in the years ahead.

We have taken steps to improve our effectiveness by reducing overhead costs through stewardship contracting and video conferencing. As we cut monies spent in offices, we can re-direct those funds to critical projects on the land.

I encourage you to visit us, and see for yourself what we have done to improve and expand the many opportunities available to you on these special lands. Whether it's hiking, bird watching, cycling, or snowmobiling, there's a variety of outdoor activities awaiting you on your national forests and tallgrass prairie.

Randy Moore



Protect ecosystems across boundaries

By joining with partners and concerned citizens, we are establishing cooperative practices to address emerging threats to forests that extend beyond geographic boundaries. In working together, we will strengthen our efforts to protect the plants and animals that depend on healthy ecosystems.

I Can See Clearly Now: Air Quality Update

One type of air pollution is haze, formed when sunlight encounters tiny particles in the air. These particles, referred to as particulate matter, are the major cause of reduced visibility in many scenic areas.

To improve visibility in wilderness and in national forests, states in the Eastern Region are developing controls for air pollutant sources using federally enforceable state implementation plans.

When these controls are in place next year, we should all be able to see more clearly.

If a Tree Falls in a Forest . . .

If a tree falls in the forest, it may be diseased. But genetic techniques can help blunt the impact of exotic diseases on the ecosystem, and hasten restoration. One example is the Eastern Region's response to butternut canker, which has killed roughly a third of all native butternut trees and infected many more. The outlook brightened when Forest Service researchers found that a small percentage of butternut is resistant to the disease. Regional employees are now collecting twigs from healthy butternut, grafting them on to roots, and planting the grafted trees in clone banks. Here the fledgling trees can be protected while producing seed for butternut restoration projects.

Similar work is underway with other tree species. Regional employees are currently screening eastern white pine for trees resistant to white pine blister rust; preserving a genetically diverse sample of ash seed before the emerald ash borer does further damage; working with The American Chestnut Foundation to develop blight resistant chestnut, and with Forest Service researchers to identify American beech that is resistant to beech bark disease.



Clark McCreedy collects ash seed in Wayne County, Indiana.



Carrie Sweeney checks on grafted butternut at the Oconto River Seed Orchard, located in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest.

Mississippi River Partners: Going with the Flow

The Middle Mississippi River Partnership (MMRP) is a collaboration of 16 federal, state, and non-governmental organizations focused on the interactions between people and natural resources along a 195-mile stretch of the Mississippi River. A unique area without locks or dams, here the river flows freely between southern Illinois and



The mighty Mississippi is unfettered by locks or dams for almost 200 miles between southern Illinois and southern Missouri.

southern Missouri. The Shawnee National Forest in Illinois is a significant federal partner, since part of the forest is located in the river's flood plain. The Shawnee is acquiring additional land via donation and purchase, converting marginal and frequently flooded farmland into thriving hardwood forest. This landscape change reduces erosion and sedimentation; moderates flooding; improves and diversifies wildlife habitat; and offers a wealth of recreational opportunities for the public. The Eastern Region is working to connect this partnership with two other similar ventures upstream and downstream, the Upper Mississippi River Forest Partnership and the Lower Mississippi Alluvial River Restoration Project.



Fire Power in the Eastern Region

Fire plays many roles in the Eastern Region. At the turn of the last century, uncontrolled fire and logging nearly eradicated species such as white pine and hemlock from Eastern forests. Early in its history, the Forest Service began suppressing most wildfires, thus eliminating fire as a natural force in the forest ecosystem.

A more progressive attitude towards fire emerged later in the 20th century. Instead of viewing fire as an enemy, we have learned to work with fire, channeling its power to reduce hazardous



We use prescribed fire under less intense burning conditions than those of many wildfires.

fuels, establish hardy ecosystems, and ensure healthy, thriving forests.

Fire's utility was never more evident than last year inside Minnesota's Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. Lightning ignited several fires

in a huge area previously devastated by a wind storm. The downed trees could have been fuel for larger, more deadly fires. But years of preventative fuel treatments decreased the risk of extreme fire behavior and we were able to control these

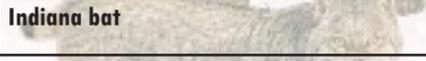
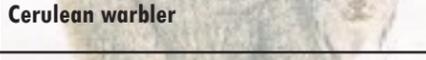
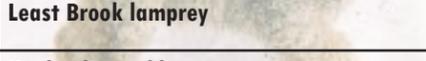
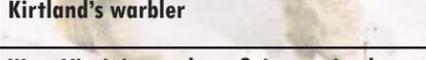
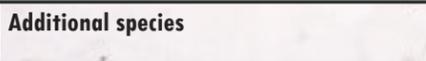
naturally occurring fires. The fires stayed within the boundaries of the wilderness, away from populated areas, ultimately having a restorative effect on the landscape.

On occasion, we need to set fires ourselves in the national forests – to reduce fuels (that could feed bigger, more dangerous fires), regenerate habitat, and encourage certain species to flourish. For example, Michigan's Kirtland's warbler nests only in recently burned areas. Prescribed fire (fire intentionally set for natural resource benefits) is a powerful tool for habitat restoration. In the southernmost part of the Eastern Region, national forests are restoring oak ecosystems by reintroducing fire. Missouri's Mark Twain National Forest is taking the lead with a program that could treat more than 5,000 acres per year.



The Kirtland's warbler nests only in parts of the forest that have recently been burned.

Threatened & Endangered Species: Working with Partners and Making a Difference

THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES	PROJECTS WITH PARTNERS
 Canada lynx	Study of radio-collared lynx in northern Minnesota revealed movement and distribution. Papers will be published by mid-2007.
 American marten	American marten survey is underway in northern Wisconsin to help us estimate distribution and determine how Lake State populations are genetically related.
 Indiana bat	Stabilized entrances and installed gates to two nonworking mines, to help protect Indiana bat habitat in southern Illinois.
 Cerulean warbler	Our work with the wind power industry will reduce wind turbine impact on the cerulean warbler and Indiana bat.
 Least Brook lamprey	Research on the least brook lamprey will help us develop best management practices to protect this aquatic species and its habitat in southern Illinois.
 Kirtland's warbler	Record number of singing male Kirtland's warblers documented in Michigan - a total of 1,479 - the most counted since monitoring began in 1951.
 West Virginia northern flying squirrel	Memorandum of understanding drafted for red spruce conservation, to provide habitat for endangered West Virginia northern flying squirrel. MOU will be finalized in 2007.
EASTERN REGION SENSITIVE SPECIES	FOREST SERVICE ACTIONS
 Additional species	Study of Indiana's barrens yielded 1,200 insect species, 35 of which were added to the Eastern Region's sensitive species list. Two new species were discovered.

Reaching the goal: By 2015 we'll have a 25% greater positive impact on the land – working with partners to protect large ecosystems regardless of ownership, while improving the health of lands we already manage.



The wild geranium is one of many wild flowers that thrives in the rich habitat of hardwood forests throughout the Eastern Region.

Connect citizens to the land

The public will play an increasing role in helping us reach decisions for our national forests. Our commitment to greater citizen involvement starts with engaging communities and building trust. With the future in mind, we're introducing young people to the great outdoors in hopes of kindling a life-long fascination with the land.

Carbon-neutral Super Bowl Kicks Off a Winning Partnership



On the field before the Super Bowl kickoff - Daryl Pridgin, Urban Connections Program Manager and Jack Groh from the NFL.

The Eastern Region Urban Connections program teamed up with the National Football League (NFL) and a number of Detroit partners to make Super Bowl XL carbon neutral. It all started in Nov. 2005 when volunteers planted 2,500 seedlings in and around Detroit to absorb greenhouse gases and offset the increased emissions that occur with the Super Bowl. The carbon neutral Super Bowl took place on Feb. 5, 2006, and allowed the Forest Service to connect many thousands of citizens to the land. This team effort also led to the signing of a national agreement between the Forest Service and the NFL, to further the partnership in other cities in coming years.

Tribal Relations: Connecting with Communities

The year 2006 saw significant advancement in tribal relations. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was finalized between the Eastern Region and four Michigan Tribes, making us the only Forest Service Region with two tribal MOUs. This marked great progress in recognizing treaty rights, strengthening relationships, and furthering tribal sovereignty. The new Eastern Region Indigenous Earth Walker Award went to Chief Warden Fred Maulson of the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, recognizing Chief Maulson as a vital catalyst for the joint effort between the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest and the Ojibwe in Wisconsin, to protect the land. Fred Paquin and Hope Colia of the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians were recognized for providing opportunities for youth on the Hiawatha National Forest in Michigan. After restoring a former Youth Conservation Camp – once slated for decommissioning – they opened it to community youth groups in fall 2006.



"The Magic of Frank Montano, Native American Flute, Song, Dance, & Story Telling" was featured at the Regional Honor Awards ceremony in November.

New Partnerships & Programs Battle Invasive Species

The fight against invasive species goes on. During 2006 in the Eastern Region, new partnerships and programs helped us take on the challenge in some innovative ways. Here are a few of them:

Cooperative Weed Management Areas
Five national forests—the Chequamegon-Nicolet (Wis.), Huron-Manistee, Ottawa (Mich.), Shawnee (Ill.), and Green Mountain (Vt.)—partnered with city, county, state, and tribal governments and other federal agencies to control unwanted plants. Working together in management areas—such as adjacent private lands—allowed the Forest Service to raise awareness of invasives by providing guidance to local landowners.

Invasive Plants Survey
Last summer, six AmeriCorps volunteers helped the Wayne National Forest (Ohio) survey invasive plants in a forest watershed. The volunteers completely eliminated garlic mustard, a common invasive, and reduced the infestation of others.

Invasive Species Training Program
A partnership between the Hoosier National Forest (Ind.) and Indiana University's School of Public and Environmental Affairs led to a unique program for grade schools. The program teaches students about the destructive impact of invasive plants on the land, and offers practical tips on how to identify and control them.



Ohio sixth graders pretend to be invasive plants as their fellow students discuss their fate.



Making History: Rabideau CCC Camp Designated a National Landmark

In March 2006, the Secretary of the Interior designated the Rabideau Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp in northern Minnesota a National Historic Landmark. Camp Rabideau is recognized as one of the best preserved CCC camps in the nation, boasting the largest number of unaltered structures. Occupied by CCC workers from 1935-1941, it was home to 300 young men who restored forests, built a transportation system, and crafted

beautiful log and stone structures. Volunteers have actively worked with the Chippewa National Forest to restore five of the thirteen remaining buildings.

Currently Camp Rabideau is open to the public year round, with interpretive tours available during the summer. Its historical landmark status simply makes it official: Camp Rabideau is truly a national treasure, an exceptional place that sheds light on our history and helps explain our past.



The restored Education Building is a prime example of the surviving buildings at Rabideau CCC Camp. The camp is located south of Blackduck, Minn., in the Chippewa National Forest.

Stewardship Contracts Build Strong Partnerships and Healthy Forests

With new authority for stewardship contracting, the Eastern Region is now grouping related projects together and, through contracts or agreements, paying local communities to be stewards of the land. Projects are designed to improve and restore the health of our forest and prairie lands, watersheds, and ecosystems, while providing a source of local income and employment.

In 2006, two significant stewardship contracts were awarded in the Eastern Region. One contract was for treating oak wilt disease on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest (Wis.). Oak wilt first appeared on the Forest in 1997 and was certain to kill thousands of red oak trees if not controlled. Insect and disease specialists from Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry recommended harvesting infected trees and all other nearby oaks and oak stumps. The stewardship contract

enabled the Forest and contractor to exchange goods for services, with the value of the harvested timber being off-set by the cost of uprooting the tree stumps. This collaboration helped the Forest control oak wilt disease.



An example of the damage that oak wilt disease can do to healthy trees.

The second stewardship contract was for thinning trees to improve forest health, while also improving habitat along Leech Lake in north central Minnesota. The Chippewa National Forest partnered with Cass County officials in order to harvest trees near the lake and used the timber sale proceeds to

remove old buildings from the former Cedar Springs Resort property, acquired by the Forest in 2001. Without the buildings, this highly scenic location on Leech Lake now had room for a picnic area, providing new opportunities to connect people to the land. This stewardship contract succeeded on many levels – creating a new recreation site on Leech Lake, supplying timber for local markets, and providing local jobs.

Stewardship contracting has proven to be an excellent tool that the Eastern Region will use often in the future.



A new recreation site was created near Leech Lake using a stewardship contract.

Moving Firewood Can be Risky Business

In May 2006, Northeastern Area State & Private Forestry and the Eastern Region co-hosted the Firewood Forum at the Morton Arboretum outside Chicago. The Forum taught Forest Service partners and cooperators about the risks of transporting firewood that may be infested with invasive insects and pathogens. The objective of the Forum was to share resources and identify effective ways to communicate this threat and encourage action.

Reaching the goal: By 2015 we will have increased people's connections with the land by threefold – with more environmental education, and more partners and volunteers who understand, appreciate, and are willing to help manage the public trust.

Walk the talk for sustainability

Our management of the natural resources entrusted to us has always been guided by future sustainability. Within the Eastern Region, we are now taking steps that demonstrate our commitment to reduce our impact on the land and ensure that we are more sustainable in all that we do.



More hybrid vehicles are being used across the Eastern Region.

At the Controls for Pilot Certification

Forest certification is intended as a seal of approval to assure consumers that wood and paper products come from forests managed in accordance with strict environmental and social standards. In 2006, the Forest Service signed an agreement with the Pinchot Institute for Conservation, an organization dedicated to advancing forest conservation and sustainable management.

The agreement is to conduct pilot certification projects on seven national forests, including two in the Eastern Region – the Allegheny (Pa.) and Chequamegon-Nicolet (Wis.). Our goal is to have these pilot projects completed in 2007.



The Allegheny National Forest in Pennsylvania is part of a pilot project aimed at forest certification.

Going to the Source: Biomass as Renewable Energy

Woody biomass is the material from trees and woody plants, including limbs, needles, and leaves that are by-products of forest management, such as ecosystem restoration and hazardous fuel reduction. Biomass has huge potential as a source of renewable energy. In the last year, two woody biomass utilization grants were awarded to partners of the Superior National Forest in Minnesota.



Loading woody biomass on a processor in the Superior National Forest.

One grant is to study the economic, environmental, and social barriers to removing biomass without commercial uses from forests. The second grant is for reducing hazardous fuels on state and private lands adjacent to the forest. Totalling nearly \$300,000, these grants will help communities and small businesses turn "leftovers" from forest restoration work into marketable energy products.

The Greening of the Region: Taking the LEED

As Kermit the Frog once noted, it's not easy being green. But managing national forests in a sustainable manner is part of the Eastern Region Vision. We're working hard to increase energy efficiency along with environmental awareness in our daily operations.

In 2006, we purchased 21 hybrid vehicles – which run on a mix of electricity and gasoline – in an effort to reduce fuel costs, lower emissions, and increase fuel efficiency. In the years ahead, we will explore ways to convert the larger vehicles in our fleet to run on bio-diesel, an environmentally safe fuel made from non-petroleum sources.

Major new buildings in the Region will adhere to Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) standards, which require energy efficiency plus environmentally friendly construction materials. A prime example is the Superior National Forest's Kawishiwi Ranger District (Minn.) where a new district office is being built conforming to LEED guidelines. Plans are in the works for three additional structures in the Region that will comply with these strict green principles.



The new Kawishiwi Ranger District office was designed to be 40 percent more efficient than required by established energy conservation standards.



After the Flames Are Out, BAER Teams Take Action

After a forest fire is out, the work begins for a select group of specialists in the Eastern Region. Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) teams evaluate wildfire damage and identify treatments to quickly restore the land. Composed of hydrologists, soil scientists, engineers, biologists, silviculturists, range conservationists, and archaeologists, these teams examine the burned area with special attention to conditions that threaten life or property or cause degradation of natural and cultural resources.

Although BAER projects are rare in the Eastern Region, there

were three in 2006. Fires last year in Minnesota's Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness required BAER team evaluation due to health and safety hazards at burned-over



Damage caused by the Hughes Lake fire on the Huron-Manistee National Forest required treatment by BAER team specialists.

campsites. Treatment included removing trees from portage trails and campsites, replacing burned wilderness latrines, and detecting non-native invasive species. Another fire on the Huron Manistee National Forest in Michigan destroyed habitat for the Kirtland's warbler, a federally endangered songbird. Treatment included planting jack pine to accelerate restoration of Kirtland's warbler habitat, installing barriers to prevent off-highway vehicle access, and detecting non-native invasive species.

Revolutionize effectiveness and efficiency

If we are to remain a leading natural resource agency, we must adapt and find new ways to do more with less. Recognizing the need to change is only the first step - we must be a catalyst for change, reassessing and reorganizing our agency to confidently confront the challenges that we will face in the years ahead.

Growing Partnerships Funds for Key Projects

Through partnerships, the Eastern Region has been able to make scarce federal dollars go farther to accomplish projects, while also connecting people to the land. A number of significant partnership projects were completed in 2006:

Great Lakes Watershed Restoration Grant Program

The program funded fourteen projects dedicated to ecological restoration in the Great Lakes Basin. Funding of \$827,200 in federal dollars was leveraged by another \$1,457,519 in non-federal contributions.

Shawnee National Forest 2006 Prescribed Fire Season

The Shawnee National Forest (Ill.) completed its 2006 prescribed fire season with 21 burns, covering a total of 2,054 acres. This was a 28% increase over 2005, made possible with partner contributions. The prescribed fires, conducted in open lands and woodlands, yielded many benefits including improved wildlife habitat and a reduced risk of wildfires.



A prescribed burn at Keeling Hill on the Shawnee National Forest in Illinois.

Invasive Species Outreach Campaign

Outdoor enthusiasts learned about their role in limiting the spread of harmful exotic species through public service announcements, billboards, airport light-boxes, and print and TV ads that connected citizens to the lands where they recreate.



Billboards spread the word so that invasive species don't spread.

Midwin Fund: Leveraging Funds on the Prairie

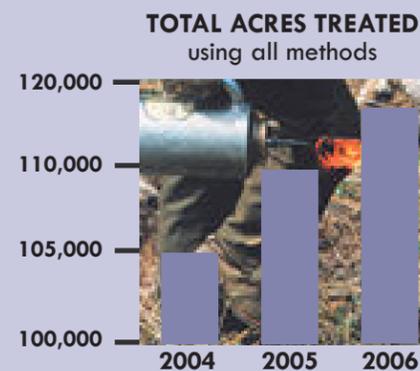
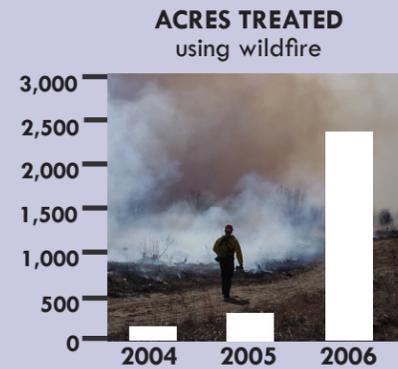
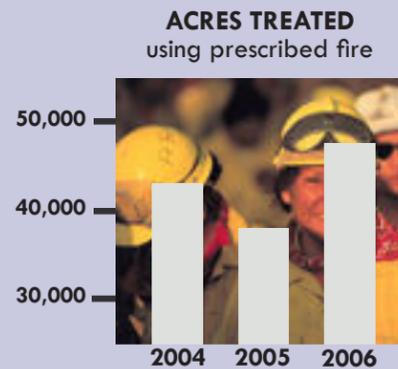
In 2004, the Midwin National Tallgrass Prairie (Ill.) entered into an agreement with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to create the joint public/private Midwin Fund, starting with \$500,000 in seed money from CenterPoint Properties. The Fund is managed by the NFWF, who awards grants for projects geared to protection, restoration, environmental education, and interpretation of Midwin and its watershed. By 2006, fourteen projects were financed, including training volunteers to monitor rare plants, restoring wetlands, and researching the effects of prescribed fire on prairie insects. With partners increasing Midwin's resources fivefold for the Fund, the Prairie has been able to accomplish that much more.



Training for monitoring frogs and toads at Midwin last spring.

Fighting Fire with Fire: Hazardous Fuels Reduction

In 2006, the Eastern Region made significant progress in reducing the hazardous fuels that build up in forests and contribute to the risk of fire. Fuels are reduced using a combination of mechanized and other methods such as timber harvests and prescribed burning, as well as wildfire for natural resource benefits. Hazardous fuel treatments meet a variety of resource needs including improving forest health and restoring fire-adapted ecosystems. We focus most hazardous fuel treatments on the *wildland urban interface*, where communities border forested land. Fuel treatments lessen the effects of wildfire on people, homes, and natural resources.

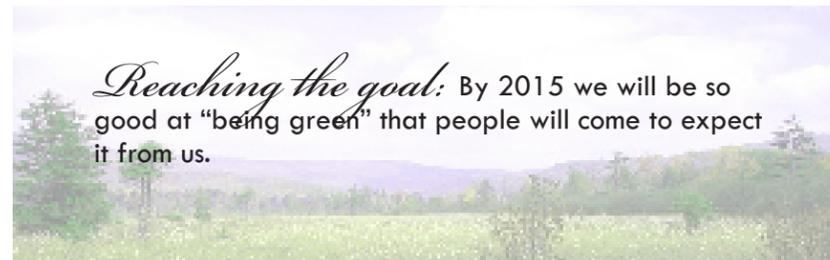


Timber, One of Our Renewable Resources: Sales Are Up

Fiscal year 2006 accomplishment is based on the volume of timber actually awarded to contractors rather than the volume offered for sale, as in past years.



Reaching the goal: By 2015 we will be so good at "being green" that people will come to expect it from us.



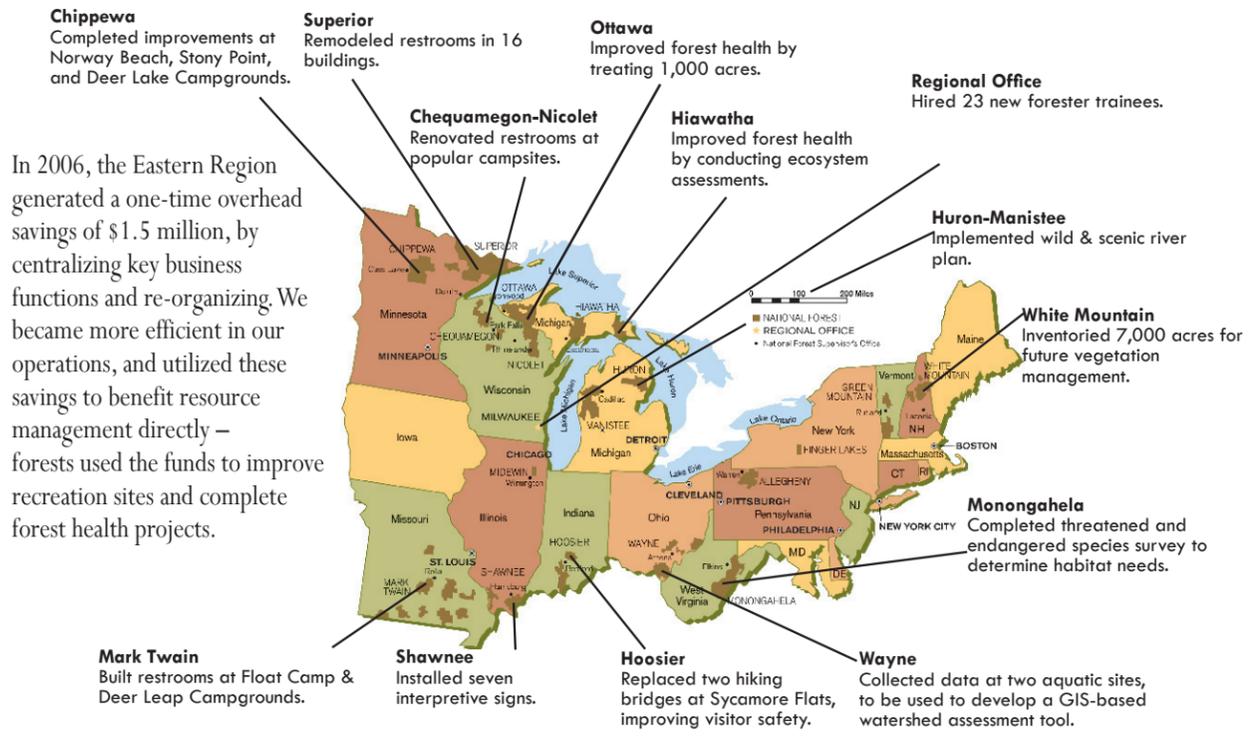
The Finale: Revised Forest Plans

The Eastern Region will reach a significant milestone in 2007. Revised forest management plans, incorporating public input and the most up-to-date science, will be in place on every one of our Region's national forests and tallgrass prairie. The journey began in 1996 when the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest (Wis.) published a public Notice of Intent to revise their forest plan. Their plan revision was completed in 2004 and the Region learned much from this first revision experience.

In 2003 we expedited the planning process to the point that several forest plans were revised in as little as 2 1/2 years. In 2006, nine additional forest plan revisions were finished, marking completion of 14 of the Region's 15 forests/prairie. The Allegheny National Forest's (Pa.) plan revision is still in progress, and will be completed in early 2007.



Overhead Savings Reap Benefits for National Forests



In 2006, the Eastern Region generated a one-time overhead savings of \$1.5 million, by centralizing key business functions and re-organizing. We became more efficient in our operations, and utilized these savings to benefit resource management directly – forests used the funds to improve recreation sites and complete forest health projects.

Video Conferencing: The Wave of the Future

In 2006, the Eastern Region took a radically different approach to regional meetings and training. It began when employees on all 15 national forests and tallgrass prairie completed required training using the Region's video conferencing system, eliminating the need for travel. A high point for the new system was capital investment planning for 2007. Each unit presented its project proposals via videoconference, resulting in 50 ranked projects – every unit could take part without traveling to Milwaukee.

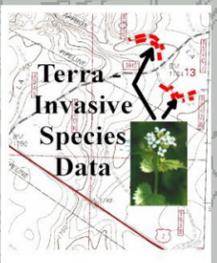
Monongahela staff standing by in Elkins, WV and Regional Office staff in Milwaukee, Regional Forester Randy Moore signed the document. Forest employees who'd spent years of hard work on the plan were able to enjoy the signing without spending a single travel dollar. That's a great savings, given an average trip between the Regional Office and a forest costs \$700 per person, not including salary dollars spent while in travel status.



Regional Forester Randy Moore and Deputy Regional Forester Skip Starkey take part in a video conference.

Into the Woods with Information Management

In 2006, the Eastern Region incorporated a number of different technologies to streamline our management of natural resources. A good example is the individual tree crown inventory pilot project on the Superior National Forest (Minn.), which tested remote sensing techniques to complement forest-level inventory and monitoring. We found that there is great potential for high cost, forest-level inventories to be partially replaced by lower-cost remote sensing techniques, resulting in cost savings and more reliable data.



Invasive plant populations are tracked in the Terra database, one example of how we use computer technology to monitor forest health.

Reaching the goal: By 2015 every dollar we spend will go further as a result of continually improving the way we do business.

Be an employer of choice

To be successful stewards of our national lands requires a workforce that is representative of our diverse backgrounds and shared commitment to natural resource management. We actively recruit the best and brightest candidates to fill vacancies and we continually strive to make our forests a great place to work.

Recruiting: The Future is Now

In 2006, the Eastern Region hired 23 entry level foresters – including members of minority groups – through a first-of-its-kind initiative. Our outreach team met with college and university students at career fairs, including the annual American Indian Higher Education Consortium representing 34 Indian colleges. We will continue to recruit aggressively to achieve our goals, moving ahead to diversify our future workforce.

Urban Connections: Earning Our Street Cred

We've embarked on an innovative partnership between our Urban Connections outreach program and Strive Media Corporation in Milwaukee. Through their youth-oriented magazines *Gumbo* and *Ya Heard*, Strive helped expand our outreach to minority populations throughout Wisconsin, featuring articles about Forest Service careers.



Students learned to recognize animal bones at a workshop called *Skulls & Skins*.

careers by offering workshops and hands-on experience. Many of the instructors were recruited from the White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire. At the *Adventures in Travel Expo* in Chicago and New York City, we connected with scores of young people interested in Forest Service employment opportunities.



Daryl Pridgen, Tonika Goins (Forest Service) and Jennifer Higgins (Microsoft Corp. volunteer) join students for the awards ceremony after the workshops. Microsoft donated prizes for participants.

In Boston, Urban Connections teamed up with Future Pathways to introduce teenagers to natural resource

Students Hike the Forest Service Career Path

The Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) provides top-performing undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate students with practical work experience and training tied to their primary field of study. From 2003-2006, 49 SCEP students were hired into permanent, full-time positions in the Eastern Region after completing their temporary assignments.

students, introducing them to Forest Service programs in the East. The group visited our Washington, DC, headquarters, met with natural resource specialists, and talked with several Latino leaders who spoke about their career experiences in the Forest Service. On the Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia, the students visited the Timber and Watershed Laboratory and the Fernow Experimental Forest, where specialists from the Northeast Research Station and State & Private Forestry led outdoor investigations.

In partnership with El Valor – a Chicago-area multicultural organization – we sponsored an orientation trip for 18 college

For the 11th consecutive summer, our urban outreach center, America's Outdoors, hired four college interns to coordinate outdoor education activities in Milwaukee. Last year these interns interacted with more than 2,000 youngsters in the metro area. In July the interns accompanied a group of teens from Milwaukee's Neighborhood House on two-day trip to the Hiawatha National Forest (Mich.) that included overnight camping.



Conservation education intern Heather Kohlmeier and these two Milwaukee school children agree: "We're number one!"

Reaching the goal: By 2015 we will be the place where people want to work, rich in diversity, excellent in leadership, and dedicated to the public good.

Courageous Conservation: A sustainable future, a legacy of restoration.

The US Forest Service celebrated the legacy of its first century of service in 2005. At that time, leaders in the Eastern Region asked, "What will our legacy for the next century be?" The Region commissioned the Institute for Alternative Futures, a leading futures think tank, to help guide the vision and strategic planning process. Employee delegates from the Region's national forests and national tallgrass prairie met with the Regional Leadership Team to work on strategic issues and developing a vision. That vision is **Courageous Conservation, a sustainable future, a legacy of restoration.** In January 2006 we began to incorporate our Vision into our business practices.

Our five goals:

Protect ecosystems across boundaries

Working with partners, using traditional and creative new approaches, to expand the amount of land managed for public benefit. We cooperatively manage ecosystems at the larger landscape level, using both traditional approaches and new models of interest-based public, tribal, and private collaboration.

Connect citizens to the land

Building greater capacity to engage citizens in our work through partnerships and agreements. We link potential partners and volunteers to high priority programs through partnerships with organizations in local communities, state and federal agencies, and international organizations. We increase communication, education, and outreach efforts to help forest users think globally and act locally.

Walk the talk for sustainability

Developing a regional sustainability framework setting the stage for better performance and a change in our agency culture. We are on the front edge of implementing national policy on "green" (sustainable) certification and environmental management system requirements. We procure green products; construct green facilities; use alternative energy systems; and have energy-efficient Forest Service vehicles.

Revolutionize effectiveness and efficiency

Developing cost-efficient, easy-to-use information systems that facilitate work at multiple scales. We will work to increase the public benefits we deliver by working at broader scales, seamlessly managing information, and changing our management processes to facilitate flexible and effective results.

Be an employer of choice

Recruiting employees using updated marketing and aggressive recruiting strategies. We nurture a culture within the Region that embraces diversity in all its attributes. We provide and fund ongoing training and development for employees. We reward employees who take risks and provide great leadership in pursuit of these vision goals.



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