



SUCCESS STORIES

REPORTING EXAMPLES OF OUR PROGRESS IN CARING FOR THE LAND AND SERVING PEOPLE



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Volunteers Enhance, Restore Spawning Habitat

In 1998, the Chippewa National Forest entered into a partnership with the Jessie Lake Watershed Association, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and Itasca County Soil & Water Conservation District, to improve water quality, fish habitat, and upland habitats within the Jessie Lake Watershed.

The partnership proposed to first evaluate aquatic resources within the watershed in order to determine the cause and effect of declining water quality in Jessie Lake and was awarded an \$80,000 Clean Water Partnership grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

Water quality assessments, evaluation of septic systems, and freshwater mussel and fishery surveys conducted watershed-wide during 1997-2003 were used to draft recommendations for improving aquatic resources within the Jessie Lake watershed.

One of the recommendations was to improve spawning habitat in

Spring Lake Creek. Spawning walleyes migrate out of Jessie Lake in the spring to spawn in Spring Lake Creek.

However, extensive beaver activity in the tributary had, over the years, created a channel that was overly wide and shallow for this channel type. As a result, fine sediments dropped out, and walleye spawning habitat was degraded.

In July 2001, the Jessie Lake partnership was awarded a Conservation Partners Grant from the Minnesota DNR for restoration work, which included re-shaping the stream banks to form a narrower, deeper channel in two additional locations.

Gravel was added to the new stream channel to enhance spawning habitat for walleye and other gravel spawning fishes & invertebrates. This new channel was designed using stream geomorphology concepts and restored the stream channel to more natural dimensions.

The Chippewa National Forest completed the NEPA and required surveys and donated the rock for the project.

The project was completed by the Minnesota DNR and the Forest Service, along with 140 hours of volunteer labor from the Jessie Lake Watershed Association. The volunteers will continue to monitor spring spawning activity at these sites and two other riffle sites that were completed by the partnership in 1998-1999.

Future projects may include restoration of pool habitats in the stream, and more water quality monitoring.



Jessie Lake Watershed volunteers and agency staff helped to complete the stream restoration project on the Chippewa National Forest.

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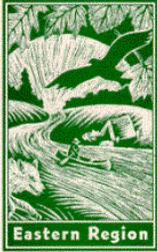
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For more information contact Melissa Rickers at (218) 335-8625





Monongahela Land Acquisition OK'd

Deeds were recently signed which increased the size of the Monongahela National Forest by 6,813 acres.

Previously owned by paper manufacturer MeadWestvaco, the tract was a highly desirable addition to the Forest because of its large size and proximity to lands already in the Monongahela and the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests.

The Trust for Public Land facilitated the complicated process of acquiring the land. They purchased the property from MeadWestvaco and then re-sold it to the Forest Service.

The newly acquired land—referred to as the Buskirk tract—lies immediately south of the rest of the Monongahela and adjoins the George Washington and Jefferson to the east on the Virginia-West Virginia state line.

The terrain is generally mountainous, and steep with dry oak and oak-pine ecosystems. Because of its prior use as an industrial forest, the area has nearly 50 miles of roads already built within the tract.

Until a complete road management plan can be developed, the roads will remain closed by gates. Visitors are invited to hike, hunt, bike, and otherwise enjoy the new land just as they can on other parts of the Monongahela. No roads are designated for use by ATVs so they are not currently allowed in the area.

While the land is primarily in a large contiguous block of Forest Service ownership, there are several small private in-holdings. The lines are well marked with red boundary paint—and some signs remain from its former owners—but for now there are no Forest Service signs.

Press releases on the acquisition encourage visitors to stop by one of the two offices of the Marlinton-White Sulphur Ranger District to obtain a map of the area in order to avoid unintentional trespass.

For more information contact Kate Goodrich at (304) 636-1800 ext. 220



The recent land acquisition will increase the size of the Monongahela National Forest.

TRTR Funds Finance Low-Water Crossings



The Rattlesnake Ferry tributary low-water crossing on the Shawnee National Forest was completed in the fall of 2003.

The Kincaid Lake stream and Rattlesnake Ferry tributary low-water crossing projects have been completed on the Shawnee National Forest.

The Forest completed construction of two low water crossings within the Shawnee in Jackson County, Illinois, during the fall of 2003. TRTR funds totaling \$136,344 were used to pay construction costs for the projects.

Forest employees provided labor for the project and a contract supplier provided materials and supplies.

At the Kincaid Lake stream low-water crossing located in Township 7 South, Range 4 West, Section 34 runoff from the roadway enters the stream that flows into the lake. At the Rattlesnake Ferry tributary low-water crossing located in Township 10 South, Range 3 West, Section 27 runoff from the roadway enters this tributary that flows into the Big Muddy River.

The purposes of the low-water crossings are to protect the streams from further erosion and sedimentation buildup and to provide administrative access to areas adjacent to the crossings. Sediment reduction benefits the riparian area and improves fish habitat, water quality and the municipal water supply.

For more information contact Marion Bunch at (618) 253-7114



‘Living With Fire’ Poster Unveiled

“Living with Fire: Making Wise Choices” is the name of the Eastern Region’s newest educational effort. Targeting middle-school, high-school, and adult audiences, the resulting poster and website provide educational background and ideas for teachers and fire educators.

The effort was the brainstorm of a partnership of state and federal employees who worked together to develop a curriculum for the eastern area on living with fire and making wise choices.

Led by Teri Heyer of Northeast Area State and Private Forestry, the group consisted of several fire prevention specialists from northeastern area states, including Teena Ligman from the Wayne and Hoosier, Alan Zentz from NAS&PF and even a rep from the New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources.

“We wanted to develop a poster and educational materials that spoke to fire ecology in the eastern area,” said Teri Heyer, Northeastern Area office of State and Private Forestry.

The new poster includes artwork that the Northeastern Area had contracted in 1997. The intent was to develop four paintings that showed fire’s role in the ecosystem. The paintings show the same piece of land as it was when the Native Americans used fire here, and then that same piece of land with prescribed fire, a wild fire, and then developed as a subdivision.

For various reasons the project was never completed, but with the new fire programs, Heyer saw the series of paintings had real potential for the Eastern Region.

“I assembled a talented group of people interested in fire prevention and conservation education, and we’ve re-energized the project,” said Heyer.

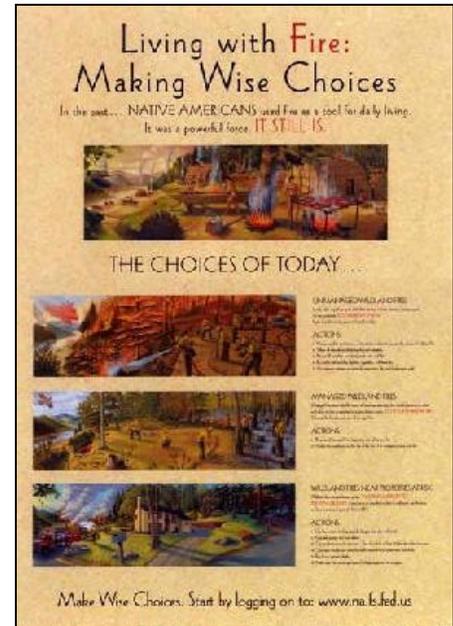
Using the artwork, the curriculum explores four themes; Native American use of fire, unmanaged wildland fires, managed wildland fires, and wildland fires near properties at risk.

Rather than print additional information on the back, or print related materials, the group decided to link the poster to a website. The website then provides background information and educational activities for each of the four areas as well as the science of fire and suggests additional links.

“We wanted this poster to look at fire as being part of our world, and that we have choices, including managing our forests and reducing fuel buildups. It also speaks to rural areas and managing the fuel around our homes,” Heyer said.

Heyer notes that “with the recent interest in the Healthy Forest Initiative and fuel hazard reduction, the poster is more relevant than ever. We hope it, and the website developed to support the poster, will be well used.”

Copies of posters are available from state foresters. A limited supply was distributed to national forest offices. The hope is that the poster will address an age group not normally targeted in fire curriculums, and will provide a much-needed relevant eastern slant to fire education.



The new Eastern Region “Living With Fire” poster is geared toward a larger audience.

For more information contact Teena Ligman at (812) 277-3579





Wayne Employees Fill Soldiers' Stockings

Pam Stachler—Hydrologist on the Wayne National Forest—has a son, Nick, who is in Baghdad, Iraq, with the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne Corps. In order to bring cheer to Nick and his friends, employees on the Wayne decided to send Christmas stockings to some of the soldiers.

They filled 20 stockings in early December and mailed them off.

“When I told Nick we were sending him a package with 20 stockings to distribute to soldiers who would not receive a Christmas package, he was very moved,” Stachler said.

She said after Christmas Nick was able to call and thank everyone.

She said he had broken his thumb and wasn't able to write very well, so asked her to convey his and the other soldiers' appreciation.

“He said that when he returned from a patrol there were 25 letters and 20 stockings. He was able to pass them out on Christmas Day and there were many soldiers who had not received anything,” Stachler related. “He said they all shared and everyone got something and to tell all the folks on the Forest that it meant soooo much.”

She said she'd asked Nick to take pictures of the soldiers with their stockings but their compound had 16 separate attacks on Christmas Day.

Stachler said the stockings are a group effort but might not have happened if Connie Roberts hadn't taken an interest and stayed late putting all the items together that employees had donated.

What the Wayne continues to do for soldiers has made a real difference to the men and women of the 82nd Airborne Corps, one of the Army's elite units stationed at Fort Bragg, NC.

Stachler said her son and his unit are preparing for redeployment and should be back in the U.S. by the end of January.

For more information contact Teena Ligman at (812) 277-3579

Shawnee Hosts Educational Field Trips



The historic Iron Furnace on the Shawnee National Forest was the site of a local school field trip.

Students from Hardin County Elementary and Eldorado Elementary Schools recently made the historical Illinois Iron Furnace the site of their educational field trips to the Shawnee National Forest.

The Iron Furnace is listed on the National Register Historical Sites. The Furnace is located near Elizabethtown, Illinois, and operated during the 1800s producing crude pig iron in support of the Civil War.

On May 10, approximately 152 first-, second- and fifth-grade students—along with their teachers and volunteer chaperones from the Hardin County Elementary school—visited the Furnace.

Then on May 16, approximately 85 sixth-grade students, teachers and volunteer chaperones from the Eldorado Middle School visited the Iron Furnace for their educational field trip.

Shawnee employees Rebeccah Lampert and Roy Street conducted presentations on each of the days. Joanna Leonard assisted Lampert and Street May 16.

Presentations given to the students included a history of the Iron Furnace and an overview of fire aspects on the Forest.

The Shawnee staff appreciated the opportunity to share knowledge of the Forest with the students while stressing the importance of protecting our environment.

For more information contact Rebeccah Lampert at (618) 287-2201



Forest Welcomes Family Members Home From Military Service Abroad



Alissa Austin extinguishes the candle that burned in her honor at the Wayne's SO.

The Wayne National Forest officially welcomed home two of their “family members” recently by letting each of them put out the candle the Forest has been burning since they left last March.

Army Captain Alissa Austin—daughter of Forest Supervisor Mary Reddan—and Sergeant Dana Moler, a Wayne employee, made their return official as they turned off the candles that had burned brightly in the Forest Headquarters Building in Nelsonville since their departure, symbolizing their service in the nation’s armed forces.

Moler returned in mid-June after a three-month tour at Fort Bliss, Texas. He deployed to Fort Bliss along with his unit—Headquarters, Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 174th Air Defense Artillery (Avenger) of McConnellsville, Ohio—with the expectation of serving in a combat zone, but instead was returned to home station where the unit stands in readiness.

Austin was a member of the Army Individual Ready Reserve when she was called to active duty in March. She was deployed to Afghanistan and served with an Army Engineer unit. While serving there, she was active in the support of a children’s orphanage and garnered support of Wayne employees to donate stuffed animals and toys.

Three other family members have returned safely and three still remain deployed including Reddan’s son Zeke, an Army lieutenant serving in Iraq. Their candles will continue to burn under the Memorial Flag for all passers-by to see as a tribute in their absence.

For more information contact Teena Ligman at (812) 277-3579

Chippewa Holds Forest Open House on Logging

People of all ages spent the day in the woods during an open house of the Jon Rowe Memorial Forest, near Grand Rapids, MN, on Sept. 26. The Jon Rowe Memorial Forest is managed by the Grand Rapids High School Forestry class as part of the school’s forest program.

The event showcased the Forest, informed the community about logging issues, and demonstrated the latest equipment.

Chippewa National Forest employee Dave Roerick is chair of the School Forest Committee and explained how the forest serves as a viable tool for educating people on the harvest of renewable resources. All year, people are invited to take self-guided tours with brochures available at the forest pavilion that narrate the 14 different stops.

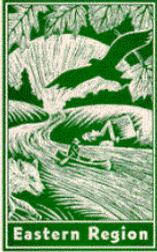
Quietly trotting past the visitors, draft horses Barney and Charlie—who often can be seen at the Forest History Center—towed a small cart loader on wheels for horse logging. A low-impact way of logging, this method is often used for selective harvesting, plantation thinning, lake lot improvements and small tract harvests that are uneconomical for commercial mechanized loggers.

Ed Nelson and Mike Kippley of Wood “en” Horse Logging cut several trees, used Barney and Charlie to skid the logs out of the woods then loaded them into their new cart and hauled them off to be sawed into boards. Deeper into the woods, where the sweet smell of fresh cut balsam and pine boughs mingled with the scent of sawdust, the Pittack logging crew demonstrated the capabilities of a large loader and cut-to-length mechanism for harvesting large amounts of timber.

“The Pittacks were very good with answering the kids’ questions in tune with wanting to educate people on what is going on in the forest,” Roerick said.

Combining their Annual Fall Tour with the open house, the Itasca County Private Woodland Committee members were on hand throughout the day to help guide tours through the Forest. The day before the open house for the public, more than 300 fourth-grade students toured the Forest.

For more information contact Melissa Rickers at (218) 335-8625



Public Tours Allegheny Storm Damage



Allegheny officials led a tour of areas damaged by storms in July in advance of planned resource management activities on those lands.

The Bradford Ranger District of the Allegheny National Forest conducted a public tour of its Martin Run project area in Warren County during November 2003 in advance of planned resource management activities at that locale.

Knowledgeable Forest Service personnel used this opportunity to provide information to 10 interested persons and to answer their questions regarding the purpose and potential impact on the environment of the 20,300-acre project, which could include harvesting and salvaging trees.

The project area, located near Sheffield, Pennsylvania, contains 16,000 acres of National Forest System lands and 4,300 acres of private lands. The visitors were informed that a variety of activities are included in the Land and Resource Management Plan, including wildlife management habitat, dispersed recreation, salvage of blowdown trees, and the potential to harvest trees to encourage tree species diversity which would lead to a healthier future forest.

Those joining tour leader Jason Rodrigue of the Bradford Ranger District included six other persons from the Forest Service and a diverse public complement of six landowners, two environmentalists, one forester and one person interested in the recreational aspects of the project.

On planned stops along one Forest road, the tour group viewed a wind-damaged tree stand, a regenerating tree stand and pipeline corridor. On another stop, they discussed proposed management of oak and white pine, heard about proposed forest health measures and proposals to promote late successional forest characteristics and discussed a proposed management area change.

Trees in this area, along with those in many other large tracts of the Allegheny National Forest, were downed during July 2003 storms which ripped through the woodlands, causing extensive damage.

The public tour, which lasted three-and-a-half hours and covered a driving distance of nearly 30 miles, was in advance of preparation of a Draft Environmental Statement for the project area.

ANF personnel who played a role communicating with the public on the tour included Andrea Hille, Scott Reitz, Jim Apgar, Nancy Larson and Jason Rodrigue from the Bradford Ranger District, and Stephen K. Miller and Rick Fox from the ANF Supervisor's office.

For more information contact Bill Massa at (814) 723-5150





Wayne Repairs Road, Protects Wildlife

A 70-year old wetland known to local residents as Big Bailey got a facelift thanks to the partnership of the Wayne National Forest and the Athens County Engineer's Office.

Located in northern Athens County in S.E. Ohio, one mile north and west of Chauncey, Big Bailey has existed ever since the mine-operated railroad was abandoned about 70 years ago. Recently it presented challenges for the county as the beaver dam flooded four-acre parcel overflowed in heavy rainfalls threatening the base of the adjacent county road.

According to Athens District Ranger Dan Kincaid, "We decided we could improve the situation, with assistance from the County Engineer, by constructing a rock spillway and a water control structure. Both the Forest and the county benefited from this action as it increased wildlife habitat and resolved the flooding issue."

"Controlling the water level allows us to encourage vegetation, thereby increasing the diversity of habitat and providing food for the Great Blue Herons that have built a rookery at one end of the wetland," District Wildlife Biologist Lynda Andrews added.

The District worked closely with the County Engineer's Office to complete this work. Athens County provided both the heavy equipment and equipment operators for the project.

"We are always happy to participate in partnerships that offer benefits to Athens County and its residents," said Athens County Engineer Archie Stanley. "I have several friends that enjoy the Big Bailey wetland and the many species of wildlife that flourish there."

According to Stanley, "The project improved the wetland, making it a more stable environment for the wildlife, and at the same time worked to avoid flooding of our County Road."

Local residents Richard and Christina Gibbons are happy to see the increase in wildlife at the wetlands.

"We particularly like watching the young herons in the spring" they said. Other wildlife that can be observed there includes the Kingfisher, wood duck, beaver and some painted turtles.

"The Wayne National Forest encourages mutually beneficial partnerships like this," Forest Supervisor Mary Reddan said. "We, of course, want to be good stewards of the land we have been entrusted to manage, but we also strive to be helpful citizens of our local communities."



A member of the Athens County Engineers mans a backhoe as Wayne National Forest employees Bob Kerber (left) and Dan Anerino assist at the Big Bailey wetland.

For more information contact Gary Miller at (740) 753-0862

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