

WHAT'S NEW?

THE US FOREST SERVICE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

June 2012

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Combatting Illegal Logging in Peru**
- **US Forest Service Honors Outstanding Achievement in Bird, Bat and Butterfly Conservation**
- **Progress on Emerald Ash Borer Collaboration**
- **US Forest Service Assists with Historic Flooding and Disaster Management in Thailand**

For more information on any of these program areas, please visit www.fs.fed.us/global/

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The Office of International Programs is currently working to improve forest management, to conserve biodiversity and to foster the trade of sustainably harvested forest products around the world.

COMBATTING ILLEGAL LOGGING IN PERU

In Peru, the US Forest Service is currently collaborating with the Government and counterparts to enhance forest sector governance and promote legal trade in timber products. The work is vital in helping the country to comply with the obligations detailed in the **Environment Chapter and Annex on Forest Sector Governance of the US-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement**. The Annex could help to level the playing field in international trade for timber producers across the globe. About 15 percent of the world-wide trade of forest products is from illegally harvested wood. This



The US Forest Service is working in Peru with the Government and counterparts to combat illegal logging by enhancing forest sector governance and promoting legal trade in timber products

results in artificially-low prices for the illegal harvests, upsetting the balance in world markets. Efforts related to the Annex will help to ensure the legality of wood products exported to the United States and other countries, and build technical capacity for sustainable forest management. As in other countries, a

more level playing field in timber and timber products worldwide could benefit private industry in the US.

To that end, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) funded the US Forest Service in 2009 to develop the *Peru Forest Sector Initiative*. The work addresses several critical issues highlighted in the Annex including: development of an information and control system for forest and wildlife resources; chain of custody for CITES-listed species; environmental law enforcement and prosecution and several others.

Recent work includes a spring 2012 visit by a team of inventory specialists from national and regional agencies in Peru

to the Southern Research Station in Knoxville, TN, to work with US Forest Service researchers and inventory experts. The aim was to analyze data generated by their new forest inventory model for concessions. The model was successfully piloted in one region of Peru's Amazon, Loreto, in late 2011 and

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will be replicated in another region later this summer. In addition, based on exposure to the US Forest Service systems, the Peruvians initiated design of their own country-wide process for data collection, analysis, and reporting to stakeholders.

Another important development of the Peru Forest Sector Initiative is a new, automated **timber and wildlife tracking system** being developed in Peru. When it is fully implemented in 2014, the system will verify legal origin and allow compliance with chain of custody standards of CITES. Further, it will improve transparency, data sharing and fraud detection—critical for Peru's procurement process for timber tracking and control software.

The Peru Forest Sector Initiative is scheduled to continue through 2015.

US FOREST SERVICE HONORS OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS IN BIRD, BAT AND BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION

Associate Chief of the US Forest Service, Mary Wagner, presided over the 2012 Wings Across the Americas Conservation Awards ceremony. The event was held in Atlanta, GA, as part of the 77th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference. US Forest Service employees and their partners are celebrated at this annual awards ceremony for their outstanding work in the conservation of birds, bats, butterflies and dragonflies.

The US Forest Service, other federal agencies, state governments and non-governmental organizations invest heavily in protecting habitat for declining populations of migratory birds, many of which spend the winter in Latin America and the Caribbean. If habitats in these areas are not protected, the tremendous US domestic investment in conservation is wasted. The work is critical because migratory species play unique ecological roles and are intrinsically beautiful. Sadly, many birds, bats, butterflies and dragonflies continue to



US Forest Service's Associate Chief, Mary Wagner, honored the Children & Family Center, El Valor Children & Youth Services, El Valor Adult Services Program, and the Chicago Academy of Sciences and Its Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum--one of seven groups recognized--at the annual Wings Across the Americas Conservation Awards ceremony.

face a multitude of threats.

Successful conservation work typically happens through partnerships—and these award winning projects were no exception. All of the US Forest Service employees who received awards shared the stage with partners from a myriad of organizations. They included universities, volunteers, foundations, conservation organizations or private firms. The evening's Master of Ceremonies, Dr. Gregory Butcher, the Wings Across the Americas Program Coordinator, announced the winners for each of the following categories:

- The award for the **International Research and Partnership** category went to the US Forest Service Northern Research station's project **Habitat Requirements and Conservation Needs of At-Risk Neotropical Migrant Birds on their Wintering Grounds**. Partners in this work include US Geological Survey Patuxent Wildlife Research



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Center, Montes de Oro Coffee Cooperative, The Nature Conservancy (Nicaragua Field Office and the Latin America Program), Honduras Mesoamerican Development Institute, the Smithsonian Institution, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

- In the **Research and Partnership Award** category, the award went to ***Bird Responses to Invasive Species, Fire and Fuel Removal in Vulnerable Southwestern Ecosystems***. US Forest Service Award recipients came from the Rocky Mountain Research Station and Region 3, State and Private Forestry. Partners included the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the City of Albuquerque Open Space, the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge and the Joint Fire Science Program.

- There were two winners in the **Habitat Management and Partnership** category. The first was ***Conservation and Management of the Lesser Prairie-Chicken***. The US Forest Service award winners were from the Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands. Partners included the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

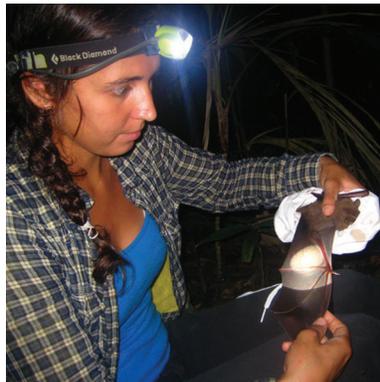
- The second award in the **Habitat Management and Partnership** category went to the US Forest Service's Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry and the Washington Office State and Private Forestry for their work on ***Chippewa Flowage Forest Conservation Easement***. Partners in this effort included the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Trust for Public Land and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

- The **Butterfly Conservation Award** went to

Interagency Mardon Skipper Work Group. The US Forest Service award recipients included the Region 6 Regional Office/Bureau of Land Management's Oregon State Office, the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, the Willamette National Forest, the Rogue-River/Siskiyou National Forest, and the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest. Partners in this effort included the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Xerces Society, the Medford Bureau of Land Management and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

- For the **Urban Communities in Conservation** category, the winner was ***Using Cultural Symbols to Introduce Monarch Conservation and Nature-Based Activities in Chicago***. The US Forest Service partnered with Children & Family Center, El Valor Children & Youth Services, El Valor Adult Services Program, and the Chicago Academy of Sciences and Its Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum.

- And in the last category of **Bat Conservation**, the winner was ***Workshops and Scholarships for Bat Conservation in the Americas***. The US Forest Service partnered with Bat Conservation International and the Walt Disney Company - Corporate Citizenship - Environment & Conservation Team.



The US Forest Service recognized the outstanding work done by the Agency, Bat Conservation International and the Walt Disney Company to conserve bats.

For more information, including the names of the individual winners, please visit the US Forest Service website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/global/wings>.

PROGRESS ON EMERALD ASH BORER COLLABORATION

In February, the US Forest Service's Office of International Programs and the Agriculture Research Service sponsored a scientific workshop at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History in

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The Emerald Ash Borer causes billions of dollars in damage and threatens to kill most of the ash trees throughout the continent.

Washington, DC. The workshop focused on the systematics of wood-boring beetles related to the emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*). The borer, which causes an estimated \$3.5 billion in annual damages in the U.S., threatens to kill most of the ash trees throughout North America. Researchers are keenly interested in identifying other, closely-related species of the emerald ash borer since they could also pose a serious threat to U.S. forests.

Attending this workshop was a Ph.D. student from the Chinese Academy of Sciences and two of the foremost experts on Agriline systematics, from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and the Czech Academy of Sciences.

This workshop furthered participants' understanding of beetle systematics and broadened their exposure to hundreds of specimens of wood-boring beetles related to the emerald ash borer.

US FOREST SERVICE ASSISTS WITH HISTORIC FLOODING AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN THAILAND

In late 2011, tropical storms coupled with strong monsoon rains flooded 65 provinces in Thailand. The historic flooding affected 13.6 million residents and left 813 dead; with an estimated loss of 400,000 jobs and economic losses of over \$43 billion. Among those assisting in the response and mitigation efforts was a cadre of 30 Thai disaster managers who had completed a series of US Forest Service-led training in Incident Command System (ICS). The Incident Command System, which was first developed by the US Forest Service for wildland firefighting, is a standardized, on-scene,

all-hazards incident management approach. It is now used in the United States for all types of incidents and is being adopted by other countries, including Thailand. The trainings were organized by Thailand's Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation and conducted by the US Forest Service's Disaster Management Program, with funding from U.S. Agency for International Development, Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA). The Thai Incident Command System cadre members served in a variety of functions during the flood response and were able to apply many of the principles they had learned during the courses.

As the flood waters rose, USAID/OFDA sent a disaster response team, including a team member from the US Forest Service who had conducted the training for the Thai disaster managers. He provided feedback on how Thai disaster managers had incorporated the newly-learned Incident Command System principles into response operations. With funding from USAID/OFDA and the U.S. Department of State, the US Forest Service is providing continued support to Thailand with training and technical visits. Thailand, serving as a model for the region, plans to share its lessons learned in adapting the Incident Command System with neighboring countries in South East Asia.



The US Forest Service was part of a disaster response team to Thailand, where floods as a result of monsoon rains have devastated provinces across Thailand.