

WHAT'S NEW?

THE US FOREST SERVICE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

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HIGHLIGHTS

- **US Forest Service Leads Delegation to Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Ministerial**
- **The Emerald Ash Borer: Update on a Successful Invasive**
- **Economic Assessment of Community Forest Management in the Brazilian Amazon**
- **US Forest Service Helps with Hunger in the Horn of Africa**
- **Transboundary Conservation and Management in the Tajik Pamirs**



The US Forest Service and partners in the United States and China are working together to prevent the spread of the emerald ash borer.

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

For more information:
1-202-273-4695



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.

US FOREST SERVICE LEADS DELEGATION TO ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION MINISTERIAL



In September, US Forest Service Associate Chief, Mary Wagner led the US delegation to Beijing, China, for the first Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Ministerial Meeting on Forests. The focus was on the important role that forests play in green growth, sustainable development, and climate change. Hosted by the Chinese Government, President Hu Jintao opened the event, calling for greater high-level support for forestry cooperation. His presence underscored the increased attention that China is giving environmental issues, both nationally and internationally.

Joining the Associate Chief was new US Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, Gary Locke, as well as representatives from the US Department of State and USDA's Food and Agriculture Service. Ms. Wagner spoke about the constructive role that APEC can play in promoting sustainable forest management, promoting trade in legally-harvested forest products,

and combating illegal logging and associated trade. She noted that a lack of clean water and air can result in negative social and economic impacts on communities and economies. She also shared that the US Forest Service is focusing on: promoting sustainably harvested forest products and the associated jobs; preventing the loss of large carbon sinks; and integrating watershed scale restoration to enhance forest and watershed resiliency.

The United States has been a long-time partner in the region. It has promoted sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation and actively participated in a range of multilateral and regional networks including FAO's Asia Pacific Forestry Commission and ASEAN's Wildlife Enforcement Network. Forests and forest products are vital to the health of many APEC economies, including the United States, which is one of the world's largest producers and consumers of wood and wood products. Forests are also critical to maintaining climate conditions, freshwater systems, productive soils and biodiversity—all of which are critical for food security and other key aspects of human well-being.

THE EMERALD ASH BORER: UPDATE ON A SUCCESSFUL INVASIVE

Entomologists from the US Forest Service and USDA Agriculture Research Service (ARS) returned from a successful summer field season in

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The Emerald Ash Borer has killed tens of millions of ash trees.

China and Vietnam where they worked with local experts to examine and collect specimens of woodboring beetles, which are the close relatives to the Emerald Ash Borer. In China, they collected 100 specimens, including one from the Emerald Ash Borer group and 10 species of *Agrilus*, to which the Emerald Ash Borer belongs. Collections in Vietnam yielded over 2,000 specimens of woodboring beetles, including two from the Emerald Ash Borer Group and over 200 specimens in the genus *Agrilus*. This information will be used to publish a fully illustrated identification manual and serve as the basis for training workshops and several illustrated books that will further disseminate this valuable information.

In addition to this, two Chinese entomologists will receive intensive training on the identification of Emerald Ash Borer and related species this winter. This cross-cultural exchange will contribute to both the taxonomic and biological understanding of the Emerald Ash Borer.

All of this work is part of a larger, strategic effort to protect our forests and the US economy, specifically, trade in sustainably managed forest products. Since its introduction into the United States, the borer has killed tens of millions of ash trees. With no natural enemies here, it has the potential to destroy most of this genus on the continent, which would result in billions of dollars of losses to the US economy. It can also devastate forests, decrease biodiversity and change the delicate balance of native species here. To prevent this, US Forest Service International Programs is working with Chinese counterparts and the ARS on a

three-year project to better understand why the borer is so successful. This will help predict and prevent potential future outbreaks by related woodboring beetles.

ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGEMENT IN THE BRAZILIAN AMAZON

For more than twenty years, the US Forest Service has worked with partners in Brazil on a large portfolio of natural resource activities. The agency lends scientific and technical expertise to Brazil in several key areas, including fire and environmental change, sustainable forest management, habitat management, and forest health. One integral component of sustainable forest management, planning and implementation in the Brazilian Amazon is community forest management. Success in these areas would provide multiple benefits to society, including a higher standard of living for rural communities through jobs creation, the promotion of sustainably harvested forest products trade and biodiversity conservation.

With funding from the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the US Forest Service has been helping to develop an economic assessment of commu-



Can community forest management projects succeed in the Amazon?

nity forest management projects. Many stakeholders are keenly interested in this information, including the Brazilian Government and the non-governmental organizations working with communities and forest management. The work consists of financial analyses of enterprises in two Amazonian communities: the Mamiraua in Amazonas state and Ambe in Para state. Both communities produce logs and boards, but on different scales. The assessment sought to evaluate if the two enterprises could be financially viable when all costs are included, including those that are usually subsidized e.g., technical assistance, equipment. The results show that both can be financially viable.

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The methodology developed in this work was used to develop a tool for monitoring and analyzing financial data for small enterprises in Brazil. In late September 2011, the first draft was tested by professionals who work with governmental and non-governmental organizations in community forestry in the Amazon region. The participants provided valuable feedback for improving this economic tool and were enthusiastic about using it for not only small scale timber production, but also non-timber forest product production models. The plan is to give a revised version of the tool to local partners in Brazil later this year. The results will be published in the journal, Ecological Economics.

US FOREST SERVICE HELPS WITH HUNGER IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

In the eastern Horn of Africa, drought in spring of 2011 led to food insecurity among pastoralists and populations in the marginal farming areas. In addition to below-normal harvests, shortages of grazing resources caused livestock to decline as well.

In July, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) activated a regional Disaster Assistance Response Team in Nairobi, Kenya, and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to monitor regional drought conditions, identify humanitarian needs, and coordinate response activities with other donors. A team was put in place to support field efforts and to coordinate all US government humanitarian efforts. With full program funding from USAID, the International Programs Disaster Assistance Support Program contributed to staffing the effort. Expertise in the Incident Command System and emergency response allows staff members to integrate quickly into the response effort. Support to the effort will continue through the end of the calendar year.



The US Forest Service works with partners in the Pamirs, home to unique wildlife species.

TRANSBOUNDARY CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT IN THE TAJIK PAMIRS

The US Forest Service is currently working to improve the management in the Pamirs, a complex series of mountain ranges separated by high valleys and a high arid plateau, and bordered by Afghanistan, China and Pakistan. One section of the Pamirs, some 80,000 square km, is found in the Central Asian nation of Tajikistan. Home to unique wildlife species including the Marco Polo sheep, the markhor, and the iconic snow leopard, the Pamirs are complex to manage and protect. Most agree that it must be done as a whole, rather than in a piecemeal way by the three individual countries. Despite complex political and socio-economic relationships, the need for transboundary collaboration is essential to the long term health of the ecosystem.

To promote transboundary collaboration to conserve this unique landscape, the US Forest Service partnered with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) to conduct a comprehensive stakeholder assessment in Tajikistan. The group also held a seminar on conservation and livelihoods in the Tajik Pamirs. A US Forest Service protected area specialist accompanied the research team on site visits. This

trip revealed a wide range of stakeholder concerns and potential threats to conservation of the unique wildlife found in the area. They include pasture degradation, conflicts between domestic livestock and wildlife, poor implementation of benefit sharing arrangements from trophy hunting, illegal hunting, and a lack of capacity and financial resources for conservation. Following the assessment, the team worked with stakeholders to identify and discuss solutions to these challenges. This type of collaborative work is possibly the best way to protect this fragile alpine ecosystem and the communities that depend on it.