# THE CHIEF’S DESK

# PEOPLE, PLACES AND THINGS

February 15, 2013

**When walkways freeze, walk safely please.**

**WO-NFS: Decision to combine Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forests in Idaho**

On Feb. 11, Deputy Chief Leslie Weldon announced the decision to administratively combine the Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forests in Idaho. The decision finalizes a five-year process to consolidate leadership and programs between the two forests.

**National Rangeland Management awards announced**

Rangeland Management Director Charlie Richmond recently presented five national rangeland management awards at the Society for Range Management annual meeting. Dr. Stanley G. Kitchen and the University of Arizona-Cooperative Extension Rangeland Monitoring Program were each given Research and Development awards. National Forest System awards went to Chuck Duncan and to S. Martinez Livestock, Inc.

**WO-EMC: 2012 Planning Rule Proposed Directives released**

The Forest Service [has posted online](http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/planningrule/directives) the proposed directives for the 2012 Planning Rule for public comment. The proposed directives are a key set of agency guidance documents that, once finalized, direct the implementation of the 2012 Planning Rule. These directives will support consistent approaches to achieving the broad goals of the 2012 Planning Rule. A notice of availability will be published in the *Federal Register*, kicking off a 60-day comment period.

**WO: Engineering - Forest Service and USDA agencies participate in National Engineering Week**

Please join the Washington Office Engineering staff in celebrating National Engineering Week at the Whitten Patio on Feb. 20 from noon until 4 p.m.  This event will include exhibits from all USDA engineering staffs that demonstrate the diverse and important contributions they make toward their respective agency missions.  The Forest Service engineering exhibit will showcase their unique mission requirements and innovative solutions, embodying their mission to “provide premier engineering services across a diverse natural environment through innovative technical solutions.”

**WO-FAM: Fire prevention announcements on DIY**

Viewers of DIY Network and the Home & Garden Network will learn about Fire Adapted Communities this month. The Ad Council and the Fire Adapted Communities program worked with DIY to produce public service announcements using DIY on-air talent. The PSAs highlight the Firewise and Ready, Set, Go! programs, Community Wildfire Protection Plans, and the use of mutual aid agreements, safe zones and evacuation routes.

**WO-R&D: Global agroforestry guidelines include Forest Service input**

On Feb. 5, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization [announced the publication](http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/169259/icode/) of its new policy guide, "[Advancing Agroforestry on the Policy Agenda: A guide for decision-makers](http://www.fao.org/docrep/017/i3182e/i3182e00.pdf)." Forest Service staff in International Programs, Research & Development and State & Private Forestry as well as USDA colleagues submitted comments on the draft guidelines, which include references to agroforestry in the U.S. and the USDA Agroforestry Strategic Framework.

**Books link natural and social sciences**

Forest Service employees have contributed to two recently published books, “Forest Landscape Restoration: Integrating Natural and Social Sciences” and “A Goal-Oriented Approach to Forest Landscape Restoration.” Research Ecologist John Stanturf served as lead editor on both books, which used 105 authors from 12 countries.

**WO-SusOps:**  **Four units partner with Sustainable Operations**

Multi-disciplinary teams of employees on the White River, Tahoe and Umpqua national forests and the Durham, N.H., field office were chosen as FY13 Net Zero Fellows.  Sustainable Operations will assist the fellows in developing and implementing net zero projects in energy, water, or waste prevention and recycling.  Each team has signed a resolution to adopt net zero as a guiding principle and have secured leadership support for their efforts.

**WO-W&WSR: New edition of Wag Tales available online**

The Chief’s Wilderness Advisory Group just completed the winter 2013 edition of its newsletter, “[WAG Tales](http://www.wilderness.net/NWPS/documents/FS/WAG_Newsletter_Winter2013.pdf).”  Part of the group’s 2013 emphasis is working toward a new performance measure for the wilderness program to replace the 10-Year Wilderness Stewardship Challenge, which ends in 2014.

**R1: Teachers complete Forest for Every Classroom workshop**

Sixteen teachers recently graduated from the Missoula & Lower Clark Fork Forest for Every Classroom workshop conducted by the Lolo National Forest and its partners. The goal of the year-long workshop is to provide teachers with focused, hands-on, place-based learning and teaching techniques in a variety of natural settings that help them increase their students’ understanding of forested landscapes and their communities.

**Northern Region gets boost from volunteers**

In FY 2012, the Northern Region’s Volunteer and Service Program saw an increase in number of participants from 2,975 to 3,563 and an increase in total hours contributed by volunteers and service partners from 214,344 to 239,538. The work accomplished by these volunteers was valued at more than $5.2 million, an increase of 15 percent over 2011.

**R2:** **Rangeland management award received**

Bob Mountain, range and weeds program manager for the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests, Pawnee National Grassland, Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland, was recently given an Outstanding Achievement Award for stewardship at the annual [Society for Rangeland Management](http://rangelands.org/) meeting in Oklahoma City. Mountain was recognized for his dedication to rangeland management, work ethic and ability to work with partners.

**Team building exercise prepares crew for fire season**

A 10-member AmeriCorps crew assigned to the Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands is preparing for the upcoming wildland fire season. The crew members, many from large East Coast cities, are working on projects that benefit range, wildlife and historical areas. Additionally, the crew is improving the trail system near Picture Canyon in Baca County and Vogel Canyon in Otero County as a team-building exercise before their first wildland fire assignment.

**R3: Forest Service ASC HRM employees experience the great outdoors**

Hearing impaired employees from Albuquerque Service Center – Human Resources Management recently visited the Cibola National Forest and Grasslands’ Mountainair Ranger District to learn about life on a district. District staffs met with the employees and, through the assistance of an interpreter, described their work and showcased some of the projects taking place on the district.

**Cibola employee receives award from the National Wild Turkey Federation**

Jeanne Dawson, a forester on the Cibola National Forest and Grasslands, was recently selected for a national award from the National Wild Turkey Federation. Dawson and federation regional biologist Scott Lerich received the Habitat Management Project Award for their work in wildlife habitat improvement on the Bluewater Ecosystem Restoration and Puerco Landscape Planning Projects.

**R5:** **2013 Siskiyou sled dog races**
More than 100 spectators and 20 racing teams from all over the West Coast gathered at the Klamath National Forest's Deer Mountain/Chuck Best Snowmobile Park near Weed, Calif., on Feb. 9-10 to watch and compete in six different race categories. While the many sled dogs were a draw for children and adults alike, every musher brought a unique and interesting story to the race as well. Many use rescue dogs in their highly-trained teams.

**Wild and Scenic Smith River**The Smith River Alliance, in partnership with the Six Rivers National Forest (Calif.), recently completed a video that showcases the exceptional qualities of the Wild and Scenic Smith River and its unique watershed. The project was made possible through funding from Del Norte County Resource Advisory Committee Secure Rural Schools Act Title II funding. The Smith River is California's only undammed river and supports some of the state's healthiest runs of coho and Chinook salmon and steelhead and coastal cutthroat trout.

**R6: Okanogan-Wenatchee receives regional safety awards**

Regional Forester Kent Connaughton recently presented two safety awards to the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest. The first, “Wildland Fire Team Safety Award for Excellence,” recognized the forest’s work in communicating expectations, honoring a commitment to employee safety and deliberate risk management. The second was to the forest’s Utility Terrain Vehicle Examiner’s Cadre for developing and implementing training to ensure safe and standardized operations.

**R8: Cherokee strengthens ties with Job Corps students**

Cherokee National Forest employees recently hosted Jacob’s Creek Job Corps students in their first annual Groundhog Career Shadow Week. Students learned about careers in recreation, lands, engineering, fire and timber. Some of these same students recently built a fee station for the Jacob’s Creek campground and day-use area.

**Longleaf pine restoration improves resiliency of Oconee National Forest**

This month, the Oconee National Forest in Georgia is planting 86 acres of longleaf pine to offset Southern pine beetle outbreaks in loblolly pine stands. Last month the forest conducted the first prescribed burn in 700 acres of longleaf planted in 2008 because fire-adapted longleaf pine is more resistant to the beetle and to disease and provides habitat for the red cockaded woodpecker.

**R9: Chippewa employee engages the public through stories**

During the past year, Chippewa National Forest employee Kelly Barrett has connected citizens to the land through a series of wildlife stories posted on the forest’s website under “[Stories to Share](http://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/chippewa/home/?cid=stelprdb5389316&width=full)” and published in local newspapers. The “Western Itasca Review” newspaper has asked Barrett to continue this effort with a monthly column called “Gifts from the Chippewa.”

 **Region celebrates exciting partnership with Shedd Aquarium**

Representatives from Chicago’s [Shedd Aquarium](http://www.sheddaquarium.org/) recently visited the regional office to share accomplishments from their challenge cost-share agreement with the Forest Service and to explore future opportunities. With 2.2 million visitors annually and nearly 800 volunteers, Shedd is an excellent partner in the Forest Service’s effort to connect citizens to the land and water.

**IITF: Institute sponsors astronaut’s visit**The International Institute of Tropical Forestry and the Center for Urban, Community and Business Action recently sponsored the visit of Puerto Rican astronaut Joseph M. Acabá and Smokey Bear to the Capetillo Garden, Nursery and Community Urban Forest. Puerto Rico Wildland Firefighters, local residents and nearly 100 children from elementary schools also attended.

**NA S&PF: Morgantown takes CFC award**The Northern Research Station, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry and Forest Health Technology Enterprise Team in Morgantown, W.Va., received the “Campaign Cornerstone” award for their 2012 Combined Federal Campaign efforts.

**Northeastern Area staffs conference**

The Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program sponsored the New Partners for Smart Growth national conference in Kansas City, Mo., Feb. 7-9, organizing educational sessions on climate change mitigation and green infrastructure. Employees staffed a display for more than 1,100 diverse city mayors, planners, developers, realtors and environmental justice advocates with support from Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry staff.

**FPL: Small business owner touts benefits of partnering**

Through Small Business Innovation Research grants, researchers at the Forest Products Laboratory have worked in partnership with Whole Trees Architecture for several years. The joint projects study the use of whole trees as construction material in place of traditional components. Amelia Baxter, co-founder of Whole Trees, was interviewed on ["WisBusiness.com: The Show"](http://www.wisbusiness.com/index.iml?Article=288913) where she discussed how working with FPL can be very favorable to small businesses and has been invaluable to moving their business and vision forward.

**Partnership acknowledged for role in sustainable product development, job creation**

San Diego’s [KUSI-TV morning show](http://www.kusi.com/video?autoStart=true&topVideoCatNo=default&clipId=8326775) segment recently featured ECOR technology, a product developed in a cooperative effort between the Forest Products Laboratory and Noble Environmental Technologies. Founder Bob Noble talks about how his company partnered with USDA to develop a valuable, sustainable product that promotes job growth in the San Diego area. ECOR is a strong, light-weight bio-based panel that puts waste material to use in many applications including furniture, wall panels, displays, stage sets and automotive parts.

**NRS: Scientist honored with Karkhagne Award**

Dan Dey, a project leader with the Northern Research Station in Columbia, Mo., is the recipient of the 2013 Karkhagne Award, the Missouri Chapter of the Society of American Forester’s highest honor. The award cited Dey’s scientific papers, professional presentations, leadership in oak silviculture and commitment to developing and delivering science and technology that improves forest management.

**Scientist serves on international team to assess risk of Emerald Ash Borer to Europe**

Robert Haack, a research entomologist with the Northern Research Station, served as the U.S. representative on a recent Emerald Ash Borer Pest Risk Assessment team for the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization in Paris. The organization plans to use the pest risk assessment to regulate plant and wood products from countries where emerald ash borer is native as well as the U.S., Canada and European Russia, where it has been introduced.

**PNWRS: Study explores source of mountain valley widths**

Station research fisheries biologist Kelly Burnett co-authored [a new study](http://geology.gsapubs.org/content/early/2013/02/07/G33979.1.full.pdf%2Bhtml) that explores the natural processes that control the width of valleys and is based on an analysis of the Umpqua River basin in Oregon’s Coast Range. The findings can help inform river restoration efforts designed to improve habitat for coho salmon.

**PSWRS and PNWRS: Stations assist Mexico’s efforts in reducing greenhouse gases**

Dr. Armando Gonzalez-Caban, a research economist at Pacific Southwest Research Station-Riverside, and Dr. Ernesto Alvarado-Celestino, a forest fire scientist from the Pacific Northwest Research Station, recently hosted representatives from the Mexico National Forestry Commission to share expertise on developing and implementing a methodology for estimating greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, Drs. Gonzalez-Caban and Alvarado-Celestino discussed ways to implement a fire economics simulation system to evaluate the efficiency of Mexico’s fire management programs, which may affect the amount of emissions released.

**RMRS: Joint effort seeks feedback on software**
Rocky Mountain Research Station’s Wildland Fire Management Research, Development and Application office has partnered with the Joint Fire Science Program to evaluate the Interagency Fuels Treatment Decision Support System. The groups will organize and facilitate 12 workshops to gather user feedback to provide an assessment of the support system to agency and department leaders.

**SRS: McNulty named “Most Distinguished” in Forest Science**

Dr. Steven McNulty, research ecologist with the Southern Research Station, recently received the agency’s national Research and Development “Distinguished Science Award.” He is recognized for sustained research productivity, proactive science technology, innovative leadership, applied forest science and longtime federal service.

**Press Announcements**

**Forest Service offers practical advice for using insect-killed trees**

**WASHINGTON, Feb. 12, 2012 -** A new manual released by the U.S. Forest Service provides guidance on how best to use the millions of dead and dying urban trees infected by invasive insects in the eastern United States. The free publication, developed by the Forest Service Forest Products Laboratory and the University of Minnesota Duluth, offers insight into the wide variety of products and markets that are available and practical advice for considering the many options. Uses for insect-killed wood include lumber, furniture, cabinetry, flooring and pellets for wood-burning energy facilities.

**Forest Service seeks public input on planning rule directives**

**WASHINGTON, Feb. 15, 2013 -** The U.S. Forest Service has released and is seeking public comment on the proposed 2012 Planning Rule Directives, the key set of agency guidance documents that direct implementation of the 2012 Planning Rule. Today's announcement will be followed by the publication of a notice in the *Federal Register*.

**Press Interviews**

On Feb. 15, Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell interviewed with the Society of American Foresters magazine, *Forestry Source,* on longleaf pine restoration and partnerships.

On Feb. 11, Forest Service Deputy Chief Leslie Weldon interviewed with *KWMR West Marin Community Radio* on Aldo Leopold and Forest Service history.

On Feb. 11, Dave Cleaves, Climate Advisor to the Forest Service Chief, interviewed with the Society of American Foresters magazine, *Forestry Source,* on the USDA Climate Assessment Report.

On Feb. 11, Dave Cleaves, Climate Advisor to the Forest Service Chief, interviewed with *Federal Times* on climate issues.

On Feb. 8 Doug Nash, Forest Service Chief Information Officer, interviewed with *Federal News* *Radio* on new technology and budget.

**Executive Travel**

Chief Tidwell will be in Raleigh, N.C., to speak at the International Association of Wildland Fire Conference on February 21.

State and Private Forestry Deputy Chief Jim Hubbard will be attending the 2013 Wildland Fire Pre-Season Risk Management Workshop in Golden, Colo., on February 21.

**Personnel News**

**Jacqueline Buchanan** has accepted the position of Region 2, Director, Renewable Resources in the Rocky Mountain Regional Office in Golden CO. She is currently the Region 4 Forest Supervisor on the Bridger-Teton National Forest in Jackson WY.

**Richard Cooksey** has accepted the position of Region 2, Director of State and Private Forestry in the Rocky Mountain Regional Office in Golden CO. He is currently the Region 2 Deputy Forest Supervisor on the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and the Thunder Basin National Grassland in Laramie WY.

**Willie Thompson** has accepted the position of Region 2, Director, Safety, Fire and Aviation Management in Golden CO. She is currently the Region 5 Deputy Director for Fire and Aviation Management in the Rocky Mountain Regional Office.

**John Exline** has accepted the position of Region 5 Deputy Forest Supervisor on the San Bernardino National Forest in San Bernardino CA. He is currently the Region 5 District Ranger for the Hume Lake Ranger District on the Sequoia National Forest in Dunlap CA.

**Daniel Lovato** has accepted the position of Region 5 Deputy Forest Supervisor on the Angeles National Forest in Arcadia CA. He is currently the Region 2 District Ranger on the Clear Creek Ranger District of the Arapaho/Roosevelt National Forest in Idaho Springs CO.

**John Lint** has accepted the position of Region 8 Forest Supervisor on the Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests in Columbia SC. He is currently the Region 8 Deputy Forest Supervisor on the National Forests of Mississippi in Jackson MS.

**Footprint Area of the Month:** Fleet & Transportation

**Action Item of the Week:** Recycle motor oil

Disposing of used motor oil by pouring it into storm or sewer drains, dumping it onto the ground, or placing it with household trash may create risks to human health and the environment - **used oil from a single oil change can ruin a million gallons of fresh water, a year's supply for 50 people**. Pour all collected used oil into a clean, empty, sealable container such as a plastic milk jug or specialized used oil containers, which may be purchased at auto parts stores. Drop the container off at a used oil collection site that accepts and recycles used motor oil. These sites can be identified by an amber and black “Recycle Oil” logo. Call 800-CLEANUP for the nearest used oil disposal facility. For more energy-saving tips, and information on the Forest Service Sustainable Operations, visit [our website](http://dvspdevpoc/sites/sus-ops/Pages/Default.aspx).

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