

Forest RPG Priorities for 2009

Progress Report to the Natural Resources Policy Committee - July 19, 2009

- 1 - Identify and explore emerging forestry issues and opportunities (e.g. forest health, ecosystem services, climate change, and carbon markets).**
 - Updates on all of these topics are provided to conservation districts through monthly issues of *Forestry Notes* and are part of the Forest RPG meeting discussions in Denver.

- 2 - Monitor and influence ongoing legislative, regulatory, and policy efforts affecting forest landowners and managers (e.g. bioenergy, stewardship contracting).**
 - Partner Caucus on Fire Suppression Funding Solutions – testimony July 21, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 - Forest-Climate Working Group report developing recommendations of federal climate legislation

- 3 - Assist NACD in fulfilling contractual obligations for Forest Service and Department of Interior cooperative agreements.**
 - All deliverables in both agreements are on schedule.
 - DoI agreement is ending July 31, 2009 after 5-years. Three new desk guides are being made available: 1) Woody Biomass Desk Guide and Tool Kit, 2) Community Wildfire Desk Guide and Tool Kit and 3) Disaster Debris Tool Kit. A CD containing all three guides will be included in the August issue of *Forestry Notes* and will be posted on-line at: <http://nacdnet.org/resources/guides>

- 4 - Conduct joint meeting of Forestry RPG with NASF Forest Resources Management Committee in August, 2009.**
 - Meeting is planned and organized for August 4-6 in Denver, Colorado. Attendance includes US Forest Service Cooperative Forestry leadership and staff; NASF executive director and 6 state foresters; other federal partners and Forest RPG members.

- 5 - Keep districts informed of forestry related emerging issues and resource tools and technology through *Forestry Notes* and other NACD communication tools.**
 - *Forestry Notes* continues to be distributed to 4,700 natural resource offices early each month and eNOTES frequently contains many forestry items. The Spring issue of *The Resource* carried several important articles including a feature story on market based conservation, cap and trade legislation, economic stimulus funding, and an article by Sally Collins, the new Director of USDA's Office of Ecosystem Services and Management.

- 6 - Develop a strategy for delivering *Forestry Notes* at the reduced 2009 funding level to implement as early as September of 2009.**
 - US Forest Service has restored funding, however, we continue to plan for reductions in future years and are exploring increasing use of electronic distribution and will be discussed at our August Forest RPG meeting.

7 - Actively participate in the Joint Forestry Team (NACD, NRCS, FS, NASF) efforts to improve delivery of technical assistance to forest landowners; continue advancing our BLM – DoI, partnership; and initiate and strengthen forestry related partnerships with other agencies and organizations at the national, regional, and state level.

- Contracted and populated new Joint Forestry Team Web site:
<http://jointforestryteam.org/>
- NACD President Steve Robinson and NACD Board Member Johnny Sundstrom (OR) participated in the May 4 meeting of the Joint Forestry Team (Team) leadership in Washington, D.C. The meeting included a national webconference providing a national overview, highlights of team activities and 2008 Farm Bill implementation. Over 120 offices across the country participated in the webconference.
- Invitation for Doug Loudenslager or Steve Robinson to speak at the NASF Annual Meeting in September.
- NACD forestry participation as included: working on two forest coalitions advocating for a broad and inclusive definition of woody biomass in energy and climate legislation; AFF Independent Standards Review Panel; 5th 25x'25 National Summit; annual meeting of the Sustainable Urban Forestry Coalition; Social and Economic Committee of the Forest Health Initiative; and Western Joint Forestry Team.

8 - Advocate continued FS and NRCS support for the National Agroforestry Center. Continue to advance the expansion of farm bill programs for forestry (e.g. EQIP, WHIP, WRP, and CStP)

- Forest RPG will discuss National Agroforestry Center activities with USFS and NRCS during our August Forest RPG meeting.
- NACD is preparing a new forest landowner brochure on forestry opportunities in the Farm Bill in partnership with The Nature Conservancy and the American Tree Farm System.

9 - Develop plans for 2011 “Year of the Forest” Stewardship Theme

- NACD’s stewardship materials will carry a forestry theme, coinciding with the United Nations International Year of the Forests in 2011.

Submitted July 15, 2009
By Charles Holmes, Chairman
NACD Forest Resources Policy Group