

10/18/2006

Greetings to all recent and past Bark Beetle Technical Working Group participants!

During our recent meeting in Fairmont Hot Springs, Montana, we announced that funds (~\$20,000) were again being provided through Harold Thistle (FHTET). Harold has made 'seed' funds for worthy projects available for many years and continues to feel they are useful for promoting research projects that might have a hard time finding funding, particularly during lean financial years.

Designation of this money (FY2007) will be determined through the following process:

- 1) send a one page (no more) proposal outlining your research question to Sheri Smith (ssmith@fs.fed.us) by November 13th, 2006
- 2) proposals are not limited to Forest Service employees
- 3) identify which priority(s) are addressed by your project (by number/letter; see attached list developed during the CY2006 meeting)
- 4) a subcommittee of 1 FHP representative from each Region has been identified to review the proposals and provided a recommendation to Harold
- 5) Harold will let the recipient know they will be receiving the funds, likely before the end of 2006. Distribution of funds will occur as soon as possible after January 1st.

Any questions about the proposals or the processes should be directed to Brytten Steed (bsteed@fs.fed.us; 801-476-9732) or Sheri Smith (ssmith@fs.fed.us; 530-252-6667).

Sincerely,

/s/ Brytten Steed

BBTWG Agenda Chair-CY2006

10/19/2006

Hi All, I wanted to jump in here and first of all apologize for missing the Butte Meeting, I literally had my bags packed and then came down with a nasty flu bug and cancelled my trip the day before my scheduled flight.

I wanted to say that the funding for the BBWG group basically exists because the group is focused and productive making the funding easy to justify. The history of this funding has borne this out as a number of small, applied projects have been successfully undertaken.

A complaint was lodged last year that my assignment of the money based on a vote at the BBWG meeting might be allowing undo influence by private sector participants. Instead of contesting this premise, after discussions with Steve Munson and Brytten, the group came up with this approach (outlined in Brytten's note) to allotting the money. I think the outlined approach resolves any concerns.

I need to point out that I can't fund 'research' projects as such, but the kinds of projects that lead in a direct way to operational methods, methods development, equipment development, operational approaches or evaluation of existing techniques are OK. I would point out that most of the projects that have been funded with these dollars over the last few years have had substantial participation by FS Research (capitol R) and I am quite comfortable with that.

Finally, I would point out that \$20K won't go a long way considering multiple proposals. I will commit to keeping an eye out for funding of proposals that aren't funded in this initial cut. Also, feel free to call me with needs as the year progresses. Funding opportunities come and go occasionally and the best way to approach this uncertainty is to have definite, justifiable funding needs in queue.

Thanks, Har

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Bark Beetle Technical Working Group Research Priorities List – CY2006

1. Improve methods to predict where, when, and how much bark beetle activity will occur on forest landscape
 - a. Evaluate methods for determining the relationship between tree physiology and susceptibility to bark beetle attack, including stress factors and constitutive and induced resistance.
 - b. Define methods for predicting the occurrence, rate of spread, size, duration and impact of outbreaks for individual bark beetle species.
 - c. Refine methods of evaluating landscape – level susceptibility to bark beetle outbreaks.
 - d. Determine the role of climate change in predicting bark beetle outbreaks.
 - e. Utilize information from all possible sources to define what constitutes an outbreak.
 - f. Integrate all of the above into operational, predictive models for significant bark beetle – host systems.

2. Clarify results and interactions between bark beetle populations, wildfires, and prescribed fire
 - a. Fire, fuels, and beetles. Define short & long-term ecological relationships associated with bark beetle populations, wildfires and prescribed fire.
 - b. Projects should meet National Fire Plan objectives.
 - c. Develop tech transfer tools for bark beetle/fire interactions for the general public.

3. Evaluate, quantify, and describe the effects of no action.
 - a. What are post-outbreak conditions on treated versus untreated lands?
 - b. Is it possible to see differences in species composition, diversity or species shifts as a result of not taking specific management actions?
 - c. What are the consequences of bark beetle outbreaks to forest ecological function, e.g. 1990's spruce beetle outbreak in Alaska?
 - d. What are the costs of "do nothing" alternatives?
 - e. Document and summarize case histories.

4. Develop additional technologies for using natural attractants and repellents such as pheromones to protect forest resources
 - a. Summarize what is currently known about the effectiveness of semiochemicals.

- b. Develop an appropriate “clearing house” for semiochemical information (webpage, case studies, etc.)
 - c. Develop new and improve existing semiochemical technologies
- 5. Validate silvicultural techniques to meet various management objectives
 - a. Evaluate and document current conditions of previously installed (10+ years) silvicultural treatments to determine risk to bark beetle (LPP)
 - b. What are slash-treatment alternatives?
 - c. What fuels treatments may change hazard ratings for bark beetles?
 - d. “What are the effects of fuel reduction treatments, including thinning, on bark beetle populations”
 - e. Install demonstration areas where stands are silviculturally manipulated according to established risk rating to geographically refine risk models
- 6. Develop additional technologies and strategies for using insecticides to selectively protect priority resource values on forest landscapes
 - a. Evaluate insecticide delivery systems such as sprays, electrostatic, or injections.
 - b. Determine the effectiveness of insecticides for less studied conifer species.
 - c. Determine the effectiveness of using lethal trap trees.
 - d. Summarize what is currently known about the effectiveness of insecticides.
- 7. Facilitate technology transfer, improve communication with land managers, and inform the general public.
 - a. Strengthen resource education and technology transfer.
 - b. Strengthen taxonomy expertise and encourage training sessions to foster identification skills.
 - c. Inform land managers and general public of the political/legal ramifications of what we do/don't do and should do/can't do.