



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA Forest Service Awards Over \$1.5 Million to Enhance Hardwood Forests

PRINCETON, WV— Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Director Kathryn Maloney announced that the U.S. Forest Service is awarding more than \$1.5 million in grants to 23 competitively selected projects. The grants encourage innovation and the sharing of processing and marketing knowledge with wood products manufacturers in the Eastern United States. The primary goal of the grants is to keep local wood businesses globally competitive and sustainable.

"An important component of improving the health of hardwood forests is to maintain a vibrant forest products industry that has the ability to sustainably utilize lower-value trees for products that will assist our citizens with their energy needs as well as provide locally-produced wood products used in our daily lives," said Maloney. "These projects will help advance the use of woody biomass for energy, and support the adoption of new forest products and their markets from our eastern hardwood forests."

Selections were based on a number of factors, including consideration of whether the project or grant recipient could:

- Maintain the economic competitiveness of hardwood industries.
- Bring information and technology to existing and emerging businesses that develop and manufacture wood products.
- Bring marketing and business-related skills to existing and emerging wood products businesses.
- Encourage the adoption of new technology to improve competitiveness and profitability.
- Provide support and key information to entrepreneurs and start-up businesses.
- Address global issues and assist communities and industries facing threats from invasive species, such as the emerald ash borer.

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- Increase the use of woody biomass for domestic energy use.

The maximum grant amount is \$100,000. Grant recipients are required to match Federal funds, dollar for dollar. The selected projects will provide matching funds in excess of this requirement, totaling \$1.9 million, for a grand total of approximately \$3.4 million invested in these endeavors. The 23 grant recipients include:

Agri-Tech Producers, LLC (Columbia, S.C.), \$100,000
Allison Tree Care, Inc. (Verona, Wis.), \$43,000
Architectural Woodwork Institute (Potomac Falls, Va.), \$92,000
Concord University (Princeton, W.Va.), 58,860
Conway & Robison, LLC (Sharpsburg, Ga.), 79,100
CuddleBug Firewood & Forestry Products (Campbell Hill, Ill.), \$15,000
Haywood Community College (Clyde, N.C.), \$77,522
Itasca Economic Development Corporation (Grand Rapids, Minn.), \$50,000
Maine Forest Service (Augusta, Maine), \$76,879
Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences (Brunswick, Maine), \$50,000
National Network of Forest Practitioners (Athens, Ohio), \$100,000
North Carolina State University (Raleigh, N.C.), \$96,874
National Hardwood Lumber Association (Memphis, Tenn.), \$25,000
Penn State University (University Park, Pa.), \$89,561
University of Minnesota Duluth (Minneapolis, Minn.), \$89,500
Upper Peninsula Resource Conservation District (Marquette, Mich.), \$ 48,700
Vermont Wood Manufacturers Association (Rutland, Vt.), \$42,647
Virginia Tech University (Blacksburg, Va.), \$98,786, \$45,928, \$32,050, and \$27,750 (4 projects)
Wood Machinery Manufacturers of America (Philadelphia, Pa.), \$78,441
Young Furniture Mfg. (Bow, N.H.), \$100,000

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Ten projects will address increasing the economic competitiveness of the hardwood industry, with grant awards totaling \$743,147. Six projects will focus on woody biomass utilization using grant awards totaling \$340,579. An additional four projects focus on education with \$222,272 in grant funds, and three projects pertain to urban wood utilization and invasive species control, with grant awards totaling \$211,600. The selected projects competed with many other worthy proposals. All proposed projects combined were seeking \$5.1 million in Federal funds.

Funding is provided through the U.S. Forest Service Wood Education and Resource Center, located in Princeton, WVa., and administered by the agency's Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry organization. The Center's mission is to work with the forest products industry toward sustainable forest products production for the eastern hardwood forest region. It provides state-of-the-art training, technology transfer, networking opportunities, applied research, and information. For more information, visit <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/werc/>.

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