



# 2005 Accomplishments

## State and Private Forestry

USDA Forest Service—Rocky Mountain Region

Americans have a great treasure that has become more and more vulnerable to loss in recent years. That treasure is the forested land under private or state ownership — nonfederal forests. They represent 70% of the forests of the Nation, and are under constant threat from development pressures and fragmentation. This precious resource can literally disappear, hundreds of acres at a time. Future generations depend on all of us to keep these lands healthy, productive, and sustainable so they meet our present needs as well as those in the coming decades. The unique federal role in reinforcing the value and functions of forested lands spans ownerships from remote wilderness to urban green space. We are moving forward in this critical mission, shoulder to shoulder with our partners, the State Foresters in Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wyoming.



**Rick Cables**  
Regional Forester,  
Rocky Mountain Region

### These are our Programs:

#### Cooperative Forestry

- Forest Stewardship
- Forest Land Enhancement Program
- Forest Legacy Program
- Urban and Community Forestry
- Economic Action and Biomass Utilization

#### Cooperative Fire Protection

- State Fire Assistance
- Volunteer Fire Assistance
- Federal Excess Personal Property

#### Forest Health Management

- Federal Lands
- Cooperative Lands

#### Healthy Forests

#### Tribal Relations

### Contact us:

USDA Forest Service—R2  
740 Simms Street  
Golden, CO 80401  
303-275-5131  
<http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/>

### Especially Noteworthy:



After years of technical assistance and work with our DOE and State Energy partners, Aquila's Canon City Power Plant is now co-firing wood with coal and has received certification to issue EcoPower Certificates, also known as Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) or green tags. This renewable energy is being generated by biomass co-firing from forest thinning. This is the first time that forest biomass will be used as an energy source for RECs offered on the voluntary market.



Under the FSP, the South Dakota Division of Forestry provided advice to private landowners on tree salvage, insect and disease control, erosion control, grass reseeding and tree planting.

## Forest Stewardship Programs (FSP)

In 2005 our Federal Forest Stewardship dollars (\$1,177,800) helped State Partners:

- Provide professional forestry technical assistance to 6,104 non-industrial private forest landowners;
- Conduct 31,864 acres of non-industrial private forest improvement;
- Provide forestry education that influenced the improvement of 102,241 non-industrial private forested acres;
- Develop 441 Forest Stewardship Plans and revised 21 Plans covering 40,034 acres.

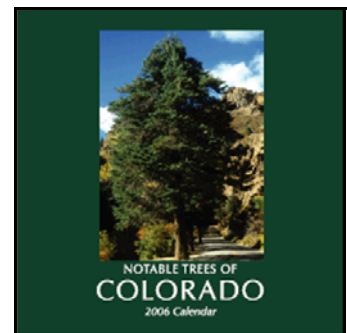
Additionally, each of our States began developing their own GIS databases in support of the national Spatial Analysis Project. Upon completion, States will be able to identify important forested watersheds; record planned and completed management activities by landowner; and generate reports electronically at the touch of a few buttons.

Non-industrial Private Land Under Stewardship Plans						
	CO	KS	NE	SD	WY	Total
New Stewardship Acres - 2005	8,285	3,644	3,614	5,188	13,783	34,514
Stewardship Acres – 1991-present	546,074	89,618	95,786	55,398	360,316	1,147,192
Estimated Non-industrial Private Forest Acres	6,674,370	2,318,358	1,396,470	887,880	1,999,252	11,189,830

## Urban and Community Forestry (UCF)

In 2005, the UCF program provided \$1.55 million in financial assistance to state partners which engaged nearly 7 million people, 87% of the population in the Region. Volunteers donated 77,248 hours of work worth over \$1.1 million in these communities. The growing wildland urban interface continues to create challenges in managing open space for invasive weeds, degrading water and air quality, and in hazardous fuel accumulations that pose a fire risk. From the Black Hills to the Front Range, communities are growing. The program focuses on delivering services on-the-ground by providing tools and skills to address urban forest health through inventories, training, and other management efforts.

- **Conservation education and community forestry** partnered in the city of Cheyenne, Wyoming to develop a tree house, interpretive trail and community forestry nature center. Colorful, outdoor interpretive panels that explain community forestry have been placed there and in parks, along greenways, and in other high traffic areas in cities throughout the state.
- **Improving Water Quality through forestry practices** is demonstrated in the Kansas City metropolitan area by the Marais des Cygnes Riparian Initiative which implements forestry best management practices in high priority watersheds. The Lake Region RC&D contracts a watershed forester position to work exclusively with land owners in high sediment load areas (TMDLs) through riparian vegetation management and other conservation practices. (FSP and UCF)
- **Tornado Recovery Assistance** funding helps communities to respond to severe tornado damage which hit several Nebraska communities. The community of Hallam, NE continues to recover from a devastating tornado. Federal funds helped them to remove and replant trees in the community and now residents are moving back to Hallam which was over 90% destroyed. The community will continue to plant even more trees as more residents return.
- **Community involvement** in South Dakota takes many forms. For example, local tree boards, which are a very important part of any community forestry program, provide the foundation for many community forestry programs. Tree boards perform a wide variety of functions such as developing local tree ordinances and annual work plans; planting, pruning, and removal projects; and Arbor Day activities. Currently, there are 53 known tree boards across South Dakota. New communities are involved every year, such as Eagle Butte on the Cheyenne River Reservation.
- **Outreach and education** in one Colorado project highlights special trees and the Champion Tree Program in an annual Notable Trees Calendar. This project increases awareness of Colorado's trees, their care, and the Colorado Tree Coalition.



## Forest Health Protection Programs (FHP)

Our programs provide advice and financial assistance to all federal land managers and State Forestry Organizations so that important forest values can be maintained. We and our State partners share the cost of funding specialists to maintain similar types of expertise for state and private lands. We also provide funding to restore federal and state lands from the impacts of insects and diseases as well as preventing and suppressing new outbreaks. Here are a few of our important accomplishments from 2005:

- Aerial surveys of forest insect and disease conditions detectable from a high winged aircraft were conducted over 40,000,000 acres.
- Over 3.8 million dollars of prevention and suppression funding were allocated to National Forests and States to help manage insects, diseases and invasive weeds.
- High value trees in developed sites threatened by bark beetles were sprayed with insecticides to prevent those attacks.



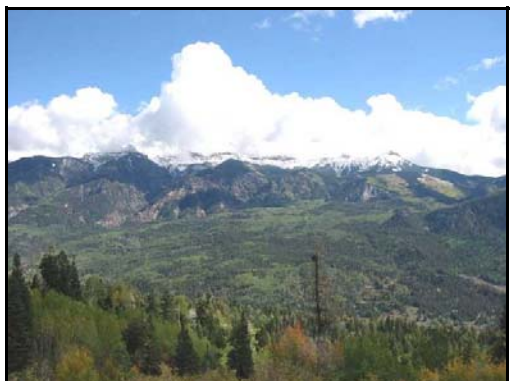
The anti-aggregation pheromone, MCH, was successfully used to protect Douglas-fir from attack by Douglas-fir beetle.

- A study to evaluate the efficacy of several pruning and canker removal treatments in reducing white pine blister rust infections and decreasing mortality in high-value limber and Rocky Mountain bristlecone pines was initiated in Colorado and Wyoming.
- Wyoming's, South Dakota's and Colorado's Forestry Organizations continue an ongoing program of thinning in the wildland urban interface to reduce bark beetle susceptibility.
- Winter Park and Steamboat Ski Areas continued to aggressively remove or destroy beetle-infested trees within their administrative boundaries. The survey and sanitation efforts are successful, but beetle activity in the area continues to intensify.
- R2 FHP and KS Forest Service conducted an early detection survey for Sudden Oak Death disease in the oak/hardwood forests of Eastern KS in 2005. Forest environment-nursery perimeters were surveyed at 14 high risk sites where possibly infected plants had been shipped. Fortunately, all lab results came back negative for *Phytophthora ramorum*.

## Tribal Relations Program

The Tribal Relations Program assists line and staff officers with the implementation of a federal trust responsibility to Tribal Governments, traditional practitioners and tribal members. In FY 2005, the Tribal Relations Program supported and assisted the following highlighted projects:

- We co-sponsored the 5<sup>th</sup> annual session of "Working Together – American Indians and the Forest Service." This course continues to serve line and staff officers as an important training session in basic Indian law, partnership development and other pertinent topics such as the implementation of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. This inter-regional training session was created and supported by Regions 2, 3, and 5. The session will be held in Region 5 in FY 2006.
- The Tribal Relations Program Manager successfully served as the team leader of the Sacred Sites Policy Development Team. The team, chartered to develop national policy for the Forest Service on the management of sacred sites, delivered the draft Sacred Sites Policy to the Washington Office.
- The Tribal Relations Program, Cooperative Fire Programs, Kansas Forest Service, and Haskell Indian Nations University continue to collaborate and develop a fire science curriculum for accreditation and implementation in the School of Arts and Sciences, Natural Sciences Department.
- We continue to support the development of technical capabilities and skills necessary for tribal members to engage in fuels reduction activities on National Forest System managed lands.



## Forest Legacy Program (FLP)

We protect environmentally important forest areas from conversion to non-forest uses by purchasing conservation easements or lands in fee title from willing landowners. The Forest Service contributes to these acquisitions by funding grants to the states that participate in the Forest Legacy Program.

In 2005, Colorado State Forest Service in partnership with the Conservation Fund and Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) successfully competed for and was awarded funding to secure approximately 8,000 acres of conservation easement on the Banded Peaks Ranch in southern Colorado. Grant funds from GOCO will serve as a match to the almost \$3,000,000.00 of FLP funds provided to Colorado in support of this acquisition.



The **Healthy Forests Initiative (HRI)** is an ongoing commitment to care for America's forests and rangelands, reduce the risk to communities from catastrophic fire, help save the lives of firefighters and citizens, and protect critical natural resources. Coupled with the 2003 Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) and the National Fire Plan (NFP), much progress has been made under the Healthy Forests Initiative to reduce the threat of wildland fires and restore the health of our public lands.

## Economic Action Program—Biomass and Small Wood Utilization

Together with our partners in State Forestry, energy agencies, universities and the Forest Products Lab, we continue to work towards reducing the cost of forest management and fuels reduction activities through the improved utilization and marketing of woody biomass and small wood.

Technical and financial assistance was focused on:

- Support for the use of biomass in heating and electricity;
- Creation and marketing of new product niches and adding value to traditional products;
- Workshops and assistance in harvesting, processing, sawmill improvement, stewardship contracting and entrepreneurship;
- The Promotion of local wood products and forest based businesses.



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For more information, go to: [http://www.state.co.us/oemc/programs/waste/forest\\_thinnings/canoncity.htm](http://www.state.co.us/oemc/programs/waste/forest_thinnings/canoncity.htm)

## Cooperative Fire Protection Program

Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA), State Fire Assistance (SFA), and Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) programs enhance, equip and train State and local fire preparedness and suppression programs to protect life, property, and natural resources.



The five states within the Rocky Mountain Region have assisted over a thousand rural departments with equipment, training, and organization. This includes hundreds of pieces of FEPP equipment on loan to various departments.

The wildfire prevention program: supported Smokey Bear appearances at various events in Colorado Springs, Sturgis, Chatfield Balloon Festival, and numerous schools; assisted establishing wildfire awareness month in Nebraska; maintained wildfire awareness throughout the Region utilizing Public Service Announcements (PSAs), flyers and radio interviews; and increased available Prevention Team resources by training additional team leaders and members.

## Community Wildfire Protection Assistance

State and Private Forestry financial assistance and collaborative partnering continued working toward safer communities in 2005 through preparedness/prevention/mitigation programs. All States have taken active leadership roles in continuing to complete and implement Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP). Federal partners collaborate, support and assist these efforts at the community level.

- Colorado, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wyoming utilized FY05 State Fire Assistance Competitive Projects funding to plan and complete over fifty hazardous fuels treatments for communities at risk.
- State Fire Assistance funding supported the treatment of nearly 11,000 acres during 2005 for community wildfire protection.
- Community Assistance Funding for hazardous fuels adjacent to National Forests helped Colorado, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming provide treatment to over 1800 acres.
- All states are actively engaged in implementing the CWPP process. New plans are being established, developed and implemented in various communities throughout all the states with interagency assistance.
- Our financial assistance has supported over a thousand communities in their efforts to conduct hazardous fuels treatments and preparedness to help reduce their losses due to wildfires.