

THE YEAR
IN REVIEW:
2007



O T T A W A
N A T I O N A L F O R E S T

A NOTE FROM OUR FOREST SUPERVISOR



Susan Spear

Hello! For those of you I haven't met yet I am Susan Spear, the new Forest Supervisor of the Ottawa National Forest. I'm so pleased to be returning to the Upper Midwest after more than 30 years away. I started my Forest Service career as a YCC student on the Superior National Forest at Lake Isabella. It's here where I got my first taste of working in the great outdoors. My YCC experience led naturally to my connection to the resources and a strong desire to ensure that we manage them sustainably for future generations.

During my short tenure on the Ottawa, I've noticed a great deal of hard work and accomplishment. Over the next few pages, I'd like

to share with you some of the highlights from my perspective. It's important to note, though, that so much more occurs on the Forest. From our vegetation management projects to wildlife habitat restoration to maintenance and operations of our recreation facilities, the Ottawa is a flurry of activity. Forest personnel work closely with the local communities to protect ecosystems, improve our streams and lakes, and guard against the threat of non-native invasive species.

I couldn't share any of these success stories with you without mentioning all of our partners, volunteers, contractors, and community members who allow us to accomplish so much. I am truly

impressed by the commitment shown from our cooperators—it's this shared dedication to the land that makes the Ottawa such a special place.

I have strong ties to the Great Lakes area and the Forest Service and I'm proud to be a part of the community and local area that makes up the Ottawa National Forest. I invite you to come visit the Ottawa—you'll be amazed at the opportunities that await you.

**USDA Forest Service
Ottawa National Forest
E6248 US Hwy. 2
Ironwood, MI 49938
906/932-1330**



PROTECT ECOSYSTEMS ACROSS BOUNDARIES

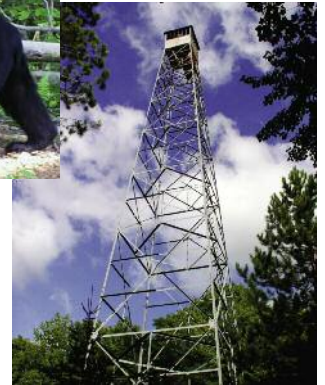
THE OTTAWA'S commitment to land stewardship and public service is the framework for how we manage the forest.

To be successful in our mission, we work closely with other land management agencies, tribes, environmental organizations, local communities, and the public. This cooperative approach to management allows us to expand the amount of National Forest System land managed for public benefit.

One of the biggest threats to forest health currently is exotic forest pests. For example, the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) has killed millions of ash trees in Lower Michigan and has recently been found on the eastern end of the Upper Peninsula. To address the possible spread of EAB to the Ottawa, a Forest closure order restricting the movement of firewood from outside of the Upper Peninsula was signed.

The Ottawa performed both mechanical fuel treatments and prescribed burns across the Forest in 2007. This type of work helps us respond to the threats from wildfire in a proactive manner while achieving multiple resource objectives.

Every project that the Forest undertakes is an effort to improve the conditions of the natural resources that are so important to each of us.



PROTECTING AGAINST INVASIVE SPECIES

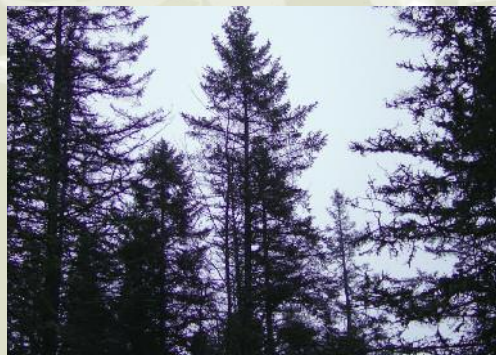
In 2007, the Ottawa joined forces with the Iron County Conservation District and the Invasive Species Control Coalition of Watersmeet to promote the "Clean Boats, Clean Waters" boat launch education program. The goal of this program is to raise awareness about aquatic invasives to slow the spread into local lakes. Aquatic Invasive Species such as Eurasian watermilfoil, Curlyleaf pondweed, and Rusty crayfish can threaten the use of area lakes. Always remember to check your boats and equipment for hitchhikers before going to another lake.



Michigan Sea Grant Archives

PROTECTING HABITAT

Over the last several years, white spruce decline and mortality has been observed in the northern Great Lakes Area. The USFS in cooperation with the Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan Departments of Natural Resources, recently embarked on a study to evaluate the decline of white spruce plantations. White spruce is a very desirable tree species for wood and wildlife habitat. The results from this study will help us determine patterns and factors associated with the decline and provide resource management agencies with recommendations on where and under what conditions white spruce can be grown successfully.



White spruce decline is affecting plantations in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan.

CONNECT CITIZENS TO THE LAND



FOR EVERY VISITOR TO the Ottawa, the Northwoods means something different. Some find a bond with family and friends enjoying outdoor sports and activities; some value the remote solitude and wild experience that are unique to the area; and, still others make their living here. We are all somehow connected to the forest.

Living next door to the forest means we sometimes forget how much pleasure there is to be had in forests—how much forests can contribute to our physical and spiritual well-being. Such experiences and insights have ignited many natural resource careers and conservation movements. We want to share this experience with as many people as possible. To that end, we participate in the Urban Connections program, which involves our urban constituents in conservation education, community “greening” efforts, and visiting national forests.

This year the Ottawa has worked hard to help people connect with the land. Through our conservation education programs at schools and Forest Service facilities to our volunteer programs and work days to our partnerships with universities, organizations and local area groups, we are steadfast in our commitment to working with the people of the western Upper Peninsula to care for the land.

CAMP NESBIT ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER



Nestled in the beautiful Northwoods of the Upper Peninsula, Camp Nesbit is the perfect setting for exploring the natural world. Built in the late 1930s by the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps), Camp Nesbit features twelve modern, dormitory-style cabins, a kitchen, and a recreation hall. The forest itself serves as an outdoor campus. Working with trained instructors and natural resource specialists, students visiting Camp Nesbit participate in programs developed to promote an appreciation of the natural resources.



Visitors to Camp Nesbit enjoy the great outdoors in CCC-era facilities.



VOLUNTEERS: SETTING OUT ON NEW PATHS

It’s a Saturday afternoon, the weather is beautiful, and more than a dozen volunteers have descended upon the Norwich Bluffs area. Their destination: the Norwich Mine Interpretive Trail. The goal: clear and sign this little known trail to uncover its hidden promise. The trail, which was created over a decade ago, travels past the historic remnants of a former copper-mining community. Now that the trail has been re-opened, all visitors to the area are invited to set out on this new path.



Volunteers participate in a trail project on National Public Lands Day.

WALK THE TALK FOR SUSTAINABILITY

INTEREST IN SUSTAINABLE

management of the nation's forest resources has heightened over the past decade. Changes in uses, parcelization of private land, climate change, water supply and demand, timber supply and demand, and other factors all influence the way people perceive the Ottawa.



Because demands for goods and services are expected to continue to increase in the future, it is important that our management practices promote a healthy and sustainable forest. By protecting our forests from threats such as non-native invasive species, catastrophic fires and fragmentation, we help ensure a sustainable supply of goods and services to the public.

Ottawa employees help preserve critical habitat for a great diversity of plant and animal species on a daily basis. Timber wolves, bald eagles, loons, bobcat, various species of trout, lake sturgeon and other aquatic species make their home on the Ottawa. Different ferns and flowering plants, ranging from common to relatively rare, are also found on the Forest. Sustainable management practices help ensure the plants and animals that inhabit the forest are provided for as well.

Managing resources in a manner that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs is how we practice sustainable forest management.

DOING OUR PART FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

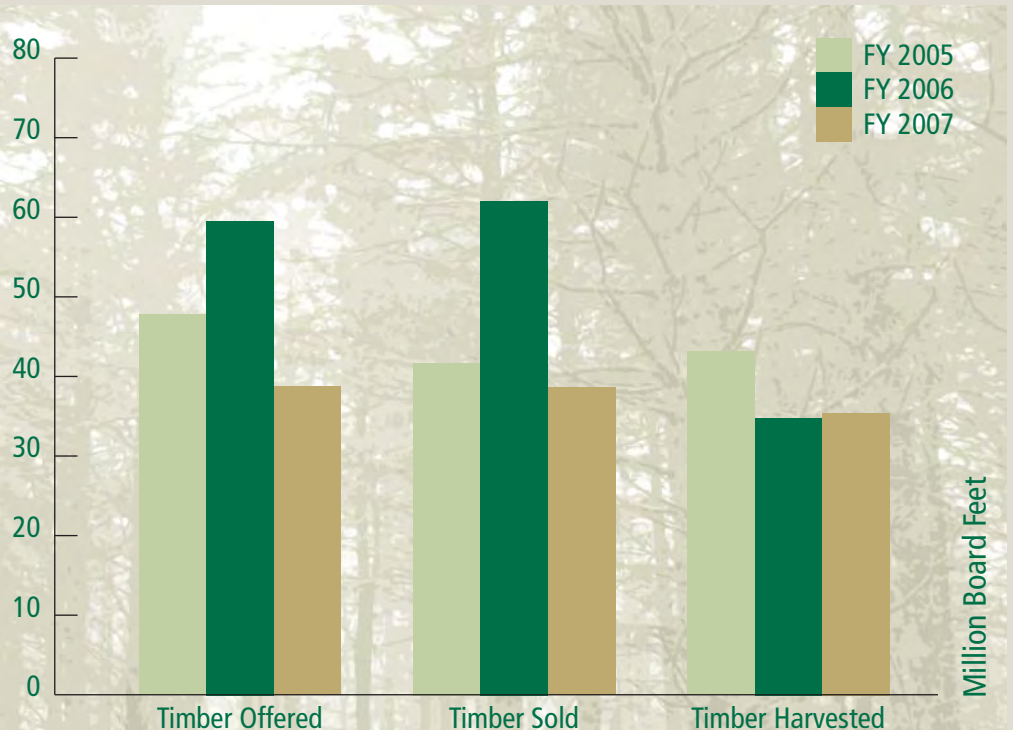
Managing the natural resources in a sustainable and responsible manner is important to Ottawa employees. The Ottawa National Forest is proud to have an active recycling program on each of its units. In addition, this year the Forest

purchased a hybrid vehicle to add to our fleet, we put into practice the use of bio-based lubricants for our chainsaws, and continue to work with other government agencies to share information on operating "green."

TIMBER SALE PROGRAM

Vegetation management projects on the Ottawa serve several purposes. They not only provide raw material for wood products, but they also meet a variety of resource objectives, including improvement of wildlife habitat conditions, improving

recreation opportunities and access, and maintaining healthy forest ecosystems. Whenever timber harvest occurs on the forest, managers are quick to ensure sites are reforested, soils stabilized, and watersheds protected.



REVOLUTIONIZE EFFECTIVENESS & EFFICIENCY



IN A TIME OF INCREASING costs and decreasing budgets, the Ottawa is continually seeking new ways to increase our effectiveness and efficiency.

Nearly all of the products, services, and opportunities produced on the Ottawa involve partners. Whether they're from the local business communities, volunteer organizations, area tribes, schools, logging operators, local governments, environmental groups, associations, or others, we couldn't get it done without them. Partnerships help us restore healthy watersheds, provide quality recreation, sustain healthy ecosystems and communities, and implement our Forest Plan. Simply put, our partners and volunteers increase our capacity to get the job done.

This past year, the Forest made major strides to increase our efficiency and reduce costs by co-locating our Bessemer administrative site with our Supervisor's headquarters. This move will help us reduce our operating costs, alleviate maintenance costs for multiple sites, and provide for "one-stop-shopping" for our customers.

As we move into the new year, we continue to review our recreation program and those facilities that support it. Our Recreation Facility Analysis will help us provide a higher quality and more efficiently managed recreation program which meets the needs, desires, and expectations of our visitors within the funding and resources available.

MANAGING OUR DATA TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCIES

The *Forest Service Natural Resource Information System* provides information and support for a variety of database, data collection, and analysis products. Forest employees share in the responsibility for gathering and entering data that is used to produce maps, analyze the effects of

projects on the ground, run reports on forest vegetation, and locate heritage sites, just to name a few examples. Recently, the Forest was recognized during the Eastern Region Honor Awards for their outstanding efforts in information management.

THE RIGHT TOOL

Have you ever heard the saying, "the right tool for the job?" What if that tool hasn't been invented yet? Working closely with the Missoula Technology and Development Center (MTDC), the J.W. Toumey Nursery in Watersmeet had two new devices designed and manufactured to improve operations and increase employee efficiency. These new tools, a pipeline sprayer and irrigation pipeline puller, provide Nursery employees with the tools necessary to perform their work in a safe, efficient and effective manner.



A pipeline sprayer designed for our Nursery operations is just the right tool.

EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

FOR OVER 75 YEARS

Ottawa employees have been on the front line of natural resource management. Today our jobs are more exciting, challenging, and diverse than ever before. Managing nearly 1 million acres of some of the most beautiful and vibrant forests in the nation is a great responsibility. Managing it in ways that are most effective for the land, water, air, wildlife, and people is our mission.



With this mission in mind, the Ottawa strives not only to be a resource management leader, but we also work hard to be an employer of choice. This means creating a safe working environment where our number one commitment to employees is their safety and well-being. Through high-quality safety programs, employee assistance programs, and a progressive wellness plan, the Ottawa works hard to ensure our workforce stays healthy, both at work and at home.

To keep our employees at the top of their profession, we provide world-class training supported by the latest technologies. Career development is ensured through continuing training and career-related education opportunities, both within our organization and through external educational institutions.

The healthy forests, clean water, abundant wildlife and fish that we all take pleasure in are the result of hundreds of dedicated and hard-working employees here on the Ottawa.

SAFETY FIRST: A WAR ON ERROR

Safety of both employees and the public is of primary concern to the Ottawa. Nothing is done without first considering safety. To that end, the Ottawa National Forest engaged its entire workforce in a series of training sessions throughout the year designed to raise the consciousness of its workforce to reduce human error and to improve our safety awareness in high-risk jobs. Our goal is zero accidents. That means that every Ottawa employee has an obligation to themselves, their families, coworkers, and the public to perform their work in a safe manner. We're proud of the strides we've made as a Forest to move closer and closer to our goal.

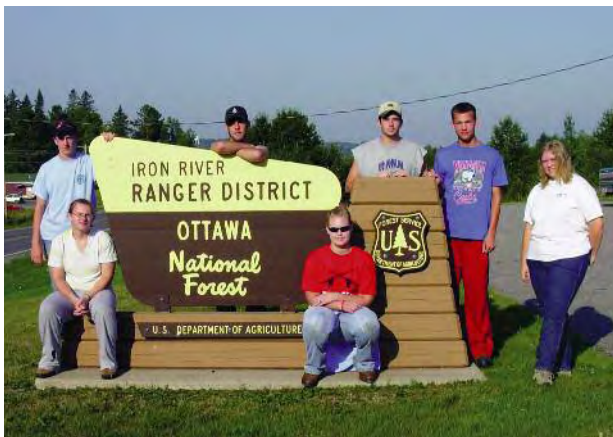
EARLY CAREER DEVELOPMENT & LEADERSHIP

Working for the Ottawa provides career opportunities that both challenge and enthruse a whole new generation of employees. Our Early Career Development and Leadership program helps employees to gain leadership training and experiences while in their first two years on the Forest. Participants gain technical resource management skills and learn to develop innovative solutions to real-life issues.

These lessons provide employees with a head start in building the foundation that will make them strong leaders and better managers in the future.



YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS



This year's YCC enrollees worked on a variety of projects across the Forest.

In the past, YCC enrollees have been instrumental in trail construction and maintenance; maintenance of historic facilities on the Forest; and working on a wide variety of resource management projects including stream rehabilitation and eradication of non-native invasive species.

Where else but your National Forest would you be able to work out of doors in the beautiful Northwoods enhancing and protecting the natural resources that are so important to our nation. The Ottawa National Forest is a proud supporter of the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) Program. The YCC program provides employment opportunities and environmental education to high school students interested in the western Upper Peninsula's wetlands, forests, and waterways. The YCC program aims to provide a healthy and hands-on educational experience to our youth in order to encourage the development of natural resource managers, personal growth, teamwork, leadership skills, and an environmental mindset that participants will carry with them throughout their life. Students who participate in the program often gain a life-time love and understanding of the environment through these educational opportunities and the hands-on work experience.

USDA NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



USDA Forest Service
Ottawa National Forest
E6248 US Hwy. 2
Ironwood, MI 49938