

Sustainable Operations—Greening the Northeastern Area

USDA Forest Service
Northeastern Area
State and Private Forestry



Description: The Northeastern Area (NA) and Northern Research Station (NRS) staff launched a new initiative in 2007 to help ensure that our agency is able to respond affirmatively to Presidential Executive Order 13423. Actions that address that mandate fall under the title of Sustainable Operations.

Key Issues:

- Presidential Executive Order 13423 requires that government agencies take specific steps to reduce the environmental impacts of completing their missions.
- As a land stewardship agency, it is critical that we “walk the walk” as well as “talk the talk”.
- NA shares four of its primary locations with the NRS – making a joint effort highly desirable.

Accomplishments:

- **NA/NRS Charter and Action plan**—NA staff led development and adoption of a joint NA and NRS Sustainable Business Operations Charter and Action Plan.
- **National Environmental Footprint Report**—NA staff reviewed a draft data collection tool and then responded to the data call, providing FY2007 baseline information for each of our worksites.
- **NA/NRS Sustainable Operations Website**—NA staff created a joint NA and NRS Sustainable Operations intranet web site. The site includes information about our environmental footprint, tools and tips for employees, and links to national and state initiatives.
- **NA News Notes Sustainable Operations Column**—NA staff have worked to raise employees awareness via a regular column in the Area’s monthly newsletter.
- **Greening of Grey Towers**—Grey Towers management has committed to making the facility a Sustainable Operations show case; including receiving third party green certification. Grey Towers is forming its own local Green Team to lead the greening of Grey Towers facilities and operations.
- **2007 & 2008 Sustainable Operations Summits**—NA staff helped shape the 2007 Summit agenda, with a last minute suggestion to include sustainable site design, which was adopted. Staff are working with Region 9 and the Forest Product Laboratory (host for 2008) to deliver the 2008 Summit.

Budget History: To date, NA’s Sustainable Operations efforts have not required budgetary support.

Future Direction:

- Begin outreach to the NA and NRS field units, starting with a presentation to introduce all employees to the Sustainable Operations effort and the EO.
- NA staff will work with NRS colleagues to address the action items in the FY2008 Plan of Action.

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12/15/07