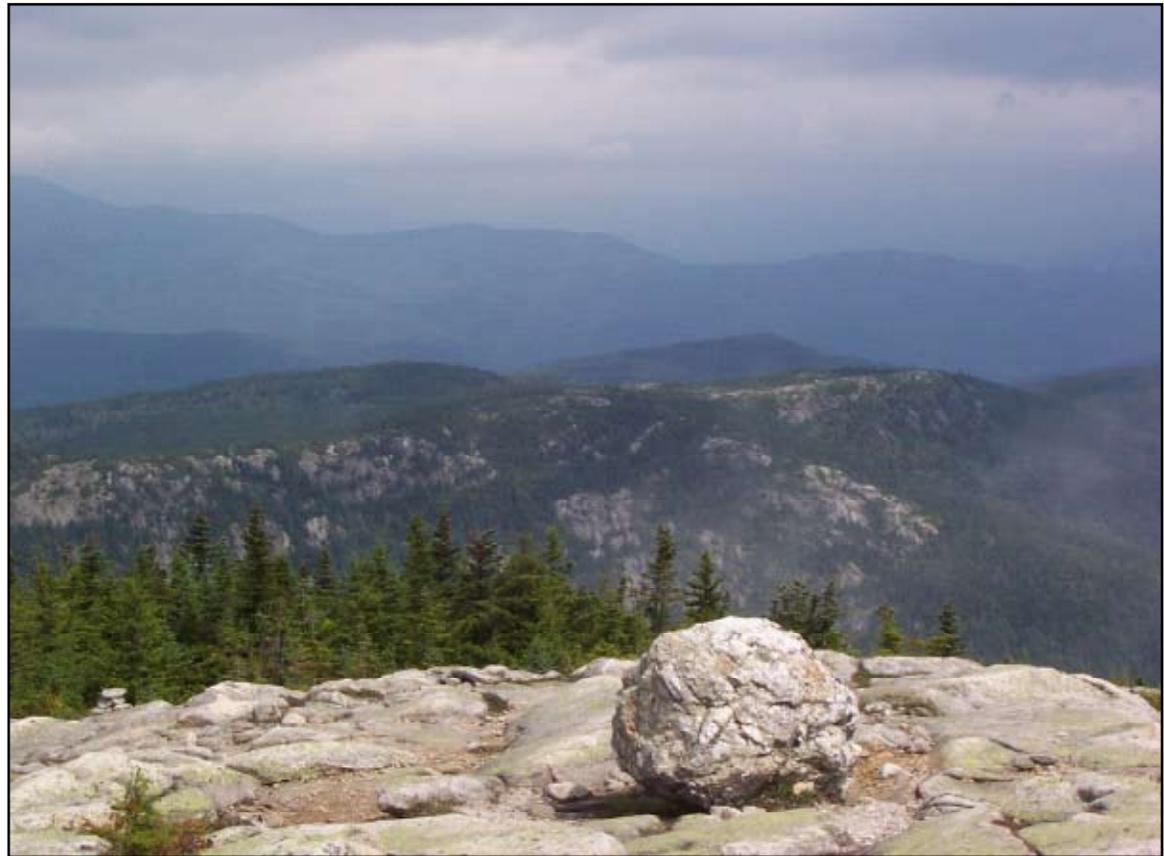


White Mountain National Forest
A Year in Review

Connecting Mountains and Memories for Generations

The rugged mountains of the White Mountain National Forest form a significant scenic and cultural landscape of New England. Whether viewing the forest via roads and trails or challenging themselves in the wilds of the backcountry, visitors find respite in the naturalness of the forest as nearby urban areas continue to grow. Cultural and recreation history are a key part of the recreation experience. The forest maintains quality recreation opportunities while working closely with communities, partners and private providers.



Sharing in stewardship regardless of boundaries

I hope you will enjoy reviewing this sample of work done on the White Mountain National Forest in 2007. I continue to be amazed at the variety and complexity of projects accomplished each year. I'm proud to be a member of the White Mountain National Forest team working for you.

In December I was pleased to be a part of an annual recognition of employees in the Eastern Region. The Eastern Region Honor Awards, held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, spotlight projects and employees who have gone a step beyond their normal duties. Ken Jaeger, shown in the photo at right is one of the White Mountain employees recognized in 2007. Ken is a Forestry Technician on the Saco Ranger District. His family lives near Milwaukee and was able to attend the ceremony.

Other employees recognized include Bill Dauer, C. Jon Jakubos, Bruce Jackson, and Kurt Kretvix who received the Green Award for their work on our new Administrative Complex in Campton that will house the Supervisor's Office and Pemigewasset Ranger District. Jon Jakubos also received the Engineer of the Year award.



Our long term volunteer Bill Barrett was recognized for more than 11 years of dedicated service. He's given almost 9,000 hours of his time. Bill is such an exemplary volunteer that when I first came to work here I thought he was a full time employee!

My congratulations to all of these folks and to everyone working to support all of our programs.

Forest Land Acquisitions



The following additions to the White Mountain National Forest were made because of continued support of local towns, Trust for Public Land, and the Access Fund.

Town of Rumney Tract (above) — 64 acres. The acquisition of this isolated property on the Pemigewasset Ranger District eliminates over a mile of boundary line maintenance expense as three sides of the property abut the White Mountain National Forest. It protects 30 acres of wetlands and 1,440 feet of stream frontage. The sale was supported by the selectmen of the Town of Rumney.

Mosedale Tract — 48 acres. This purchase is consistent with objectives within our Forest Plan to conserve the integrity of undeveloped land and improve habitat quality. It protects the viewshed and provides vistas of Cherry Mountain and Mount Martha. The Town of Carroll selectmen supported the acquisition.

TPL/Riveroaks Tract, also known as Owl's Head Cliff (below) — 360 acres. The property is bounded on three sides by National Forest land and has over 6,000 feet of frontage along Oliverian Brook. In addition, the Audubon Society of New Hampshire observed four fledgling peregrine falcons on the cliffs within the boundaries of the property.



Why Forestry?

The history of the White Mountain National Forest is founded on grass roots citizen efforts, prompted by widespread destructive logging across New England in the late 1800s. These poor logging practices raised concerns for the protection of forest lands and navigable water. Since then, through careful stewardship, including sustainable forestry, the White Mountains have been restored from “lands nobody wanted” to one of the Northeast’s premier public lands. Today, a portion of the Forest is zoned for forest products.

Currently, we are faced with a growing population, increased consumption and more demands on resources. Timber harvest on national forests is done under strict environmental laws, unlike the harvesting that occurs in some other parts of the world.

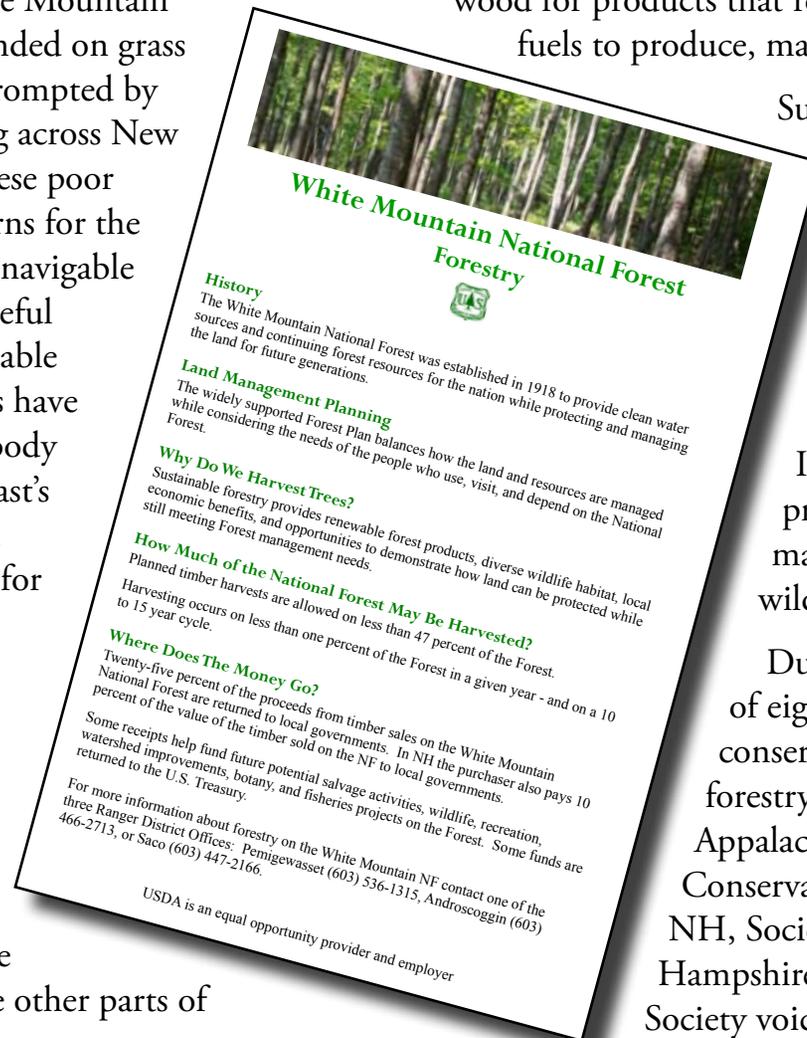
Forestry provides paper and lumber that we all use. In addition, sustainable forest management for emerging technology such as bioenergy, biofuels, and substituting

wood for products that require high amounts of fossil fuels to produce, may help decrease global warming.

Sustainable forestry is also an important component of northern New England’s economy and cultural identity. Receipts from timber harvesting on the National Forest provide significant income to local communities. In addition to the benefits of producing resources locally, forest management provides a variety of wildlife habitat.

During Forest Plan revision, a group of eight state, regional, and national conservation, environmental, and forestry groups, including Audubon, Appalachian Mountain Club, NH Conservation Law Foundation, State of NH, Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, and the Wilderness Society voiced support for continued sustainable forest management and timber

harvesting on the WMNF. They wrote that exemplary forestry, including timber harvesting, on the WMNF serves as a model of sound management





Skiers on the Maple Mountain Trail enjoy a recently opened vista on the Popple Mountain timber sale within the Jackson Ski Touring permit area.

Fire on the Forest

Fire and Fuels Programs

The prescribed fire program is used to reduce hazard fuels, restore ecosystems, and to improve and maintain wildlife habitats.

In FY07, 107 acres were treated with fire for wildlife purposes on the Forest. An additional 247 acres were thinned, removing potentially hazardous fuels.

We also provided assistance to the Green Mountain National Forest and Department of Defense prescribed burning activities. Each situation provides our crews with valuable training and experience that they will use when fighting wildfires or working on other incidents.



Counterclockwise. Firefighter uses a drip torch for a prescribed burn; donning protective gear; wildlife opening burn, UNH field on the Kanc.

Off-Forest Incident Duties

Forest employees are trained to fight wildfires and respond to other natural disasters. In 2007 crews and individuals (single resources) were dispatched to the states of Arizona, California, Minnesota, Oregon, Nevada, Utah, Idaho, Montana, Georgia, Maine, Michigan, North Carolina, Kansas, Florida, Alaska, Kentucky, Washington, Wyoming and Pennsylvania. Specialists were requested by FEMA during the March tornado situation in Kansas



Building line. Mop up. Protecting homes, rooftop gardens included.

Soil Survey

The National Forest has entered into an agreement with Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), the Northern Research Station (NRS), and Plymouth State University to begin a multi-year Forest-wide soils survey.

This survey will:

- Gather ecological information in addition to soils series.
- Enhance monitoring of atmospheric deposition through collection of soil chemistry.
- Combine research with inventory data that will allow us to answer questions on calcium depletion and effects on vegetative growth.
- Support the Terrestrial Ecological Unit Inventory and Ecological Land Type mapping.
- Provide NRCS with data to complete that National Soil Survey Information System for New Hampshire.
- Provide landscape level soils data to support NRS' research programs.

Current Situation:

- 10,000 acres were mapped in FY07.
- An additional 10,000 acres will be mapped in FY08.
- The project provided training opportunities for students at UNH and PSU.
- A strategy is being developed to map vernal pools.

Soil survey team at work.



Non-native Invasives

White Mountain Early Detection Network

An innovative partnership was formed in 2007 to identify and treat invasive species in the White Mountain region ecosystem.

The partnership is unusual because of the complexity and commitment of the groups and individuals involved. They include; White Mountain National Forest, Forest Service State and Private Forestry, Pondicherry Division of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge, the Invasive Plant Atlas of New England, and the Appalachian Mountain Club. State of New Hampshire and Maine Departments of Transportation, Parks and Lands, Environmental Services, Fish and Game and private conservation organizations, local government agencies and commissions all joined to discuss the problems and seek solutions. Well over 100 people attended the first meeting last spring.



The Network provides educational information and a simple reporting method via the Forest's web site.

Invasive Plant Control

Fifty-five acres of invasive plants were treated in FY07 using a combination of mechanical, chemical and biological treatments. Treatment of this acreage is a five fold increase over the acreage treated in FY06.



Pulling out invasive plants by hand.

Education and Working Relationships

The Forest continues its close relationship with the States of Maine and New Hampshire, Northeastern Area State & Private Forestry (S&PF), and NGO partners, such as New England Wild Flower Society and the Invasive Plant Atlas of New England, to provide education and outreach programs and materials on the threat of invasive species such as Japanese Stiltgrass and hemlock woolly adelgid to the northern Forest. With the assistance of S&PF, particular attention was focused on educating the public on the risk of emerald ash borer infestation through firewood importation. "Don't Move Firewood" flyers were distributed and posted throughout the Forest.

Botany

The summer of 2007 was a good year for botany on the White Mountain National Forest, and in particular on Mount Washington.

In late July, a group of Forest Service and partner botanists spent several days surveying Oakes Gulf on the southeastern side of the Mount Washington. Oakes Gulf, named for Reverend James Oakes, was once described as a “seemingly bottomless abyss.” This area is known to harbor a number of rare alpine and sub-alpine species. During the three-day botanical foray, more than thirty occurrences of rare plants were updated. The crown jewel of these discoveries was a small population of black sedge (*Carex atraitiformis*) which had not been observed in the State of New Hampshire since 1952!

Another rediscovery took a slightly more extreme approach. Nodding saxifrage (*Saxifraga cernua*) was first discovered in Pinnacle Gully in 1939, and it is the only known location in the eastern United States. Located on the eastern flank of Mount Washington, Pinnacle Gully, with its sheer overhanging walls made slick by the gush of a perennial alpine stream, is a treacherous place: climbing equipment and skills are a must.

The plants were last positively observed in the early 1970s, and several recent attempts to locate them turned up several possible but no positive observations. On August 2, 2007, a team of three rappelled into and

through Pinnacle Gully to search for the plants. The team was composed of the Forest botanist, a botanist from the New England Wild Flower Society, and the Backcountry and Wilderness Supervisor from the Androscoggin Ranger District. The rappel, from the summit of The Pinnacle (an imposing buttress jutting out from the south wall of Huntington Ravine), was an adventure in itself.

Aptly named “The Pinnacle Plunge,” it began with a sheer drop of 40-50 feet from the summit of the Pinnacle to the floor of the gully. The rappel then continued down the steep streambed, often requiring the team to travel in the stream itself and over several waterfalls.



Nodding saxifrage (*Saxifraga cernua*).

Many other rare species were observed growing at the top and throughout Pinnacle Gully, including Mountain Avens (*Geum peckii*), Pickering's Reed Bent Grass (*Calamagrostis pickeringii*), alpine willow-herb (*Epilobium hornemanii*), and White Mountain saxifrage (*Saxifraga paniculata*). The further the team descended through the gully the more discouraged they became: no plants could be found. They were beginning to think that the torrent spring run-off may have wiped out the population.

Near the bottom of the gully, searching locations that are clearly visible to an observer at the base, the team observed a small colony of nodding saxifrage growing on a tiny shelf protected from the rushing waters by the morphology of the gully wall. Success!

The plants, appearing to be healthy and reproductive, occupy an area less than one square meter. The number of people who have actually observed these plants at this location is as small as the four or five plants that constitute the population. But for these three team members — two plant fanatics and a rock climber — they can now add their names to that list.



Research

We continued our strong relationship with Hubbard Brook and Bartlett Experimental Forests on several fronts, strengthened our ties with the Center for the Environment at Plymouth State University, and began a new relationship with the Climate Change Center at the University of New Hampshire.

Relationship with Northern Research Station

Analysis was conducted on timber sale proposals on the Bartlett and Massabesic Experimental Forests. Meetings were held with research staff to discuss future cooperative efforts and strategy sessions were held to chart a long term direction for research on the Bartlett Experimental Forest.

At Hubbard Brook, long term soil productivity monitoring continues. Soil monitoring protocols were developed to measure soil productivity and these were used on 12,000 acres of soils inventory. There is a possibility that when paired with historical soil samples, this work may better define atmospheric deposition and climate change effects on soils.

Water quality monitoring at the Ore Hill Mine reclamation project was carried out by Masters program students from Plymouth State University's Center for the Environment. This work will continue in FY08.

Right: Spreading loam prior to reseeding the Ore Hill repository area early in FY07; and grass growing well later in the year.

Carbon Sequestration and Climate Change

In FY07, we reached out to become more active in the regional dialogue concerning climate change and our role in carbon sequestration.

Recent reports indicate the forests on the White Mountain are sequestering twice the level of carbon than they are using. To help us determine the role we should be playing in this issue, we attended several conferences to establish new relationships and began talking with partners about how we can work together.

At the ground level, much of the work in the soils and ecology programs are tied directly to carbon sequestration.



Future generations of Natural Resource Managers

A number of programs are designed to help students learn about natural resources and obtain skills needed in resource fields. We are fortunate to have an active Youth Conservation Corps program that gives local students an opportunity to spend their summer learning leadership and conservation skills. Our partnership with the Student Conservation Association brings students from across the country to work on trail crews. That partnership is featured below. We also utilize a program the Student Career Employment Program, that leads college students from their studies to full time employment.

These young people are part of the future of conservation in America.

Student Conservation Association (SCA)

The Forest hosted four SCA crews, including two Mountain Conservation Leadership Corps from Manchester, NH, and a New Hampshire Americorps crew. These crews rehabilitated heavily impacted campsites within riparian areas and performed a range of much needed trail maintenance.

For some of these young people, working on the Forest was a life changing event. We hope to continue working with SCA in hosting students from cities in southern New Hampshire and the Boston area in 2008.

SCA crew members help rehabilitate backcountry camp sites.



Students

Recognizing that the White Mountain National Forest is an excellent setting to help develop future leaders, we continue to invest in a variety of programs that impact college students. We are working with Plymouth State University to provide environmental sciences and outdoor recreation internships. Demand for these types of experiences grows annually as students and professors recognize the value of the National Forest as an educational laboratory.

Two new Student Career Employment Program (SCEP) students have begun working on the Forest. One will further her masters degree program while assisting in determining our carbon footprint. The other is involved with our lands program, studying to become a surveyor, a much needed resource on this Forest.



Youth Conservation Corps (YCC)

Six local area young men and women participated in the YCC program during the summer of 2007. In addition to the physical labor done such as pruning and releasing 15 acres of apple orchards, cleaning waterbars, rehabilitating trails, and constructing fences and kiosks they learned interpersonal and leadership skills that will be used throughout their lives. All of their physical labors were intertwined with lessons about Leadership, Collaboration, Respect, and Accountability



All the participants grew and learned lessons they will carry with them as they move into the next stages of their lives.

Left. SCEP student monitors plant species in the Alpine Zone. Above and right. YCC crew builds a kiosk and prunes an apple orchard run wild.



A Forest for Every Classroom

“A Forest for Every Classroom: Learning to Make Choices for the Future of Our Forests” is an educational program developed by the National Wildlife Federation, Shelburne Farms, the Green Mountain National Forest, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, and the National Park Service’s Conservation Study Institute. This professional development model is being replicated by the New Hampshire partners with permission and support of this founding collaborative.

The NH Partners are: New Hampshire Project Learning Tree, Hubbard Brook Research Foundation, Northeast Natural Resource Center — The National Wildlife Federation, White Mountain National Forest, USDA Forest Service’s State and Private Forestry Branch, Northeastern Area, and USDA Forest Service’s Northeastern Research Station.

During this year-long team teacher training program, each participating team of educators will be responsible for developing a curriculum unit that meets New Hampshire’s curriculum frameworks and the literacy needs of their school. Units must be based on real-world learning experiences within their local communities. Each team of teachers will develop a service-learning project that brings the school and the community together, where teachers and students learn about local forestry issues and

pertinent forest research, and become involved in a viable community-based project.

Place-based education is the process of using the local community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts in language arts, math, social studies, science, and other subjects across the curriculum.

The 2006-2007 program included eleven teachers from private and public middle and high schools. The program of study includes place-based education, soils, forestry and silviculture, land management, plant and animal identification, air quality, global effects, and others.



Teachers learn to measure tree diameter at breast height (dbh).

Recreation

FY07 was a challenging year for both the Recreation and Wilderness programs on the Forest. Facing a large reduction in funding and vacancies of several key recreation positions the recreation team across the forest looked for different ways to accomplish work in order to provide quality recreation opportunities for the visitors. We succeeded by working together, combining crews, sharing special skills, and taking advantage of strong partnerships and volunteers.

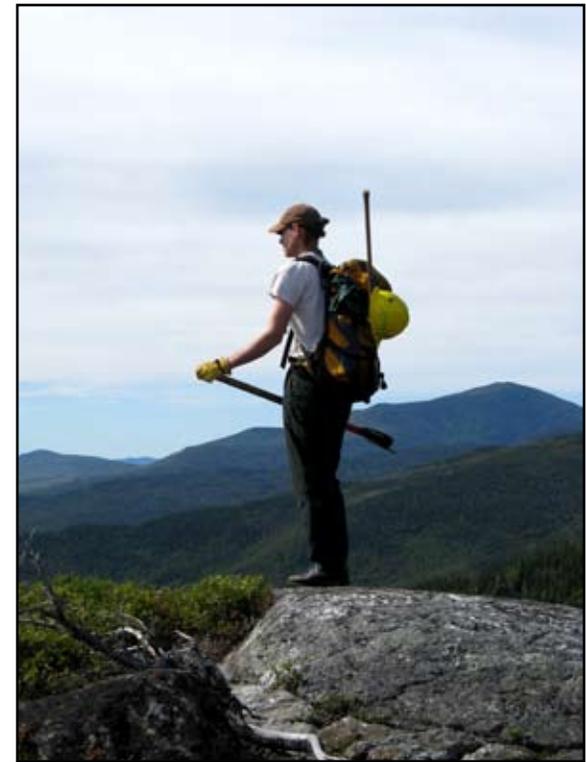
Backcountry

In addition to helping hundreds of hikers, cleaning up numerous backcountry campsites, and educating thousands of people on Leave No Trace and hikeSafe, our backcountry staff converted an outdated pit toilet into a new moldering composting toilet. This continues to bring us up-to-date with the most current backcountry waste management techniques while also enhancing accessibility.



Trails

With the help of partners and volunteers limited seasonal crews were able to complete 275 miles of basic maintenance. This included areas which had significant blow down from severe storm activity in April. The Appalachian Mountain Club offered assistance and conducted basic maintenance on 75 miles of trail typically maintained by Forest Service trail crews.



Recreation Special Uses

Many recreation opportunities on the Forest are provided through partners and outfitter/guides. In 2007 eight term permits were managed to standard, 155 outfitter/guide permits were issued as well as more than 30 recreation event permits.

Wilderness

We continue to implement the White Mountain National Forest Wilderness Plan, completing the second year of trail use monitoring and beginning the campsite density monitoring on tailless peaks and drainages. With the designation of the Wild River Wilderness and the expansion of the Sandwich

Wilderness, crews were busy constructing and installing new Wilderness boundary signs and entrance portals.

Friends of the Wild River and Sandwich Range held a celebration in July to recognize the Forest Service and Congressional delegation for their work in the passage of the Wilderness bill.



Friends of Wild River and Sandwich Range gather at the new Wild River Wilderness boundary.

Mount Washington Avalanche Center

The Mount Washington Avalanche Center (MWAC) operated on the Androscoggin Ranger District is the only American avalanche center east of the Rockies. With the rich history of skiing and climbing here, it is also the oldest forecasting program in the country. The Center's public safety priorities are three fold.

The first and main focus from October and November until the end of May is the daily avalanche advisory for multiple forecast areas in Tuckerman and Huntington Ravines. In FY07 the center issued over 170 advisories and also began issuing "weekend updates" on Friday evenings to give visitors more up to date information to help with weekend trip planning.



Secondly, the MWAC takes lead agency authority for Search and Rescue in the Cutler River Drainage from December 1 to June 1 each year. This last season the center managed 16 Search and Rescue incidents. The third priority is as an eastern professional avalanche resource for anyone who needs assistance.



In 2007 this included participating in 20 local avalanche courses, providing mountain information and advice to thousands of skiers, hikers and climbers on Mt. Washington, providing avalanche training and high angle rescue training to volunteer rescue groups, participating as an adjunct speaker in a meteorology course at Plymouth State University, responding to media requests, and giving presentations regarding the MWAC, search and rescue and avalanche safety and awareness.

White Mountain Administrative Complex

The contract to construct a new White Mountain National Forest administrative complex has been awarded to P&S Construction of Lowell, MA. The Forest Supervisor's Office and combined Pemigewasset Ranger District offices will be co-located on the 44 acre site adjacent to the Blair Bridge Exit, Exit 27, on Interstate 93 in the Town of Campton. The new office will house approximately 100 permanent and seasonal employees. Work on the new building is expected to begin in early August.

Implementation of this project is significant to improving efficient operations and effective public service provided by the White Mountain National Forest. The new administrative complex will be built using construction techniques to reduce the carbon footprint and increase sustainability, and achieve at a minimum a Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design, (LEED) rating of Silver.

Forest Supervisor Tom Wagner said, "This is a significant milestone in our efforts to reduce fixed costs, improve public service, and move into a sustainable facility. P&S Construction is the third in a series of outstanding contractors. A special thanks to Jeremy Hiltz Excavating, Inc., from Ashland, NH, who built the access road, and Jewett Construction Co., from Raymond, NH, who did a terrific job on the first phase of the project."

The complex is designed to have more than a 60 percent energy savings through the co-location of three current offices, the physical orientation of the building, and by utilizing sustainable and efficient products such as super-efficient windows and building materials. The building will take advantage of natural and controlled lighting, utilize composting technology to reduce water usage and wastewater generation, recycle grey water, and minimize site runoff, along with numerous other "green" technologies to save considerable energy. With the heating, cooling, and power requirements reduced by 60 percent, the design further reduces the energy needs by heating the entire complex with wood pellets at one-third the annual cost for fuel compared to heating with oil or propane.

In addition, a combined heat and power generating system will use innovative technology of biomass gasification for power and heat. This system will significantly reduce carbon emissions through the gasification process.

Occupancy is projected for late fall of 2009.

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