

# Forest Health Monitoring Program Monthly Update May 2015

## WHAT'S NEW

**The Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) Program** held a first ever Virtual FHM Workgroup Session on April 21, 2015. The meeting consisted of a welcome from Frank Krist, FHM Acting National Program Manager, and four technical sessions (1) A tablet near you – Changing the way aerial and ground surveys are conducted; (2) Near real-time monitoring and planning via the web – Successes and limitations; (3) Safety first – Supplementing aerial surveys with operational remote sensing; and (4) Where did all my data go? Streamlining the distribution of survey and monitoring data and supporting Forest Action Plans. A quick overview of each session is included here. The full presentations will be available on the FHM website in the future.

- (1) This session included two main parts, an overview of the Digital Mobile Sketch Mapping System (DMSM), and a discussion about changes in software and coding – how it can improve data quality and expand its utility. The DMSM is an application for use on tablets and will eventually replace the Digital Aerial Sketch Map System (DASM). The Forest Health Technology Enterprise Team (FHTET) anticipates buying multiple units for distribution as part of a beta test planned for the application this year. The DMSM has three major modes that enable collection, viewing and editing of data while conducting aerial surveys for insects and diseases. The changes in software and coding DMSM will bring about were discussed using work in Michigan and Colorado as examples. Insect and diseases survey information is used nationally, regionally, and locally for early detection of pests and to determine long-range trends. New damage estimates in DMSM using percent classes will enable better assessments of pest impacts and reduce errors of commission, i.e., reducing the amount of healthy trees in damage estimates.
- (2) This session included two main parts, a Forest Disturbance Monitor ([FDM](#)) demonstration, and a discussion about appropriate uses of FDM and remotely sensed data. FDM is a MODIS satellite-based digital change-detection product that compares healthy green foliage values against current forest disturbance data and the expected healthy green foliage from 3- or 5-year baselines. FDM provides a coarse-level early warning system analogous to a smoke alarm for potential forest disturbances, and allows for rapid evaluation of potential disturbances over large areas. A demonstration of the FDM was given showing the basic features of the tool. A new feature this year is the ability to export products to a geospatial PDF format for use in mobile devices for field sampling and disturbance verification.

- (3) This session included one main discussion about new developments and the status of the Operational Remote Sensing (ORS) program in Forest Health Protection (FHP). How the ORS and the Insect and Disease Survey (IDS) interrelate to provide maximum safety and data utility was discussed. Examples were presented about how ORS could be used in significant forest pest event tracking. Several new tools including Google Earth Engine now make it much easier to leverage the use of remotely sensed data over very large landscapes.
- (4) This session included three main parts, a discussion of the FHM annual national report; an FHP mapping and reporting portal overview and Forest Health Advisory System ([FHAS](#)) demonstration; and a discussion about forest action plans and how FHM can meet their data needs. A conceptual overview of the FHM annual national report was presented along with specific examples from recent reports. An overview was given of the Pest Event Reporter (PER), which rolls together all the pest conditions data and information collected annually in FHP. This information is similar to what is in the Forest Health Highlights, but provides a national summary that is used to communicate forest health issues to leadership and Congress. The information from PER then rolls up nationally into the FHP portal and is accessible in several tabular and spatial formats. The FHAS, a new addition to the portal, was demonstrated. FHAS summarizes national insect and disease risk data and allows overlays of forest host information, aerial surveys, and wildland fire potential in an interactive web application. Reports can be generated within FHAS at a State, National Forest, National Park, Tribal and Fish and Wildlife Unit level. Finally, forest action plans and how FHM/FHP data can contribute to the plans were discussed. Challenges were presented along with a call for further effort to be dedicated to addressing these challenges.

**U.S. Forest Service, Forest Health Protection, Southern Region** is extremely pleased to announce that the next Forest Health Monitoring Program Manager for the US Forest Service Southern Region is Dr. Chris Asaro. Chris has an exhaustive knowledge of forest health issues in the South and very strong relationships with a wide variety of forestry and forest health cooperators in this Region and throughout the nation. He has been the Forest Health Specialist with the Virginia Department of Forestry for the past 10 years. He will be an outstanding addition to the Forest Health Protection team and will officially begin this position on June 29<sup>th</sup>. Please welcome him to his new role.

## NEWS ABOUT FHM PARTNERS

**U.S. Forest Service, Forest Health Protection** is pleased to announce the selection of Dr. Ryan A. Blaedow to a Plant Pathologist position in our Asheville Field Office. Ryan worked as a Forest Ecologist on the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest and also as a Plant Pathologist in Region 6 before joining the Forest Health Protection Asheville Field Office staff. Dr. Blaedow has worked with the North Carolina Forest Service and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry as a Forest Health Specialist. He will be working on a variety of native and introduced plant pathogens on NFS, other federal and state and private lands in the Asheville Field Office zone.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

(Items beginning with \* indicate a new listing or new information)

**\*May 27-29, 2015.** Tuscaloosa, AL. The 5<sup>th</sup> Fire in Eastern Oak Forests Conference. The conference will be held at the Bryant Conference Center on the University of Alabama campus in Tuscaloosa, AL. The goal of the Fire in Eastern Oak Forests Conference is to improve land stewardship through transfer of knowledge and technology of fire as a management tool and its role in a historical context. The conference brings together noted experts in research and management to present state-of-the-art information, perspectives, and syntheses on key issues and provides learning and networking opportunities to over 300 participants. The conference is held once every three to five. This year's symposium will emphasize topics relevant to management of oak and oak-pine forests and woodlands and should be of great interest to managers, scientists, landowners, consultants and students. The conference will feature field tours, 17 invited presentations, a poster session, and a panel discussion led by scientists and managers on a wide range of topics in fire science and management. For complete information about the meeting, visit the [conference website](#).

**July 21-24, 2015.** Fayetteville, AR. EARLY ALERT! The 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Southern Forest Insect Work Conference. We have chosen The Chancellor Hotel for our meeting. Although meeting registration is not yet open, I encourage you to make your hotel reservation as soon as possible. We have a block of 75 rooms set aside for the group until **June 20**, so make your reservations by this date. Don't miss out on the special pricing! Here are the details: Date: 21-24 July 2015; Place: The Chancellor Hotel, 70 North East Ave., Fayetteville, Arkansas; Phone reservations: 1-855-285-6162 (or 479-442-5555). Mention that you are attending the *Southern Forest Insect Work Conference*. Visit the [hotel website](#)

for hotel information. Room rates are \$83.00 per night plus tax. Remember, this low rate is valid only until June 20, and only for the first 75 rooms (first 30 on Monday, July 20). Make your reservation right away! **IMPORTANT NOTE:** If you reserve your hotel room now, we will be able to determine if we need to open additional rooms at the \$83.00 rate, and can ensure that everyone who needs a room gets one! Please be considerate to your fellow attendees and reserve your room as soon as possible. **YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED FOR THE 2015 PROGRAM!!!** Please contact Bob Coulson ([r-coulson@tamu.edu](mailto:r-coulson@tamu.edu)) or John Riggins ([jriggins@entomology.msstate.edu](mailto:jriggins@entomology.msstate.edu)), our 2015 Program Co-Chairs, if you have any program or session topic suggestions, or would like to volunteer as a session moderator. More program details coming soon!

**August 23-28, 2015.** Orléans, France. The 5<sup>th</sup> International Workshop on the Genetics of Tree-Parasite Interactions. The deadline for submission of abstracts was April 15, 2015. The deadline for early bird registration was April 15, 2015. To help the organizers with this event AND if you are considering attending the meeting but still waiting for money/approval, **please create a user account** on the conference's website. Creating a user account on the website does not imply registration to the conference or abstract submission, it is just a way to let organizers know that there is a fair probability that you will come. **To create your user account, just click [on this link](#).** (if the link does not work, go to the conference website <https://colloque.inra.fr/tree-parasite-interactions2015> and you will find a link in the "Abstract submission" section. Although the link states "I want to create an account to submit" you will not be forced to submit an abstract once your account is created.) This workshop is intended to foster collaboration and communication among all scientific disciplines working on tree-parasite interactions, and between science and management. Forest trees will be the main focus, but contributions regarding ornamental or fruit trees are also welcome. For more information including the main topics, visit the workshop website: <https://colloque.inra.fr/tree-parasite-interactions2015>.

**September 17-20, 2015.** Ashland, OR. 2015. EARLY ALERT! 2015 Whitebark Pine Ecosystem Foundation Annual Science and Management Workshop. This will be the first time the Whitebark Pine Ecosystem Foundation (WPEF) has had their scientific meeting in the Pacific Coast range of whitebark pine – a chance to feature unique aspects of this part of the range (California, Oregon, Washington, British Columbia), the other high elevation white pine species, and to hear key information from scientists and managers from other areas. The hope is to feature not only whitebark pine, but also the other high-elevation 5-needle pines (foxtail, limber, southwestern white pine, the two bristlecone pines – many of which occur in this area [and notably in California]). Also, the definitive (through 2015) information on genetic blister rust resistance will be available. The Crater Lake National Park field trip will feature many things, including the successful restoration plantings they have established, the dramatic impacts of mountain pine beetle on whitebark pine, the selection of trees for resistance testing and gene conservation, and much more. There will be

an indoor session followed by a poster session, and multiple field trips. For planning purposes, after June 1, please check [the meeting website](#) to register for the meeting and fieldtrips. Preliminary information is currently available on the website. Contacts for more information are: Kristen Chadwick ([kchadwick@fs.fed.us](mailto:kchadwick@fs.fed.us)), Richard Sniezko ([rsniezko@fs.fed.us](mailto:rsniezko@fs.fed.us)) and Jen Beck ([Jen\\_Beck@nps.gov](mailto:Jen_Beck@nps.gov)).

**September 21-25, 2015.** Newport, OR. EARLY ALERT! The 63<sup>rd</sup> Western International Forest Disease Work Conference (WIFDWC). The conference will be held at the Best Western Agate Beach Inn. Register with the inn by **August 21, 2015** to receive the conference rate. Visit [the conference website](#) for updated information about the conference as it becomes available.

**November 3-7, 2015.** Baton Rouge, LA. Society of American Foresters 2015 National Convention. The theme of the convention is *Recreating Forestry: The Confluence of Science, Society, and Technology*. The 2015 call for presentations is currently posted. The deadline for presentation submissions was March 31, 2015. The deadline for poster submissions is **September 30, 2015**. For complete information about the convention, visit the [Society of American Foresters convention website](#).

**December 8-10, 2015.** Portland, OR (location tentative). 2015 Forest Inventory and Analysis Science Symposium. The US Forest Service, Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) Program is pleased to announce the 2015 FIA Science Symposium. The theme of the 12<sup>th</sup> biennial Science Symposium is *Pushing Boundaries – New Directions in Inventory Techniques & Applications*, emphasizing the development of innovative approaches to incorporating non-traditional approaches and uses of inventory information. The Symposium brings together international forest scientists, managers, and stakeholders to share insights on a wide variety of topics, including contemporary issues, science policy, mensuration, geospatial products, and inventory methods. The first call for sessions and papers has been issued. All abstracts and proposals were due March 11, 2015. Please send submissions to [pnw\\_iram@fs.fed.us](mailto:pnw_iram@fs.fed.us). For more information about the symposium, including details about submitting abstracts, visit [the symposium website](#) or contact Sharon Stanton ([sharonMstanton@fs.fed.us](mailto:sharonMstanton@fs.fed.us)).

## UPCOMING WEBINARS

(Items beginning with \* indicate a new listing or new information)

**\*Learn at Lunch Live Webinar: i-Tree Version 6 Preview: Applications and Strategies for Utah Communities** (Sponsored by the Utah State University Forestry Extension and Utah Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands)  
Speaker: Al Zelaya, Urban Forester with The Davey Institute, Chicago, IL.  
Since 2006, the i-Tree software suite has provided free analytic tools to quantify

community forest structure and the environmental services trees provide based on U. S. Forest Service science. This webinar will preview the latest innovative features and tools which will be available later in 2015. In addition, the webinar will explore strategies to utilize key i-Tree field-based and aerial assessment tools including i-Tree Canopy, Design, Eco and Landscape. No registration required for the webinar! CEUs are available from the following organizations: International Society of Arboriculture, and Society of American Foresters. This webinar will be conducted at **12:00 p.m. (MST) on May 19, 2015**. To access this free webinar, visit [the webinar information site](#) for more details. Plan to access the site a few minutes early.

**The Sustainable Forest Roundtable** offers periodic webinars. A recent webinar, Invasive Plants Best Management Practices, is open to the public and may be viewed at this [website](#). For information about accessing past and future webinars, please visit [the Webinar Portal for Sustainable Forests](#) .

**Webinars offered by the U.S Forest Service Remote Sensing Applications Center (RSAC)** include three varieties. The lightning talks (**Lightning Talk**) are very short presentations that will last approximately 15 minutes; they will focus on specific geoprocessing tasks and are designed to provide concise and useful information in a very efficient manner. The Awareness Sessions (**Awareness**) are designed to build your knowledge base on the particular topic and enable you to further explore the technology with realistic expectations. The Technical Training Webcasts (**Technical**) are designed to provide you with the technical skills and tools to complete remote sensing geoprocessing tasks. **Note: If you don't have access to the Forest Service Intranet, the registration links will not work. Please email Brent Mitchell ([brentmitchell@fs.fed.us](mailto:brentmitchell@fs.fed.us)) directly after Jan. 26 to make accommodations. Before Jan. 26, please contact Brenna Schwert ([bmschwert@fs.fed.us](mailto:bmschwert@fs.fed.us)) to ensure you can register for the classes you want.**

- [Using eCognition to Map Pine Beetle Infestations](#) (**Awareness**) Mapping trees affected by beetle infestation can aid forest managers in devising plans to reduce the spread of infestation. This 1-hour awareness session will examine a case study of how eCognition was used to map beetle infested trees in the Black Hills of South Dakota. The processing workflow of preparing the high resolution aerial photography, creating segments, collecting samples, choosing the best classifier, exporting a shapefile of the infected tree areas, and product cleanup will be showcased in a live demonstration. This webinar will be conducted from **10:00am to 11:00am (Mountain Time) on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015**. [Click here to register or for additional information.](#)

## Job Opportunities

### **The U.S. Forest Service, Forest Health Protection, Pacific Northwest Region**

is currently advertising a Biological Scientist (Insects and Diseases) position. This position is being advertised to Merit candidates. Duty station is located in Sandy, Oregon at the Mount Hood NF Headquarters. This position is part of the State and Private Forest Health Protection (FHP) Staff in the Pacific Northwest Region, and reports to the R6 Aerial Survey Program Manager. The incumbent will function as lead aerial observer for the State of Washington, working independently and performing a variety of complex and recurring duties in support of Forest Health Protection (FHP). The incumbent must be able to plan, coordinate and conduct aerial and ground surveys using established standards and guidelines for the collection. The incumbent must also evaluate and report aerial and ground collected data; maintain oversight responsibility for aviation safety in the FHP unit and coordinate with personnel within and outside the agency; develop data coverages and perform GIS based analysis and act as the Forest Health Protection Unit Aviation Officer when delegated to do so. For additional information about the position, including how to apply, view the full vacancy announcement on the [U.S. Office of Personnel Management website](#). The job announcement for federal career and status eligible applicants (see announcement for a full list) is 15-0606-126512G-BMY. The open period is **Wednesday, May 13, 2015 to Monday, May 25, 2015**. *USDA is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*

### **The U.S. Forest Service, Southern Research Station, Forest Inventory and**

**Analysis** in Knoxville, TN Tennessee anticipates hiring only one *Supervisory Forester*. Note: The locations being considered are Pineville, Louisiana; Jackson, Mississippi; and Hot Springs, Arkansas. This position is targeted for the GS-11 or GS-12 grade level. The skills required for the position are management and leadership qualities; communication skills; project management and supervisory skills; and broad technical knowledge of the Forest Inventory and Analysis Program. The person selected is a Zone Supervisory Forester in the Southern Research Station Research Work Unit FS-SRS-4801, Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA). The mission of SRS-4801 is to conduct a program of research to improve the understanding of Southern forest ecosystems through inventories and analyses of the status and trends in resource conditions, use, productivity, and sustainability; and to conduct research to provide improved technology for timely and accurate resource inventories. Duties include, but are not limited to: serve as Zone Supervisory Forester for Data Acquisition Section; provide technical expertise, staff coordination and consultation while fulfilling supervisory responsibilities over 8-13 direct reports; develop improvements to the procedures used for collecting, verifying, compiling and summarizing strategic inventory data; maintain collaborative relationships with State forestry agencies, University collaborators, and others; plan the work to be accomplished in his/her zone, assigns work to employees, and establishes production or quality standards for the unit's work. For more

information about this position, please contact Dale E. Trenda, Data Acquisition Section Head, Southern Research Station Forest Inventory & Analysis, at (865) 862-2039 or by email at [dtrenda@fs.fed.us](mailto:dtrenda@fs.fed.us). If you are interested in this opportunity, please return the form (attached to this Update as attachment 1) by **May 15, 2015**, along with a brief (< 1 page) *statement of your interest* in the position. *USDA is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*

## **PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST**

1. **Carswell, Cally.** 2014. Don't blame the beetles. *Science*. 346(6206): 154-156. This article contains graphics and information derived from forest insect and disease data collected by Forest health Protection (FHP) and its State partners. Available [online](#).
2. **Eastern Forest Environmental Threat Assessment Center.** 2015. The forest threatnet. The March/April edition of the Eastern Forest Environmental Threat Assessment Center Newsletter. Available online at the [Forest ThreatNet](#).
3. **Siegert, Nathan W.; Mercader, Rodrigo J.; McCullough, Deborah G.** 2015. Spread and dispersal of emerald ash borer (Coleoptera: Buprestidae): estimating the spatial dynamics of a difficult-to-detect invasive forest pest. *The Canadian Entomologist*, available on CJO2015. [doi:10.4039/tce.2015.11](https://doi.org/10.4039/tce.2015.11).

## **FOR MORE FHM INFORMATION**

Visit the [FHM homepage](#) and the [Forest Health Portal](#)  
or access both via the [USDA Forest Service homepage](#)

# Outreach Response Form

USDA Forest Service  
Southern Research Station

*I am interested in the position and will call or email the contact person, in addition to checking <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov> for the position announcement.*

**Position Title/Series/Grade: Supervisory Forester, GS-0460-11/12**

**Location: Pineville, LA; Jackson, MS; Hot Springs, AR Only one position to be filled**  
**(please indicate location preference)**

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Current Federal Employee?      Yes      No

Current title/series/grade/location:

**Interested applicants should return this form by May 15, 2015 to:**

***Dale Trenda, Data Acquisition Section Head***

E-mail: [dtrenda@fs.fed.us](mailto:dtrenda@fs.fed.us)

Phone: (865) 862-2039

*Thank you for your interest in employment with the Southern Research Station.*

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