

U.S. Forest Service R&D Newsletter - April 2018

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U.S. Forest Service

Research and Development

Monthly News and Highlights from the World Leader in Forestry Research

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FEATURED NEWS

Does Spending Time Outdoors Reduce Stress?

A USDA Forest Service [review](#) explores the influence on human stress of outdoor activities such as nature viewing, outdoor walks, outdoor exercise, and gardening. The report provides convincing evidence that spending time outside—especially in places with green space—improves both heart rate and blood pressure, helping to reduce stress and boost overall health.



FOREST RESTORATION

Addressing Massive Tree Mortality in California

Since 2010, about 129 million trees have died in California's national forests due to conditions caused by climate change, unprecedented drought, bark beetle infestation and high tree densities. As a result, many hazard trees exist in and around communities. R&D's work with the National Forest System to address [tree mortality](#) in California is presented in multimedia materials on [drought](#), [bark beetles](#), [wildfire risks](#), [wildlife management](#) and [restoration strategies](#).



INVASIVE SPECIES

After the Storm: Hurricane Katrina Impacts Invasive Species

Forest Service researchers [studied](#) abandoned land, vegetation regrowth, and community recovery after Hurricane Katrina in eight New Orleans neighborhoods. Results indicate that non-native, invasive trees were more common in areas with higher proportions of non-white residents, which the researchers attributed to uneven implementation of recovery and resettlement programs.



SUSTAINABILITY

New Forest Sustainability Tool

The Forest Service is working with the American Forest Foundation, GreenBlue, the Environmental Systems Research Institute, and other diverse partners to develop a mapping tool called Forests in Focus. The [tool](#) will assess the sustainability of family-owned forests and inform the sustainability strategies of companies that source wood fiber.



URBAN GREEN SPACE

Chicago's Elevated Trail

As the world's first multi-use elevated trail, "The 606" extends 2.7 miles through diverse neighborhoods that have some of the least open space per person in Chicago. Forest Service scientists are providing [information](#) about the trail's use to help the Trust for Public Land maintain safe experiences for users, design maintenance plans, and document the multiple public benefits of trail development.



FOREST ECOLOGY

Crowding Impacts Tree Growth

Forest Service scientists [surveyed](#) mature and old-growth trees in Mount Rainier National Park in Washington to investigate how a combination of climate and competition affects tree growth. Their results suggest that changes in climate will likely increase individual tree growth most in uncrowded areas that are characterized by less competition.



FIRE MANAGEMENT

Rethinking Wildland Fires

A [video](#) by the Forest Service and the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition explains how healthy fire can provide ecological benefits and decrease unplanned fire risk, and reveals why fires in the West are unique.



SOCIAL SCIENCE

The Human Element to Mapping National Forests

Resource managers traditionally map biophysical forest data without including relevant social science data. A Forest Service social scientist and colleagues are using in-person mapping exercises and workshops to develop [maps](#) depicting the diversity and intensity of human-resource interactions.



SUSTAINABILITY

Palau Accepted into Global Monitoring Network

The Republic of Palau, an archipelago of over 500 islands in the western Pacific Ocean, has become the latest addition to the Smithsonian Institution's Forest Global Earth Observatory Network. Its induction was made possible by forest inventory [research](#) from the Forest Service's Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry. This inventory research also led to the discovery of a new tree species, *Osmoxylon ngardokense*.



POLLINATORS

The Wonderful World of Native Bees Featured in "Science Friday"

Susannah Lerman, a Forest Service research ecologist, explains on the March 30th [episode](#) of *Science Friday* how to attract more native bees to your backyard. The episode also featured the author of a book chronicling the lives and challenges facing native North American bees.



FORESTRY

Experimental Forest Tours Connect Scientists and Partners to Research

Experimental forests are available for all Forest Service station-level scientists and their partners to conduct research, but many scientists aren't aware of the opportunities they provide. In February, the Southern Research Station hosted its second experimental forest [tour](#), showing scientists 11 of its 19 forests.



HISTORY

Teaching Educators About Fire at the Forest's Edge

As part of the annual conference of the American Society for Environmental History in Riverside, California, Forest Service historian Dr. Lincoln Bramwell helped educators review issues facing fire researchers and managers in Southern California by co-leading a [tour](#) of the Southern California Geographic Coordination Center and the San Bernardino National Forest.



Did You Know? Fish Need Forests, Too

The Forest Service manages some of the best, and in some cases only, habitat for many valuable and culturally important fish and aquatic resources—including habitat for more than half of federally-listed freshwater fish, mussels, and amphibians. Fishing, boating, and other aquatic activities benefit communities economically, socially, and culturally. (Scroll down for related infographic.)

The agency's [sustainable approach](#) to managing healthy watersheds and aquatic habitat supports these vital recreational and commercial economies. The Forest Service recently completed an updated national fish and aquatic strategy titled [Rise to the Future: National Fish and Aquatic Strategy](#) .

Recent Blogs



[Blast Testing Shows CLT Can Take the Heat](#)

Tests of two-story cross-laminated timber (CLT) structures show the material can survive blasts large enough to cause lethal injuries. This demonstrates CLT's potential for use in military construction projects.



[Helping Forestland Owners Navigate the Tax Code](#)

The USDA Forest Service Forest Taxation and Estate Planning Program helps private forest landowners, foresters, loggers, and timber businesses navigate the new federal tax code.



[Faces of the Forest Service: Meet John Pye](#)

John Pye manages the computer systems that help make Forest Service Research and Development tick.



[Faces of the Forest Service: Meet Cindy Miner](#)

Cindy Miner serves as assistant station director for the Pacific Northwest Research Station, where she focuses on strategic communications.

BY-THE-NUMBERS

Millions of people **fish** on national forests and grasslands, providing **more than \$2.2 billion** of economic activity each year.

An illustration of a forest landscape. In the foreground, there is a river with several fish swimming in it. The background shows a dense forest of evergreen trees under a light sky.

[Learn more about Aquatic Sustainability](#)

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