



First Friday All Climate Change Talks (FFACCTs)

Hosted by the USDA Forest Service

Eastern Forest Environmental Threat Assessment Center

March 6, 2015—11:00 a.m. (ET)



FFACCTs Opening remarks by Steve McNulty, Director, USDA South East Regional Climate Hub (SERCH)

Washington Office (Research and Development) Update

Karen Dante, Climate Change Fellow, Climate Change Advisor's Office (CCAO)

- Sandy Boyce (National Wildlife Ecologist) is currently acting as the Climate Change Advisor to the Chief.
- Beginning in 2011, all national forests and grasslands were required to implement a proactive climate change response using a 10-point scorecard (Climate Change Performance Scorecard) to report accomplishments in four dimensions – organizational capacity, engagement, adaptation and mitigation. This will be the final year of reporting. In the next few weeks, the Climate Change Advisor's Office will begin discussions on revising the Scorecard and looking ahead to the next five years – 2015 to 2020. Stay tuned for more details.
- The Federal Forest Carbon Coalition a national coalition of national, regional, and local organizations sent a body of recommendations to the Obama Administration focused on federal land management agencies on the management of federal forests, particularly forest carbon last year. The group released a press release late last week stating “the US Forest Service and other federal forest management agencies are failing to adopt policies, regulations, and practices to explicitly mitigate the loss of carbon and increase carbon stores nationwide”. The WO is currently working on a response for leadership.
- House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Bishop discussed panel priorities last week on E&ETV (<http://www.eenews.net/tv/videos/1946/transcript>). He suggested, “a healthy forest and forest management plan with increased grazing and improvements in the way you manage the grazing can actually take most of our carbon emissions and carbon problems out and put it sequestered into the land itself.” Responses are being developed for WO leadership.

USDA Climate Hubs Update

Randy Johnson, National Leader, USDA Climate Hubs

- The hubs are beginning to work more closely with NRCS to incorporate their Soil Health Programs and COMET-FARM tool into the Hubs. For example the California and Northern Plains Hub are working closely with NRCS to 1) better quantify GHG emissions from specialty crops in California with the COMET-FARM tool, and 2) to improve soil health and resilience in the Northern Plains (respectively). All the Hubs will be eventually working with NRCS to bring the Comet tool to our stakeholders
- Hubs are providing support to Sandy Boyce, acting as the Climate Change Advisor to the Chief
- Tools webpage moving forward, we are beginning to test a beta site for the tools
- Two of our Regional Leads gave Presentations at the Ag Outlook Forum

Northeast Climate Science Center (NECSC) Update

Toni Lyn Morelli, Program Manager, Northeast Climate Science Center

- Our 2014 Annual Report is now available. Research activities and accomplishments are highlighted for a variety of events and projects including the Shifting Seasons Building Capacity for Tribal Climate Change Adaptation Summit and our annual Fellows Retreat introducing NE CSC Graduate and Postdoctoral Fellows to the climate adaptation challenges of forestry management in central Missouri: <http://necsc.umass.edu/news/2014-annual-report-now-available>.
- Our College of Menominee Nation colleagues have been conducting a listening tour, visiting a number of Tribes in the Northeast region to discuss their climate change issues and connect them to the resources of the NE CSC. <http://necsc.umass.edu/news/building-bridges-between-tribes-and-climate-scientists>

Southeast Climate Science Center (SECSC) Update

Jerry McMahan, DOI, Director, Southeast Climate Science Center

- SECSC is in the process of negotiating final workplans and budgets for a couple of our FY 15 projects; Two of these multiyear projects will likely have some need for collaboration and involvement of the Forest Service;
 - e.g. Southeast conservation adaptation strategy -- led by Kirstin Dow at University of South Carolina with colleagues at NC State and National Wildlife Federation;



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- around coastal refuge reserve of Cape Romain (Charleston to Santee, multiple partner groups; long term climate smart plan to accommodate sea level rise) and working on expansion of plan with Francis Marion National Forest;
- Continuing discussion of aligning activities between SECSC and SERCH; Aranzazu Lascrain and Lisa Fouladbash are working to build tribal contacts and investigate project collaboration
- Strategy to collaborate and coordinate perhaps co-locating at some point down the line; also perhaps establishing an advisor and stakeholder advisory board or some kind of joint stakeholder advisory group or coordinating steering group

Station Updates

Steve McNulty, Research Ecologist and Team Leader, Eastern Threat Center, Southern Research Station (SRS)

- Based on interactions (Menominee & Threat Center; USET & TACCIMO) and looking toward the future, SERCH and Station scientists are continuing to build tribal relations. SRS partners with the Eastern Band of the Cherokee for integration of traditional and western systems of knowledge for addressing climate and landscape change in the Southern Appalachians (2014 MOU). Serra Hoagland, John Schelhas and Sarah Workman will attend the To Bridge a Gap conference in Oklahoma later this month. SERCH and The Station and R8 keen to coordinate our Research, NFS and Climate Center efforts and build further tribal relations.
- In collaboration with the Virginia Department of Forestry Kurt Johnsen and colleagues have observed that loblolly seed sources from across the South, including Florida and Louisiana, have performed as well as local sources when grown in Virginia. They are now collaborating with the University of Vermont to quantify the cold tolerance of these seed sources using the electrolyte leakage method. Results of this work have implications restoration efforts as well as potential artificial migration of the species in light of climate change.

Dave Hollinger, Project Leader, Climate, Fire, and Carbon Cycle Science, Northern Research Station (NRS)

- Lindsey Rustad is hosting a "Smart Forests" meeting next week on March 11th to review the State of the Network & future directions.
- The NSF has recommended funding for proposed work that would investigate the impacts of ice storms (Glazing events) on northern forests. This is a \$1,178,000 grant over 3 years due to start this spring and includes three NRS scientists (Rustad, Schaberg, Campbell). Charley Driscoll (Syracuse) is the lead and others involved include Sarah Garlick (Hubbard Brook Research Foundation), Katharine Hayhoe (Texas Tech) Peter Groffman (Cary Institute), Tim Fahey (Cornell), and Robert Sanford (Univ. of Southern Maine).
- Hub scientists are meeting up with University partners to develop cooperative work.

National Forest System Updates

Patricia Butler, R9/Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science-Eastern Region & the Northern Forests Sub Hub

- The Climate Change Resource Center has posted the second education module at www.fs.usda.gov/ccrc/climate-basics/education. The CCRC is developing an educational program to provide accessible information on climate change. Three comprehensive education modules are being created using curriculum developed by the Forest Service.
- The Ottawa NF has organized a series of all-employee climate change discussions at district offices and the Supervisor's Office. These presentations will feature NIACS staff, who will share information from new education modules hosted on the Climate Change Resource Center and from a recently-published vulnerability assessment that covers forest ecosystems in western Upper Michigan.
- Superior NF has used the Adaptation Workbook on two more vegetation projects this winter and will be starting a third - that makes 6 for them!
- Chippewa NF was featured in a Minnesota Public Radio series on climate change adaptation in the state: www.mprnews.org/story/2015/02/03/climate-change-forestry
- The Allegheny NF is a lead author on the Mid-Atlantic Vulnerability Assessment, now underway. A vulnerability assessment led by NIACS will use projections of future climate, forest impact models, new scientific literature,



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recent research, and local expertise from scientists and managers to identify key vulnerabilities in major forest ecosystems.

- FAPP Trainings - Forest Adaptation Planning and Practices (FAPP) is an active, hands-on training to help natural resources managers incorporate climate change considerations into their own real-world forest management projects. Upcoming events will take place in Connecticut (March 16-17) and West Virginia (April 14-15). Visit <http://forestadaptation.org/fapp> more information.
- NIACS is currently assisting Hub leaders in testing and developing an agricultural adaptation toolkit based on the suite of forest adaptation resources that NIACS has developed. The USDA Midwest and Northeast Regional Climate Hub leaders are writing proposals to conduct agricultural trainings similar to the highly successful forest adaptation planning and practices trainings put on by NIACS, with focuses on adaptation and mitigation conservation practices relevant to producers.
- The Wayne and Superior National Forests were awarded Landscape Restoration Partnership funding that incorporates climate change. NIACS will work with the Wayne to host workshops that help enable all the landscape partners to make climate-informed decisions as they engage in oak-hickory restoration. NIACS helped the Superior National Forest use the [Adaptation Workbook](#) to consider climate change adaptation actions for a project occurring on federal land within the [North Shore landscape](#).

David Meriwether, Ecosystems Management Coordinator, Southern Region

- Continuing to pursue plan revision for the three early adopter forests with efforts towards making them climate smart plans; addressing effects of drought on many of their moist and wet forest communities and building that into the monitoring as well; Specifically the Francis Marion on the coast of South Carolina which is adjacent to Cape Romain, is also addressing sea level rise. Kudos are due to Southern Research Station (SRS) and especially Emrys Treasure who is part of our ID team for the Forest and contributing very directly to that work.
- In trying to document flagship relations with tribes, since we are pursuing a flagship agreement with the Eastern Band of Cherokee (North Carolina) in conjunction with the SRS, we are trying to figure out how to document the process and are asking for input about how others have done this.
- Regional geneticist Barb Crane in partnership with Kevin Potter from the SRS has developed a strategy for tree gene conservation, particularly focused on species for which we see declines occurring and can anticipate declines for. It is a long-term plan that includes outplantings to conserve tree species.
- Looking at the CC scorecard for this year, we are working particularly on Elements 7, 8 and 9 for adaptation actions, monitoring and carbon. R8 is working with forests to strengthen natural resource management to meet these scorecard criteria. We are sharing ideas across the region and agency from the scorecard responses that we have seen. It has been a great experience. We have just finished element 8 and we are moving to element 9 next month.
- Tony Tooke came in during January 2015 as the new Regional Forester in R8. He has created a new environment and strong leadership addressing and establishing some clear, new expectations.

Presentation

"USDA Northeast Climate Hub turns 1: Lessons Learned but will we see 3?" -- **Dave Hollinger, Northern Research Station – USDA Forest Service Research Physiologist and Project Leader of the NRS Climate, Fire, and Carbon Cycle Sciences group.**

Q&A

Round Robin Discussion

The next FFACCTs will take place **April 3, 2015**.

See <http://www.forestthreats.org/news/upcoming-events/ffaccts> for details.

Please send comments, feedback, and presentation suggestions to Stephanie Worley Firley, Eastern Threat Center, (sworleyfirley@fs.fed.us) and visit the [FFACCTs webpage](#) for additional information.