Greetings!

Our visitor centers are “hopping,” campgrounds are filling up, crews have shifted from planting trees to timber stand improvement work, and our biologists are moving from plover and Kirtland’s Warbler monitoring to dragonflies and other studies. In a nutshell, summer is in full swing on the Hiawatha! It was a busy spring, and we hope you’ll enjoy reading about some of what we’ve been up to. We also hope you’ll find at least one opportunity to visit us here and enjoy “Your Great Lakes National Forest!” Have a safe and relaxing summer...

Tom

Recent Success Stories

**Telecommuting to Africa**

In his latest contribution to the agency’s International Forestry efforts, Dave Maerklein (Ecosystems, Planning and Fire Staff Officer) has applied his Hiawatha experience in landscape analysis to assist the US A.I.D. program in Republic of Niger. Maerklein prepared the biological diversity assessment required of US A.I.D. projects. Niger is currently listed as the poorest country in the world.

**To the Woods!**

Munising Forester Laurie LaBumbard reports a successful field trip with Michigan Tech. University’s integrated field practicum. The Hiawatha plays an active role in hosting the annual event.

**Harvesting in Forested Wetlands**

Roughly half of the Hiawatha is classified as wetland and much of that is forested. Forester Martha Sjogren, St. Ignace, explains how cold winter temperatures and heavy snow loads allow timber harvesting activities in some of these areas through creative mitigation measures.

For more details on these and other stories, click on the titles!
Connecting Citizens: It’s a Wild Life!

And East Side Wildlife Biologist, Steve Sjogren, is thankful for that! Sjogren sings praises to three volunteers whose dedication to a variety of wildlife-oriented projects has benefited wildlife and made his job a little easier at the same time.

John Ries has donated thousands of hours over the last 15 years as a volunteer working on the conservation of sharp-tailed grouse on the Forest and across the Eastern Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Mike Berg has donated countless hours over the last 15 years as a volunteer working on the conservation of the Endangered Kirtland’s Warbler on the Hiawatha.

Kimberly R. Hall, PhD, of East Lansing, has worked tirelessly since 1996 to build a multi-faceted monitoring, inventory and research project to investigate various aspects of forest-dwelling migratory songbirds on the East Side of the Forest.

For more information about these projects, visit the SSRS.

Connecting Citizens: Growing Success

According to Forest Botanist Terry Miller, a series of three volunteer workdays held earlier in the year marked the second annual “Volunteer Days” at the Forest’s Native Plant Program Greenhouse, in Marquette, MI. Over the three workdays, thirty volunteers from a variety of organizations contributed 118 hours and prepared and planted 15,000 individual plugs of more than 35 species of native plants, the majority of which will be used for HNF restoration projects throughout the forest.

Volunteers came from a variety of organizations including the MSU Master Gardener program, Marquette County Conservation District, Northern Michigan University environmental science program, Superior Watershed Partnership, Marquette Senior High School, Marquette-Alger Regional Educational Service Agency, Moosewood Nature Center, and retirees from Munising, Marquette, and Ishpeming.

See the SSRS for additional info.

Employer of Choice: Workforce Planning

The Hiawatha’s Workforce Planning effort continues. The draft workforce plan was initially sent to the Union at the end of February and is currently under review.

In May, the Workforce Transition team announced the availability of the Hiawatha’s Workforce Transition Resource Page. The webpage, found on our intranet page, includes many resources designed to help employees adjust to change, build resumes, apply for jobs, obtain training, and handle stress.

Employees continue to respond to the optional Employee Skills and Interests database, designed to help the Forest develop and utilize employees’ skills efficiently as we operate with a smaller workforce.
Protecting Ecosystems: **Land Ho!**

This spring marked the completion of several important land acquisition projects on the Hiawatha. According to Forest Lands Program Manager, Sharon Hagstrom, the Forest recently added key inholdings in three Wildernesses on the Forest. The Forest acquired the final inholding in the Mackinac Wilderness, the 41-acre Vogt parcel. With the help from Little Traverse Conservancy, the Forest also acquired 25.8 acres in the Horseshoe Bay Wilderness, the final private inholding there. The Forest also recently acquired through exchange the "Ice Caves 40," an ecologically sensitive inholding within the Rock River Canyon Wilderness. Over the years, the HNF has worked with several parties to acquire this key parcel. Forest Geologist, Jessica Stuntebeck, reports the Hiawatha recently acquired 42,000 acres of mineral rights in a donation from the Stearns Coal & Lumber Company, which had reserved these mineral rights when the USFS purchased the property back in the mid 1930s. With this generous donation the United States will increase its mineral ownership by 5% under Hiawatha National Forest Lands taking our total to 35%.

Team Highlights

**Public Service**

Recreation Facility Analysis – With its RFA Program of Work complete and summer in full swing, the Forest has initiated public involvement regarding a first round of potential projects. Summer users of potentially affected facilities are being targeted.

Recreation Residences – The Recreation Residence program has been busy of late. The Forest is implementing fee increases from previous appraisals and initiating reappraisals on all lots. Summer will be busy with inspections.

**Ecosystem**

Emerald Ash Borer – Michigan Department of Agriculture is doing intensive trapping in the Moran area. We’re working with them to better determine the size of the infestation. Results of this year’s trapping effort are expected in the fall, when we’ll evaluate the need for further action.

WATA Awards Event – On June 4, with Peninsula Point Lighthouse in the background, Supervisor Tom Schmidt honored 26 Wings Across the Americas awardees. Following the ceremony, about 100 guests enjoyed lunch on the grounds.

National Monarch Butterfly Workshop -- A workshop focused on Monarch butterfly conservation was held June 3-5, 2008, on the Hiawatha National Forest. The agency’s International Programs office selected the venue due to the Forest’s longterm work with Monarch butterflies and with native gardens. In addition to numerous workshop sessions, attendees from around the country took field trips to sites related to Monarch management including Peninsula Point and the forest’s Native Plant Greenhouse in Marquette.

Spring Tree Planting – During the planting season, it was discovered that members of the planting crew were not properly documented. The crew was removed and replaced.

**Administration**

Regional Forester’s Visit – We enjoyed hosting Kent and Skip during their April journey north! Employees on the West Unit appreciated his visit, and we look forward to hosting you on the East Unit in the near future.

**Public Affairs**

Website – The Forest is among several nationwide that will be “early adopters” of the new web format. We’ve been completing the “information architecture” for the site and anticipate migration in the near future.

OHV/TMR Field Visit – We have invited our Congressional contacts to join us for a field tour of OHV-related sites on August 20. The Rec Team and leadership have been working to finalize the details of the trip.

GREEN TEAM

The Forest has recently distributed a variety of “green” products (from cleansers to biolubes) to the units. The goal is to help increase green purchasing by giving employees the opportunity to try a variety of products. Employees’ product reviews will be posted on our intranet site to help guide future purchasing.
**Hiawatha Highlights**  
**Volume 2 Issue 3**  
**Page 4**

Hiawatha National Forest  
2727 North Lincoln Road  
Escanaba, MI 49829  

Phone: 906-789-3339 (Tom) or 906-789-3329 (Janel, PAO)  
Fax: 906-789-3311

**NEPA Summary**

**Westside (Rapid River, Manistique, and Munising Ranger Districts)**

- **Name of Project:** Westside Gravel Pits  
  **Description:** Development of several new gravel pits  
  **Date of Public Release:** Decision expected March 09  
  **Likelihood of appeal:** Low

- **Name of Project:** Beech Bark Disease EA  
  **Description:** Anticipated TPPS project  
  **Date of Public Release:** Collecting data FY08. Decision FY09.  
  **Likelihood of appeal:** Low/Medium

**Munising Ranger District**

- **Name of Project:** Mirrorwood EA  
  **Description:** Vegetation Management  
  **Date of Public Release:** Decision FY10  
  **Likelihood of appeal:** Unknown

**Rapid River/Manistique Ranger District**

- **Name of Project:** Stockyard Stewardship CE  
  **Description:** Joint Kirtland’s Warbler/fuels reduction project. Stewardship and partnerships. Estimated 0.7 MMBF  
  **Date of Public Release:** Was a Category 10 CE, but now is an EA. Decision signed June 2008.  
  **Likelihood of appeal:** None (only supportive comments received)

- **Name of Project:** Single Track Motorcycle Trail EA  
  **Description:** Construct a 26-mile single track motorcycle trail.  
  **Date of Public Release:** Scoping and 30-day notice & 30-day comment period ran concurrently in April 07. Decision expected in September 08  
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- **Name of Project:** Dutch Mill EA  
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**Eastside (St. Ignace/Sault Ste. Marie Ranger District)**

- **Name of Project:** Gooseneck EA  
  **Description:** Vegetation Management  
  **Date of Public Release:** Initial scoping Mar 08. Decision expected in March 09  
  **Likelihood of appeal:** Unknown

- **Name of Project:** Permanent Opening CE—East  
  **Description:** Routine wildlife maintenance activities. Approximately 5,900 acres of existing openings  
  **Date of Public Release:** Decision made March 10, 2008, withdrawn. New decision expected June 2008.  
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- **Name of Project:** Sand Clay EA  
  **Description:** Large vegetation management project. (49,000 acre analysis area with alternatives ranging from 17-19 MMBF)  
  **Date of Public Release:** Decision expected March 2008  
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- **Name of Project:** Niagara EIS  
  **Description:** Large vegetation management project  
  **Date of Public Release:** NOI in FR in Jan 08. Decision expected March 09.  
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**Parting Shots**

- About 26 teachers attended this workshop organized by MAEOE.
- Biologist Matt Cole listens during spring Kirtland’s Warbler surveys. The 2008 results showed continued increase from previous years.
- Below left, Forest Supervisor Tom Schmidt views a Piping Plover nest during a May field trip lead by biologist Steve Sjogren.

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