

Farm Bill Accomplishment Report Template

Farm Bill Midyear Accomplishment Report

Year:	FY2016
State:	Maine
Cooperative Agreement Name:	Forest Pest Outreach and Survey Project
Cooperative Agreement Number:	16-8223-0662-CA
Project Funding Period:	9/20/2016 – 9/19/2017
Project Report:	Farm Bill FPOSP Midyear Report
Project Document Date:	2/1/2017
Cooperators Project Coordinator:	State Survey Coordinator
Name:	Karen Coluzzi
Agency:	Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF)
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E-mail:	Karen.l.coluzzi@maine.gov

Quarterly Report	<input type="checkbox"/>
Semi-Annual Accomplishment Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Annual Accomplishment Report	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. Approach

a. Describe specific activities and accomplishments...

The cooperator (DACF) will accomplish the following goals by the end of the agreement period:

1. Contract with one of more entities that was chosen through a competitive RFP Process...

A request for proposals (RFP) was advertised during CA# 15-8223-0662 and two organizations, the Saco River Recreational Council (SRRC) and the Maine Association of Conservation Districts Employees Committee (MACD), were awarded funds to enhance the state's outreach of invasive forest pests. DACF renewed the contracts with these organizations to continue the outreach for CA# 16-8223-0662. Members of these organizations have attended previous FPOSP trainings and have been conducting invasive forest pest outreach over the years. ***The proposals and midyear reports for both organizations are attached.***

2. Maintain a list of outreach and training activities, tabling events, media contacts and targeted audience participants and report on these per reporting requirements in the cooperative agreement.

A database is maintained by the cooperator that tracks all events related to FPOSP outreach. Although we are no longer building up a volunteer base through DACF, we continue to solicit activity reports from our previously trained volunteers, and continue to participate in various outreach activities. Below is a list of events by DACF staff and/or volunteers for the reporting period (9/20/16-12/31/16).

Date	Location	Event	Type	# Impacted	Notes
9/19/16 (didn't get reported last year)	Farmington	Ag Day at Farmington Fair	DACF staff assisted with FPO display booth	500	Popular K-12 event.
10/3/16	University of Maine, Augusta campus	Senior College - Maine's Natural World	Invasive Forest Pest Presentation	50	FPOSP Volunteer / Master Naturalist taught about invasive forest pests at a senior college.
10/6/16	Fryeburg	Fryeburg Fair	SRRC booth – a portion dedicated to invasive forest pest and firewood outreach	800	DACF helped staff the Saco River Recreational Council outreach booth at the Fair, a 10-day event.
10/21/16	College of the Atlantic, Bar Harbor, ME	The Nature of Halloween	Halloween event / Costume party – open to the public	200	Acadia NPS staff donned ALB and EAB costumes
11/3/16	Waterboro	Massabesic Middle School Invasive Species Forum	Staffed FPO and Firewood display booth	150	School and community event to educate on various invasive species issues.

3. Develop and/or maintain an in-state electronic list of citizen volunteers for present and future pest detection communications as well as requests for assistance. Most of the communications will be achieved through newsletters and social media.

We maintain a database of all trained volunteers from 2009 to 2015, plus additional citizens who have expressed interest in staying involved with invasive forest pest issues. We currently have over 600 names in the database. These names have been added to the subscription list of our electronic newsletter, *Invasive Pest Outreach News*, which currently has 1534 subscribers and is delivered electronically 4-6 times a year. Two newsletters were delivered during this reporting period (September 20 – December 31, 2016):

- [*Invasive Pest News: Welcome Fall!*](#)
- [*Invasive Pest News: Fall II – Bees, Beetles, Moths, and More!*](#)

We also achieve outreach through the Maine Bug Watch social media pages, [Facebook](#) (547 likes) and [Twitter](#) (217), which not only inform followers of pest updates, but help to solicit volunteers and set up new outreach events.

Maine DACF-FPOSP Social Media Metrics

9/20/16 - 12/31/16		# subscribers prior	# subscribers in report per.	% increase	# posts	engagement	
Type	Name						
Newsletter	Invasive Pest Outreach News	1463	1534	5	2	30%	"unique opens rate"
Facebook	Maine Bug Watch	539	547	1.5	44	119	"avg post reach"
Twitter	Maine Bug Watch	214	217	1.4	38	119	"impressions per day"

-
4. Coordinate FPO events with national outreach efforts, including Earth Day, National Invasive Species Awareness Week, and Emerald Ash Borer Awareness Week.

No events have been planned for these weeks during the reporting period.

5. Cooperate with other agencies, contractors, and NGOs to develop and disseminate outreach materials.

We continue to share all our materials, including posters and presentations to SRRC and MACD so that the technical information and message for forest pest outreach remains consistent. We continue to develop, print and distribute outreach materials to these groups and our trained volunteers.

6. The cooperator (DACF) will also join Firewood Scout, an online resource created to help residents and visitors of participating states to buy and use firewood locally, in an effort to slow the spread of invasive forest pests.

A separate Farm Bill grant was awarded for the state’s firewood outreach effort, which will start April 1, 2017. To make sure Maine is “live” by the start date, DACF staff worked with

the organizers of Firewood Scout to prepare for membership and data collection. Staff developed outreach materials for promoting FWS (*attached*) and designed an advertisement for inclusion in 2017 Maine Camping Guide (*attached*). Staff also visited roadside firewood vendors throughout the state to promote participation in the online resource. Staff entered 173 participating vendors into the spreadsheet for upload onto the FWS website.

Approved and signed by



Cooperator

Date: 2/6/2017

Date:

ADODR

Attachments:

- Firewood Scout brochure and Maine Camping Guide ad
- Saco River Recreational Council (SRRC) Proposal
- SRRC Semiannual Report
- Maine Association of Conservation District (MACD) Proposal
- MACD Semiannual Report

Firewood Scout tri-fold brochure

Why join FWS?

Because you would help...

- ~ Reduce the risk of invasive insects coming to Maine
- ~ Protect our gorgeous forests, lakes, and all of our state's natural biodiversity
- ~ Make it easier for out-of-area campers to locate YOUR firewood
- ~ Freely boost your business while advertising on a nationwide database
- ~ Spread the word about the **Don't Move Firewood Campaign!**



FIREWOOD SCOUT.ORG

Go to FirewoodScout.org in 2017 and sign up as a firewood vendor.

Or, email us at Bugwatchme.agr@maine.gov for more information



This brochure was made possible, in part, by a cooperative agreement from the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). It may not necessarily express APHIS' views.
November 2016

BUY IT WHERE YOU BURN IT.

Sign up your storefront or roadside business on **FirewoodScout.org** and help protect Maine's forests from unwanted invasive pests!

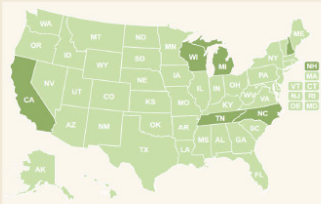
Outside



Buy it where you burn it!

What is Firewood Scout?

Firewood Scout was developed in response to the growing concern that long-distance dispersal of firewood allows invasive tree-killing pests to spread further and faster.

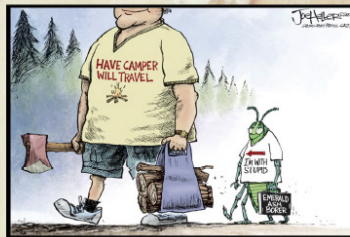


The responsive-design website, Firewoodscout.org contains a database of firewood vendors that assists the public in locating local sources of firewood.

Because of its responsive design there is no app to download, and searchers can use the website on any mobile device, especially helpful when camping in a new location.

Maine will join the growing network in 2017 with over 100 Maine firewood vendors entered into the database. If you sell firewood and would like to be listed in the database, contact us!
bugwatchme.agr@maine.gov
207-287-7551

What issues come with the movement of firewood between states?

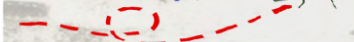


- Invasive insects and diseases easily hitchhike in firewood, though the wood may look clean to the average camper's eye.
- The state would need to spend time and money trying to control or eradicate invasive pests - it can become very expensive.
- Maine's entire forested landscape can be irreparably changed as new invasive threats and pests appear in the state.
- Damaged land has lower property values.
- Within states, moving wood more than 10 miles can bring invasive pests across county borders; so locating local, affordable firewood as close as possible to where the camper wants to burn it is key to minimizing pest movement.

Several known invasive insects close to or in Maine:

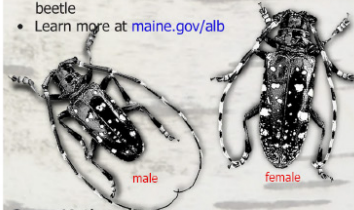
Emerald Ash Borer

- Threatens all species of North American ash, including black ash, which is used in native American basket making.
- Has killed millions of ash trees throughout the U.S.
- Is difficult to detect and control.
- Learn more at maine.gov/eab



Asian Longhorned Beetle

- Attacks a number of hardwood trees; especially a threat to maple.
- Closest known infestation is in Worcester, MA.
- Often confused with native whitespotted sawyer beetle
- Learn more at maine.gov/alb



Gypsy Moth

- Very destructive defoliator of many trees
- Egg masses can be laid on any surface, is easily spread to new areas.
- Maine has a town-by-town quarantine, reducing spread throughout the state and to other parts of the country.



Inside



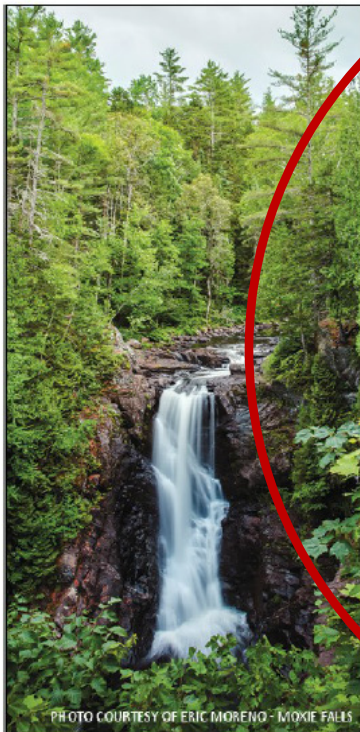
Order Your FREE Vacation Planner at kennebecvalley.org

places to go, things to do

Whitewater Rafting, ATV Riding,
Snowmobiling, Hunting, Fishing



Hiking, Boat Cruising, Sightseeing,
Theater, Museums, Shopping, Dining



PROTECT MAINE FORESTS

Use local firewood
Moving firewood long distances can bring harmful insects and diseases to your favorite campgrounds. You can make a difference.
Buy your firewood at your destination.
Find local sources at

FIREWOOD SCOUT.org

KENNEBEC VALLEY

SRRC Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

SRRC will include in all of the conferences, fairs and etc displays for the FPOSP and educate people about ALB, EAB, HWA, Winter Moth and other invasive pests that are on the radar and the importance of not moving firewood. The Swans Falls educational facility, which is currently housed in a small visitor center/camp store, will have FPOSP displays set up throughout the season from May through October with the goal of educating visitors on a daily basis about these invasives and much more. The educational facility is the hub for educating youth groups (e.g. scouts and schools groups) and the general public on invasive forest pests. With assistance from this grant, the educational facility can be expanded and upgraded with the intention of becoming a training facility for FPOSP and other important environmental concerns. SRRC often does impromptu forest pest outreach, including showing the “Lurking in the Trees” documentary, handing out tattoos, pencils, references materials and asking for their help with educating others by taking this project as a science project to help us spread the word and educate others. A new expanded training facility will allow for larger numbers of people to be educated. SRRC staff, including management, as well as stakeholders along the Saco River corridor (e.g. canoe liveries, other campground owners) have been educated through SRRC on invasive forest pests and will continue to disseminate outreach materials to their customers and constituents. SRRC will post posters provided by FPOSP at all take out location bulletin boards and campgrounds on the upper Saco River in Fryeburg and Brownfield to keep visitors informed.

2. Implementation - Work Plan

SRRC will continue with invasive forest pest outreach at all fairs, conferences, schools and any other yet to be organized outreach events throughout the year. With funding from this grant, SRRC will be able to employ a summer intern to dedicate more hours to outreach and education, and to have a bigger presence at more events. Additional funding will help to expand SRRC’s educational facility that will be able to accommodate trainings and workshops year-round, as well as house permanent displays that FPOSP has developed for invasive forest pest outreach. Metrics for assessing impacts will include the numbers of events and trainings that focus on invasive forest pest education, the numbers of people that attend trainings and events, and the number of visitors that bring out-of-state firewood.

SRRC Semiannual Report*

* Michelle Broyer, the driving force behind the initiative to bring Invasive Forest Pest Outreach to the Fryeburg and Saco River area, passed away unexpectedly 11/9/16. Her passion and energy for environmental issues will be difficult to replicate. The SRRC is determined to continue her pursuits of environmental education. Their official midyear report comes after this table of events that I constructed from the emails and phone calls I had with her prior to her death. - klc

SRRC EVENT DETAILS ~ Sept. 2016 – Dec. 2016

EVENT COORDINATOR, Michelle Broyer

Date	Location	Event	Type	# Impacted	Notes
9/30/16– 10/9/16	Fryeburg	Fryeburg Fair	SRRC and Invasive Forest Pest /Firewood Outreach display	“hundreds”	8 Days of outreach and education of thousands of fair goers. Included diorama and lots of FPOSP handouts and tattoos!!
10/31/16	Fryeburg	Trunk or Treat	Invasive Forest Pests treat bags for Halloween	“thousands”	Included LNT (Leave No Trace) Ethics and the SRRC and invasives pests. <i>Pics. 1, 2 and 3</i>
11/3/16	Waterboro	Massabesic Middle School Invasive Species Forum	SRRC, Invasive Forest Pest Outreach and Environmental Education booth	150	School and community event to educate on various invasive species issues.

Some messages from Michelle talking about her plans...

From: Michelle Broyer <michelle@sacorivercouncil.org> Sent: Wed 8/31/2016 2:24 PM
To: Coluzzi, Karen L
Cc:

Hello, I can't believe that year is over already! I have some very exciting stuff coming right up with Fryeburg Academy and the Middle school MESA program. I start next week! We will be studying and focusing on forest pests and aquatic invasives and am trying to encourage them to do an invasive fair at the school like Massabesic did last fall! The MESA program is going to start the focus on EAB, learning about ASH trees and identifying the signs of EAB etc. They will be here on the 7th for that. They are going to report some of thier findings to Vital Signs. I will keep you updated as plans progress. Lots of good stuff happening.

The FA awarded me an intern for the school year who I will be training in FPO and maybe coming her with the MESA project. Should be fun and interesting. This effort would become part of the next grant cycle if that sounds ok to you.

Hope all is well. Cleanup next week and I have over 100 volunteers!
Michelle

i You replied to this message on 9/27/2016 7:58 AM.
From: Michelle Broyer <michelle@sacorivercouncil.org> Sent: Mon 9/26/2016 12:17 PM
To: Coluzzi, Karen L
Cc:

Hello Karen,

How are you? I am getting very excited between the fair and the developing school intern program. I have been awarded an Intern by Fryeburg Academy to work with me through Dec. She is great and she is a dorm student from Mass and loves the outdoors. So, I am teaching her about what I do here and the education program especially invasives and its starting to take an exciting turn. I have another teacher at the Academy who I had a great conversation with last Friday and we are looking at doing invasive studies together with our intern and his class. We are thinking the early fall study water quality, testing, observation studies and hopefully some macroinvertebrates stuff if i can get a connection. Then the next semester we want to work on Forest Pests, thinking about identifying trees on campuses, neighborhood, mapping, and invasive monitoring stuff and thought maybe I could get you guys to come visit. I though citizen science work, actual survey, mapping or monitoring of threatened trees they can "adopt" and take care of etc. Very exciting stuff. I am hoping I could blend my intern with his class. You will meet her at the fair booth on Thursday.

Talk soon.

Michelle Broyer

Saco River Recreational Council
Conservation Education program

You replied to this message on 11/4/2016 8:49 AM.

From: Michelle Broyer <michelle@sacorivercouncil.org>
To: Coluzzi, Karen L
C:

Sent: Thu 11/3/2016 8:05 PM

Hi Karen,

It was great to see you today. I had a great time working with you all today and talking to your assistant, who I really liked. Students kept asking me what type of beetle, or bug was in the box and I wasn't sure and kept referring them to her. I told them how she collects beetles and labels them, LOL. It was funny. I said you could get paid to do that for a living. :) Some of these kids were interested. :) I enjoyed talking to Vital Signs and the Forester. Together we make a difference! Thank you for all you do to educate and fight the battle and keeping me educated!

Oh, was there anything on our EAB trap?

I attached pics of my Trunk for our Trunk or Treat which saw over 1000 people! It was a great event. I made the goodie bags with the Forest Pest stuff and everybody loved it! I used exam gloves as goodie bags with tattoos, pencils, bookmarks and candy of course. I had the plastic spider rings, and candy eye balls, etc. Lol, way to much time on my hands. I ran out of candies and started handing out tattoos and bookmarks I keep in my goodie bag in the car. LOL They loved it, parents thought it was better than candy. Looking forward to it next year!

Michelle Broyer

Saco River Recreational Council
Conservation Education program

Pics. 1, 2, and 3 Trunk or Treat



SRRC Accomplishment Report

AdvantageME CT No: CT# 20150914*1050 RIDER A

USDA

To: Karen Coluzzi, Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
From: Stefan J. Jackson, Conservation Education Consultant, SRRC Partner/Member
CC: Beth Griffin, Bob Tagliaferri, Prudy Westerberg
Date: January 30, 2017
Re: September 20, 2016 – December 31, 2016

Comments: Michelle Broyer's sudden passing on November 9th, 2016, left a total void in professional management of grants and programs under the Saco River Recreational Council's obligation and strategic vision. Our conservation education, riverine stewardship, and recreational management communities of the Upper Saco River Watershed were left reeling as we efforded to memorialize and celebrate Michelle's leadership in conservation education, the total effort of what turned out to be the last decade of her life – a life dedicated to working partnerships to protect the Upper Saco River.

From her passing through the end of the year, SRRC's volunteer leadership and community partners have come together, reaffirming our commitment to sustain a legacy built through community effort and stakeholder strategic planning, a legacy adopted and shaped by Michelle's work, the work of SRRC and its partners.

SRRC's partner leadership will be convening shortly in the first quarter of the new year. We will need to research what Michelle was able to accomplish in the approximately month and a half from the commencement of the Rider until her untimely death. We will also effort to create a final Quarterly Accomplishments Report that includes other conforming efforts by our partners.

Please understand that for this effort, volunteers doing the work will need more time, but will complete this final report within the first quarter of 2017.

Summary of Proposed Outreach for Invasive Forest Pest Education

The Scope of Services to be provided by the Maine Association of Conservation Districts Employees Committee Technical Delivery Team for the continuation of the Invasive Forest Pest Grant for the time period of September 20, 2016 to September 19, 2017 will be in accordance with the goals and plans outlined in the *DACF Maine Forest Service's Maine State Forest Assessment and Strategies* of June 18, 2010. As noted in this publication, "MFS has identified several critical and interrelated challenges that are key to the future of our forests: Keeping our forests as forests for the long-term – this is fundamentally important....A number of exotic insects and diseases, some established, some not yet here, threaten significant components of Maine's forests."

In the first year of this grant the MACD Employees Committee's Technical Delivery Team reached most of its target goals written into the Work Plan, including coordinating outreach materials from the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to all of the counties and conservation districts targeted in the first year of the grant. Additional materials were developed as needed, including consistent agendas for all workshops, a Host Trees information sheet and Power Points that were tailored for specific events and target audiences. Press releases were provided to announce the grant goals and also to announce the 10 workshops, 3 with field sessions/walk and talks, throughout 7 counties in Maine. Approximately 180 people were reached through these events, including conservation-minded landowners and professionals working in forestry, logging or other natural resource careers, that were the intended target audiences for these events. CEUs were provided for 6 of these workshops in 5 counties in Maine. These CEUs were provided by the DACF's Maine Board of Pesticides Control and also by the Society of American Foresters.

To date, several hundred people stopped to view invasive forest displays and talk with staff at 8 large events, such as fairs and trade shows that were organized for 9 counties in Maine, including 2 counties that had not offered workshops. Some counties offered workshops and also provided outreach at fairs or trade shows, such as Franklin, Knox, Lincoln, Somerset and Oxford Counties. For the remainder of this current grant period, a minimum of 5 more fairs will have displays and outreach, including Kennebec, Knox, Lincoln, Oxford, Somerset and York Counties. Interface through social media was provided by individual conservation districts throughout the state. Municipal outreach was provided to hundreds of public works personnel from town all throughout Maine through the Highway Congress in Somerset County, and campground outreach was primarily provided through the Maine Campground Association.

The Forest Invasive Pest Outreach and Education Technical Delivery Team will continue to provide cost efficient and effective outreach and education, and will expand outreach to all 16 counties in Maine from the initial 12 counties targeted in the first year of the grant.

A *Train the Trainer* session will be offered through MACD at the 2016 Winter Meeting, which will enable additional conservation district staff to become trained presenters. Currently 4 conservation district staff throughout the state have been presenting at workshops and other events, and many others have staffed larger events, answering questions, providing information and resources and managing displays.

Workshops, trainings and/or walk and talks will be held throughout Maine, and where possible, in conjunction with conservation partners during key awareness weeks such as the Invasive Species Awareness Week in late February and also the Emerald Ash Borer Awareness Week in late May. Public Service Announcements will be provided to radio and news outlets in advance of these events in order to generate greater awareness of the threats to our forests and woodlots from invasive forest pests. These events will target outreach to local landowners and to forestry professionals. Events such as fairs will have invasive forest pest displays and handouts. Some of these fairs will be staffed and others will have stationary displays.

Municipal outreach will be provided through the Maine Municipal Association (MMA) and where possible through local municipal associations such as the Oxford County Municipal Association. This outreach will target municipal officials, public works department personnel and other local government officials through regional meetings with the goal of municipalities developing invasive pest management plans for their communities. Folders for municipalities, conservation commissions and tree boards will have focused information to provide strategies and draft management plans to address invasive forest pests in their communities. Additional outreach will be provided to campground owners and campsite visitors. This outreach will be provided by a combination of hand delivery and through the Maine Campground Association and will focus on the “*Don’t Move Firewood*” initiative.

Invasive Forest Pest Information Packets will be produced for all 16 conservation districts in Maine in order to significantly expand statewide outreach throughout the year. Conservation districts, while differing in their focus throughout the state, all provide numerous natural resource education workshops and technical trainings, giving opportunity to place these information packets out at relevant events. Additionally, many conservation districts offer tree and plants sales, during which these packets will be made available. Given that our target audiences for all events are conservation minded professional and landowners, conservation districts can put this important information in the hands of people who spend a good amount of their time outdoors, and who typically have very good awareness about the natural world, enabling them to notice any negative changes in their environment.

As noted in our original grant application to the DACF, conservation districts are uniquely positioned to efficiently deliver invasive forest pest outreach and education statewide due to our presence in every county in Maine. The MACD Employees Committee is committed to continuing invasive forest pest outreach and education through this grant and to expanding the scope of service to include all counties in the State of Maine.



Maine Association of Conservation Districts
Employees Committee
PO Box 541, Portland, ME 04112-0541
Phone: (207) 596-2040
Email: Hildy Ellis, Committee Chair at hildy@knox-lincoln.org

MACD Employees Committee Invasive Forest Pest Outreach and Education Grant Report
to the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
Bureau of Agriculture, Division of Animal and Plant Health
for RFP # 201506109
Quarterly Report Time Frame: September 20 through December 31, 2016

1. Public Relations Outreach

The MACD Employees Committee coordinated a grant announcement press release with John Bott, the DACF Director of Communications and Special Projects. The DACF distributed this press release through their list serve to 3,234 recipients, and the story was redistributed via the Associated Press, as well as through Maine natural resource agencies.

The same PR was publicized through multiple Facebook pages, including the DACF page and through individual conservation districts. Several posts regarding impacts of invasive forest pests have been re-posted to conservation district Facebook pages throughout Maine.

2. Outreach Event

Common Ground Fair, Unity, Maine – September 23, 24, 25, 2016 - Waldo and Knox-Lincoln County SWCDs board and staff note that many people who stopped at the booth were knowledgeable about pests and wanted to engage about control of specific pests. There were a lot of questions, materials taken, and generally folks were very engaged with this issue.

3. Technical Delivery Team Meetings

The first Technical Delivery Team Meeting was held on October 11th during the MACD Fall Meeting. A second Technical Delivery Team Meeting was held during the December 9th MACD Winter Meeting. At both meetings, Hildy Ellis, MACD Employees Committee Chair and Invasive Forest Pest Grant Administrator, and Joanna Tarrazi, IFP Project Manager reviewed the goals, objectives and work plan of the grant and answered questions about project logistics.

DATE	EVENT	# ATTEND	PARTNERING ORGANIZATION(S)	NOTES
9/23/2016 through 9/25/2016	Common Ground Fair	About 100 people talked with staff at the MACD Invasive Forest Pest Booth	Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association; Waldo County SWCD; Knox-Lincoln County SWCD	Waldo and Knox-Lincoln County SWCDs board and staff note that many people who stopped at the booth were knowledgeable about pests and wanted to engage about control of specific pests. Folks were very engaged with this issue.

10/11/16	MACD Fall Meeting	About 25	16 Maine Conservation Districts	Meeting and discussion on the goals, objectives and work plan of the grant.
12/9/2016	MACD Winter Meeting	About 40	16 Maine Conservation Districts	Meeting and discussion on the goals, objectives and work plan of the grant.



Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
 Common Ground County Fair, September 2016
 Invasive Forest Pest Display by Knox-Lincoln and Waldo County SWCDs.



Piscataquis SWCD's Joanna Tarrazi and Knox-Lincoln SWCD's Hildy Ellis leading a Technical Delivery Team Meeting at the MACD Winter Meeting in December, 2016.

Attachment:

DACF Press Release: November 30, 2016 – Expansion of Search for Invasive Forest Pests Announced

For Immediate Release

Expansion of Search for Invasive Forest Pests Announced

Outreach will encompass all 16 Maine Counties in effort to combat growing threat posed by invasive insects

AUGUSTA - The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) announced two awards that will expand outreach to all 16 Maine counties in an effort to address the growing threat from invasive forest pests. The Maine Association of Conservation Districts Employees Committee and the Saco River Recreational Council received continued funding (\$35,000 and \$5,000, respectively) for their efforts to provide outreach and education to engage citizens in helping protect Maine forests.

"Early detection of invasive pests such as Asian longhorned beetle, emerald ash borer, hemlock woolly adelgid, winter moth and others are crucial in protecting the forest products and forest recreation industries in a state that is 90% forested," said DACF Commissioner Walt Whitcomb. "Once these insects have established a foothold in other states, they become difficult if not impossible to eradicate. By working in partnership with soil and water conservation districts in all 16 counties and community partners along the Saco River, we can better protect our forest resources and economies."

Early detection of invasive forest pests can be accomplished through outreach and education efforts. This not only reduces the costs and resources needed for a management response, but also increases the chances of eradication success.

The DACF has been conducting outreach and education since 2009 with funding provided by the Farm Bill Section 10007. The Maine Association of Conservation Districts Employees Committee, in partnership with 12 county conservation districts in Southern and Central Maine, and the Saco River Recreational Council were both awarded funding under a competitive Request for Proposal issued by the DACF in 2015. This year's awards continue the outreach provided by these organizations, expanding outreach to all 16 counties in Maine.

"The outreach and education that are being contributed by these two conservation organizations will enhance the Department's existing efforts resulting in increased public understanding of the economic and environmental threats associated with invasive forest pests," said Karen Coluzzi, DACF State Pest Survey Coordinator. "The awards increase support for management and mitigation efforts, and increase reporting of potential pest sightings to federal or state authorities. The threat of invasive forest species requires continued vigilance, education and awareness of the general public to safeguard this significant state resource."

For more information on invasive forest pest outreach and education in Maine, contact Karen Coluzzi at the DACF Division of Animal and Plant Health at Karen.L.Coluzzi@Maine.Gov or at (207) 287-7551.

To read more about the Department's efforts to address forest invasive pests, access the annual accomplishment reports at www.maine.gov/dacf/php/caps/ALB/AnnualReports.shtml.

For more information on the Department's Forest Pest Outreach and Survey Project, read a synopsis at www.umaine.edu/invasivespecies/2012/05/14/fpos/.

This material is made possible through a grant from the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) and is funded in part by a Cooperative Agreement from the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. The USDA and the DACF are equal opportunity providers and employers.