



Fall Collaborative Report

At the Oct. 2nd Forest Collaborative meeting, held in Marienville, thirteen Forest Area students and approximately thirty other individuals attended.

After working group updates and lunch, two field trip stops were taken in the ANF with discussion regarding the forest conditions seen.

The AFA was glad to include students in the outing and make them aware of forestry issues.

GNA Agreement Signed

In March 2018, the Good Neighbor Authority Master Agreement was signed. It will allow current USFS and DCNR cooperation to expand to landscape-level restoration activities including: Insect and disease treatments, invasive species control, silvicultural practices, and fish and wildlife habitat management and improvements.

The agencies have begun to explore these activities through Supplemental Project Agreements to be implemented in the future.

Interim Chief Visits ANF

The new USFS Chief, Vicki Christiansen, visited the ANF on October 26th. This was her first visit to any national forest as head of the agency. She said business as usual is not an option in management of our national forests, and asked the public and timber industry to have patience “with an equal amount of pushing” to resolve issues facing the ANF. She also said a new federal program may end tapping of the ANF budget for fighting forest fires in the west.

Tariffs Impacting Timber

The decisions of our government and its agencies all trickle-down, usually to be felt most on the local level by small companies. The trade war with China has definitely had an impact on the timber and wood products industries. Local timber companies are telling us exports of raw materials are down 30%. Finished wood products are estimated to be down 30% - 60%.

Good news: European markets are up, and there is a 90-day truce on new tariffs.

Fall 2018

Board of Directors

Officers:

Amanda Hetrick—Pres.
Bob Kirchner—Vice Pres.
Becky Lucia—Secretary
Ed Sleeman—Treasurer

For a full list of AFA Board Members, please visit our [“About” page](#).

Executive Director:

Julia McCray
afaexec@gmail.com

Next Meeting:

February 26, 2019
3:00 pm

2018 Annual Meeting Report: Trade Wars to Community Awareness

Unfortunately, the AFA continued the tradition of holding its Annual Meeting in a snowstorm, reducing our attendance drastically this year. However, our guest speaker, D. Wayne Bender of the PA Hardwood Development Council, did make it to Kane and gave a brief review of the impacts of the trade war with China and how the timber industry is dealing with this. He also talked about development of new foreign and domestic markets and a European market resurgence, as well as the trade shows and other events the PHDC is doing to support the timber industry in Pennsylvania.

Lacking a quorum of board members present, board elections were tabled.

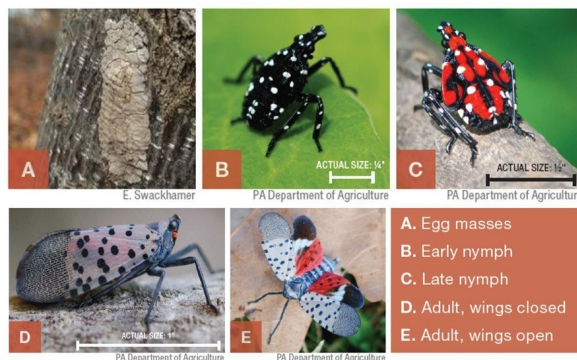
A proposal from Arthur Stewart (Warren County School District) was discussed and well-received. He proposes holding an ANF “community awareness day” next spring (possibly in a few different locations). This would include taking township supervisors, school board members, students, families and the press to the ANF to see first hand the timber conditions. A professional forester would lead the tours, pointing out dead ash trees, overgrown cherry and maple, and talking about the age class problem and what it all means for the forest, our schools and communities. The AFA board will follow-up on this.

Thanks to those who made it to the Annual Meeting. If you did not, feel free to attend our next regular meeting in February.

Spotted Lantern Fly Threat Increases

Signs of Spotted Lanternfly on tree and shrubs include discoloration and drooping of leaves; gray, putty-like egg masses on trees, metal, equipment, etc.; unusual, colorful, flying moths.

For info on identifying, controlling, and reporting sightings of this pest, visit <https://extension.psu.edu/spotted-lanternfly>



Forest Recreation

The ANF offers several forms of recreation including hunting, fishing, hiking, cycling, horseback, ATV and snowmobile riding.

This variety of recreation is of huge benefit to the communities hosting the ANF. Visitors include both local residents and those from around the country and around the world. They all value the free or low-cost access to outstanding recreation experiences.

Recreation tourism is regulated on this forest to protect the eco system, yet it provides millions each year in wages, business income and tax revenues.

In 2014, the ANF reported that it supported 3,790 jobs and \$131.3 million in income for local wage earners and business sole proprietors.

The largest share of those dollars was in the Forest Products industry, supporting 3,130 jobs and \$109.7 million in earnings.

However, recreation by non-local visitors also supported 310 jobs and \$7.7 million in earnings. That's nothing to sneeze at in our small communities!

The AFA works to help represent the local tourism interests by commenting on ANF projects in support of recreation development and maintenance projects. See below to add your support!

Plant Poaching on ANF

There are 13 endangered and threatened plants in the Eastern Region of the USFS, and 605 "Regional Forester Sensitive" plants identified nationwide. None of the "endangered" or "threatened" species are noted in the ANF. However, 24 "sensitive" plants are found here, though many people don't know the plants by their names and won't see the list. You can find the full list online at https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/regions/eastern/documents/RFSS_Plants_EasternRegion_20120220.pdf

Many of these plants are ornamental and people often think it's okay to "take just one" for their garden. Others are herbal, with commercial value. Collection of these plants—for either personal or commercial use—is prohibited and punishable by a \$5,000 fine and/or 6 months imprisonment. Yet, many people looking at the list will not know the plants by their names.

Berries and mushrooms picked for personal use/consumption is permitted and do not require permits. Perhaps this feeds the attitude of visitors that they can pick edibles, herbs and flowers, or dig plants not just on the forest, but on private property too. Residents complain of rare plants and desirable mushrooms on their property being harvested without their consent. This can carry criminal charges as well. Help protect these plants and property owner rights by making others aware of the consequences.

ANF Project Comment Opportunities: October–December, 2018

We encourage you to keep informed of and comment on proposed projects on the ANF.

Use the link below to view the current Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) Report for the ANF. <https://www.fs.fed.us/sopa/components/reports/sopa-110919-2018-10.html>

As we publish this newsletter quarterly, we suggest that you check the SOPA link frequently for any updates between issues. We will list critical projects and AFA comment actions here.

Tracy Ridge (ON HOLD): McKean, Warren; Forest Plan amendment to allow mountain biking on 12.5 miles of hiking trails; **Secondary comment period to be announced.**

Pine Bear Supplemental EA (updated): Forest Products, Vegetation Management, Road Management; **Draft Decision Notice issued 12/3/18 for Modified Proposed Action.**

Hoover Project EA (updated): Warren; Forest products, forest health issues, early successional habitat objectives,

non-native invasive plants, fishery stream habitat, transportation systems, improved recreation opportunities; **Draft Decision Notice issued 12/4/18.**

FR136/FR343 Road Relocation and Wetland Restoration EA: (updated) Elk; Watershed management, Road management; **Estimated Comment Period: October 2018.**

Marienville ATV Connector CE (updated): Forest; Recreation Management; **Estimated Decision Notice: March 2019.**