



Contents

◆ Success Stories	1
◆ Recovery Act Summary	2
◆ Outfitter & Guide Permits	
◆ AuTrain Recovery Act Project	3
◆ Recovery Act Collaboration	
◆ "Midscales" & LSC	
◆ Friends visit the Byway	4
◆ Earth Day Clean-up	
◆ Aerial Seeding	5
◆ Secure Rural Schools	
◆ Great Lakes Restoration	
◆ Calendar	6
◆ Parting Shots	

Keeping You Informed

Setting the Stage for a Busy Summer Field Season

Winter is always a busy time on the Hiawatha. Not only are we managing a strong winter recreation program centered around our tremendous "lake effect snow" resource, we're simultaneously engaged in the pre-work that sets the stage for the coming summer's projects. I've always known we had a great team here on the Hiawatha, but this year perhaps more than ever I have been appreciated the contributions of our team. Indeed, the Hiawatha is living proof that "The sum of the whole is more than the sum of the parts." Many of the Forest's successes can be attributed to the outstanding staff work of individual employees. But I am most proud of the way our employees work strategically to get the job done while also helping to ensure the success of R9 programs as a whole. I feel this grasp of "the Greatest Good" is part of what makes our agency and this Forest stand out. Read on for highlights of recent work occurring on the Forest ...

Sincerely,
Thomas A. Schmidt
 Forest Supervisor



Recent Success Stories

Human Resources Highlights

Brenda Dale has been hired as Fire Management Officer on the East Unit effective in June.

Benjamin Wagner has been hired as Fire Tech on the east Unit, effective in May.

Interagency Science Cafe

Hiawatha NF, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, and Seney National Wildlife recently teamed up with a local café to start the first official "science café" in UP Michigan. The goal of the science café is to provide a casual inclusive conversation in which people without science backgrounds can learn about and discuss a wide variety of scientific topics. The



Federal agency personnel and a local business have teamed up to bring science into every day conversation.

partners aim to bring scientists from local agencies to lead a series of science cafes. Dave Maercklein (Hiawatha National Forest) provided the kick-off café with an informative discussion of his recent experiences with US Forest Service International Forestry in the Congos of Africa. Attendees of the café learned about forestry and resource management along the Congo River.

Protecting Across Boundaries:

Recovery Act Projects on the Hiawatha



Hiawatha ARRA at a Glance:

Projects –13 (plus two project awarded to Northern Research Station) will occur on Hiawatha NF lands.

Funding— \$10.8 million available (plus \$800,000 for Research projects)

Active on the Ground — Currently 4 projects have been active on the ground. Three more will hit the ground in mid-May and many more are in the final stages of contracting and will soon be active.

FOCUS ON Outfitters & Guides

Did you know ... ?

The three Forests in Michigan have been designing a cooperative education effort focused on outfitting and guiding. We anticipate releasing our educational materials in May.

Summary Project List

ROAD MAINTENANCE AND WATERSHED RESTORATION PROJECTS

County Road 513 Resurfacing/Reconstruction (\$3,500,000) - Project #CIM-0904/0907/0910-424-1R will resurface 11 miles of Delta County Road 513 (Forest Highway 29) from Highway US 2 to the Stonington Township Hall. (Delta County)

AuTrain Road Reconstruction (\$900,000) - Project #CIM-0904-0907/0910-400-1R will resurface portions of Country Road 550/FR2276 and County Road 596/FR2596 from the AuTrain River Road to the AuTrain Lake campground. (Alger County).

Mackinac Trail Reconstruction (\$1,000,000) - Project #CIM-0904/0907/0910-404-1R will complete the resurfacing of the final 4 miles of Mackinac Trail/Forest Highway 26(Mackinac County)

Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) culvert replacement (\$341,000) - Project #CIM-0901/10-05E will replace two existing drainage structures with new. (Alger County)

AOP Watershed Restoration design (\$500,000) - Project #CIM-0910-13EW will result in the design of 10-15 AOP structures by a contract engineering design firm. (Multiple counties)

AOP Watershed Restoration construction (\$2,000,000) - Project #CIM-0907/10-15E will replace multiple existing culverts with new, eliminating deferred maintenance and improving the crossings to AOP. (Multiple counties)

Dukes Experimental Forest Project (Northern Research Station, about \$600,000) – This project will fund road maintenance and culvert replacement through a cooperative agreement with Marquette County Road Commission.(Marquette County)

HAZARDOUS FUELS REDUCTION AND ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROJECTS

Fuel Break Maintenance/Savannah Restoration (\$200,000) - Project #WFM-0900-09HFR is designed to reduce hazardous fuels through fuel break maintenance, treatment of activity fuels for reforestation, and removal of encroaching vegetation. (Chippewa, Alger, Delta and Schoolcraft

Counties)

Barren/Savannah Restoration (\$100,000) - Project #WFM-0900-09HFR will cut and masticate vegetation in order to reduce wildland fire risk and restore barren/savannah habitats. (Alger, Delta and Schoolcraft Counties).

Hazardous Fuels Treatment (\$171,000) – Project #WFM-0900-01HFR will reduce hazardous fuels, site preparation and reforestation, including hazardous fuels removal and site preparation and planting. (Delta County).

Old Field Restoration on Grand Island National Recreation Area (Northern Research Station \$200,000) – This project fund old field restoration on Grand Island through a partnership with Lake Superior Watershed Partnership.

FACILITIES AND TRAILS PROJECTS

Michigan Toilet and Storage Building Reconstruction (Hiawatha NF portion \$419,000) - Project #CIM-0900-7F will provide funding to replace toilet buildings and site furniture at various recreation sites forest-wide, reducing “deferred maintenance: and providing accessible facilities. (Multiple Counties).

Grand Island NRA NL Creek Bridge Replacement & Rim Trail Culvert Replacement (\$500,000) - Project #CIM-0910-5T has two components. 1) The first portion will replace a condemned bridge which serves as a critical east-west trail link at Grand Island National Recreation Area in Alger County. (Alger County)

Clear Lake Education Center - Site erosion control, Water & Wastewater Rehabilitation, A.D.A. accessible walkway construction (\$620,000) - Project # CIM-0900-24F will fund multiple projects at the Clear Lake Education Center. (Schoolcraft County).

Grand Island NRA Building Design & Renovation and Dock Rehabilitation (\$300,000) - Project #CIM0900-28F will fund design and implementation of visitor info station and dock renovations for Grand Island NRA.

**Projects shown in green are active on the ground!*

Recovery Act Collaboration Continues:

Alger County Road Commission

Since winter left early this year, construction has already resumed on the Recovery Act-funded AuTrain Road Reconstruction project (\$900,000). The project, which will resurface a total of 2.96 miles of the Buck Bay Road (FR2276), Campground Road (FR2596), and the AuTrain Lake Campground and Boat Accesses, is being accomplished cooperatively by Hiawatha National Forest and Alger County Road Commission (ACRC). The Forest is providing ARRA funding while the ACRC is implementing the project with its work crews and subcontractors. Work began in 2009 and will be completed in 2010.

Forest Supervisor Tom Schmidt notes, "This is an excellent example of successful interagency cooperation. With one project we can improve our road systems, provide for public health and safety, protect natural resources, and enable access to the National Forest."

ACRC Engineer/Manager, Bob Lindbeck echoes this sentiment saying, "Working together on joint-jurisdiction projects allows us to pool our resources. This project is benefitting the Road Commission, helping to round out the budget that provides for our employees. It's also providing a benefit to several local businesses providing materials and services."



Alger County Road Commission employees are excited about how their Recovery Act project will benefit the local community. Surveying the work in progress, ACRC Foreman, Dave Maki, and his crew, put it this way: "When we get done here, this facility is going to be really nice for local people and visitors to use."

Recovery Act: Collaborative Projects with Mackinac and Delta County Road Commissions

The County Road Commissions in Delta and Mackinac County recently joined the Forest Service in announcing the roadwork timelines for collaborative Recovery Act projects that will be occurring in their respective counties. In Delta County, two projects will occur along County Road 513, including road resurfacing and replacement of the aging Squaw Creek Bridge with an aquatic organism-friendly crossing. And in Mackinac County, the Mackinac Trail/Forest Highway 26 will be resurfaced. Work is expected to begin in mid-May.

In Delta County, construction of the bridge will be done through agreement with Delta County Road Commission (DCRC). The Forest Service is providing funding for the project, while the DCRC is overseeing the contracting.

In Mackinac County, approximately three miles of road will be resurfaced through an

agreement with Mackinac County Road Commission (MCRC). The Forest Service is providing the funding while MCRC is overseeing the contracting.

DCRC Managing Director, Rob VanEffen, is enthusiastic about the benefits to the county and the local economy. Mackinac County Road Commission Manager, Dirk Heckman shares that enthusiasm, recently expressing his appreciation for the partnership and for the assistance of MDOT in the contracting process. Both DCRC and MCRC recognize the value of collaborative efforts like those currently being undertaken.

Forest Supervisor Tom Schmidt summed it up when he said, "Collaboration is good for all of us: it gets more work done as efficiently as possible while creating jobs and infrastructure in our rural communities."

FOCUS on Landscape Scale Conservation

Did You Know...?

Midscale assessments are an integrated tool for identifying opportunities to move the Forest landscape toward Forest Plan desired conditions. Since 2006, the Hiawatha has undertaken Midscale Assessments covering at least three quarters of the Hiawatha. The opportunities identified will form the basis for numerous future landscape scale and site-specific projects.

Connecting Citizens to the Land: Hiawatha Friends Meeting



FOCUS on Earth Day

Employees Take Initiative

The arrival of Earth Day 2010 inspired several Supervisors Office employees to organize an impromptu clean-up of the grounds surrounding the Hiawatha's S.O. building. Armed with trash bags and safety equipment, the employees gathered numerous bags of trash, much of it found behind the office where a railroad grade passes.

For their efforts, the group was noticed by the local paper which ran a brief story highlighting the clean-up. Many thanks to all employees who participated!



Focus on Whitefish Bay Scenic Byway and other Nearby Resources

Each spring and fall, a wonderfully diverse group of individuals gather to learn more about the latest happenings on the Hiawatha National Forest. This informal group, known unofficially as "the Friends," began in the late 1980s as a group of appellants to the 1986 Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. Since then, the group has expanded to include an ever-changing array of people interested in the Hiawatha. Attendees may represent organizations or clubs; universities; industry and recreation; local, state, and national government; or simply themselves. But all share a passion for the Hiawatha.

In addition to round robin updates by all attendees, April's meeting included updates on Forest happenings, including a brief "success story" presentation by Martha Sjogren about the Niagara EIS. In addition, Curt Friez, Manager at FWS's Pendills and Sullivan Creek Fish Hatcheries provided a special "about us" presentation featuring recent projects at the innovative hatchery. The hatchery is operated through an MOU with the Forest.

The April meeting was held at the Bay Mills Indian Community's lovely community

The Friends group field trip highlighted improvements along the Forest's Whitefish Bay Scenic Byway, including facility improvements at Point Iroquois Lightstation. The Byway highlights two key components of the Hiawatha's recreation niche, lighthouses and lakeshores.

college facility located on the shore of Lake Superior. In addition to the location's beauty, it is conveniently located near the Forest's Whitefish Bay Scenic Byway, the focus of the afternoon field trip.

During the field trip, East Unit employees guided an in-depth look at the improvements made along the byway in the past year. Highlights included the improvements to the Spectacle Lake overlook, resource protection measures at several waysides, and many facility and signing improvements along the way.

"As usual, I really appreciated the frank discussions we can have at these meetings," says Forest Supervisor, Tom Schmidt. Participants' insightful questions and thoughtful comments benefit everyone and contribute to the learning atmosphere.

Already, we are looking forward to the autumn meeting, which will focus on the recent facility and resource protection projects on Grand Island National Recreation Area.



Protecting Ecosystems Across Boundaries: Aerial Seeding Partnership Saves Time & Money

Jonny Jackpine Seed Takes to the Air

Annually, the Hiawatha National Forest regenerates 4,500 to 6,000 acres of new stands following timber harvests. This includes natural regeneration, planting and direct seeding. Direct seeding is artificial regeneration of stands by applying tree seed directly to the forest floor to supplement natural regeneration, usually after the area has been mechanically scarified. Direct seeding is normally accomplished by mounting a seed spreader to a snowmobile and applying the seed on the snow crust in late March.

The Sault Ste. Marie Ranger District has completed 100-500 acres of direct seeding per year for the past 10 years to artificially regenerate new jack pine stands near Raco, Michigan. The District has never been able to accomplish more

than 500 acres per year of direct seeding using snowmobiles.

This fiscal year, the District had planned over 700 acres of direct seeding. However, low annual snowfall meant direct seeding could not be accomplished with snowmobiles in late winter or early spring 2010.

But as the saying goes, "where there is a will, there is a way." In one day, March 16, 2010, the Sault Ste. Marie Ranger District accomplished 724 acres of aerial seeding in conjunction with the Minnesota Inter-agency Fire Center (MIFC). Efficient!



Highlight

Secure Rural Schools —

Hiawatha National Forest is currently establishing a federal resource advisory committee to oversee distribution of Secure Rural Schools Act funds. The funds will be utilized by Delta and Chippewa Counties for projects on National Forest Lands in those counties. Both Counties are actively engaged in developing the RAC membership.

At left, MIFC Forest Service pilot Dean Lee worked with Hiawatha employees Doug Born, Karen Waalen, Marjorie Allmaras, Sam Barnes and Mike Thibodeau to spread 181 pounds of jack pine seed.

[For more details on this story, visit our Success Story Reporting System website.](#)

The view from Spectacle Lake Overlook is hard to overlook! One can see both Spectacle Lake and the St Mary's River in a glance. The new stone wall serves to protect visitors from the steep hillside while also reducing the likelihood of erosion due to human use on the slope.



Highlight

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative —

The Forest is implementing over \$800,000 including \$144k to enhance/establish two cooperative weed management areas, \$209k for endangered/threatened specie recovery/restoration, and \$463k for aquatic organism passage.

Hiawatha National Forest



2727 North Lincoln Road
 Escanaba, MI 49829

Calendar

Parting Shots



The Hiawatha features many beautiful sites to see. A recent hike in the woods found these falls flowing well despite the dry spring weather.

Date	Event
April 30	Friends of Hiawatha Meeting
May 4	MICHnet call
May 17	New Employee Orientation (East)
May 26 & 27	Forest Leadership Team Meeting
May 27	Science Cafe
June 3	New Employee Training (West)
June 8	MICHnet call
June 12	Get Outdoors Day (Detroit UC)
June 23-24	Forest Leadership Team Meeting
June 24	Science Cafe
July 6	MICHNet call (tentative)
July 28 & 29	Forest Leadership Team Meeting

Questions? Contact us!

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