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## LANDSCAPE SCALE CONSERVATION NEWS

### Model Landscape Scale Project – Chippewa National Forest’s Leech Lake Pines Collaborative

What is missing from the forests in North Central Minnesota? The answer is: conifers such as white, red and jack pine, cedar, tamarack, spruce and fir. According to Minnesota Forest Resource Council’s analysis, white pine is 25 times less abundant now than it was historically, tamarack is 22 times less abundant, and spruce is 7 times less abundant. For this reason, the Council’s North Central Committee agreed that they need to collaborate with partners and interested landowners to manage forests to increase conifers. Conifers in forests have many benefits: they increase wildlife habitat diversity and species that use them, improve timber harvest capabilities, and moderate snowmelt and rainfall runoff.

The broad goal of this collaborative work is simply stated: Increase conifers across the North Central Minnesota landscape. This goal is shared by [Chippewa National Forest](#), who developed their goals and plans in unison with the North Central Committee of the Forest Resources Council, allowing them to easily link their programs and projects. There are many other partners that have agreed to this goal too, including the [Leech Lake Pines Collaborative](#) made up of Cass County, the Forest, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, and the Nature Conservancy.

The Leech Lake Pine Collaborative is implementing on-the-ground projects to help reach this goal. They are working together to manage approximately 75,000 acres on the south side of Leech Lake to increase conifers and forest diversity. Their first project titled “Restoring Pine Habitat in the Silver/Carnahan Lake Area, involved planting white pine and other conifers within a 300 acre tract of Cass County and National Forest land. A Conservation Partners Legacy Grant from the Minnesota Outdoors Heritage Fund of \$51,872 was secured in 2010 and the trees were planted by the Minnesota Conservation Corps. Cass County acted as the fiscal agent for this grant.

“The most exciting aspect of this project is the opportunity to work across boundaries. We share common goals and are able to implement them together. It breaks down our artificial administrative barriers for the benefit of the landscapes we all cherish,” remarks Carolyn Upton, District Ranger at Walker, Minnesota.



*Minnesota Conservation Crew (MCC) members build wire cages that will protect white pine trees from deer browsing*



*MCC member and Chippewa National Forest reforestation technician, Stefan Longo, stake wire cage*

## UPDATES ON OTHER LANDSCAPE SCALE CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

- The Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science released the publication “[Forest Adaptation Resources: Climate Change Tools and Approaches for Land Managers](#)” (FAR). Forest ecosystems are expected to undergo numerous changes in response to a changing climate. The FAR provides information and resources to help managers incorporate climate change considerations into management and identify actions that enable forests to adapt to changing conditions. This publication is part of the [Climate Change Response Framework](#) of the Forest Service’s Eastern Region.
- The National Fish Habitat Partnership ([www.fishhabitat.org](http://www.fishhabitat.org)) has unveiled its 2012 10 “Waters to Watch” list, a collection of rivers, streams, estuaries, watershed systems, shores and lakes that will benefit from strategic conservation efforts to protect, restore or enhance their current condition. The list includes the White River in Vermont, whose headwaters flows from the Green Mountain National Forest and is a priority watershed under the [Watershed Condition Framework](#).
- America’s Great Outdoors is an Obama Administration initiative to establish a community-driven conservation and recreation agenda for the 21st century. The Connecticut River watershed, which includes portions of the Green Mountain and White Mountain Forests, was announced as a National Blueway by Department of Interior Secretary Ken Salazar. The Connecticut River Watershed is a model for how communities can integrate their land and water stewardship efforts with an emphasis on 'source-to-sea' watershed conservation: <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/news/2012/socmediapacket.html>
- USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced a new National Water Quality Initiative impaired watersheds in every U.S. state and territory. 157 selected watersheds were identified with assistance from state agencies, key partners, and State Technical Committees. NRCS will make available at least \$33 million in financial and technical assistance to farmers, ranchers and forest landowners this year to implement conservation practices to help provide cleaner water for their neighbors and communities. Click [here](#) to view watersheds, maps and more information.

## LANDSCAPE SCALE CONSERVATION PROJECTS — HONORABLE MENTIONS



### White Mountain National Forest Collaborates with Air Force on Invasive Species Control

Each year botany and wildlife staff work tirelessly to perform early detection and rapid response actions on priority invasive plant species infestations on the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF) and at New Boston Air Force Station via an inter-departmental agreement with the Department of Defense. In 2011, the Forest achieved approximately 58 acres of non-native invasive species (NNIS) control on the WMNF and 105 acres at New Boston Air Force Station. Click [here](#) to read more.



### Mark Twain National Forest Partners Have Burning Desire to Restore Landscape

This spring, two Mark Twain National Forest Ranger Districts completed prescribed burns totaling 11,758 acres in the Ozark Highlands of Missouri. These prescribed burns are part of a 345,000-acre collaborative initiative, Missouri Pine-Oak Woodlands Restoration, that will lead natural community restoration into the future. The area has important conservation implications for the long term survival of forest interior birds and endemic aquatic wildlife. It also harbors the globe's largest restorable fire-mediated shortleaf pine-bluestem ecosystem. Click [here](#) to read more.



### See the Kirtland’s warbler first-hand at the Huron Manistee National Forest

The Kirtland’s warbler is an endangered species that nests in central Michigan. The [Huron-Manistee National Forest](#) is part of this recovery story because of their habitat restoration at a landscape scale. The Kirtland’s warbler nests only on the ground in young jack pine forests that are about 5 to 16 feet tall and spaced to let sunlight through to the ground. Forest Service management maintains this habitat across its landscape in Central Michigan. Through the efforts of the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#) and its numerous partners, Kirtland’s warblers are on the mend. The Forest and its partners are offering a great opportunity to see Kirtland’s Warblers and their habitat through June 20 via [guided tours](#).