



# North Dakota Forest Service

## the prairie forester

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### 2014 TREES AWARD WINNERS RECOGNIZED AT TREES BOWL

The North Dakota Forest Service and North Dakota State University (NDSU) honored the 2014 Trees Award winners at an awards ceremony, and at the Trees Bowl football game in the Fargodome on September 20, 2014. The Trees Awards recognize individuals, organizations and agencies who contribute in an outstanding way to forestry activities. Forestry activities can include: fire mitigation, protection and suppression; tree planting, preservation or maintenance; community forestry efforts; forest management practices; forest recreation or environmental education.

Following a ceremonial tree planting and luncheon, NDSU President Dean Bresciani and Nursery and State Forests Team Leader Michael Kangas presented each winner with a special Trees Award plaque and a limited edition print at the awards ceremony.

The winners were also recognized on the field during half-time of the NDSU Trees Bowl winning football game against the Montana Grizzlies. After the game, 3,000 Colorado blue spruce and bur oak trees were distributed to fans.



*The 2014 Trees Award winners from across the state were recognized at the Fargodome by the North Dakota Forest Service and North Dakota State University. They are pictured with the third national football championship oak tree that will be planted on the NDSU campus.*

The 2014 award winners include:

- Community of the Year  
**City of Williston**
- Conservation Achievement  
**Leonard Porter, Watford City**
- Distinguished Service Award  
**Scott Hochhalter  
Bismarck**
- Environmental Educator  
**Joe Super  
Minot High School**
- Excellence in Government  
**North Dakota Conservation  
District Employees Association**
- Fire Department Cooperators  
**Rolette Rural Fire Department**
- Forest Stewardship Landowner  
**Miles Hoff, Moorhead**

- Media Outreach  
**Bob Bertsch  
NDSU Ag Communications**
- Natural Resources Professional  
**Henry Duray, Devils Lake**
- Smokey Bear Poster Contest  
**Aspen Eslinger, Baldwin**
- Tree Celebration  
**NDSU Bison Athletics**
- Volunteer Organization  
**ND Urban and Community  
Forestry Association**
- Youth Tree Planters  
**Girl Scout Troops #30886, #32090  
and # 30123**
- Distinguished Leadership  
**Randy Kreil  
ND Game & Fish  
Bismarck**



## A View from the Top of the Tree



**Larry A. Kotchman**  
*State Forester*

Every North Dakota legislative session is uniquely important in setting direction and initiating opportunities that enhance and benefit the State. The 2015-17 Legislative Assembly will deliberate on funding forestry programs included in the Executive recommendation. On October 8, we presented the Cooperative Fire Protection Initiative to the Office of Management and Budget for their consideration. This initiative would provide critical financial, technical and educational assistance to rural fire departments for wildland fire prevention, suppression and mitigation. In addition to helping ensure North Dakota's first responders are prepared, the initiative would provide funding to complete hazardous fuels treatments designed to protect local communities from wildland fire, and reduce the risk of fire in the future. Protecting forests from harm by restoring fire adapted lands and reducing the risk of wildfire impacts are long-term strategies identified in the *North Dakota Statewide Assessment of Forest Resources and Forest Resource Strategy*.

Natural disturbances, such as drought and flooding, within native forests have led to high fuel accumulations of dead, woody debris that can and have resulted in intense fires threatening lives and property. On average, North Dakota experiences over 440 human-caused wildfires that burn in excess of 29,000 acres each year. With a dispersed population, North Dakota relies heavily upon rural fire departments and local governments for wildfire protection and suppression. The North Dakota Forest Service Fire Management Program supports the state's 341 fire departments that are essential for enhancing firefighting capabilities and public safety.

Adding to the natural wildfire threat is the rapid increase in population, infrastructure and industry, which have resulted in an increase in fire occurrences across the state. The area of wildland urban/industrial interface, zones where human development intermingles with undeveloped land, is growing across the state. At the same time, the number of fire departments registered with the State Fire Marshal decreased from 397 in 2009 to 341 in 2013.

As the demand for firefighting resources increases, more responsibility for initial attack is placed on rural fire departments. These factors result in a higher frequency of emergency responses by fewer departments, all with increased geographic areas of responsibility. Rural fire departments need financial and technical assistance to address wildfire planning and mitigation of hazards as more and more people move into their protection districts.

The initiative will provide (1) suppression and mutual aid support, (2) the implementation of planning and preparedness practices with local jurisdictions, (3) education outreach on FireWise practices and fire prevention, (4) fire training at the local, regional and statewide level, and (5) grants to at-risk communities and fire departments for equipment, hazardous fuels reduction projects and fire prevention/outreach programs. The Forest Service request also includes funds for three fire technicians to assist the fire departments, emergency managers, communities and landowners with implementation. The US Forest Service is contributing \$70,414 in matching funds through a Hazardous Fuels Reduction grant towards the initiative.

We are looking forward to an initiative that helps provide rural fire departments with cost-share funds for organizing, training, planning, purchasing and repairing fire equipment. When implemented, all these projects will be instrumental in protecting firefighters and public safety.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry A. Kotchman".

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## Tree City USA Deadline and Upcoming Awards Ceremony

*By: Gerri Makay, Community Forestry Manager*

All Tree City USAs and Tree Campus USAs are encouraged to utilize the online system for their 2014 applications. The deadline to apply is December 12.

Tree City USA is a national program sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation and National Association of State Foresters. The ND Forest Service administers the program, and

will recognize the 2014 Tree City USA communities with an awards ceremony and refreshments at the capitol in Bismarck on March 18, 2015. Mark that day on your calendar!

# Minot High Seniors Represent the U.S. at the International Junior Forest Contest in Russia

By: Glenda Fauske, Information and Education Coordinator

Two Minot High School seniors, Brandon Christman and Allison Rabe, represented the United States at the 11<sup>th</sup> International Junior Forest Contest in St. Petersburg, Russia from September 8 - 12. Alex Shipunov, Minot State University biology assistant professor, mentored the students by providing data samples and assisting in data analysis. Joe Super, the students' Envirothon advisor and teacher at Minot High School, aided with the project and accompanied the students to Russia.

"We were notified of this opportunity by the North Dakota Forest Service. We knew this contest was a highly competitive process and only one representative team from each country would be selected," said Rabe.

The students' research paper, "The Ecological Impact of Flooding: A Study of Tree Damage," was selected by the Russian Federal Forestry Agency to represent the United States. The study examined factors that determined damage sustained by trees in a flood event. They evaluated relationships between tree height and damage, water height and damage, genus and damage, and native or nonnative trees and damage. Through this project, the students turned the devastation of the Minot flood in 2011 into information that can help mitigate flood damage in the future.

The major goals of the contest are to contribute to the cooperation of international youth in the exchange of forestry knowledge and experience,

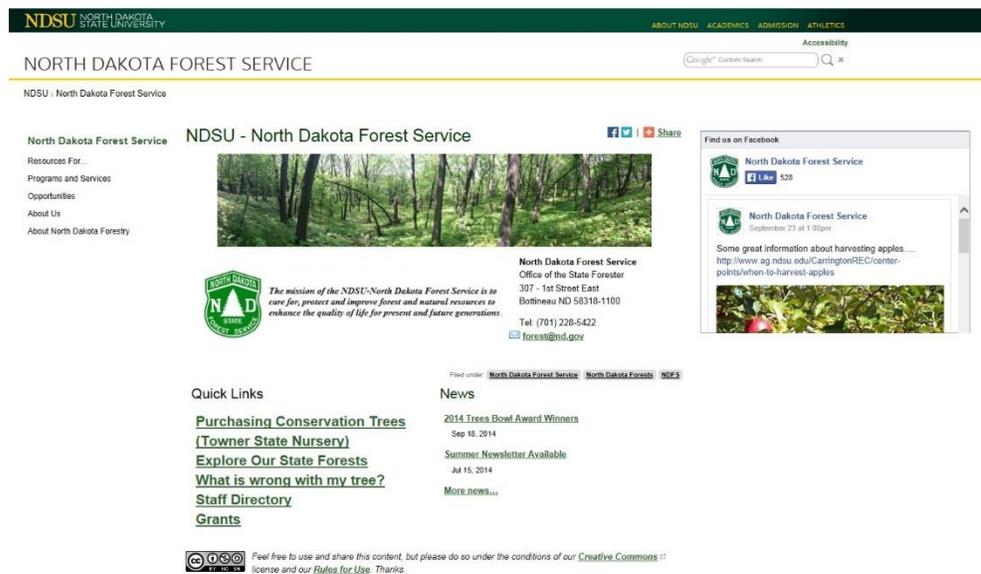


**Brandon Christman and Allison Rabe represented the United States in Russia at the International Junior Forest Contest.**

and to draw attention of the world community to forest issues. More than 50 countries presented their research to a panel and the best ten won awards.

## ND Forest Service Website Redesign

By: Michael Kangas, Nursery and State Forests Team Leader



The screenshot shows the new website layout for the North Dakota Forest Service. At the top is a dark navigation bar with 'NDSU NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY' on the left and 'ABOUT NDSU ACADEMICS ADMISSION ATHLETICS' on the right. Below this is a yellow header with 'NORTH DAKOTA FOREST SERVICE' and a search bar. The main content area features a large forest image, a sidebar with 'Quick Links' (Purchasing Conservation Trees, Explore Our State Forests, etc.), and a 'News' section with a '2014 Trees Bowl Award Winners' article. A Facebook widget is also visible on the right side of the page.

In an effort to provide better service to our customers and partners, the North Dakota Forest Service has updated its website. The website retains the url [www.ndsu.edu/ndfs](http://www.ndsu.edu/ndfs), however,

some of the pages have been consolidated, some have been reformatted, and some have been removed all together. The North Dakota Forest Service encourages

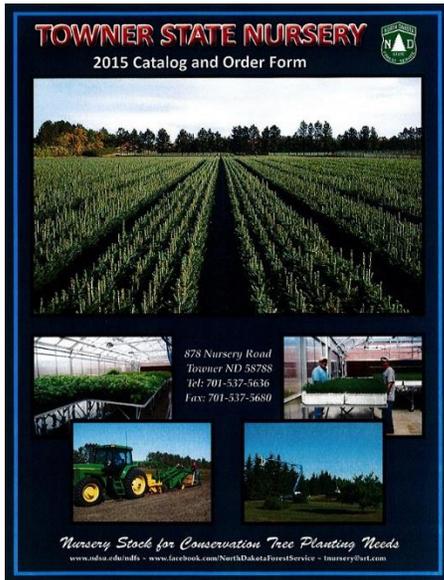
customers and partners to visit the new website, navigate to frequently visited programs and services, and update your browser's bookmarks as some have changed during the redesign.

Features of the new website include a paired down navigation tree, 'Quick Links' to frequently visited sites based on analytic assessments of the old website, a news feed, and a social media portlet that synchronizes the agency's Facebook page with the website. In addition, the website is search engine and smart phone optimized.

Please visit our new website and give us your feedback. For additional information contact Michael Kangas at [Michael.Kangas@ndsu.edu](mailto:Michael.Kangas@ndsu.edu) or call (701) 231-5936.

## 2015 Towner State Nursery Catalog Available

By: Rhonda Schell, Sales and Office Manager



*The 2015 catalog is filled with helpful information and tree tips.*

The 2015 Towner State Nursery catalog is here! Customers wanting to ensure species availability next spring should place their orders before the 1<sup>st</sup> of January. Orders can be placed by working with your local Soil Conservation District office or contacting the Towner State Nursery directly at (701) 537-5636.

Be sure to check out the full catalog, which is also available online at [www.ndsu.edu/ndfs/documents/2015-catalog.pdf](http://www.ndsu.edu/ndfs/documents/2015-catalog.pdf). It includes additional information on how to care for your nursery stock, types of nursery stock, selecting the type of stock and species, and storage tips for bare-root and container (plug) stock.



*New in 2015, Douglas fir is a conifer with dark, blue-green needles.*

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## Recreational Improvements on the State Forests

By: Tom Nowatzki, State Forests Manager

The North Dakota Forest Service is coordinating with the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department to implement the Trail Restoration and Improvement Program (TRIP). The project was funded through the Outdoor Heritage Fund established in 2013 to provide grants to state agencies, tribal governments, political subdivisions, and nonprofit organizations for improving access for sportspersons, stewardship practices, habitat improvements, and recreational improvements.

The two-year TRIP project is aimed at enhancing recreational use and access through the construction of sustainable trails and easement acquisition in the state's high priority recreational areas. The Turtle Mountains and Sheyenne River Valley are designated as two of the high

priority resources according to the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

The project represents a partnership between the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department, North Dakota Forest Service, Sheyenne River



*A new boat ramp was installed at Pelican Lake in the Turtle Mountains this fall to improve access.*

Valley and Dakota Prairie Chapter of the North Country Trail Association. These entities have demonstrated successful recreational improvements and coordination among stakeholders.

In addition, the agency has coordinated with the North Dakota Game and Fish Department to renovate and improve boat ramps to improve access for fishermen on lakes in the state forests. Utilizing a 75:25 match, the North Dakota Forest Service was able to use the program to renovate the boat ramps at Hahn's Bay Recreation Area, and install a new boat ramp in the Pelican Sandy Recreation Area.

For more information, email [Tom.Nowatzki@ndsu.edu](mailto:Tom.Nowatzki@ndsu.edu) or call him at (701) 228-3700.

# Aerial Forest Surveys Completed

By: Aaron Bergdahl, Forest Health Manager



*Forest Service staff use aerial photos, like the one above taken over the Missouri River, to look for major health threats in the riparian forest.*

This summer, the North Dakota Forest Service (NDFS) conducted aerial surveys of forest resources in the Turtle Mountains, the Souris (Mouse) River, ponderosa pine forests in the southwestern region of North Dakota, the Killdeer Mountains, a portion of the Little Missouri River and riparian forests along the Missouri River. The purpose of the surveys were to identify forest health threats for later ground truthing. Ground truthing confirms the presence/absence of forest pests and provides management options to forestland owners/managers.

The NDFS Forest Stewardship staff participated in the surveys of the Turtle Mountains to gain perspective on over maturity of aspen resources, and the Souris River to assess forest resources impacted by past flooding.

The US Forest Service Forest Health Management Program Aerial Survey Team from Missoula, Montana,

assisted with the survey of the ponderosa pine resources and Missouri River riparian forests in June. For the July survey of the Turtle Mountains and Souris River, the Forest Health Program contracted an aerial survey crew from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resource's Resource Assessment group from Grand Rapids, Minnesota. Both survey groups used geographical positioning systems on board the aircraft and aerial imagery on specialized tablet computers to record information about forest health. The collected data is then given to the NDFS for input into ArcMap, a geographical information system computer program enabling closer analysis, acreage calculations and mapping of forest health issues of concern. Aerial photos of areas of concern and healthy forests were also taken.

Notable findings of the aerial surveys include the following:

Roughly 4,500 acres of forest tent caterpillar/large aspen tortrix defoliation occurred in the **Turtle Mountains**. This number is down from about 20,000 acres from the previous survey in 2011. Also approximately 4,000 acres of aspen decline due to over maturity was recorded in the Turtle Mountains.

Along the **Souris River**, roughly 20,000 acres of standing dead trees were recorded due to the 2011 flooding during the growing season.

The state's only native **ponderosa pine forests** in Slope County were in good health and no mountain pine beetles, an insect that has strongly impacted pine forests in the Black Hills, were observed.

**Killdeer Mountain** forest resources were overall in good health, although several defoliated areas were identified. These areas will be revisited in 2015 to determine the actual defoliator and extent of the phenomenon.

Forest resources along the **Missouri River** and **Little Missouri River** were in good health overall as seen from the air.

Aerial surveys will continue next year with a focus on the Sheyenne River and Devils Lake Hills.

For more information about forest health and the aerial surveys, please contact Aaron Bergdahl, Forest Health Manager with the North Dakota Forest Service, [aaron.d.bergdahl@ndsu.edu](mailto:aaron.d.bergdahl@ndsu.edu); or call (701) 231-5138.

# Pacific Northwest Emergency Wildland Firefighting Efforts

By: Sarah Tunge, Fire Manager



***ND Forest Service fire crews working on fire suppression efforts in Washington.***

The ND Forest Service (NDFS) Fire Management Program has a responsibility to provide support both within the state of North Dakota and to other partners across the United States. This year, due to record setting moisture locally, NDFS fire crews were able to provide much needed support to several western states.

In mid-July, crews were dispatched to the state of Washington for a 14-day assignment on the devastating Carlton Complex of fires. The Carlton Complex started as four fires that grew

into one larger fire dramatically on July 17. Hot weather and windy conditions pushed the fire over the ridge tops and into the town consuming approximately 300 homes in its path and destroying critical infrastructure. NDFS crews were able to provide critical support to taxed Washington resources in the effort to suppress this large fire complex.

Crews returned home for two days and were requested to assist in firefighting efforts in Oregon. The Rowena fire was their first stop. This 3,680-acre fire was threatening homes and infrastructures. NDFS crews assisted in structure protection efforts on this fire. They were then transferred to the John Day Unit of the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) to provide initial attack coverage. This service provided a much needed break for ODF firefighters who had been engaged in suppression efforts since early June.

The Pacific Northwest suffered a record setting fire season in 2014. Without the help of outside state and



***ND Forest Service fire crews provided much needed support to several western states this year.***

partner support, the impacts would have likely been much greater. As it stands, many of the fires NDFS crews were involved in are now in the rehabilitation stage and work is ongoing to rebuild homes and infrastructure damage by these deadly wildfires.

For more information on the NDFS Fire Management Program, please contact Sarah Tunge, Fire Manager at [Sarah.Tunge@ndsu.edu](mailto:Sarah.Tunge@ndsu.edu) or call (701) 328-9985.

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## Forestry Datelines

Dec. 12	Tree City USA Application Deadline Contact: Gerri Makay (701) 652-2951	Mar. 13	Keep North Dakota Clean Poster Contest Deadline – <a href="http://www.Keep-ND-Clean.org">www.Keep-ND-Clean.org</a> Contact: Glenda Fauske (701) 228-5446
Jan. 25-28	NDNGA and NDUCFA Joint Conference Ramada Plaza Suites Hotel, Fargo NDNGA: Mary Holm at (701) 886-7673 holmgh@polarcomm.com NDUCFA: Scott Liudahl at (701) 241-1465 sliudahl@cityoffargo.com For details and registration, go to: <a href="http://www.nducfa.org/">www.nducfa.org/</a>	Mar. 18	Tree City USA Awards Ceremony Capitol Building, Bismarck, ND Contact: Gerri Makay (701) 652-2951
Feb. 26-Mar. 1	ND State Fire School ND State Fairgrounds - Minot, ND Contact: <a href="http://www.ndfa.net">www.ndfa.net</a> or (701) 222-2799	Mar. 19-20	NDCDEA/NDFS Tree Promotion Meeting Comfort Inn, Bismarck, ND Contact: Liz Smith (701) 400-8330

## People in Forestry



**Cody Clemenson**  
*Resource Forester  
Bottineau Field Office*

**Cody Clemenson** was selected by State Forester Larry Kotchman to serve as the Resource Forester at the Bottineau field office beginning on July 7.

Clemenson is responsible for conducting forest resource management activities on State Forest lands. He will assess forest stand conditions, monitor noxious weeds and implement best management practices. He will also install demonstration areas on private and state land.

Cody received his degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Management from Valley City State University. He was a Range Land Technician with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Coleharbor.

“I will be spending a lot of time on the State Forest trails, and enjoying the different seasons as they come and go,” said Clemenson.

**Cody Clemenson**  
Resource Forester  
ND Forest Service  
1037 Forestry Drive  
Bottineau ND 58318  
Tel: (701) 228-3700  
Cody.S.Clemenson@ndsu.edu



**Carson Kerr**  
*Fire Technician  
Bismarck Field Office*

**Carson Kerr**, Fire Technician, was appointed by State Forester Larry Kotchman to begin his duties on April 1 at the Bismarck field office.

Kerr will supervise a seasonal fire/saw crew and provide administrative support for crew member time sheets, travel and billing documentation. He will also assist in fire suppression on both in-state and out-of-state fire emergencies. He will assist in providing training, developing courses, arranging for instructors, maintaining fire vehicles, managing the fire cache and ordering equipment.

Carson has an AAS Degree in Natural Resources from Itasca Community College in Grand Rapids, MN. He has been a seasonal fire fighter for the agency for the past five years.

“I’m pleased to be part of the wildland firefighting team, and using my skills across the state in wildland fire suppression efforts,” said Kerr.

**Carson Kerr**  
Fire Technician  
ND Forest Service  
916 East Interstate Ave, Ste 4  
Bismarck ND 58503  
Tel: (701) 328-9946  
Carson.Kerr@ndsu.edu



**Anthony Schultz**  
*Fire Management Specialist  
Bismarck Field Office*

**Anthony Schultz** was selected by State Forester Larry Kotchman to serve as the Fire Management Specialist for the North Dakota Forest Service. He began his duties on August 11 and is stationed at the Bismarck field office.

Schultz will be responsible for achieving the goals of the wildfire equipment acquisition programs Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) and Fire Fighters Program (FFP), Cooperative Fire Protection grants and wildland fire planning (Firewise Programs).

A native of Overland Park, Kansas, Anthony received his degree in 2011 from Kansas State University. He was a Senior Wildland Firefighter for the National Park Service in Medora.

“I am looking forward to developing relationships with volunteer departments across the state,” said Schultz.

**Anthony Schultz**  
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*“The mission of the North Dakota Forest Service is to care for, protect and improve forests and natural resources to enhance the quality of life for future generations.”*

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