

Barb Crane
USDA Forest Service Region 8 National Forest System

R8 states: AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, VI & PR

Mission: R8 Genetic Resource Management Program's mission is to apply genetic principles to silvicultural practices on all southern national forests. Key objectives are genetic conservation, ecosystem restoration and partnerships.

SFTIC Committee June 2006 updates:

Genetic Conservation

Seed orchards: visit all 7 annually (NC, TN, SC, MS, LA, AR FL). Conducted a Seed Orchard Managers meeting to discuss strategies for the orchards. Funding remains a critical issue. Orchards are still in seed production mode, with plans for expansion with targeted species of concern. Ultimately the orchards will become conservation preserves.

Collected Table mountain pine cones, seed in inventory, plans underway to establish a TMP seedling seed orchard at NC SO. Same plans for Mountain longleaf, Eastern & Carolina hemlocks, Butternut, American chestnut, with other species to follow.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita impacted the MS and LA seed orchards, lost both cone crops, procured outside longleaf seed (Rayonier, State of Florida) to supplement National Forests' seed inventory and planting targets.

Working with R8 Botanists to facilitate use of local seed sources, future plans are to establish local seed source beds utilizing orchard lands.

Ecosystem restoration

Continue with longleaf and shortleaf pine restoration, planting oak (northern red, white, cherrybark, black, swamp chestnut, willow, nuttall) seed production areas, enrichment areas and reforestation acreage with oaks.

Partnerships

Camcore collecting C & E hemlock germplasm for ex-situ conservation, needle tissue sent to NFGEL (National Genetics Lab in Placerville, CA) for evaluation of genetic diversity represented in collections.

Continue to work with The American Chestnut Foundation, Longleaf Alliance, Georgia Forestry Commission, University of Tennessee (hardwood seedlings), FS Southern Research Station, National Seed Lab and NFGEL, Auburn Nursery Coop., SE Hardwood Working Group.