



## Florida A&M University Student Takes Initiative and Excels in Forestry

by Ted Willis

**Terry Baker**, Multicultural Workforce Strategic Initiative student, was elected 2003-2004 president of the University of Florida's student chapter of the Society of American Foresters. Terry is the first African American at the University elected chapter president. As part of his many presidential duties, Terry represented the University at the World Forestry Congress in Quebec, Canada; participated in the Southeastern Region Society of American Foresters meeting in Mobile, AL; and attended the Society of American Foresters National Convention in Buffalo, NY — all while maintaining a 3.27 GPA.

Terry has worked as a Student Career Employment Program (SCEP) participant on the National Forests in Florida for two summers in addition to serving one season as an Asheville Hotshots. Upon receiving his May 2004 degree in Forest Resources and Conservation with a botany minor, Terry will convert to a permanent



full-time position on the National Forests in Florida, Apalachicola Ranger District.

The Multicultural Workforce Strategic Initiative is a Forest Service supported joint degree program between Florida A&M University and the University of Florida.

## Ann Bartuska named Deputy Chief for Research and Development

On November 26, 2003, USDA Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth announced the selection of Dr. Ann Bartuska as deputy chief for research and development.



Dr. Bartuska replaces Dr. Robert Lewis, who led research and development since April 1997.

"The Forest Service is thrilled to have Ann Bartuska return to the agency from her successful invasive species work at The Nature Conservancy," said Bosworth. "Ann brings an ideal mix of talent and skill as a scientific researcher, and a leader. We are extremely fortunate to have someone with Ann's background and experience as the next deputy chief for research and development."

Dr. Bartuska had been directing the invasive species initiative at TNC since 2001. Prior to her position with TNC, she worked for the Forest Service for

# In this issue:

**Page 3...**  
**Reaching Across Borders for the Cerulean Warbler**

**Page 6...**  
**EA Employees Discuss Civil Rights**

**Page 6...**  
**Images of Bent Creek**

## From the Director's Desk..

As we head into the summer field and fire season, I want to be clear that I concur completely with the Chief's recent messages about safety at all times, and I again ask your support for the fire mission.

Following are excerpts from the Chief's memo on safety; I encourage everyone to abide by this guidance:

"Accidents are the result of an interruptible chain of events. We must constantly stay alert to identify unsafe acts and conditions in order to interrupt that chain.

We must consistently ask ourselves:

- Is what I'm about to do or ask someone else to do SAFE?
- If there is a risk, what is the level of risk and does it make sense for me to take the risk?
- What can I do to reduce the risk?
- Who should I talk to if there's nothing I can do to adequately mitigate the risk?

Safe practices are an essential component of how we do our jobs. You often hear the motto "Safety First," but we simply *must* do better when it comes to putting safety first. We owe at least that much to our employees, to each other, to ourselves, and to our families."

Chief Bosworth's goal, and my goal, is for *everyone* to get home safely at the end of the day, every day. Please help us get there – make a personal commitment to practice safety to care for yourself and others. Each and every one of you is important to me, and to your families.

I also want to remind you that we are all stewards of the land and we have a critical role in supporting the

mission of the Forest Service during fire season. When the call comes, I am asking supervisors to make every effort to allow employees to go on wildfire suppression duty. Safety concerns are also paramount in our work with prescribed fire and wildfire suppression.

The Forest Service Fire Line Officer Team released a memo addressing responsibilities in Fire Management: "Concerning safety, we ask for your steadfast involvement in and oversight of fire operations in the upcoming season. Each of us has a responsibility to assist in reducing risk in the fire management program. . . In his message at the January National Forest Supervisor Conference, Chief Dale Bosworth stressed the importance of restoring our fire-adapted ecosystems and reducing high levels of wildland fire risk. To that end, we need the attention and support of every Line Officer to address the basic problem of hazardous fuels on the landscape. Vegetation management and wildland fire use are the tools to deal with the issue."

***Stay safe – in the office, in the field, and at home!***



## Dr. Chung Yun Hse awarded 2004 Chief's Honor Award

Dr. Chung Hse was the 2004 recipient of the Chief's honor award for distinguished science. Dr. Hse is being honored for successful conceptualization, development and execution of his research program. His career has been marked by innovation and productivity and has been one of tremendous international collaboration. Dr. Hse's work reflects positively not only on himself and his unit, but also on the entire Forest Service Research & Development organization.



Cerulean Warbler USFWS

## Reaching Across Borders for the Cerulean Warbler

by Zoë Hoyle

The Southern Research Station is part of an international effort to maintain viable populations of the cerulean warbler—a forest songbird once common in the eastern United States, now rarely seen. In an article in the January issue of *The Auk*, Paul Hamel, research wildlife biologist with the SRS Center for Bonttomlands Hardwood Research unit in Stoneville, MS, provides an overview of the status of the cerulean warbler, including current research findings and future needs. The article also details the formation of the Cerulean Warbler Technical Group, an international effort to focus research and use the results to conserve the species.

Migrating to the lower slopes of the Andes in August, cerulean warblers return in April or May to build nests in the upper canopy of forests in the southeastern United States. Since 1966, populations of the species have declined an estimated 70 percent, the decline tied to the fragmentation and destruction of habitat in both breeding and winter ranges. For its breeding range, the bird needs large areas of mature deciduous forest, often along streams: in the southeastern United States, much of this

habitat has been lost to agriculture or development. In its winter range in South America, forests are also being lost to agriculture.

Hamel summarizes what is currently known about the biology of the cerulean warbler and the research questions that remain to be answered.

"Cerulean warblers are very difficult to study in the field because they nest and forage in the high canopy," says Hamel. "Fortunately, we have learned a few tricks, such as surveying from canoes and using carved wooden decoys to attract the males. We have also developed genetic tools to help us track the movement of specific populations. We are seeing a dramatic shift in range. Land

(continued on page 5)

### Reminder:

When submitting photos for the *Southern Aspect*, please send black-and-white print photographs, if possible. A second choice is to send in good quality 35mm slides.

If you must submit digital photos, your digital camera must have an image quality of 1.3 megapixels or better on the high quality setting. The final size of the digital photo should be 1024X768 or larger. Images of lower quality than 300dpi cannot be used. The editorial staff will contact those who submit articles with digital photos that do not meet the minimum quality level, so that you may have time to resubmit either black-and-white photos or 35mm slides.

### Southern Aspect

includes events and employee news from the research laboratories and administrative staffs of the Southern Research Station, which serves Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. This newsletter is published by the USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station, P.O. Box 2680, 200 WT Weaver Boulevard, Asheville, NC 28802.

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To submit newsworthy stories for future issues, please send complete articles hard copy or on diskette (MS Word or RTF) to Shane Coates at the above address, call (828) 259-0509, or email to rcoates@fs.fed.us. Photographs are encouraged, preferably black and white.



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## **Stone High School (Wiggins, Mississippi) Forestry Students Visit The Southern Institute of Forest Genetics on the Harrison Experimental Forest**

The Southern Institute of Forest Genetics (SRS-4153) hosted the Stone High School Forestry Classes at the Harrison Experimental Forest near Saucier, Mississippi. Several researchers from the facility led the students in various informative forestry and genetics related presentations throughout the day. The classes were lead by Mr. Willie Holmes, teacher, and represented by 12



students in Forestry I and 14 in Forestry II. The students were welcomed with a power point presentation on the research projects located at the site by forestry research technician Larry Lott. The research projects presented included forest genetics, tree pathology, and wood preservation studies. Dr. Dana Nelson, research geneticist and project leader, led a discussion on forestry career opportunities, including research.

Lynn Lott, biological science technician, demonstrated how to collect, store and graft scionwood from selected pine trees onto rootstocks. During the demonstration he showed proper rootstock selection and grafting techniques. He ended his presentation with a discussion of the operation of the greenhouse in relation to research

studies. In the DNA analysis laboratory, Glen Johnson and Sedley Josserand, biological science technicians, demonstrated and discussed the isolation of DNA from various tissues, the theory and set-up of the polymerase chain reaction (PCR), separation of PCR amplified DNA fragments using gel and capillary electrophoresis, and detection and quantification of these fragments with photography or laser detection of fluorescence.

Gay Flurry, forestry technician, demonstrated how control-pollinations are carried out for breeding programs to produce seedlings for use in the research studies (see picture below). This included the demonstration of how a bucket truck is used to reach 'flowers' in parental trees that can be over 70 feet tall.

Following a catfish lunch prepared by E.J. Anderson, SCSEP, Larry Lott lead the group on a field tour of various research sites on the HEF. These sites included long-term wood decay and termite infestation studies on treated wood samples, genetics studies using self- and cross-pollinated families and species hybridization, and disease and insect studies of fusiform rust and Nantucket pine tip moth.

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## **What's the Subject?**

**Please remember to put a clear, useful topic in the Subject line of all of your email messages. It's effective and can save your readers time. Recently some viruses have been sent around in messages that appear to be from known users - using a pertinent Subject line helps the reader determine if it is a legitimate message, or if it should be deleted without being opened and read.**

## Cerulean Warblers

(continued from page 3)

use change is certainly one cause, but climate change—either short- or long-term—may also be a factor.”

Surprisingly little is known about the behavior and population ecology of the cerulean warbler, mostly due to the difficulty of catching females, locating nests, and observing the young. “Most glaring is our ignorance of the cerulean warbler during the non-breeding season,” says Hamel. “So far, we only have two published studies from South America.”

Hamel has been instrumental in the Cerulean Warbler Technical Group (CWTG), an international collaboration formed to develop a proactive, broad-based strategy to conserve the cerulean warbler. “We followed the example of other ad hoc conservation groups such as the Louisiana Black Bear Conservation Committee in our basic philosophy of including as many partners as possible,” says Hamel.

“We agree to leave agendas at the door, and to keep the focus on identifying meaningful solutions through sound science, clear communication, and trust. Our hope is that this group can serve as a model for other efforts to conserve forest bird species.”

The partnership includes industry, State and national government, nongovernmental organizations, and universities in North and South America. CWTG is organized approximately around the breeding and non-breeding seasons. The breeding season group is developing a research design to document the effect of land use change and to determine which forest management methods benefit the species. The non-breeding season group, El Grupo Ceruleo, is gathering information on the winter range of the cerulean warbler by developing a network of observers and conducting an analysis of habitat in South America.

In March 2003, El Grupo Ceruleo, which includes scientists from both the breeding and non-breeding ranges, met in Ecuador

(continued on page 7)

## Deputy Chief

(continued from page 1)

14 years. Ann started her Forest Service career in 1987, serving as Program Manager for Southern Commercial Forest Research Cooperative (SCFRC).

In 1989 she accepted the position of Assistant Station Director for Research with the Southeastern Forest Experiment Station. In 1991 Bartuska transferred to the USDA Forest Service Research Office in Washington to serve as national coordinator for the agency's freshwater wetlands research program.

Ann has held positions with research and development; state and private forestry as the director of forest health protection; and the national forest system as the agency's first director of ecosystem management. She was the first woman and first ecologist to be named director of forest management.

Ann holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Wilkes College, Wilkes Barre, PA, a master's degree in botany from Ohio University, and a doctorate in biology from West Virginia University. She is currently on the board of the Council of Scientific Society Presidents and was recently president of the Ecological Society of America.

“Being selected to lead the Forest Service research and development organization brings full circle my beginnings within the Forest Service and is a long sought goal,” said Dr. Bartuska. “I consider the organization the premier forestry science outfit in the world and am excited and honored to be able to work with a cadre of scientists and professionals who are at the leading edge of many of society's most pressing environmental problems.”

Article deadline for next issue: July 15, 2004

## **FIA Employees Discuss Civil Rights and Social Impacts of Reorganization**

by Linda LeBlanc

FIA Data Acquisition employees gathered at the Doubletree Hotel in Asheville December 9 and 10 to discuss a proposed reorganization of the Data Acquisition staff and the potential social and civil rights impact of the proposal.



John Kelly, Assistant Director for Research and FIA Acting Project Leader said that the reorganization was being considered because the current mode of operation entails a large amount of travelling by the training staff and those associated with conducting other aspects of FIA field work. Kelly explained that while the proposed reorganization was initially considered because of the training staff needs, there are other aspects of the program that would benefit having SRS-FIA staff located throughout the region of operation, rather than all centrally located at headquarters.

Anita Dungan, IT Specialist and Civil Rights Committee representative explained the Civil Rights Impact Analysis (CRIA) process to the group. "The purpose of developing a CRIA is to look at the potential impacts of a proposed action on employees and recommend mitigation measures," Dungan told the group. Following her presentation Dungan handed out a CRIA survey form to each employee and explained that completion of the surveys would be helpful in developing the CRIA. The group then began an exercise to identify CRIA concerns and mitigations for those concerns, as they relate to potential reorganization plans.

Facilitator Paul Godfrey did an excellent job working with employees to process information, gather input, and suggest alternatives. Getting to know one another was one of the meeting's objectives and that was accomplished with fun-filled group exercises. On the first day during a break Kelly's administrative assistant-Beulah Sketo served up cake and ice cream to celebrate Kelly's birthday. FIA employees spent the next two days at Headquarters receiving Human Resources related training, a briefing on the Mentoring Program and attending the Station's holiday party.

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## **Images of Bent Creek - 1937**



*Ranger's house, front*



*Laboratory No. 3: from interior of quadrangle*

(continued on page 7)

## Cerulean Warblers

(continued from page 5)

to discuss the conservation of the cerulean warbler and other migratory and resident neotropical birds and to outline research needs. The USDA Forest Service and the Nature Conservancy are providing the funding for South American biologists to conduct new research on cerulean warblers in winter 2003 and 2004.

Research findings in North America confirm habitat loss as the main reason for the decline of cerulean warbler populations. Studies have also found a growth in populations of cerulean warblers in areas where forests are regenerating. "We have some evidence that we can regenerate and manage forests to create or improve habitat for the cerulean warbler," says Hamel, "but we need to act quickly and throughout the bird's range."

Paul Hamel currently serves as the interim chair of the El Grupo Ceruleo. Some of his articles on the cerulean warbler can be accessed in full text format by searching the SRS publications database at <http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/index.htm> .

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## Bent Creek

(continued from page 6)



West entrance to laboratories



Workshop

## Margaret Stoughton Abell

Margaret S. Abell of Corvallis died Sunday, Feb 22, 2004 at the age of 95. She was born in Osage, Iowa. In 1930, she was the first woman to earn a bachelor's degree in forestry from Iowa State University.



She then joined the USDA Forest Service as the first female forester. Her first post was at the Appalachian Forest Experiment Station, where she met her husband.

She married Charles A. Abell on July 10, 1931, in Asheville, N.C. She continued working for the Forest Service until 1936, when she became a full-time homemaker. The family moved to the ranger station in the Shasta National Forest in 1942 and eventually retired to Corvallis, OR. Abell was a member of the Society of American Foresters.

Survivors include daughters Jean Porter and Susan Abell of Corvallis, and Barbara A. Borgers of Bayside, Calif.; two grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband.

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