

Delaware Hosts Mid-Atlantic Cooperative Forest Health Meeting

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The 2018 Mid-Atlantic Cooperative Forest Health Meeting (CFHM) was hosted by Delaware State Forest Service Forest Health Specialist William Seybold and held at the Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge in Delaware. The CFHM is a joint effort between the U.S. Forest Service, Forest Health Protection staff in Morgantown, WV, and forest health specialists from Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Washington, DC, and West Virginia. Virtual meeting options were made available via Adobe Connect and conference lines. Delaware State Forester Mike Valenti provided opening remarks and greetings. In addition, U.S. Forest Service Northern Research Station scientist Jennifer Koch presented “Highlights of the 6th International Workshop on the Genetics of Tree-Parasite Interactions.”

All State cooperators provided a summary and review of their programs, along with each State lead from the Morgantown Field office. The group discussed current and future forest health projects as well as programmatic needs. These included a more holistic approach to discussing and sharing information on emerging issues. A more inclusive system of sharing knowledge on novel pest outbreaks, such as spotted lanternfly and beech leaf disease, would benefit the group as a whole.

Bart Wilson led a field trip to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge. Wilson described an extensive tidal marsh restoration project, the largest of its kind in the Eastern U.S. The project restored a 4,000-acre area of marsh/barrier beach ecosystem severely damaged by Hurricane Sandy in 2012. More than 25 miles of tidal channels were dredged out of the marsh interior to restore tidal water flow. This project has improved habitat for species such as American oystercatchers and least terns.



A marsh/barrier beach project restored habitat for horseshoe crabs, sea turtles, and nesting birds at the Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge. (U.S. Forest Service photo by Danielle Martin)