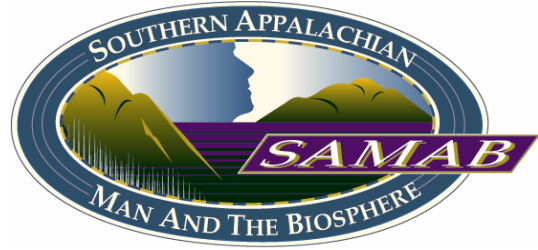


SAMAB Update 2004

Successful cooperation toward stewardship and sustainable development of natural, economic and cultural resources, since 1988



The Southern Appalachian Man and the Biosphere (SAMAB) Cooperative is a partnership of federal and state agencies that helps to identify and implement resource management and sustainability initiatives that are broad in scope and cross natural, political and geographical boundaries. Its non-profit partner, the SAMAB Foundation, facilitates citizen-centered activities that complement the Cooperative's focus and advance community and private stewardship of resources.

Addressing Critical Regional Issues

SAMAB has pulled together a partnership of more than 30 federal, state, tribal, university, and private entities to address the **hemlock woolly adelgid** threat in the Southern Appalachians. The substantial partnership has developed print and web-based information to focus attention on the problem, helping to secure private funding. The partnership, called the Save Our Hemlocks Action Team, has developed guidance on biological and chemical HWA controls suitable for public and private lands and is facilitating volunteer efforts that complement federal efforts to monitor the severity of infestations in the region.

Through SAMAB's program of **citizen environmental monitoring**, 12 communities have begun monitoring their watershed health, invasive species, and forest health. These citizen-stewards have gathered information to use in their communities' natural resource valuation studies and local decision making. Communities adjacent to National Forests and Parks in North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and Virginia are involved. For these citizen-monitors and land managers, SAMAB and public and private partners have produced pocket guides for identifying common invasive plants. With demand for these tools so high, a second printing is planned.

SAMAB's "**After the Southern Pine Beetle**" workshop in January 2004 was a multi-agency and state exploration of management approaches following the decimation of pine stands throughout the Southern Region. In trademark SAMAB fashion, the workshop did not prescribe a specific management approach, but fostered information sharing to allow each party to develop its own well-informed management strategy.

SAMAB's long-term effort to build **synergies among member agencies'** invasive plant efforts and to focus public attention and volunteer efforts on the problem has grown roots in Asheville, where SAMAB is helping to plan and coordinate the Asheville Weed Team activities and leverage them with agency activities and priorities.

The **SAMAB/SAIN partnership** works with agency IT professionals to make agency biological and related information more accessible and usable to the region's citizens and decision makers.

SAMAB Foundation Complements Cooperative's Action

Success of the Foundation's community-based monitoring program encouraged it to establish the U.S. Biosphere Reserves Association. SAMAB, through the USBRA is leading reformation of the U.S. Man and the Biosphere Program toward a more community-oriented program, focusing on local engagement and control. The Association broadens the potential for SAMAB-like cooperation at other biosphere reserves throughout the Southeast region.

Communication Breeds Success

SAMAB assures its continued success as a regional partnership through its multi-directional dialogue. At the SAMAB spring planning meeting, fall conference, and other workshop opportunities, partners exchange information to identify and address the critical issues that require an inter-agency, inter-organizational, and cross-boundary approach. Through the SAMAB fall conference, SAMAB's monthly newsbriefs, and the SAMAB website, we track progress in addressing these issues. This cyclical and structured communication process is supplemented by focused dialogues, like the recent SAMAB workshop of community planners and natural resource managers that spawned an interactive web site (in development) that enables community and resource managers to exchange information on best practices toward sustainable economic development that builds on the region's unique resources.