



Annual Report 2008 - 2009

2008 - 09 was a notable, thought not to say strategic, year for the FGCA or at least its Coordinator - ironic in a year we were to finalize a new 5 year Strategic Plan. Last year our annual plan and strategy 'flexed' to allow my involvement in the development of the **50 Million Tree Program**. It is proving a much needed boost to our capacity to restore a fully functioning forest to the landscape of southern Ontario.

This past year saw the enactment of the new **Ontario Endangered Species Act** and with it a huge workload for butternut, which again caused a few FGCA projects to be sidelined. Regulation on a private land base can be an effective tool, but in itself is not the complete answer to most issues. And this includes Butternut Recovery, and indeed recovery of other listed, diseased threatened species (chestnut, flowering dogwood) where habitat loss is not the main driver. I spent a lot of time working with OMNR colleagues to develop an exemption for butternut and to adapt our FGCA Butternut Health Assessment Method to serve the ESA 2007. My main objective was to reduce barriers to working with landowners and facilitate recovery efforts. Luckily this last year also saw increased efforts by great local recovery partners - those who are effectively engaging interested landowners and getting butternut information, seed and even scions into the recovery program.

Climate change is increasingly working its way into the consciousness of landowners and local managers. I get many calls about what species to move north, and how far north, what seed sources or mixes to try, and what aspects of forests to monitor. The latter is especially important and will help us understand the degree of variation we are about to experience and will have to adjust to.

Also, as a late 'boomer', I am attending many retirement parties. It is a concern to me and many others, how quickly we are losing some **key people and competencies** from active duty. I've told certain people they are to stay off of ladders this year - at least until we get a few more seed workshops out of them! So part of the new FGCA strategy will be to network and transfer more information - to build relationships where this information can flow more readily. I see it already in the tree planting sector with more people talking seed, soils, stock quality, tree spacing, species mixes, direct seeding and site preparation and tending. You'd almost think it was 1990. And just when some of us thought those discussions were gone for good.

So crises in climate, in forest health, in regulation, in expertise, and in workload and budgets aside - bring on 2009/10. Really - can it get any more interesting!

Barb Boysen, FGCA Coordinator

This report is laid out in 5 sections as per our current FGCA Strategy and Objectives. Contact me if you are interested in hearing more detail on any of the items described briefly below.

- I. **Biologically Appropriate Reforestation** - Increase quality and quantity of source-identified, native species seed
- II. **Forest Conservation & Management** - Increase awareness and use of genetic resource management principles to help conserve and improve existing native forests
- III. **Species Conservation** - Increase awareness of native species diversity and status.
- IV. **Promotional Activities** - Increase awareness of FGCA program among forest management and conservation sectors in southern Ontario
- V. **Administration** - Maintain a not for profit corporation and serve its membership. Please refer to the 2008/09 Financial Statement in a separate document.

I. Biologically Appropriate Reforestation

Ontario's Natural Selections Seed Source Certification Program

- Certified Seed Collector (CSC) Training
 - 2 Workshops Delivered by CSC instructors **Brian Swaile** and **Ron Thayer**
 - A 1-day Mentoring Workshop at ForestCare Nursery in SW Ontario to help new collectors
- Program Development
 - Participated on OMNR/Trees Ontario advisory Committee re the 50 million Tree Program
- Many SeedWhere analyses were completed to help direct use of source identified seed and stock to collectors, growers and forest industry and planting agencies.

Building a Seed Source Network

- Seed supply management - contributed to Trees Ontario and the 50 MTP seed management plan which includes establishment of a network of seed production areas for many species along with white pine seed orchard management.

White pine seed orchard management

- Cone beetle management - 2008 trapping operations as advised by **Dr Peter de Groot**, CFS in Cayuga (7E orchard) with **Terry Schwan**, OMNR Guelph and the Haldimand & Area Woodlot Owners Association and in Scugog (6E W orchard) with **Greg Bales**, **Carole Seysmith**, OMNR Stewardship Coordinators and OMNR Ontario Tree Seed Plant Staff **Sarah Drabble** and **Madelaine Danby**.
- Crown Management - Remedial topping methods were continued to maintain crop accessibility in Gratton with Ottawa Valley Forest SFL, and in Cayuga and Scugog orchards (with above partners).
- 2007 Seed Collection - Generally a good year, with seed/cone counts
 - Cayuga (7E) ~ 50 Hl, **Terry Schwan**, OMNR Guelph & Haldimand & Area Woodlot Owners
 - Scugog (6E w)~ 70 Hl, FGCA, **Michelle Sumere** and Stewardship Rangers
 - Glencairn (6E w) > 100 hl, Ontario Tree Seed Plant
 - Conger (5E w) ~ 10 Hl, Westwind Forest Stewardship

Realised Gain Trial

- One of 3 RGT's was planted this fall with the help of Ferguson Forest Centre staff, OMNR Kemptville District Staff and OFRI staff **Darren Derbowka** and **Ben McKay**.
- Selected 2 sites for other RGTs with Westwind Forest Stewardship and Ottawa Valley Forest (for May 09 planting)



Climate Change

- Worked with the Committee to prepare proceedings from 2007 Climate Change and Seed Conference Climate Change Research Information Note Number 8, 2008. Managing Tree Seed in an Uncertain Climate: Conference Summary, **S.J. Colombo, B. Boysen, K. Brosemer, A. Foley, and A. Obenchain**
- Used SeedWhere climate analysis program to guide questions from consumers and growers about seed movement under climate change
- Delivered Climate Change presentations
 - Climate Change and Sugar maple - to local Maple Syrup Association, Haliburton
 - to Renfrew County Maple Syrup Association

II. Forest Conservation & Management

Partner Collaboration:

- Contributed to OMNR's Southern Region Forest Forum and Planning Unit
- OMNR Southern Region Forest Strategy Input and Review

Presentations:

- Fleming College - Forest Renewal and Parks & Horticulture Classes
- Trent University - Forest Management and Gene Conservation

III. Species Conservation

CONFORGEN

- participated on Standing Technical Committee and subcommittee on gene conservation guidelines



Guidelines for the Conservation of Canada's Forest Genetic Resources

Butternut *Juglans cinerea*

e.g. of species
specific
guidelines
being
developed

Carolinian Woodlands Conservation Strategy

- participating on Recovery Team and the restoration group to determine best practices for forest restoration in Carolinian zone - from direct seeding to multi-species plantings

OMNR Biodiversity Strategy

- member of OBS advisory network; facilitated compilation of MNR program activity re genetic diversity conservation (all species)

Butternut Conservation

- Co-chair Ontario Recovery Team
 - FGCA received a Grant of \$20,000 from Environment Canada Habitat Stewardship Program (EC HSP) to develop
 - landowner communications material - website, posters, new brochure;
 - a health assessment protocol - manual and training workshops which were delivered in May, June and August to over 100 people with a waiting list of over 80 people for next year.

- Used 07/08 Grant from Forest Genetics Ontario to develop scannable data forms with OMNR SR Science and Information Section, to facilitate efficient data collection by field staff.
- Re new Endangered Species Act (2007) and the exemptions for butternut (Section 5 of O. Reg. 242/08) - worked with the MNR SAR staff to develop protocols:
 - for using the above manual, workshop, and forms for butternut health assessment,
 - regarding tree removal permit conditions that would require planting or cloning of trees to result in an over all benefit to the species (ESA, 2007, Section 17 - 2c)
- Received \$58,720 from MNR 2008 SAR Stewardship Fund and worked with 4 local programs including 8 Stewardship Councils to deliver local landowner contact programs to locate and assess butternut trees for seed and archive potential.

Aurora & Midhurst Stewardship Councils Program - 08/09 Results

Funding support from E.C. HSP Program, MNR SAR Stewardship Fund, 4 partnering stewardship councils, Midhurst District support (GIS etc), FGCA

 - 3000 brochures & posters distributed
 - 45 awareness & educational efforts.
 - 70 Butternut location reports
 - 40 landowner contacts made - 37 verifications
 - 25 site health assessments - used FGCA Butternut Assessment manual.
 - 5,000 butternut trees inspected
 - 70 retainable trees + 60 monitored seed trees = 1% to 2% of trees!!!
 - Seed collected from 12 trees in 2008 (frosted crop problems)
 - Seed treatment protocol and propagation partnership established.
- Prepared FGCA Funding Proposal to MNR 2009 SAR Stewardship Fund to continue the local Stewardship and Monitoring programs with additional local landowner contact programs to locate good seed and archivable trees (i.e. for cloning)
- Establishing an archive site at Ferguson Forest (Crown Land) with the Rideau Valley CA on which to outplant grafts of trees that are vigorously tolerating the canker



Butternut grafted by **Rose Fleguel** of the Rideau Valley CA <-April 08 June 08->



- Reviewed proposals and conducted site visits for aggregate and development sites
 - Delivered several presentations and developed a presentation for delivery by partners
 - OWA Chapter Meeting; Ontario Forest By-law Officers Meeting; Ontario Stone, Sand & Gravel Association; OFA AGM SAR session moderator, Norfolk County Woodlot Owners Association AGM, Grey Bruce Woodlot Day
- National Recovery Team member - draft plan at EC Nov 2006
- Draft still in review with Environment Canada waiting for final approval.