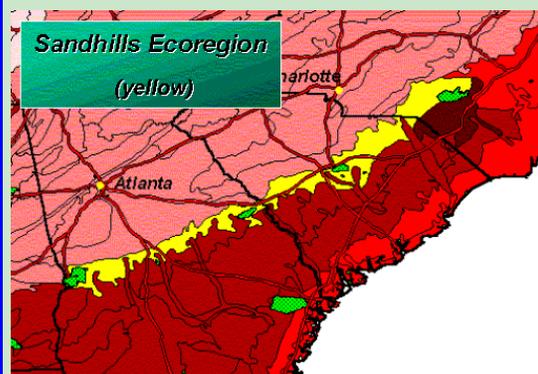


Highlights: Along the Fall Line Workshop *Beverly Collins, SREL*

Representatives of federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the academic community with ties to the Sandhills Ecoregion met March 6 and 7, 2001, at the University of Georgia's Savannah River Ecology Laboratory (SREL) conference center for a SEMP-sponsored workshop: *Ecosystem Management Along the Fall Line Sandhills*.

The Fall Line Sandhills region (*the yellow strip in the map below; with military installations in green*) stretches across Georgia into the Carolinas, just below the Piedmont. Federal installations in the region include Fort Benning, Robbins AFB, and Fort Gordon in Georgia; the DOE Savannah River Site (SRS), Fort Jackson, and Shaw AFB in South Carolina; and Fort Bragg in North Carolina. These lands share ecosystem management issues, including management of federally endangered species such as the red cockaded woodpecker and the perceived need for restoration of forest and wetland ecosystems. The Workshop provided an opportunity to discuss these issues among others, share information, and develop potential partnerships for research and ecosystem management. It contributed to SEMP's goal of technology transfer from the Fort Benning site to other installations and management landscapes in the ecoregion.

The first day of the Workshop included



presentations on the role (Hal Balbach and Bill Goran) and history (Bill Goran, Virginia Dale) of SEMP and development of ecoregional data (Bob Lozar). Rebecca Sharitz and Don Imm highlighted ecosystem management and 50 years of ecological research at the SRS. A number of presentations introduced other ecoregional partnerships or ecosystem management initiatives. These included the Southern Appalachian Assessment (Charles VanSickle), the Southeastern Ecological Framework (Neil Burns), Ecosystem Management Planning in the Southwest (John Hall), and the Ecosystem Management Program at Eglin AFB (Rick McWhite and John Hiers).

On the second day, participants identified four key Fall-line issues for breakout discussion sessions: regional strategies and goals; long-leaf pine management (*below, this group is led in discussion by Bill*



Otrosina of the USFS); SEMP extensions; and monitoring. In these discussions, participants identified the need for a taskforce or steering committee, composed of DoD, DOE, EPA, FWS, TNC, and FS representatives, to define regional goals and report to the Southeast Natural Leadership Group. The committee could help define the Fall-line ecoregion, outline a regional framework, and establish regional initiatives such as monitoring initiatives. The Longleaf Alliance can advise on regional issues in longleaf management and restoration. All agreed that a

communications and information-sharing network could facilitate regional partnerships. This initial effort from SEMP to reach beyond Fort Benning was lively and may lead to application of SEMP-developed products at other sites.

Upcoming Events

Research Coordination Meeting

November 5-7, 2001
Fort Benning, Georgia

On-site meeting of project leaders, PIs, Army personnel and selected community partners to address research coordination, data sharing, and progress reports. Wednesday, Nov 7 is a shared day with the SEMP TAC. The TAC will have the opportunity to visit several of the SEMP field sites.

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

November 7-9, 2001
Fort Benning, Georgia

SERDP/ESTCP Annual Partners in Environmental Technology Technical Symposium and Workshop

November 27-29, 2001
Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, Washington, DC

The call for poster abstracts will close on August 24, 2001. For more information on this symposium, check out the website at: <http://www.serdp.org>

New SEMP Project Director



Hal Balbach

As the "sort of new" SEMP project director, let me take this opportunity to say "Hello," and tell you a little about me and my background. First, I say sort of new, because it has now been about 9 months since I

took over for Bill Goran.

Bill, of course, was

instrumental in developing the approach to SEMP, and identifying needs and advisors to help the effort. He is still an indispensable part of the team, and will continue to serve as the coordinator of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

A little bit of history first. My first association with our organization, the Construction Engineering Research Laboratory, now a part of the Engineer Research and Development Center, came in 1972, when I was lent to the lab by Eastern Illinois University under the Intergovernmental Personnel Mobility Act (IPA) to assist with a new program in environmental impact assessment. At EIU, and before that at the California State University in Chico, CA, I taught and supervised research in Plant Ecology and environmental studies. At EIU, I was one of the designers of a new degree program in Environmental Biology, and developed and taught the first course there synthesizing social and biological principles.

While at CERL, there have been three broad foci to my research involvement. First, I was deeply involved in preparing guidance, including computer-assisted systems, to assist Army personnel in preparing environmental documentation. As a part of this area, I often was asked to direct teams which examined special Army or DoD programs needing EIS or EA documentation. I then was tasked with developing methodologies for the Army to plan facilities (and training area) demands during mobilization crises. Some of these were used in the Desert Shield phase of the 1990-91 Persian Gulf actions. For the past several years, my research project focus has been on issues related to land use and land management, so the SEMP project is very relevant to this.

Professionally, I have been active in several groups. At this time, I am a member of the Board of Directors of the American Society of Agronomy, representing the Military Land Management Division of the society. I have

been a Certified Professional Agronomist, in a program operated by the ASA, since 1982. My area of specialization there is also Land Management. I am also a member of the Board of Direction of the Society of American Military Engineers, and have been a Fellow of that society since 1995. Other professional organizations in which I am active are the Ecological Society of America, the American Society for Horticultural Science, and the International Society for Horticultural Science.

Sometimes it helps to get to know a person through developing an understanding for what he or she has done over the years. I hope this helps you to know me a little better.



Theresa Davo

Meet Fort Benning Personnel

Theresa Davo is currently the Forest Ecologist in the Land Management Branch at Fort Benning. She is the SEMP POC for the Land Management and Conservation Branches.

Theresa received an Associate's Degree in Biology from Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield, Illinois. She completed her undergraduate degree in Botany from Southern Illinois University (SIU) in Carbondale, Illinois. Theresa continued at SIU where she received a Master's Degree in Plant Biology, with an emphasis in ecology. She established and conducted the Land Condition Trend Analysis (LCTA) monitoring program at Fort Knox, Kentucky prior to coordinating and administering the program at Fort Benning. LCTA is part of the Army's Integrated Training Area Management Program, a comprehensive approach to land monitoring, management and rehabilitation on lands subjected to military training and testing. At Fort Benning, Theresa conducted threatened and endangered species (TES) surveys, monitored TES species, helped to develop and write the installation's Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan and has been actively involved with SEMP since its initiation on Fort Benning. Currently, Theresa coordinates, develops, and implements monitoring protocols for the installation and ensures all research activities are coordinated with natural resources management activities. She restructured the forest inventory and currently coordinates the inventory and manages its database. Theresa is also involved with forest modeling.

One Year as HSC

Hugh Westbury

June 18th marked the end of my first full year as SEMP Host Site Coordinator at Fort Benning. It seems like yesterday that I wandered into the Natural Resources Building to meet Theresa Davo and Pete Swiderek for my welcome aboard briefing. I now understand why they seemed glad to see me! EMD had been coordinating the fieldwork for SEMP during late spring. Having just completed the spring research madness, I can say "Thank You" to our sponsors with renewed appreciation.

Next on my task list was to re-establish the HSC office at Range Division. Skip Caldwell got me set up and online in short order. All of the Range Control crew pitched in to get me up to speed and in no time I was scheduling field trips and arranging briefings. SEMP has received excellent support from Fort Benning.

The number of field trips that summer was mercifully low through mid-June, but that quickly changed. In 2000, SEMP conducted a total of 317 crew-days (some days have more than one crew on site) of field work. For 2001, we project 477 crew-days. As of the end of May, I have arranged over 1000 daily accesses to training compartments and negotiated over 300 co-location agreements with other units. It requires a lot of cooperation to safely conduct research at this level of intensity while insuring that SEMP does not interfere with military training.

Cooperation is the key to continuing to accomplish our mission at Fort Benning. I have established a system of notification and documentation
(Continued on page 3)

The Directorate of Operations and Training - Range Division is responsible for the safe conduct of field operations at Fort Benning. All field events and range usage must be scheduled with Range Division and the Range Control radio operator must be notified when these activities commence and conclude. This minimizes the possibility of personnel entering a dangerous area and allows Range Control to notify field crews of hazards that may require that they leave an area for safety reasons.

Scheduling of all SEMP-coordinated field activities is the responsibility of the Host Site Coordinator (HSC). The HSC ensures that researchers have safe access to their study sites and that SEMP activities do not interfere with the training mission. The HSC must give additional consideration to the planning requirements of the SEMP sponsor (DEFL-EMD), allocation of SEMP resources, and the avoidance of conflict with public use (hunting) of installation property.

All scheduling of field activities on Fort Benning is based on Training Compartments. A topographic map of the installation showing the Training Compartment boundaries is available from the HSC or digitally from the SEMP data repository. Compartments are reserved at Range Control through a computerized system (RFMSS) and on a hardcopy map. Access to a compartment is denied if live-fire training is being conducted or if CS gas is being used. A live-fire training exercise can also create a Surface Danger Zone (SDZ) or "fan" where access is denied to compartments due to the possibility of ordinance falling outside of the target area.

Compartments that are being used for military training where no live munitions are employed are considered "Cold Training." Access into compartments that have been previously scheduled for cold training is dependent on the nature of the training activity. The procedure for determining which activities are safety-compatible is through the negotiation of Co-Use agreements. When a scheduler seeks access to a compartment that has been reserved for cold training, a request for a Co-Use agreement is sent to the

training unit that has reserved the compartment. If both parties agree that the compartment can be shared safely, a Co-Use agreement is reached and recorded on the RFMSS system at Range Control.

Prior to conducting fieldwork at Fort Benning, the HSC will provide a printed copy of the compartment reservations. This document lists by date the compartments which the field crew will have permission to enter, the RFMSS identification number (RCNI) and the ID numbers of any applicable Co-Use agreements. Also on this sheet is the radio ID that will be used to identify the field crew to the Range Control radio operator.

Every field crew must have a radio and maintain communications with Range Control. Although the scheduling system is designed to enable you to safely accomplish your mission, military installations are dynamic places. Where safety is concerned, the possibility of errors or last minute changes to training schedules cannot be ignored. The permission of the radio operator to enter a training compartment is the final, crucial means of ensuring the safe accomplishment of field work at Fort Benning.

of field work that may seem to be a bit restrictive, but this is necessary at this level of field activity. You should expect some compromises with your field scheduling and allow additional time for coordination. When you keep up with the various information requests that I make, you help the entire SEMP operation run smoothly.

Coordinating the field work is only part of the HSC's responsibilities. My desk is a vantage point from where it is possible to keep tabs on all of the research as well as the activities and needs of the host site. This enables me to identify and promote opportunities for cooperation between SEMP teams as well as improve the usefulness of our product for the Army. It is very important that all contacts between SEMP and Fort Benning go through me and Theresa Davo. This maximizes leveraging of resources and minimizes duplication of effort.

I have really enjoyed my first year as Host Site Coordinator. All of my contacts have been cooperative and constructive - everyone seems to be genuinely interested in seeing this project succeed. The diversity of interests and requirements that SEMP addresses insures that 2002 will be exiting and challenging to us all.

SEMP Data Repository

The SEMP Data Repository is an important part of the SEMP project plan, and is designed specifically to provide data access and exchange among the SEMP study partners and serve as a stable, long-term data archive mechanism to protect the SERDP investment. It has been operational since the end of FY 2000. The conceptual design for the SEMP repository is simple and functional. Contents are planned to include:

- 1) Baseline GIS data of Fort Benning and the surrounding area;
- 2) Digital imagery of Fort Benning and surrounding area (digital orthoquads, satellite imagery, etc.);
- 3) ECMI meteorological monitoring data (e.g. ECMI meteorological weather station data and hydrologic surface water data, etc.) and
- 4) SEMP research project data. As the individual SEMP research projects continue, contributions to the repository will

include their field data, analysis results and model output from the research teams. For more information, please contact Dr. David Price, 601-634-4874, priced@wes.army.mil



To say that SEMP is a group effort is almost an understatement. When I brief the project, I often note that, by my incomplete count, there are 24 "Principal Investigators," at least 14 universities, and four different Federal Government laboratories involved in the effort. Were we to include technicians and field data collection staff, I am sure the total number is twice that.

Aside from bragging rights within SERDP, what is the significance in these numbers? My feeling is that we ought to represent our own "audience." That is, we should be our own best "customers" for the research results generated through our efforts. Ideally, redundant collection of data should be minimized, and pooling of results applicable to SEMP as a whole needs to be emphasized. That's not to say that this has been a total failure in the past. The two ORNL projects have planned from the beginning to cooperate in sharing tasks and results, and have benefited from this cooperation. Here and there, researchers from different groups have cooperated in one way or another to assist in acquisition or interpretation of data...but it has been far from universal.

The ECMI project and the Data Repository were designed from the

beginning for the purpose of sharing data among all parties. It has been used successfully for this purpose by many persons, including several of the research teams and Ft. Benning personnel. However, most of the data present has come only from the ECMI project itself. There are practically no fields which are populated by data acquired during the course of SEMP field studies. This has been a little bit of a disappointment to all involved. Surely there are more opportunities for data sharing than have been exploited so far.

Yes, I know that the traditional working processes for research scientists have always rewarded holding the results close, and letting them dribble out only when all possible publications have been developed from the dataset. Of course, we aren't proposing anything which would restrict the right of a person or team to the first *authorship* rights derived from their own research! And, we would have to respect the feelings of the originator of such data...take a look at the LTER statements on this topic. The data section of their site is: <http://lternet.edu/data/>. The SEMP data repository was designed to be compatible with LTER principles, and any further development of the repository would try

to follow similar guidelines.

The issue here is that I feel strongly that we need to help each other with formal and informal cooperation so that we may collectively develop a better understanding of the Ft. Benning ecosystem. The first step in this has to be to develop a better understanding of the objectives of each of the research efforts. The Research Coordination Meeting, first held last November, and to be repeated in November 2001, was the first place many researchers encountered the other teams in a situation where research results were discussed. This is a complex forum to organize, but we will try to keep it a regular item on our calendar for this purpose alone.

Our advisory groups, the Science Advisory Board, Technical Advisory Committee, and the Technology Area Working Group universally express the need for SEMP to coordinate our work internally, and present (only) the unified results externally. Frankly, I think our organization is so complex that even our "allies" often don't understand us as fully as they want to. One of my most important objectives will be to help us develop a fuller, collective sense of unity and direction.



For more information, check out our website at <http://www.denix.osd.mil/SEMP>



Host Installation SEMP POCs

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Editorial Note:

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