



Many Stakeholders, One Big Park

The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.



The GSMNP is over 500,000 acres. About half of the park is in TN and half in NC. More than 9 million visitors, which is the highest visitation of any of the 58 national parks. The second most heavily visited national park is Grand Canyon with 4 million visits. The park provides an economic hub generating over \$800 million a year for surrounding tourist communities. 10 campgrounds with a total of 1,000 sites, recording more than 350,000 camper nights annually.



Forest Pests and Pathogens have been working their way through the park and towards the park for many years. Most recently, in early 2000's hemlock woolly adelgid arrived and has killed approximately 90% of the parks hemlocks.

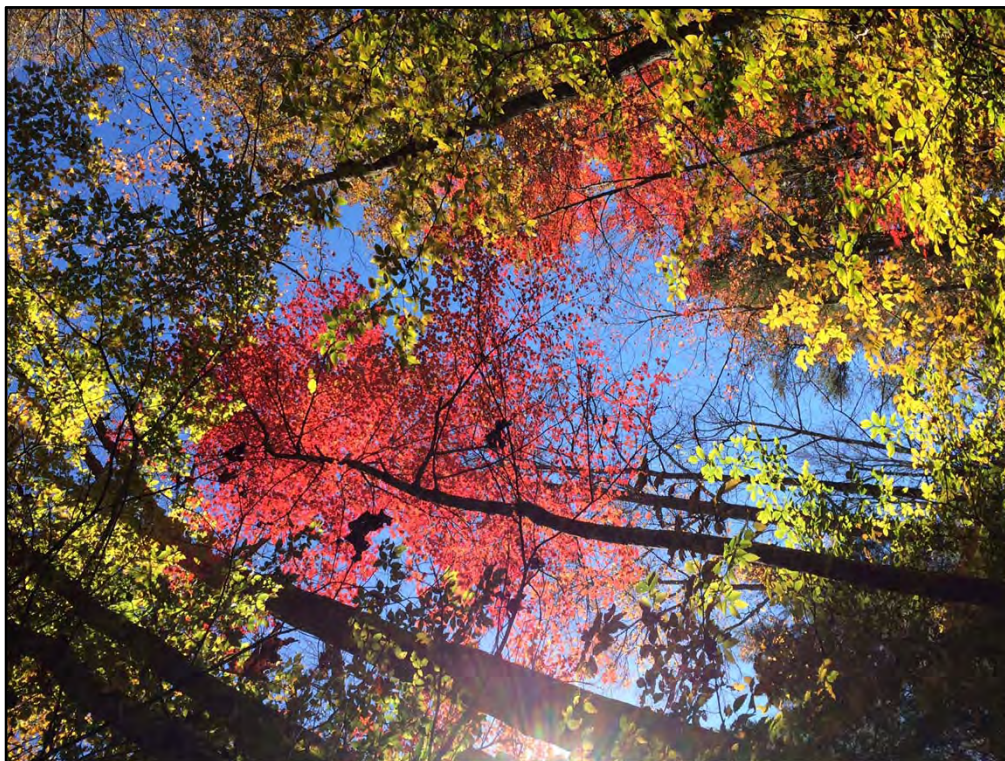
Most recently TCD and EAB have recently been found in the park.

However there are many other pests such as ALB and gypsy moth that have not set up shop in the vast half a million acres of the GSMNP.

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park is a national leader in implementing safe firewood practices. The park's current firewood rule bans firewood from being brought in from counties quarantined for tree pests.

There's an opportunity for improvement to both protect the park and make it easier for locals and visitors alike to obtain firewood for campfire memories in the park.

As a leader in protecting the park, management has proposed a rule to limit firewood to USDA and State certified firewood only in parks campgrounds. Management is set to make their decision to implement the rule by the end of this year and the rule would take effect in the spring of 2015.



What better way to help park management with addressing their concerns and questions than to form a group of experts across agencies.

TNC became involved to help form and lead this group. TNC plays a unique role in that we are able to easily communicate across diverse agencies and organizations.

GOALS of the GROUP

- Address management's concerns around 1. certified heat treated firewood availability (visitor standpoint and vendors such as concessions) 2. survey to determine if prices vary between heat treated and local sourced 3. ideas around policing if the rule is passed
- Provide much needed outreach and education
- Starting discussion in other agencies around firewood regulations



Partners from 13 different agencies and organizations have participated in monthly meetings since the early summer this year. We have had substantial engagement by USDA APHIS, TDF, NC USFS, USFS, TNC and park staff.

- Providing much needed expertise in forest pest and firewood regulation has been TDF and USDA APHIS
- Much needed expertise in messaging, language and design assistance with billboards and outreach materials- Leigh TNC, all other partners mentioned.
- Active outreach near the park with park visitors, local businesses, elected officials,- TNC
- Active outreach DMF message USDA, TDF, NC FS
- Market Research for Certified firewood- TNC
- Assistance with print materials UT, USDA

www.nature.org/firewoodmap



Address management's concerns around 1. certified heat treated firewood availability (visitor standpoint and vendors such as concessions) 2. survey to determine if prices vary between heat treated and local sourced 3. ideas around policing if the rule is passed

TNC's outreach coordinators have visited with 180 stores thus far with a goal to understand firewood options at that store and educate about firewood and forest pests. Approximately 60 have received the message about the GSMNP proposed firewood rule.

From this research, we have been able to map over 70 locations of USDA and State Certified heat treated firewood being sold around the Park. We also have concluded that certified heat treated firewood is being sold at the same price as non-heated firewood in local stores; prices averaging at \$4.99 to \$5.99.



Provide much needed outreach and education

We have found these costumes to be a very engaging outreach tool. People want to talk to you when you dress like a giant bug.

Partners have rallied around the use of these costumes. TDF, TDA- APHIS,

National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior
Great Smoky Mountains National Park



The park is proposing to further restrict the use of untreated firewood starting in Spring 2015. Campers would be limited to burning USDA or state certified wood, or using dead and down wood collected within the park.

Forests nationwide are being devastated by pests that hitch a ride on firewood. Please help us protect forests from non-native insects and diseases like Asian longhorned beetle and thousand cankers disease which could kill thousands of Smokies trees.

Don't wait until 2015! Please make the switch with your next visit.

For more information please visit the park's website at:
www.nps.gov/grsm/planyourvisit/firewood-alert.htm

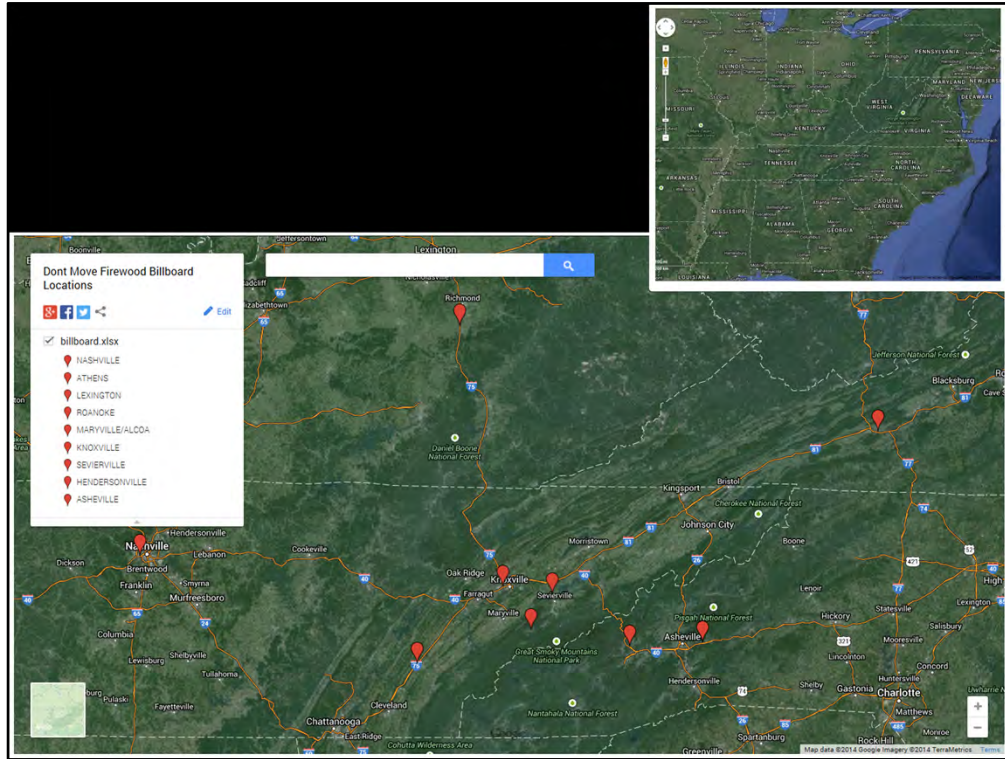
For questions or comments please contact:
Great Smoky Mountains National Park
107 Park Headquarters Rd
Gatlinburg, TN 37738
Or email us at grsmcomment@nps.gov

This product was created by the National Park Service in cooperation with the University of Tennessee and the Nature Conservancy. Funding provided by the United States Department of Agriculture.





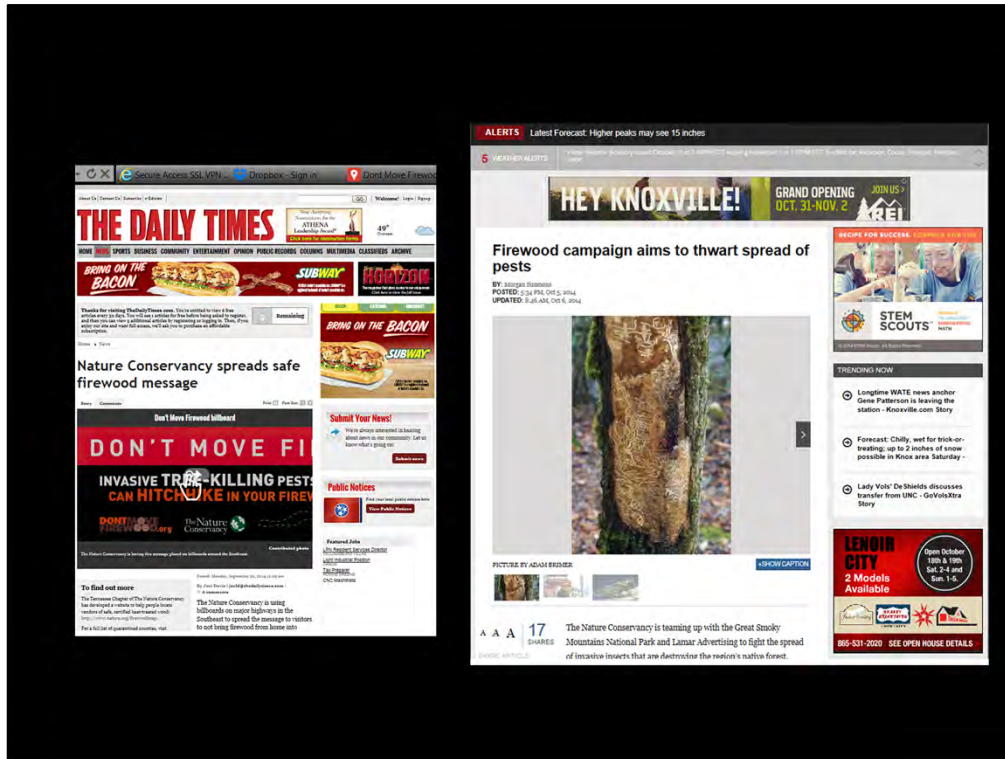
TNC partnered with Lamar advertising to put up billboards with the don't move firewood message. The firewood partners all brought their expertise to develop as a group the final print.



A total of 9 billboards were placed in areas that visitors to the park would pass on their way with 2 in Asheville, 4 in Knoxville, 1 each in Nashville, Lexington and Blacksburg.

Impressions estimate that 20 million cars will drive past those billboards before December 1st.

They will be up again in the spring Jan- March in either the same locations or locations close by.



In October, TNC sent out two press releases on behalf of the group. One release focused on the announcement of the billboards and included the don't move firewood message. The second focused on fall color and included the message of don't move firewood. Knoxville News Sentinel focused on this release in an article on the front page of their print paper. Many other smaller outlets ran the release itself.



Starting discussion in other agencies around firewood regulations

Other agencies

TN state parks – hold first meeting next week to address possible firewood regulations

Discussion at USFS level has continued. Allegheny National Forest recently shared a success story where they implemented firewood regulations 5 years ago and are seeing very high compliance! Partners continue to encourage us in moving forward.

**Don't Let Perfect Be the
Enemy of Good**

Vision for 2015

We have high hopes that park management will decide to pass the rule to allow only certified heat treated firewood.

We will continue working as the firewood working group.

We will continue to work with other agencies to discuss firewood policies.



Trisha Johnson
Director of Forest Conservation
Tennessee Chapter
trisha_johnson@tnc.org
865-392-1222

