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EPA Regional Science Workshop Fact Sheet
**TOPIC: “Landscape/Biodiversity Change and Lyme Disease-
Science and Application”**

EPA-NE Regional Lab, Chelmsford, MA - September 22 -23, 2009
(www.epa.gov/ne/lab)

The U.S. EPA New England (EPA-NE) Regional Science Council in partnership with EPA’s Office of the Science Advisor and the Office of Research and Development is hosting a Science Awareness Workshop focusing on issues relevant to landscape/biodiversity change and Lyme disease. EPA recently developed a new Biodiversity and Human Health research initiative that sponsors research projects (<http://epa.gov/ncer/biodiversity/recipients.html>) to better understand the scientific mechanisms linking changes in landscapes, biodiversity and human infectious disease transmission.

EPA is looking outside the Agency to find other stakeholders interested in this environmental/health issue in hopes of building new partnerships or a “community of practice” to help plan for and improve science implementation of future research products coming out in the next 3-5 years. Policy strategies related to land use and ecosystem management, and human disease risk reduction can all be part of integrated pest management (IPM) strategies, and each disease system will likely require a combination of approaches. The Regional Science Workshop *Landscape/Biodiversity Change and Lyme Disease: Science and Application* will be the first EPA-sponsored forum to address decision-making and management applications related to the emerging science of Lyme disease risk monitoring and prevention in the context of biodiversity and landscape change.

Objectives

- Raise awareness for stakeholders on the current and emerging state of the science related to the integrated, ecological nature of the Lyme disease problem;
- Explore and share stakeholder roles and understanding of the Lyme disease problem;
- Provide an ongoing, web-based forum (Community of Practice) allowing researchers, managers and practitioners to collaborate in addressing the issue of landscape/biodiversity change and Lyme disease;

Timely Opportunity

- Interdisciplinary, integrated problems, such as Lyme disease can only be adequately addressed through collaboration of multiple stakeholders;
- Ongoing EPA research projects and products can become more applicable to stakeholders needs through such collaboration; emerging scientific knowledge can be more readily incorporated in management decisions;
- Such research and stakeholder collaboration will foster understanding of the root causes of tick-borne disease emergence and spread, lessening disease risk;



- This collaborative Community of Practice will allow EPA and partners/stakeholders to be at the forefront of an integrative, emerging science-based understanding that considers the role of biodiversity and landscape change in human health.

Participants

Invited participants will include EPA-sponsored researchers, federal, state, and tribal environmental/natural resource management and health programs, public health agencies and health practitioners, local/regional and state land use planning and management agencies, among others.

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