



Continental Dialogue on Non-Native Forest Insects and Diseases
November 12 – 13, 2008
At the [JW Marriott](#)
Grand Rapids, MI

Greetings:

The Continental Dialogue Steering Committee is pleased to invite you to join other leaders from around the Midwest and the country who are working to address the growing threat to North American forests from non-native insects and diseases. The Fourth Continental Dialogue meeting will take place on Wednesday and Thursday, November 12 – 13, 2008 in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

This meeting will serve as an opportunity for this diverse group to build on the successes of the last year and plan for the future of the Dialogue. Specific objectives include: cultivating collaborations toward actions to address the threat of non-native forest insects and diseases; and enlisting communities in the battle against non-native insects and diseases impacting their trees. We invite you to join us in this important effort.

We hope you will attend, or, if you are not able to attend, you will consider sending a trusted member of your organization.

Registration

The meeting will take place at the JW Marriott in Grand Rapids, Michigan. For registration and more information regarding the meeting, including existing background materials, please go to <http://www.continentalforestdialogue.org/events/dialogue/2008-11-12/index.html>. Complete the registration process from there as directed. Registration for this meeting is limited and will be honored on a “first come-first serve” basis.

Thanks to a private grant, we are able to cover a significant portion of facility costs. There is, however, a registration fee that will cover all meals and other refreshments during the two-day event. The cost to attend the full event is \$60; the cost for single-day attendees will be \$40 for the first day, which includes the evening reception, and \$30 for the second day.

Please note that online registration will close on **Friday, November 7**. After that date, you may register onsite. Registration payment will be accepted in check or cash (please bring exact change).

Overnight Accommodations

We have also secured discounted rates for accommodations at two hotels:

- **Non-government, subsidized rate:** A discounted rate of \$125/night plus tax is available at the [JW Marriott](#). (Reservations cut-off: **Friday, October 31st**)
- **Government rate:** For those attendees eligible for government rate rooms, we have secured rooms at the [Courtyard by Marriott – Grand Rapids Downtown](#) at a rate of \$80/night plus tax. (Reservations cut-off: **Wednesday, October 29th**) **NOTE:** the Courtyard is connected to the JW Marriott by a skywalk.

For both locations, attendees must make their own reservations by contacting Marriott reservations at (800) 971-4762 and referencing the “Continental Forest Dialogue” group room rate. Please remember to specify which location. Please note that the availability of overnight accommodations cannot be guaranteed after the dates specified above.

If you are interested in participating and these expenses would preclude your attendance, please contact Dana Goodson of RESOLVE (dgoodson@resolv.org; 202-965-6209), as a limited number of scholarships are available to cover accommodation costs.

For questions regarding meeting objectives or the background documents posted on the web site, please contact Frank Lowenstein of The Nature Conservancy at flawenstein@tnc.org or by phone at 413-229-0232, extension 224. If you have any logistical questions, please contact Dana Goodson of RESOLVE (dgoodson@resolv.org; 202-965-6209).

A draft agenda is now available on the meeting website, and additional background materials will be distributed closer to the meeting date. We look forward to seeing you at this exciting event in November.

Very truly yours,

The Steering Committee, Continental Dialogue on Non-Native Forest Insects and Diseases

Frank Lowenstein, Director
Forest Health Program
The Nature Conservancy

Nadine Block, Manager, Forest Policy
American Forest & Paper Association

Michael Buck, Sustainable Forestry Representative
National Association of State Foresters

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