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INTERNET-BASED FORESTRY EXTENSION: USING IT IN THE CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT: The Internet Forestry Explorer is a Web site designed to present information about forest and watershed management. The target audience includes natural resource professionals, forest landowners, environmental education teachers, citizens of the featured forests and watersheds, and to a lesser extent anyone who is interested in learning more about their state's natural resources. Components of the Web site include an interactive GIS that allows the creation of tailored maps, virtual "walking tours" where users can view photos, pages of forest management examples, and links to organizations and other pages of interest. One component was created as part of a three-university virtual forest project. Penn State chose a private, award-winning tree farm to discuss and highlight forest sustainability according to the Montreal Protocol. This site includes pages describing the 7 criteria and 67 indicators of the Montreal Protocol, as well as a walking tour of the tree farm. A survey was conducted to analyze the effectiveness of the Internet Forestry Explorer in educating target audiences. This presentation will discuss the technical construction of the Web site, the results of the survey, and how the site may be used in university classroom setting.