

Communities and Forests

The newsletter of the Communities Committee of the Seventh American Forest Congress

Volume 2, Number 1

Winter 1998

Stewardship contracting

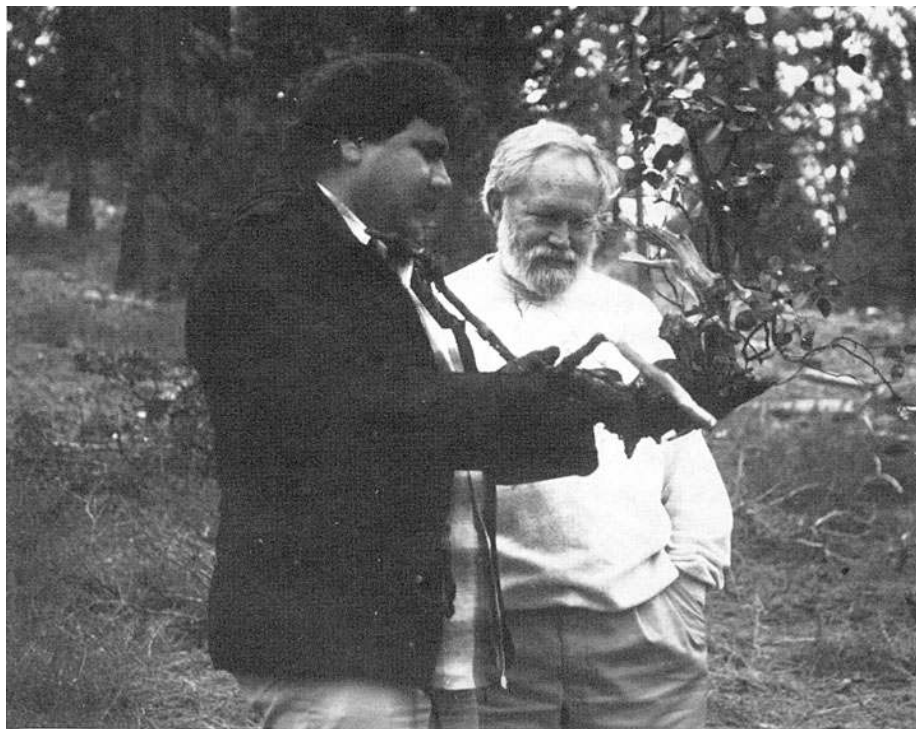
Stewardship contracting is one of the primary tools of community-based forestry. But what does stewardship contracting really mean? How do such contracts differ from business as usual and how successfully have they been used?

Stewardship contracts are designed to restore and/or maintain the various resources of an ecosystem. Where traditional timber contracts focus on a single use of a forested landscape (removing trees), stewardship contracts typically are multi-year, multi-task, and end-results oriented, addressing a variety of conditions across an ecologically defined area.

Stewardship contracts may or may not involve the removal of wood products. Because the stewardship concept focuses on the entire range of resources within a landscape, stewardship contracting can help diversify employment opportunities in rural forest communities.

So what might this kind of contract look like on the ground? In the Flathead Valley of northwest Montana, the state Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNR/C) and a local community forestry collaborative, the

continued on page 8



Communities Committee steering committee member Juan Mendoza confers with Michael Jackson of the Quincy Library Group at a QLG forest health pilot project site on the Tahoe National Forest. (photo by Jane Braxton Little)

QLG bill sparks fears of precedent

As Congress reconvenes this January, one of its first items of business is the proposed Forest Recovery and Economic Stability Act, better known as the "Quincy Library Group bill." This bill directs the Forest Service to initiate a pilot project on 2.5 million acres of the Lassen, Tahoe, and Plumas national forests. The pilot project is based on a 1993 plan drafted by the Quincy Library Group (QLG), a collection of local officials, environmentalists, timber company officials, and other citizens, and attempts to address both environmental and economic needs in the area.

QLG members asked their local Congressional representative to introduce legislation after nearly four years of unsuccessfully asking the Forest Service to amend its forest plans and test their recommendations. The first House bill was introduced in February 1997. Revised legislation passed the House 429 to 1 last July and a Senate version passed the Energy and Natural Resources Committee by a voice vote in late October. In December, however, one of the bill's primary sponsors, Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA), withdrew her support, citing environmental concerns. National environmental groups strongly oppose the bill.

The current legislation directs the Forest Service to construct fuelbreaks, thin forests, establish a riparian management program, and conduct monitoring to reduce the fire risk and improve watersheds. All roadless areas and California Spotted Owl habitat areas are excluded from treatment, and all trees over 30 inches in diameter

continued on page 2

Contents

National policy	1, 7
Urban-rural linkages	2
Committee briefs	3
Member profile	4
Community conversations	5
Resources	6

Quincy, continued from page 1.

preserved. Forest products removed by thinning and fuelbreak construction would help support the local economy.

The bill requires an environmental impact statement to assess the QLG plan before it is applied on the ground. All federal environmental and resource management laws and regulations apply to the QLG plan. It would be implemented as a pilot project and last no more than five years. The plan has been characterized as experimental by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, which plans to carefully review and monitor its implementation and results before supporting the initiation of any similar projects."

Nonetheless, the bill's detractors, most notably national and regional environmental organizations, say its passage would set a precedent for local control of national forest management. Even if they thought the QLG bill adequately addressed environmental concerns, critics say, they would oppose it because they fear it would be copied by industry-backed community groups whose sole goal is to increase timber harvests on federal lands.

QLG members say the fear of a "local control" precedent is unfounded. They say anyone frustrated enough and tenacious enough to attempt a similar bill would find their legislation subject to the same level of environmental and legislative scrutiny as the QLG bill has been. While acknowledging early versions of their bill contained pro-timber rhetoric and failed to address some environmental concerns, Group members point out the current legislation requires an environmental impact statement and extensive monitoring, and meets California Spotted Owl protection criteria.

"The law should allow the [Quincy Library Group's plan] to be tested. In five years, we will know whether this pilot project works or not, and whether local collaborative groups can in fact succeed in solving this kind of problem." Senator Dianne Feinstein

Group member and environmentalist Linda Blum further claims the bill sets no legal precedents. She cites wilderness designations as examples of "local citizens groups advocating and obtaining legislative mandates for] their desired management emphases on certain public lands."

The second sponsor of the Senate bill, Senator Feinstein (DCA), strongly supports the Quincy Library Group legislation. In a December 20 letter to Senator Boxer she wrote, "My own view is that the law should allow the consensus achieved by the Quincy Library Group to have an opportunity to be tested. In five years, we will know whether this pilot project works or not, and whether local collaborative groups can in fact succeed in solving this kind of problem."

For more information on the QLG, its activities to date, the full text of both the Senate and House bills, and reprints of several articles presenting different perspectives on the legislation, visit the QLG's Web site at <http://qlg.org>.

Working through bias

At the Eighth National Urban Forest Conference in September 1997, three forestry activists explored the myths and stereotypes urban and rural people have about each other, and discussed ways urban and rural communities might work on forestry issues together to their mutual benefit.

Lynn Jungwirth, Genni Cross, and Nancy Wolf live in areas where the linkages between urban and rural environments are becoming increasingly apparent. The northern California forests where Lynn's small, forestry-dependent community is located are the headwaters of the water supply for southern California, where Genni lives. Nancy lives in New York City, which recently entered into an agreement with thirty rural communities in the Catskill/Delaware watersheds, the source of much of the City's water supply.

Lynn discussed some of the stereotypical views urban and rural foresters hold. Rural foresters may view urban forest activists as "mystical" types who associate a strong sense of spirituality with trees and tree plantings and do not consider tree harvest an acceptable stewardship practice. Urban foresters may consider rural foresters timber-hungry forest destroyers. Although these views may seem extreme, Lynn pointed out that we all harbor stereotypes and myths about other groups, and we need to recognize and overcome them by working together.

In New York, it was mutual fear that brought the City and the rural upstate communities together. Nancy said. The City feared the extreme costs of building a water treatment plant to meet water quality standards. The rural communities feared further regulation and loss of their livelihoods. Acting to protect their separate interests, the two sides created a Watershed Forest Ad Hoc Task Force that developed recommendations to help maintain forest lands, improve forest management practices, and restore degraded areas in the watersheds.

When they worked together, the task force members began to recognize other things that link them to one another, such as the urban market in New York City for the farm and forest products, recreation opportunities, and open space the rural areas supply. The Task Force is now working on "green marketing:" promoting the use of products from the Catskill/Delaware watersheds as a way City residents can help sustain the watersheds' forests and forest communities.

Genni stressed developing relationships as a critical part of urban-rural bridge building. Tree planting and environmental improvement projects will follow as these relationships grow, she said. Genni described three important steps to building urban-rural bridges. First, develop good communication channels so people can understand each other and build and maintain trust. Second, identify clear goals so people in both settings understand what they want to accomplish together and can work effectively toward those goals. Third, promote teamwork by involving interested individuals and groups and clearly defining roles.

(This article was adapted from a longer piece by Gerry Gray that will be published by American Forests in the conference proceedings.)

Committee Briefs

Research

The task group on research completed drafts of seventeen community forestry case studies in 1997. This year, task group members will compile the case studies into a single edited volume that illustrates the complexity and diversity of community forestry. For more information, contact Jonathan Kusel at 530-284 1022, kusel@plsn.com.

Urban-rural linkages

The task group on urban-rural linkages is working on a sister community project to connect rural and urban communities through common themes such as watersheds, brownfields, environmental justice, and reinvestment.

This task group also is considering organizing a national learning session on community forestry, focused on urban forestry and urban-rural linkages. The learning session would be modeled on the Communities Committee's November 1996 national learning sessions and the June 1997 Craig workshop. For more information, contact Genni Cross at 714-557-2575, genni_cross@tpl.org or Gerry Gray at 202-955-4500, ggray@amfor.org.

National policy

In late summer 1998, national policy makers, agencies, and interest groups will get to see community-based forestry in action on field trips planned by the task group on national policy.

At the November steering committee meeting, members of this task group identified several important policy issues to watch in 1998, including stewardship contracting bills; Senator Craig's public lands bill; several forest health bills; the Quincy Library Group bill; and Endangered Species Act reauthorization. Other policy activities to track are budgetary appropriations, proposed

changes to roads and roadless area policies, and pilot Forest Service stewardship contracting projects. See *National policy*, page 6, to help develop the Committee's national policy agenda. You can find periodic national policy updates on the Communities Committee's listserv (see page 7). For more information, contact Maia Enzer at 202-955-4500, menzer@amfor.org, or Michael Goergen at 301-897-8720 x116, goergenm@safnet.org.

Communications

We're getting the word out! In 1997, the task group on communications helped produce several magazine and newspaper articles on community forestry. In 1998, this group will be writing white papers on community forestry, stewardship, reinvestment, monitoring, and collaborative processes. The white papers will be used to educate policy makers and will be made available to Committee members.

The task group on communications plans to build communication networks among Communities Committee members and is exploring opportunities for regional roundtables or workshops (see *Strength in numbers*, page 6).

To learn more or get involved in Committee communications, contact Ann Moote at 520-792 959x13, moote@ag.arizona.edu.

Fundraising

The Communities Committee needs funds to meet its goals for 1998 and beyond. To help the task group on fundraising, contact Lynn Jungwirth at lynnj@tcoe.trinity.k12.ca.us, 530 628-4206.

Steering committee

The November steering committee meeting was held in Quincy, California, and included a presentation and field trip led by Quincy Library Group members.

Juan Mendoza and Greg Aplet joined the steering committee at the November meeting. Juan directs Willamette Valley Reforestation, Inc., an organization that trains Latino forest workers in ecosystem management in the Pacific Northwest. Greg is a forest ecologist with the Wilderness Society.

Carol Daly has been elected to one of two new Vice Chair positions. Carol was a Seventh American Forest Congress organizer and founding member of the Communities Committee. She is active in both local stewardship projects and promoting stewardship contracting at the national level. The second Vice Chair position, representing urban communities, remains open.

The executive committee is recruiting additional steering committee members and working to improve steering committee diversity by adding ethnic minorities, forest industry workers, environmental interest representatives, and members from the South and Northeast. Steering committee members serve on task forces and help develop Committee policies and action agendas.

Communities Committee members can nominate themselves or others to serve on the steering committee by sending a note to Carol Daly at 406-7568548 or cdaly@netrix.net with the nominee's name, professional affiliation, and contact information, as well as reasons why the nominee would make a good steering committee member.

Communities and Forests is published by the University of Arizona's Water Resources Research Center for the Communities Committee of the Seventh American Forest Congress. Subscriptions are available free upon request.

Contributors:

Thomas Brendler
Carol Daly
Gerry Gray
Mary Mitsos
Wendy Hinrichs-Sanders
Ann Moote, Editor
Lynn Jungwirth, Committee Chair

Communities and Forests
Communities Committee of the
Seventh American Forest Congress
Box 356, Hayfork CA 96041
530-628-4206 (phone), 530-628-5100 (fax)
Mtos@tcoe.trinity.k12.ca.edu

Member Profile

Steve Blackmer

I am a New Englander by birth, heritage, and choice, having lived here all my life. My family has worked in the forests and farms of New England for many generations—now over 300 years. I grew up in Massachusetts and Vermont and have been living and working in New Hampshire as a professional conservationist since 1975. As both a forester and an anthropologist, I have a long standing interest in both the culture and the ecosystems of this region.

In recent years, my work has centered on the Northern Forest, a 26 million acre region of northern New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. The Northern Forest is the part of the northeast that has always been forest—at least since the glaciers left. Most of it was never permanently settled or cleared for agriculture. Eighty—five percent of the land is privately owned, more than half by large corporations. It is the most extensive and wildest forest area left in the eastern U.S.

The region came to widespread attention in the late eighties because of a massive leveraged buy-out of timberland. One of the region's large corporations put over one million acres up for sale, at the height of a regional real estate boom. The sale raised great fears that the land would be subdivided for second home development. In some areas, that did happen. But the sale also spurred a strong response by the conservation community, including two major initiatives to prevent the subdivision and maintain the integrity of the Northern Forest.

One effort was a series of studies and public involvement efforts by the four states and the Forest Service to identify long—term options for conserving the region's forest and forest uses. The other initiative was the creation of the Northern Forest Alliance, a coalition of environmental, forestry, and outdoor recreation groups who cared about conserving the forest. I was involved in both efforts, especially the Alliance, which I chaired for six years.

Early on, both efforts recognized that conserving the forest meant addressing forest sustainability, economic, and community issues as well as traditional land conservation. The Northern Forest Alliance developed a three-part mission: to conserve critical wildlands, promote sustainable forest management, and strengthen local communities and economies. The Alliance has done a lot in the first two areas but has not had the capacity needed to address the third, although its members are mindful of the need for cultural and economic work and have initiated some important projects.

I resigned as chair of the Alliance in 1996 to form the Northern Forest Center, with the goal of working specifically on economic and cultural issues as a complement to the Alliance's work. The Center is currently developing three programs. The first is the sustainable communities network to link communities throughout the region (*see page 5*).

The Center's second program is a cultural heritage project to help people become aware of and identify with the characteristics

that define this region. We are beginning by researching the nature of regional identity—what defines this region? We will be interviewing people from around the Northern Forest who are interested in or working on the cultural heritage and history of the region. Based on that research, we will put together a traveling exhibit, probably mounted in a logging truck, that will contain basic information about the region and regional identity. The exhibit also will provide space and assistance for people to add things symbolizing aspects of the Northern Forest that are important to them. The idea is to engage people and allow them to create a sense of regional identity and unity through the exhibit.

Our third program is an economic project intended to build an understanding that the economies, communities, and ecosystems of the region are all interdependent. A great deal of research has been done on the ecosystems of the Northern Forest, but little on the communities or social and economic aspects of the region. We will be doing a benchmark study, looking at all three sectors to develop a "wealth index" measuring what we want the region to be and how close we are to that goal. We hope the study will help build a community of business and community leaders who share a commitment to working on all three sectors and community and economic development initiatives grounded in forest conservation.

Steve Blackmer is founder and President of the Northern Forest Center in New Hampshire.



I joined the Communities Committee at the Seventh American Forest Congress because it was clear that the next step we needed to take in the Northern Forest was to focus on communities, economics, and heritage. I was particularly interested in learning from efforts elsewhere in the country and connecting to them. The Communities Committee seemed to be the single best avenue to learn about and be a part of the national effort to link communities and forest conservation.

The Committee's role in sharing information is extremely helpful. It would be interesting to have a gathering of people working on community forestry issues in different regions to learn about similarities and differences across the country. For example, what are the similarities between working with large, corporate absentee landowners and with federal agencies? Some forest issues are very different in the East than in the West. I have found it helpful and inspiring to talk with people elsewhere in the country and learn about what they are doing. It is when you get a chance to meet other people who are doing this stuff that you get inspiration and creative ideas—and the energy to keep going.

Community Conversations

Communities join forces

Communities around the United States are connecting through networks and cooperatives to promote sustainable forestry and sustainable communities. Here are some of the activities occurring in different regions of the country.

Lake States: training and research

Rural community groups in the Lake States will receive facilitator training at introductory conflict resolution workshops to be held in February 1998. The workshops are funded by the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board and co-sponsored by the Wisconsin Rural Partners and the Great Lakes Forest Alliance. Local groups also will be invited to request a volunteer to help their community. For more information, contact the Alliance at 715-634-2006.

The Wisconsin workshops developed from a 1997 regional conference on forest conflict resolution co-sponsored by the Great Lakes Forest Alliance, the Minnesota Rural Partners, the Rural Development Council of Michigan, and the Wisconsin Rural Partners and hosted by the Johnson Foundation. Leaders from land management agencies, tourism and timber industries, academia, and environmental concerns received training on collaborative learning to involve citizens in forest conflict resolution. Conference participants recommended similar facilitator training and introductory workshops for local community groups.

Five communities in Michigan's Upper Peninsula are participating in a community-based project to gauge community interests and concerns regarding management of the local national forests. Community participation will be solicited through established community groups and a series of community suppers. Input from these forums will be compared to information gathered through traditional public participation methods. For more information, contact Kathleen Halvorsen at Michigan Tech University, 906-487-2824, kehalvor@mtu.edu.

Northeast: new community network

The Northern Sustainable Communities Network, brainchild of the Atlantic Center for the Environment, the Institute for Community Environmental Management, and the Northern Forest Center, is working to build connections, coordination, and communication among New Englanders working on community issues. The Network is currently building a database of community workers and planning a Spring 1998 gathering of people working on community sustainability in the region. For more information contact Susan Clark, Network Coordinator at 802-223-5824, sclark@plainfield.bypass.com.

South: sustainable forest economies

Community forestry groups in Appalachia continue to collaborate on value-added wood manufacturing, green certification, non-timber forest products, innovative marketing, and other sustainable forestry issues. An August 1997 Central Appalachian Network "Focus on Forests" conference in Virginia drew over 40 people from six states to discuss sustainable forestry issues in the region and ways to improve communication and collaboration. Discussions on these and related issues are ongoing on the Central Appalachia Network's Sustainable Forest Economies Working Group's listserv, CANFOR. For more information contact Cohn Donahue at Rural Action, 740-593-7490, rural3@frognet.net.

Southwest: regional meetings

The Colorado Plateau Forum held a town hall in October 1997 where citizens and community leaders worked together to discuss their goals for public lands in the region, and the best ways to meet those goals. Forum participants agreed on three goals for public lands management: focus on knowledge; focus on grassroots stewardship and networking; and develop a plateau-wide planning effort that involves local government in public lands planning and management. For more information call Liz Taylor at Northern Arizona University, 520-523-1459.

The Forest Trust and Western Network are holding a Forest Stewardship Workshop in Santa Fe February 20-21, 1998. Workshop participants will share their experiences with problem solving around stewardship contracting and restoration forestry in the Southwest. For more information contact Rosemary Romero at Western Network, 505-982-9805.

Northwest: collaborative organizations

Southeast Asian, European-American, Latino, and Native American worker/harvester representatives in Oregon recently formed the Alliance of Forest Workers and Harvesters, an independent organization of forest contract workers and nontimber forest products harvesters. The Alliance will work to include the voices of forest laborers and harvesters in forest management, environmental, and employment concerns. The new group is dedicated to supporting local level leadership and community initiatives. Training sessions on fundraising and organizational development are planned. For more information contact Bev Brown, 541-955-9705, jeffctr@users.wizards.net.

The Collaborative Learning Circle, a regional network of 15 community forestry practitioner organizations, is planning a Spring retreat with peer training on monitoring programs and other community forestry practices.

The Institute for Sustainable Forestry in California and Rogue Institute in Oregon are developing community-based forest products centers to process and market ecosystem management products, including small-diameter timber and hardwoods. Similar processing centers have been in operation in Hayfork, California and Libby, Montana.

For more information on the processing centers or the Collaborative Learning Circle contact Cate Hartzell at the Rogue Institute, 541-482-6031, hart@mind.net.

Resources

National Network of Forest Practitioners

Are you working with ecotourism, non-timber forest products, watershed restoration, value-added wood manufacturing, or otherwise using forestry as a tool for sustainable rural community development? If so, you'll find kindred spirits in the National Network of Forest Practitioners (NNFP), an organization of non-profits, small businesses, agency officials, and researchers working for rural change. The Network serves as a forum where members can share ideas, acquire and provide technical assistance, and gain access to research, policy makers, and funding sources.

The Network's directory provides contact information and a description of each member organization's areas of specialization. The directory is distributed to funders, researchers, journalists, policy makers, and resource managers as well as other NNFP members. In late 1997 the Network was awarded a planning grant from the Fund for Rural America to develop a research and information center that will enable rural communities to access and conduct research and provide information on sustainable forest-based rural development.

Forest Community News, the Network's on-line newsletter, provides periodic updates on appropriations, agency technical assistance and funding programs, grant deadlines, and other policy-oriented news. *Practitioner*, the NNFP's print newsletter, includes member profiles, research abstracts, and feature articles on issues ranging from worker's compensation to chip mills. It is published three times a year. NNFP members receive both newsletters and other network publications free of charge.

The NNFP also sponsors an annual meeting and organizes technical workshops. For more information or to join the Network, contact: National Network of Forest Practitioners, 22 Hilliard Street (2nd Floor), Cambridge, MA 02138, call 617-338-7821, or e-mail trendler@igc.apc.org.

American Forests' community forestry support services

Need help with fundraising, motivating volunteers, selecting planting sites and species, or understanding municipal permitting procedures? American Forests' organizational assistance, information, and referral program can help. American Forests staff provide technical advice on community organizing, developing marketing programs, working with local governments and the media, initiating tree planting and education programs, and other aspects of running a non-profit, citizen-based forestry organization. "Tip sheets" on topics ranging from how to start a non-profit group to how to deal with burnout are available free of charge, and a handbook, "*Building Effective Partnerships for City Trees*," can be purchased for ten dollars. Staff also can help groups clarify their problems and needs, and offer tips from other organizations or referrals to local consultants. For more information on this service, contact Karen Fedor at 202-955-4500 x224, kfedor@amfor.org, or check American Forests' Web site at

<http://www.amfor.org/>.

Publications

Community forestry's making the news! For a list of recent community forestry newspaper, magazine, and journal articles, contact Ann Moote at 520-792-9591, moote@ag.arizona.edu. Also check out the following publications:

American Forests magazine, Winter 1998. "Local Voices, National Issues," the Winter 1998 edition of American Forests magazine, is devoted exclusively to community forestry issues. Articles provide different perspectives on community-based forestry, including the views of urban foresters, minority forest workers, national environmental groups, and federal agencies. Case studies and descriptions of community forestry techniques illustrate the range of forms community-based forestry can take. American Forests magazine is available from American Forests, P0 Box 2000, Washington, DC 20013, 202-955-4500.

Journal of Forestry, March 1998. This upcoming issue of the *Journal of Forestry* is titled, "Sustainable Forest, Sustainable Communities." Available from the Journal of Forestry, 5400 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814-2198, 301-897-8720.

Problem analysis on community-forest relationships. At a December 1997 meeting hosted by the US Forest Service, researchers from around the country identified questions community forestry research should be addressing in the next five years. Topics they identified include different ways to characterize communities; linkages between communities and forests; attachment to place; community response to change and uncertainty; alternative community forestry arrangements; and different forms of knowledge. The Forest Service is developing a literature review in tandem with the problem analysis, which should be available this Fall. For more information, contact the Seattle Forestry Sciences Lab, 206-553-7817.

Communities Committee listserv

Join the Communities Committee's e-mail newsgroup to discuss issues and resources with community foresters across the country. You can also get national policy updates and information on financial and technical assistance here. To join the Communities Committee's listserv, send an e-mail message to Majordomo@ag.arizona.edu. Leave the subject line blank, and in the body of the document, type: subscribe community.

Oops!

- The cover photo of Sen. Craig and Jack Shipley in our Fall 1997 issue should have been credited to Dan Smith
 - You can find U.S. Forest Service State & Private Forestry information at <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf>, as well as on the Community Forestry Web page profiled in the last issue.
-

Strength in numbers

The strength of the Communities Committee is in its membership. By joining together to share ideas and advance our mission statement, we promote community forestry in new and powerful ways. Members support each other and the Committee by contributing to discussions on the Communities Committee's listserv, nominating steering committee members, providing feedback and direction to the steering committee, and working with task groups (see *Committee Briefs*, page 3). Soon, Committee members will be able to share ideas with others through member networks, as well.

By taking 10 minutes to consider and respond to the items below, Communities Committee members can make sure the steering committee's 1998 national policy agenda reflects their needs and concerns and connect with other Committee members working on similar issues.

National policy: Where do we stand?

The Communities Committee closely follows national policy developments, and sometimes is asked to comment on proposed legislation and other national policy issues. The Committee's policy is to provide information that elevates the discussion around community forestry and make general recommendations based on its mission statement, but not comment on specific legislation. All national policy comments are approved by the executive committee (Lynn Jungwirth, Carol Daly, Maia Enzer, Sandra Hill, Jonathan Kusel, Mary Mitsos, and Betsy Rieke). Only the executive committee is authorized to speak for the Communities Committee. Member feedback on this policy is welcome.

Members are also urged to help the Communities Committee's national policy task group prioritize 1998 agenda items, using the checklists below.

Issues to track (check all you agree with):

- budget allocations and appropriations
- stewardship contracting
- new forestry legislation
- Endangered Species Act reauthorization
- new policies on roads and roadless areas
- Other: _____

Issues to push (check all you agree with):

- budget allocations and appropriations
- stewardship contracting
- estate tax relief; stewardship tax credits
- new forestry legislation
- public lands access
- reinvestment
- brownfield conversion
- all-party monitoring
- environmental justice
- Other: _____

Follow-up on national policy workshops and hearings should include (check all you agree with):

- field tours for Congressional members and staff
- additional workshops
- information provided to legislators and legislative staff
- Other: _____

Member networks

Use the following list to identify issues you'd like to discuss or work on with other Communities Committee members. Let us know if you want to be connected with people in your geographic region only, or people throughout the country.

Issues (check all you agree with):

- education
 - tools and technical assistance
 - building collaborative partnerships
 - economic development and diversification
 - stewardship contracting
 - marketing non-traditional forest products
 - value-added forestry
 - chip mills
 - brownfield conversion
 - environmental justice
 - engaging urban communities
 - urban-rural linkages
 - public lands access
 - endangered species and the Endangered Species Act
 - water quality
 - managing fire
 - Other: _____
-
- connect me with people in my geographic region only
 - connect me with Communities Committee members throughout the country who are working on similar issues

Your contact information:

Name: _____
 Title: _____
 Organization: _____
 Street/Box: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip code: _____
 phone: _____ fax: _____
 email: _____

Four easy ways to respond:

Mail: Communities Committee of the Seventh American Forest Congress
 PO Box 356, Hayfork, CA 96041

phone: 916-628-4206
fax: 916-628-5100
e-mail: mtos@tcoe.trinity.k12.ca.us

Stewardship contracting, continued from page 1

Flathead Forestry Project (FFP), developed a pilot stewardship project on school trust land adjacent to a large rural residential subdivision. The project goals were to generate funding for state schools, help achieve a desired future condition on the land, and educate and involve community members in public forest resource Flathead management decisions.

With FFP's help, community members conducted an environmental analysis and plot inventories on the site. They used information from those studies to develop a project plan and monitoring program.

The Montana DNRC and FFP worked out an innovative contracting process that required bidders to submit proposals explaining how they would use their stewardship experience to move the area toward the desired future ecological condition. Some of the specific tasks under the contract included: reducing forest stand density; promoting species and size/age diversity; retaining wildlife habitat components; reducing fire hazards; treating roads and trails to reduce motorized traffic; deterring the spread of noxious weeds; maintaining opportunities for a variety of compatible recreational uses; and educating the public about stewardship management.

Price was not the sole determinant in the bidding process for this pilot stewardship contracting project. Demonstrated stewardship skills and experience, as well as the bidders' technical and financial proposals, were used to determine bidder ranking. After preliminary analysis of the bids, the top three respondents were invited for personal interviews, conducted by a joint committee of DNRC and community representatives, who then made the final recommendation to the DNRC..

Community groups around the nation are designing and implementing stewardship contracts that, like the Flathead Valley stewardship project, involve a diverse cross-section of the community in stewardship activities and provide opportunities for local contractors to get ecosystem management training and employment.

However, communities can still run into policy and legal obstacles to carrying out stewardship contracting on federal (and some state) lands. For instance, appropriations for non-timber contracts are limited and there are a number of barriers to funding multi-year contracts. The current federal policy that timber sale contracts go to the highest bidder prevents the Forest Service from considering a broader array of contractor experience, skills, and proposed method of work in awarding a contract. FACA concerns regarding the extent of formal involvement by community groups can limit their input in the design of stewardship projects.

Because of these legal and policy barriers, it is difficult or impossible to ensure things like full community involvement in the stewardship effort, funding for multi-year contracts, and the use of performance-based contract specifications. Some communities and policy analysts have called for federal legislation explicitly designed for stewardship contracting to address these problems.

For further information on the Flathead Valley stewardship contract, phone Carol Daly at the Flathead Forestry Project, 406-756-8548 or Bev O'Brien at the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, 406-752-7994. To learn more about stewardship contracting in general call Mary Mitsos at the Pinchot Institute for Conservation, 202-797-6582.

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Communities Committee is to focus attention on the interdependence between America's forests and the vitality of rural and urban communities and to promote: improvements in political and economic structures to ensure local community well-being and the long-term sustainability of forested ecosystems; an increasing stewardship role of local communities in the maintenance and restoration of ecosystem integrity and biodiversity; participation by ethnically and socially diverse members of urban and rural communities in decision making and sharing benefits of forests; the innovation and use of collaborative processes, tools, and technologies; and recognition of rights and responsibilities of diverse forest landowners.

Communities and Forests
Communities Committee of the
Seventh American Forest Congress
PO Box 356
Hayfork, CA 96041