

Communities and Forests

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

Volume 2, Number 4

Fall 1998

Stewardship contracting, QLG bill pass as riders

Community forestry received a boost in October when the fiscal year 1999 appropriations bill passed Congress and was signed by the President. The bill included legislative language allowing 28 stewardship contracting projects on national forests across the country and established the Quincy Library Group's five-year forest management pilot project within the Plumas, Lassen, and Tahoe National Forests in California. Both the stewardship contracting and Quincy Library Group legislation passed as riders to the appropriations bill.

Why riders? The Quincy Library Group bill passed overwhelmingly in the House in 1997 and the Administration had signed off on it, but it bogged down in political disputes in the Senate in 1998. Still, interest in it was strong enough that the appropriations subcommittee added it to the appropriations bill.

The idea for stewardship contracting legislation originated in the Forest Service, which wanted to move forward with the concept but realized it needed new legislative authority to do so. The House subcommittee tasked with developing the Interior appropriations bill was interested

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Henry Lopez of the Camino Real Ranger District works with the Picuris Pueblo Forestry Crew on collaborative stewardship projects. (Photo by Ryan Temple, Forest Trust).

Collaborative stewardship in northern New Mexico rewarded

A U.S. Forest Service program developed on the Carson National Forest in New Mexico is one of 10 winners of the prestigious Innovations in American Government Awards. The Northern New Mexico Collaborative Stewardship program, launched by the Camino Real Ranger District, turned an acrimonious situation into a community partnership to restore the health of a 400,000-acre portion of forest land.

The award, given by the Ford Foundation and Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government in partnership with the Council for Excellence in Government, honors government programs that invent new ways to resolve public policy challenges. The 10 winning programs were selected from among 1,500 nominees. Each winning program receives \$100,000 for being one of the nation's best examples of government innovation.

"Many of government's most creative programs are now so familiar that we forget that their origins were experimental," says Susan Berresford, president of the Ford Foundation. "From the GI bill to the Internet, our government has created many new ways to fulfill our nation's potential. The innovative Northern New Mexico program reminds us that government paves the way for much of our country's success."

The Camino Real Ranger District initiated the collaborative process following a court injunction that stopped all timber and other forest product sales in Arizona and New Mexico.

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Forest Service focuses on urban forest stewardship

For over a decade, the U.S. Forest Service has been devoting time, energy, and more than \$25 million a year to urban and community forestry programs. Now the federal agency is about to up the ante. Along with its management of 191 million acres, most of them in remote rural areas, the Forest Service is preparing to devote even more focus and funding to urban resource stewardship in communities of all sizes.

To meet its mandate to “care for the land and serve the people,” Forest Service Chief Michael Dombeck is strengthening and expanding the agency’s commitment to urban areas. The new initiative aims to ensure good management of America’s urban natural resources while building support for the Forest Service among urban residents. Instead of focusing primarily on urban trees, the new program will address the full range of urban natural resources—other plants, animals, soil, and water. Where previous urban programs were managed and funded through the Forest Service’s State and Private Forestry branch, the new program will enlist all branches of the agency—including the Research branch and the National Forest System responsible for 155 national forests and 20 national grasslands.

“Protecting our environmental capital requires maintaining healthy and productive forestlands whether they are in urban or rural areas,” Dombeck says. “Urban resource stewardship helps to ensure that all people, regardless of where they live, can share, enjoy, and benefit from a healthy environment.”

Focus on watersheds

The urban resource stewardship initiative is an obvious outcome of Dombeck’s natural resource agenda. He has made watershed health and restoration his agency’s first priority. By committing the U.S. Forest Service to healthy and productive watersheds, Dombeck has expanded the agency’s scope beyond federal lands to include all land ownerships.

This watershed approach to national forest management highlights the natural connections between the generally rural federal lands and the urban areas where most Americans live. Over 900 municipal watersheds across the country are within national forests. In California, around 80 percent of water supplies originate on national forest land.

Involve people in the process

As the nation’s population grows, more and more people are moving into rural areas, pushing aside the boundaries that once separated city and backcountry. For forest administrators, the spread of residents onto adjacent lands creates the challenge of managing smaller, fragmented plots at greater risk from wildfire. The combination of fire and land fragmentation is forcing Forest Service officials to change their techniques and reevaluate their goals, says Steward Pequignot, Illinois State Forester and chairman of the National Association of State Foresters’ urban committee.

“The Forest Service always focused on the forest, not on the

general public,” Pequignot says. “The agency is beginning to realize you can’t approach natural resource management from natural resources alone. You need to involve people in the process.”

Along with his commitment to stream and ecosystem health, Dombeck has promised to establish closer ties with local decision-makers and to involve more people—rural and urban—in resource management. For Pequignot, the Forest Service’s urban initiative is a recognition that most Americans are disassociated from the management of natural resources. “They think milk comes from the corner store and forests somehow grow out behind the backyard. This is an attempt by the Forest Service to help people understand the role of forests nationwide,” he says.

A political mandate

For all its laudable goals, however, Dombeck’s agenda may be the response of an agency under attack. The Forest Service’s historic preoccupation with wood products, sawlogs, and “getting out the cut” has faced a barrage of criticism from a public whose values are shifting. Opposition to Forest Service clear-cutting has all but shut down federal logging in much of the West.

People today want more from national forests than lumber. They want hiking trails, clean creeks, bird song, and secluded dens for hibernating bears. Taxpayers across the country are questioning what they are getting for their \$3 billion-a-year investment in the U.S. Forest Service. The general public is more concerned with the loss of clean air and water and places to recreate than a lack of wood products.

The worst fears sparked by Dombeck’s urban resource stewardship initiative are that it is little more than a public relations campaign for an agency badly battered by the public and the press. Although it continues the traditional emphasis on conservation education and local economic development, the new proposal carries a far more political mandate. It aims to develop a foundation of advocates who support the Forest Service for what it is and what it does.

People are votes, votes are budgets, the skeptics say. From a cynical viewpoint, the entire urban initiative is a transparently political move aimed at reversing—or overwhelming—the criticism of the agency’s rural forest management. But Sonia Tamez, Forest Service urban program manager, says the proposed new program is the realistic response of a federal agency to changing needs. “We see urban centers getting closer and closer to national forests. We should be looking at serving their needs as well as the needs of rural populations. That is the best kind of public service,” she says.

“People view forests through different lenses,” Tamez says. “The Forest Service can’t afford to look at forest management through just one. We’re taking a broader approach—one that includes community along with habitat, timber, and watershed.” At a time when long-term perspectives on forest management are in short supply, it may well be the vision the nation has been seeking.

Jane Braxton Little

Revised and reprinted with permission of “California Trees”

Committee Briefs

Urban-rural linkages

The Communities Committee is working in partnership with American Forests and regional forestry organizations to develop urban-rural linkages projects in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, Puget Sound, and the state of California.

Chesapeake Bay

“Focus on tangibles and mutual education” was the guidance on building urban-rural linkages from community leaders, non-governmental organizations, and city and state representatives working in urban and rural forestry in the Chesapeake Bay area.

In October, Gerry Gray of American Forests and Bryant Smith of Parks & People Foundation convened a meeting in Baltimore to discuss the focus and format the urban-rural linkages project should take.

NGO and agency representatives at the meeting advised against holding a general scoping session on urban-rural linkages, suggesting instead a need for tangible objectives to attract the participation of diverse organizations.

Cultural exchange and mutual education among urban and rural residents were the concerns of the urban community leaders. They recommended developing projects that urban and rural residents could work on together, perhaps through a “sister schools” program.

Smith and Gray are planning a second meeting for early 1999. For more information, contact Gerry Gray at 202-955-5400, ggray@amfor.org, or Bryant Smith at 410-396-0718.

Puget Sound

In Puget Sound, the focal point for discussions is salmon recovery. In exploratory meetings with federal, state, and local agencies and elected officials, American Forests has found considerable interest in developing both on-the-ground projects such as tree plantings and a

regional policy dialogue on the connection between healthy forests and water quality. For more information, contact Gerry Gray, 202-955-4500, ggray@amfor.org.

California

In California, Leah Wills and Genni Cross are focusing on water as a way to link rural and urban communities. They’re bringing rural and urban forestry groups together to explore watershed management tools and opportunities. Other community groups may be added in the future. Ultimately, say Cross and Wills, Californians may find that even large-scale water supply and land management problems can be addressed at the community level through watershed management. For more information, contact Genni Cross at 714-577-2575, genni_cross@tpl.org, or Leah Wills at 530-283-3739, plumasco@psln.com.

National policy

The policy task group is developing a series of policy guides for community forestry practitioners. The first guide, due out in early January, navigates the reader through the federal appropriations process. It identifies critical decision points on the appropriations calendar and lists strategies for influencing Congress. The appropriations guide will tell you how to build a strategic relationship with Congressional members and their staffs, how to build coalitions with other groups, how to write an effective letter, and how and when to testify before Congress. For more information, contact Maia Enzer at 202-955-4500 x237, menzer@amfor.org.

Steering committee

The steering committee met in Tucson, Arizona, in November to work on strategic planning for the Communities Committee. There was general agreement that the Committee should continue to focus on building policy networks and providing a voice for community forestry at the national level.

The steering committee also discussed the importance of continuing to work on diversity issues and identified a need to focus efforts at the regional as well as national level. The steering committee agreed to maintain the four existing task groups (research, policy, urban-rural linkages, and communications).

A standing nominations committee, to be chaired by Hanna Cortner, was created.

Toby Rhue was elected to the steering committee. Toby is the recreation and wilderness program manager on the Hiawatha National Forest in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. Bryant Smith of Parks & People Foundation in Baltimore was elected to the executive committee; he joins Lynn Jungwirth, Carol Daily, Maia Enzer, Jonathan Kusel, Mary Mitsos, and Ann Moote on that body.

Fundraising

This fall, the Communities Committee was awarded grants from the Ford Foundation and the Weyerhaeuser Family Foundation. The funding will be used to support ongoing Committee activities and leverage partnering efforts over the next two years.

Communities and Forests is published by the University of Arizona’s Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy for the Communities Committee of the Seventh American Forest Congress. Subscriptions are available free upon request.

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Member Profile

Tamara Walkingstick

I am an extension specialist in forestry with the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service. I do a lot of work with non-industrial private foresters throughout the state and also work to foster better connections between communities and natural resource professionals and agencies, particularly the U.S. Forest Service.

My initial work in community forestry was in Nepal, where I was a Peace Corps volunteer in the 1980s. When I came back to the States, I looked for an academic program that would let me continue working with forest communities. My doctoral research at the University of Alabama examined the impacts of industrial forestry in communities. Since I came to Arkansas, much of my work has been focused on landowner education and improving communication within communities.

Landowner education

In northern Arkansas, most of the non-industrial private forests haven't been cut in 80 or 90 years. Now there's a market for these trees again, but the landowners don't know the value of the trees or their management options.

A number of landowners feel they've been taken advantage of by chip mills that have moved in in recent years. The chip mills clearcut oak, chip it, and barge it to Japan. They don't do any stand regeneration, and the oaks aren't coming back. So people are upset on two counts: they feel they've gotten chip mill prices for sawmill quality timber, and they're realizing that the stands aren't regenerating.

To address these problems, Cooperative Extension is providing landowners training in valuing their forests, marketing timber, finding a reputable consulting forester, and writing a contract. We hold informational workshops and field days for private landowners. We're also planning workshops on alternative forest products. Ginseng is a big business here, for instance, but it's almost all black market. So we're working on teaching landowners how they could capitalize on ginseng and other non-timber forest resources.

We've heard some real success stories from landowners who have attended our workshops. For example, one landowner had been offered what was probably an adequate amount to clearcut his bottomland hardwood stand. After the workshop, he decided to test the waters and put the sale out to bid. Working with a forestry consultant, he was able to get three times the amount he'd originally been offered. It was based on a selective harvest, not a clear-cut, which means he'll be able to market his timber again in the near future.

In areas where timber harvest is declining, there often are conflicts between newcomers who move in and buy up land and locals who are seeing their lifestyles diminish with the resource base. We're looking at ways to bring assistance to these communities, too.

Cooperative planning and conflict resolution

For the past two years, I've been working with Don Voth at the University of Arkansas on a project to help the Forest Service address social and cultural impacts in its forest planning process. A couple of years ago, we received a challenge cost-share grant with the Forest Service to look at connecting community planning with Forest Service planning and started working in targeted communities where the forest plan assessments were imminent or underway. When the planning got put on hold, we decided to hold a conflict resolution training for the communities.

Last February, we organized a conflict resolution workshop with representatives from three different communities. We brought in a conflict resolution professional from New Mexico who led a two-day training. It was pretty grueling, and it made us realize that we *all* need training in how to establish common ground. Still, two of the three communities have continued to meet. One is holding regular meetings of diverse stakeholder groups looking for common ground. The other is initiating a community survey and exploring the need for leadership training.

We're planning another training geared toward resource management professionals. This time the trainers are from Cooperative Extension in Kentucky, and we're bringing in natural resource professionals from Oklahoma, Missouri, and possibly Texas. It will be a good opportunity for us to connect with others in this region of the country who are working on community forestry issues.

Tamara Walkingstick is an extension specialist in forestry in Arkansas



Communities Committee

I find that when I say I work in community forestry, most people think I'm an urban forester. People don't really know what community forestry is. We have a handle on it internationally, but not so much in the United States. So I'm actively looking for allies—others who do this kind of work.

The Communities Committee has done a good job of raising community forestry issues nationally. I think it's important that we also understand that each region is different. Land use history and land ownerships vary among regions of the country, and that means the community forestry issues people are facing are different. I'd like to see more focus on the different regions of the country and coordination among community foresters at that level.

Community Conversations

Migratory interests in community forestry: a view from the Pacific Northwest

As I opened last spring's catalog for my favorite outdoor clothing provider, I noticed a photograph of a "former model living in the trees in the Headwater's forest protesting a potential clear-cut." She had forsaken one career, migrated to northern California, and was laboring to prevent a timber harvest. Her cause was well-publicized and frequently characterized as a grassroots campaign to prevent large corporate owners from ravaging this forest.

The Headwaters advocates were fortunate to purchase advertisements in The New York Times and other daily newspapers that attracted more support to this cause and stretched the boundaries of "community" concern over the Headwaters around the globe. The local conflicts over "outsiders" versus "insiders" erupted in violent situations. Yet the labor (the model) was migratory, and the cause became international.

From the volumes of literature written about community, we know community can form almost anytime, anywhere, with anyone. And there can be "competing" communities, especially when it comes to the definition and protection of community and resource use boundaries. As we continue our discussions over the virtues of community forestry, we are reminded that forest communities are not necessarily "place based" and that migratory aspects of community frequently challenge our concepts of community forestry.

Who's in?

In the fall of 1998, the Washington State Supreme Court heard arguments in a lawsuit between the state and a Native American who had been arrested by a state Fish and Wildlife agent for shooting an elk off-season and without a license. The Native American claimed he was hunting in traditional hunting grounds and treaties allowed him the right to shoot this elk. The state claims that the defendant was over 100 miles from his reservation and that allowing him to hunt in that location would set a precedent affecting the state's interest in managing big game populations.

In the 1970s, Washington state argued a similar case and lost. In the famous "Boldt decision," the court decided against the state in favor of Native Americans harvesting 50% of the salmon and steelhead that pass by their off-reservation traditional fishing grounds. The Native Americans pursued their treaty rights and came away with a clear ruling in their favor.

Like the Headwaters advocates, the Native American tribes in Washington are able to provide a forum and money for the voices advocating their cause. If the state, or local communities, choose not to listen, Native Americans can assert their message on broader levels. They will certainly be listened to in the management of game populations

Who's out?

University of Washington researcher Rebecca McLain studies mushroom pickers in the Pacific Northwest. She has found that a large percentage of mushroom pickers tend to be migratory as well as immigrants to the United States.

Since they are migratory, it is difficult both for the pickers to attend meetings and for researchers to locate their addresses for surveys. There are also issues of power keeping the pickers from participating in forestry decisions. Local law enforcement officers, as well as those from the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, frequently visit pickers' encampments, ensuring that the migratory pickers have some level of fear instilled as they work. Therefore, attending meetings to discuss local forest management is problematic at best.

The migratory workers' local knowledge of the forests they work (elk migration patterns, how the wind feels in the trees as you live in them, bollette growing patterns, etc.) may add to the great experiment of community forestry. Yet their voices are rarely heard in the development of management goals and objectives. While the migratory laborers are seemingly connected with the land, they are alienated from those who make the day-to-day management decisions.

Toward a more inclusive community

It is always expedient to work with those communities that are funded, have the technological capacity, and can enforce positions in times of disagreement. In the three examples cited, two of the communities can leverage funds and know how to "work the system." In case of the mushroom pickers, however, there are no advocacy groups purchasing newspaper advertisements. There are no lawyers taking up the causes. The laborers come in silence and leave in silence. Yet their knowledge may be vitally important to management of the forests. Perhaps we should take heed that it was organized migratory farm workers who brought issues of pesticide use and human health to the national attention.

We have developed methods to seek input from recreational users, and frequently forest advocacy groups are "at the table" with Secretary of the Interior Babbitt and Forest Service Chief Dombeck as well as local Forest Service supervisors. Many Native American groups can and do use the policymaking arena as well as courts to enforce treaty rights. The next challenge will be to find methods to include other migratory laborers in the broader community of people concerned about the woods. It will take, among other things, leadership in the laborer populations as well as initiative in the already developed communities to bring credibility to the migratory claims on community.

Kim McDonald

Trees have important social benefits, research shows

People need trees. They need to see leaves from their windows, sit in green spaces, and play in the shade. Trees draw people out from behind walls of brick and glass, and in coming together, neighbors forge relationships, nurture children, and build a sense of community. Those are key findings from a series of studies conducted by a University of Illinois College of Agriculture, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences (ACES) team.

In the ACES Human-Environment Research Laboratory, Frances Kuo and Bill Sullivan combine interests in psychology and environmental design, policy, and planning to learn how people are affected by green areas in their environments and how people can become better involved in making their environments better. They conduct much of their research in Chicago's public housing neighborhoods.

To find out how adults are affected by trees, the team designed a series of studies of residents in the Robert Taylor Homes in Chicago. The 28 architecturally identical, 16-story buildings form the largest public housing development in the world. Some buildings have grass and trees nearby, and some are surrounded by concrete and asphalt. The particular building a public housing applicant is assigned to is a matter of chance.

The researchers hired and trained residents from the public housing development to conduct interviews of their fellow residents. This helped ensure a comfortable match in gender and race with the residents. Answers to questions designed to evaluate aspects of the residents' daily functioning revealed distinct differences between people living in buildings with trees around them and those in buildings without trees. People in buildings with trees knew and socialized more with neighbors from their buildings, had a stronger sense of community, and felt safer than people in buildings without trees. They also felt better adjusted to where they were living compared to residents in buildings with barren surroundings.

Findings from another component of the research suggest an explanation. When the research team made 100 observations of outdoor common spaces in housing developments, they found adults and children gathered more often in spaces with trees, compared to spaces with no trees. By drawing people out of their homes, the trees created an opportunity for neighbors to interact and develop community relationships, Kuo said, noting other studies have shown strong neighborhood ties contribute to better physical and mental health.

That may account in part for why researchers found fewer reports of physical violence in homes that had trees outside the buildings. During interviews, those residents reported using more constructive, less violent ways of dealing with conflicts involving their children and partners than residents living in buildings without trees. Of 150 residents interviewed, three percent in buildings with trees reported hitting their children in the past year, compared with 14 percent in buildings without trees.

Tina Prow

Reprinted with permission of "The Illinois Steward"

Community forestry themes resonate around the world

Over 89 people from 20 countries met for a week in Victoria, British Columbia in October to discuss ecosystem-based community forestry in Pacific Rim countries. They gathered with two objectives in mind: to draft an international declaration of principles and guidelines for ecosystem-based community forestry, and to establish an international network of practitioners and others working to promote community-based forestry. It was an ambitious and daunting task, not unlike the 7th American Forest Congress.

The workshop began with presentations from community groups from different countries, including Chile, Nepal, India, Papua New Guinea, Canada, China, and the United States. Presenters outlined a wide variety of community forestry issues and approaches.

In China, the emphasis is on using community-based forestry to alleviate poverty. In many parts of South and Central America, small-scale approaches to forestry allow for some commercialization while still keeping forests strong enough for the subsistence use of local people. In Canada and the United States, indigenous people are providing both knowledge and leadership for sustainable, culturally appropriate resource management. In India, the state lands are managed through joint forest management with local communities, while in Nepal, many forests are managed by community groups that work out their own systems for use and protection.

Through the week-long deliberations, it became clear that forest communities around the world also share a common experience. Caught between global market pressures for industrial forestry and global environmental pressures for protection, many communities are facing both forest and social degradation. Sometimes the social degradation comes after the forest has been cut under an industrial forestry regime which does not include responsible harvest and replanting. Sometimes it comes after international NGOs have "helped" the government build broad environmental reforms that ban the cutting of any tree.

Striving to build a forest management system that integrates social, economic, and environmental well-being, community foresters have found allies around the world in the forest certification process, in the green market, and in some governmental agencies.

The international declaration, called the "Saanich Statement of Principles and Guidelines," is still in draft form. The principles concern local people taking responsibility for the long-term stewardship of the forest and receiving some benefit from their investments of time, labor, and capital.

As this workshop showed, community forestry is about open, transparent, democratic processes for natural resource management. It is about the long-term health of the forest and the long-term health of the people who work with the land. And it is happening around the world.

Lynn Jungwirth

Resources

World Wide Web sites

50 Careers in Trees. The Tree Foundation of Kern can guide you to “a challenging career that positively impacts Planet Earth daily, requires flexibility, creativity, and a sense of humor; allows you to thrive on diversity because every day is a new adventure; and is both physically and mentally demanding.” From accounting to wildland management, this site will tell you what the job entails, the skills it requires, and the salary range. Check it out at www.urbanforest.org/.

Online Urban Forestry Bibliography. New and improved, this bibliography can be searched by author, title, or keyword, and you can mark records for downloading, printing, or e-mailing. Click on www.lib.umn.edu/for/bib/urban.html.

1999 Forest Service Appropriations. You can find a full analysis of the budget issues important to forestry on the Society of American Foresters' World Wide Web page. The budget analysis covers broad categories like research and the national forest system, and specific provisions, such as helicopters in wilderness areas. Tables give comparative breakdowns of the Department of Agriculture and Department of Interior Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1999, Fiscal Year 1998, and the House, Senate, and President's Fiscal Year 1999 requests. You can find all this at www.safnet.org/archive/finalaps.html.

Publications

Land Stewardship Contracting in the National Forests, by Paul C. Ringgold, Pinchot Institute for Conservation. What are stewardship contracts? What are the laws and regulations governing stewardship contracting? What are the steps to obtaining a stewardship contract? This \$10 guidebook answers these questions and more. It includes detailed examples and a directory of Internet resources. For more information, or to order a copy, contact the Pinchot Institute, 1616 P St. NW, Washington, DC 20036, 202-797-6583.

Innovations in Forestry, University of Colorado's Natural Resources Law Center brochure series. *Innovations in Forestry: Stewardship* discusses the authority for, examples of, and issues regarding stewardship contracting. *Innovations in Forestry: Sustainable Forestry and Certification* explains the rationale behind and status of forest certification in the United States. *Innovations in Forestry: Public Participation in Forest Planning* discusses the pros and cons of different models of public involvement. Each six-page brochure provides a substantive overview of the topic and references to sources for additional information. Available from the Natural Resources Law Center, University of Colorado School of Law, Campus Box 401, Boulder, CO 80309, 303-492-1288, nrlc@spot.colorado.edu.

Conferences and workshops

Keeping Nature in Your Community: Using Ecosystem Approaches in Community Projects. March 5-6, 1999, location to be determined; March 9-10, 1999, Rochester, Minnesota. Workshop for people working on a community natural resources project, watershed management initiative, sustainable communities initiative, or community greening program. For more information, contact Mark Wever at 612-920-9326 or treetrust@willow.uctes.umn.edu.

National Town Meeting for a Sustainable America. May 2-5, 1999, Detroit. Sponsored by the President's Council on Sustainable Development and the Global Environment & Technology Foundation, this event is expected to draw 3,000 people in Detroit alone, with thousands more participating in concurrent events or through satellite links and the Internet. The program will showcase “best practices that promote sustainability” from around the country. NTM themes are crossing boundaries, building trust, and making commitments to promote and celebrate sustainable development in the U.S. For more information, call 1-888-333-6798, e-mail exhibitntm@getf.org, or visit www.sustainableamerica.org.

Keep America Growing: Balancing Working Lands and Development Conference. June 6-9, 1999, Philadelphia. Topics include causes and consequences of development, benefits of balancing working lands and development, tools to conserve working lands, and partnerships and consensus building. For more information, call 802-655-7215 or e-mail delaney@together.net.

Making the Connection II: A Greenways Revolution. June 23-26, 1999, Pittsburgh. The second international trails & greenways conference will explore environmental, economic, and quality-of-life benefits of trails, greenways, parks, and open space systems. For more information, call 202-974-5151 or e-mail rteconf@transact.org.

Ninth National Urban Forest Conference. August 31-September 3, 1999, Seattle. Topics will include urban growth management and development, urban ecology, and urban forestry. For more information, contact the 9th National Urban Forest Conference, American Forests, PO Box 2000, Washington, DC 20013, 202-955-4500, ckollin@amfor.org.

Listserv

Communities Committee e-mail discussion list. You too can be connected to about 200 community forestry champions nationwide and receive regular national policy updates and occasional job postings, conference notices, and other information. All subscribers can post messages to the listserv. To sign up, send e-mail to Majordomo@ag.arizona.edu Leave the subject line blank, and in the body of the message type, “subscribe community” (without the quotation marks). That's it! You'll receive an initial message further explaining the listserv.

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in the stewardship contracting idea and asked national-level organizations for more information on it. This led to the development of a coalition of national, regional, and local-level organizations and forestry practitioners who developed the stewardship contracting proposal.

The coalition included the Ponderosa Pine Partnership, National Network of Forest Practitioners, National Association of State Foresters, Flathead Economic Policy Center, Society of American Foresters, American Forests, Pinchot Institute for Conservation, Watershed Research and Training Center, and others.

Although no stewardship contracting language made it into the House Appropriations bill, a separate proposal for stewardship contracting did appear in the Senate version. The coalition urged the House subcommittee to push for its original proposal during conference talks. The coalition also talked with members of Congress and their staffs to demonstrate the desires of its members' constituents. Still, the coalition did not know the status of their proposal until the appropriations bill was complete.

The stewardship contracting rider authorizes 28 pilot projects across the country that will test new approaches to managing the national forests. The Quincy Library legislation is designed primarily to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire and improve forest health in 2.5 million acres of national forest in northern California. Both have significant monitoring components that will allow the Forest Service and others to track the success of new approaches to forest management.

Michael Goergen

Communities and Forests***New Mexico, continued from page 1***

The injunction was brought to protect endangered Mexican spotted owl habitat. However, it also affected thousands of families in 38 rural communities who depend on firewood from the Carson National Forest to cook and heat their homes. Small family businesses dependent on wood products were closing their doors.

Weary of litigation and poor community relations, the Camino Real Ranger District initiated the collaborative process to identify conditions that could enhance the biodiversity of the forest and sustain local communities. Together, the communities and the Forest Service determine what actions will be taken to move toward improved forest health.

As a result, the time, money, and energy once spent on appeals and lawsuits are now focused on successful forest projects and collaboration. The collaborative process ensures that everyone is involved in the democratic management of public lands and has resulted in better public acceptance and respect for innovative, sustainable practices. It has also motivated Forest Service employees, who report feeling more comfortable working with the public.

Crockett Dumas, District Ranger, says the collaborative stewardship program "broke the cycle of appeals and litigation—we haven't had an appeal since 1993." People are now "working together to raise local standards of living, improve forest health, and develop efficient business techniques," Dumas says.

U.S. Forest Service news release

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.

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