

# Full Stream Ahead

## News and Highlights from Creeks and Communities: A Continuing Strategy for Accelerating Cooperative Riparian Restoration and Management

July - October 2004

### **Challis Experimental Stewardship Group Summer Tour, August 2-5, 2004**

The National Riparian Service Team (NRST) represented by Ron Wiley (Fisheries), Sandy Wyman (Rangeland Management), Laura Van Riper (Social Science), and adjunct members Steve Leonard (Ecology & Rangeland Management) and Bryce Bohn (Hydrology), recently spent 2 days on the Challis National Forest in Idaho, looking at segments of Bayhorse Creek.. At the request of the Challis Experimental Stewardship Group (ESP), the NRST participated in the group's 2004 summer tour and provided a workshop for participants to discuss and build a common understanding of current stream condition, as well as management and monitoring options. The first day was a 12 mile horseback ride with NRST members, USFS staff and the permittees designed to provide an overview of the issues surrounding Bayhorse Creek and the larger Bayhorse and Squaw Creek allotments. The second day was a vehicle tour with the larger Stewardship Group (approximately 30 people).

The trip corresponded with the release of the University of Idaho's Stubble Height report (Ron Wiley participated in this effort), which was helpful because adaptive management issues, including use of standards and guidelines and the selection of appropriate riparian monitoring sites, were some of the primary concerns expressed by the group. In order to respond to some of the monitoring questions posed by the group, Peggy Reddick (Challis BLM) demonstrated the Cowley/Burton monitoring method (short-term and long-term). At the end of the trip, the ESP requested that the NRST return in the spring of 2005 to meet with the permittees, and representatives from the USFS, USFWS and NOAA to begin building an adaptive management strategy for the Bayhorse and Squaw Creek allotments.

### **Shared Community Stewardship Group Coordination and Planning Meeting**

As part of Gail Norton's 4C's Initiative (Conservation through Communication, Coordination, and Collaboration), the Shared Community Stewardship Group was created to better integrate the principles of collaboration, stewardship and partnerships into the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Rather than creating a new organization layer, the group is a virtual network of BLM employees who have experience in this realm (Laura Van Riper participates in the group on behalf of the NRST). Rich Whitley, who is the national group lead out of Medford, OR, recently pulled this virtual network together, along with several other internal and external partners, for a series of

coordination and planning meetings at the National Training Center (NTC) in Phoenix, AZ.

The main take home message from these meetings is that the principles regarding collaboration, stewardship and partnerships are here to stay and numerous efforts are being made to develop an institutional structure within the BLM that facilitates this type of work. Similar efforts are being under taken throughout other Federal agencies, including the USFS, NPS, USFWS and BOR. Some tasks specific to the BLM include:

1. Continuation and expansion of the BLM-NTC Community-Based Partnership Training Series.
  - a. A new course on grant-writing has recently been incorporated into this training program, and one on joint-fact finding is also being considered.
  - b. Rich is also working with NTC and the US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution to incorporate collaboration, stewardship and partnership training into the existing BLM Leadership Academy and Pathways Training.
  - c. Finally, there will be a review/change of existing language in all NTC training programs in order to provide a consistent message regarding community involvement in both landscape and project level planning.
2. A number of efforts are underway to begin bridging training and implementation.
  - a. Rich has assembled a list of BLM coaches and mentors who are available to assist individual field units with the development of collaborative efforts.
  - b. The Community Stewardship Group and the NTC are partnering with the Sonoran Institute and Sustainable Northwest to assist with efforts to bridge training and implementation.
  - c. A cooperative agreement has also been signed between the BLM's alternative dispute resolution/collaborative action group and Matt McKinney at the University of Montana, to assist these efforts.
3. The Community Stewardship Group is working with Larry Susskind and Massachusetts Institute of Technology graduate students to design and implement a study to: (1) evaluate existing adaptive management efforts across all Federal agencies, and (2) provide policy and management recommendations. Rich is in the process of forming a steering committee to guide this research process.
4. Rich has created three separate task groups to address three of the primary institutional barriers to collaboration, stewardship and partnership efforts within the Bureau: budget, procurement and performance measures.

**Community Involvement Assessing and Managing Portions of the NF Crooked River, Wild & Scenic River, in Central Oregon**

The NRST has been working with the Ochoco National Forest and Crook County Natural Resources Planning Committee, since November 2003, to develop and implement a community-based assessment, management and monitoring strategy for portions of the North Fork Crooked River Wild & Scenic River (segments 1-3 (USDA Forest Service), Lookout Pasture (BLM), and a section of private land). The Forest Supervisor requested the assistance of the NRST to help the Forest Service, and various interests within the community, gain a common vision of the current riparian conditions and management needs on the NF Crooked River. The approach integrates consensus building techniques with the principles, concepts and processes of the Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) assessment method. The NRST was represented by Janice Staats (Hydrology), Wayne Elmore (Vegetation), John Anderson (Biology & Watershed Processes), Mike Lunn (Facilitation & Conflict Resolution), and Shaney Rockefeller (Soils – OR Riparian Team). Steps taken include:

- Three meetings of interested community members to gather background information, explore different perspectives and values related to the Wild & Scenic River segments, brainstorm key participants, set project objectives, and identify a community education and involvement strategy. A key step at the first meeting was to ask “Who else should be involved in this effort?” and from this, the contact list was expanded to invite and include those missing, to participate..
- Interviews with various community members as part of a situation assessment, as well as to generate interest in a Creeks & Communities workshop.
- A Creeks & Communities workshop was held in Prineville, OR, May 14-15, 2004, with the field day on a Saturday so that more members of the public could attend. Field sites were on the NF Crooked River. The workshop was designed to create a common vocabulary and an understanding of riparian function (the attributes/processes that constitute sustainability), and to build relationships prior to the formal PFC assessment.
- The actual PFC assessment was accomplished during the week of July 19-23, 2004, and everyone on the contact list was invited to participate. This involved walking approximately 5 miles a day Monday – Friday. The Ochoco National Forest Interdisciplinary Team and different partners/members of the community participated with the NRST. On each reach, the group went through the thought process of potential/capability, current condition, objectives based on PFC checklist items and final rating, management recommendations to reach objectives, and monitoring recommendations.
- On October 26, 2004, the NRST presented the results of the PFC assessment to the community, as well as offering grazing management and monitoring recommendations.
- The District Ranger has sent out an email update to everyone on the contact list, and the Forest Service set up a website to keep anyone interested up to date on the progress of the project (<http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/centraloregon/projects/units/paulina/northfork/index.shtml>).

Involvement of the Ochoco National Forest Leadership Team has been crucial to the success of this work. The Forest Supervisor and two District Rangers communicated their commitment to work with the community, and participated throughout the entire process.

### **Swamp Creek Assessment/Grazing and Monitoring Strategies, Wallowa Valley District, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, Oregon - August 17-19, 2004**

The NRST was asked to assist the Wallowa Valley District Interdisciplinary Team and Wallowa Valley community with an assessment on Swamp Creek north of Enterprise, Oregon. The objective of the assessment was to develop a more in-depth and collective understanding of riparian conditions and options for restoration. The NRST was represented by Ron Wiley (NRST Leader), Janice Staats (Hydrology), Sandy Wyman (Rangeland Management), Jim Eisner (Fisheries), Laura Van Riper (Social Science), Mike Borman (Rangeland Management), and Craig Busskohl (Soils, Umatilla National Forest). Laura completed a pre-assignment situation assessment which expanded the list of key stakeholders, and gave us needed information on where the Forest was in their NEPA process on the allotments and a collaborative stream restoration project that has involved planting willows. The first two days were spent in the field doing PFC assessments with an emphasis on site potential, as this was an area that required additional agreement. Further discussion included livestock grazing management and monitoring. On the third day, the group met inside to document the findings and points of agreement for management and monitoring from the previous two field days. Objectives for both the livestock grazing allotment and an on-going riparian restoration project were developed by the group. In addition, the group agreed that long-term monitoring of vegetation and channel characteristics will be implemented to back up the use of annual stubble height measurements currently being taken.

The format of the group doing their own documentation the third day is an effective part of service trips. It gives the group ownership because they are documenting the findings, strategies, and actions talked about. It also saves time for the National Riparian Service Team because don't have to come back and write a report. It is important to designate at least two people as note takers that share their notes with the whole group.

### **Grazing Management for Riparian-Wetland Areas Workshop, Sheridan, MT – September 14-15, 2004**

A Grazing Management for Riparian-Wetland Areas workshop was held in Sheridan, MT September 14-15. Sponsored by the Ruby Valley Conservation District in partnership with the Ruby Watershed Council, this session was a follow-up activity to the PFC training held in Sheridan last year. The workshop was attended by 35 people representing county, state, and federal agencies, as well as private land owners.

**USDA Forest Service, Advancing the Fundamental Sciences – A Conference for Forest Service Physical Scientists, San Diego, CA - October 18-22, 2004**

Given the scientific and technical complexity of natural resource issues, it is critical that elements of the fundamental sciences are brought into collaborative decision-making to help structure the dialogue and guide the prioritization and planning of cooperative efforts. To address this, Laura Van Riper, Wayne Elmore, and Janice Staats presented a ½ day short course titled Incorporating the Fundamental Sciences into Collaborative Decision-making, October 22, 2004, in San Diego, CA. The objective of this particular session was to provide tools and techniques for designing and facilitating cooperative management efforts that effectively integrate the fundamental sciences such as:

- Assessing the existing situation
- Securing the up-front involvement of stakeholders with diverse interests and backgrounds
- Establishing a respectful learning environment
- Developing a common understanding and vocabulary grounded in the concepts of physical function as outlined in the Proper Functioning Condition assessment method
- Using assessments of system potential and capability, as well as current condition, to appropriately define a group's decision space and prioritize efforts
- Increasing individual, institutional and community capacity for confronting and management conflict
- Equalizing power and building relationships through opportunities for mutual learning and joint fact-finding
- Fostering ownership in and commitment to the implementation of management and monitoring decisions

Drawing from experience working nationally and internationally with groups in conflict over management of water resources, the instructors shared insights on how the Creeks and Communities strategy is an operating framework for integrating technical information and the human dimension. They illustrated how combining concepts of physical function (the interaction of soil/landform, water, and vegetation) with attainment of people's values, can lead to an understanding that often changes behavior. Collaboration tips and techniques were demonstrated throughout the session as part of facilitated and interactive activities designed to allow participants opportunity to personalize their learning experience. Participants were sent a workshop report that captured the results from these exercises. The PowerPoints used are on our website [www.or.blm.gov/nrst](http://www.or.blm.gov/nrst).

Janice also participated in the poster session which gave her an opportunity to talk with Forest Service hydrologists, soil scientists, and geologists, explaining the Creeks and Communities strategy and introducing them to the Riparian Coordination Network. Other members of the Network also attended and it was good to re-connect with them.

Several awards were presented at a conference banquet. The Colorado Riparian Team was nominated for the Physical Sciences Integration Team Award along with 8 other groups. The recipients were the San Dimas Aquatic Organism Passage Inventory and Design Instruction Team members. Sherry Hazelhurst, USDA Forest Service Intermountain Region Assistant Hydrologist (and Riparian Coordinator) received the first Wagon Wheel Gap Award (Forest Service Hydrologist of the Year Award), named for the site in Colorado where the first watershed study was done.

- hat capacity, she will receive updates from the NRST and others, and share them appropriately with the Cadre in Chihuahua. Others may also be named in this capacity for more extensive inclusion and distribution.
- **Chihuahua Cadre** - Gina Uribe and Cliff Mathies from the Chihuahua Cadre had their first solo Creeks and Communities Workshop November 22-24, 2004 in Dr. Belisario Dominguez (100 kilometers south of Chihuahua in the San Pedro/Conchos catchment), and they reported that it went very well. The workshop included classroom time and two field sites.
- **Web Services** – Enrique Cisneros, Fondo Mexicano para la Conservacion de la Naturaleza, will be working to increase the availability of riparian information and chatroom opportunities utilizing his organizational website.
- **Future Service Trips** – A variety of service trip opportunities were discussed informally with several groups of participants. We explained that our purpose is to help them work with communities and expand the network, and that we do not plan to be instructors at the community level in future meetings, but if financing was available would coach and mentor cadres of Mexican instructors to provide the training. We also talked about the possibility of briefings for meetings of government and non-governmental organization staff and leaders that could lead to increased emphasis on working with creeks and communities.