



Creeks and Communities:

A Continuing Strategy for Accelerating Cooperative Riparian Restoration and Management

Creeks and Communities Network

Accomplishments FY2012

(October 2011 – September 2012)

“Achieving Healthy Streams Through Bringing People Together”

PREPARED BY
THE NATIONAL RIPARIAN SERVICE TEAM
NOVEMBER 2012

Creeks and Communities Network

The interagency Creeks and Communities strategy is a joint effort of Bureau of Land Management (BLM), USDA Forest Service (FS), in cooperation with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The strategy is implemented by the Creeks and Communities Network which includes the National Riparian Service Team (NRST), State Riparian Teams and Agency Coordinators, with personnel from federal and state agencies, universities, industry and conservation interests, and the private sector.

Operating Philosophy

- Increase the capacity of the Network to effectively implement the Creeks and Communities strategy to help individuals, communities, and institutions understand riparian-wetland function, and to confront and resolve complex and contentious issues regarding riparian-wetland resources, in a way that is relevant to people's needs.
- Bring communities of people together to create a common vision for productive and sustainable riparian-wetland conditions, and assist in the development of collaborative management and monitoring plans to achieve this vision.
- Incorporate fundamental concepts from both the biophysical and social dimensions of riparian-wetland management to achieve positive results for resources and communities.
- Ensure program effectiveness through evaluation and adaptation.

Program Goal and Objectives

Goal: To develop a critical mass of people who interact with and manage riparian-wetland resources based on shared knowledge of sustainable and productive systems.

Objective: Provide individuals and groups of diverse interests and backgrounds with the tools to develop a shared understanding of riparian-wetland function, and assist in developing solutions to management challenges stemming from issues in both the resource and human dimensions.

Objective: Create awareness and understanding of, and interest in, this strategy and invite participation across multiple scales.

Objective: Ensure consistency and effectiveness through activities focusing on program management and accountability.

National Riparian Service Team

- **Steve Smith**, Team Leader, Rangeland/Riparian Specialist, BLM
- **Carol Connolly**, Public Affairs Specialist, Budget & Contracting, BLM
- **Susan Holtzman**, Team Coordinator, Forest Service
- **Janice Staats**, Hydrologist, Forest Service
- **Laura Van Riper**, Ph.D., Social Scientist, BLM
- **Sandy Wyman**, Rangeland Management Specialist, BLM
- **Mark Gonzalez**, Ph.D., Ecologist/Soils Scientist, BLM
- **Adjunct Team Members** with specialized skills in Ecology, Fisheries, Wildlife, Hydrology, Forestry, Rangelands, and Conflict Management

Agency Program Coordinators

- **Craig Goodwin**, BLM, Washington, DC
- **BLM State Office Riparian Program Leads**
- **Ric Lopez**, and **Rick Swanson**, Forest Service, Washington, DC
- **Forest Service Regional Office Riparian Program Managers**
- **Dennis Thompson**, NRCS, Washington, DC; **Bruce Newton and Gene Fults**, NRCS, West National Technology Support Center
- **NRCS State Riparian Coordinators**

State and Provincial Team Coordinators

- AZ **Dave Smith**, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Flagstaff
- BC **Cori Barraclough**, Aqua-Tex Scientific Consulting Ltd.
- BC **Patrick Lucey**, Aqua-Tex Scientific Consulting Ltd.
- CA **Dick McCleery**, NRCS Retired
- CO **Jay Thompson**, BLM Colorado State Office
- ID **Bryce Bohn**, BLM Idaho State Office
- MT **Mike Philbin**, BLM Montana State Office
- NM **John Sherman**, BLM New Mexico State Office
- NV **Sherm Swanson**, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, Reno
- OR **Jim Eisner**, BLM Prineville Field Office
- TX **Russell Castro**, NRCS Texas State Office
- UT **Justin Jimenez**, BLM Utah State Office
- UT **Mark Petersen**, Utah Farm Bureau
- WA **Vacant**
- WY **Vacant**

CONSULTING AND ADVISORY SERVICES

Place-based Assistance – National Riparian Service Team

The Creeks and Communities strategy represents an innovative and adaptive approach aimed at building capacity of land managers and stakeholders to address complex and often contentious issues inherent in managing riparian resources. Place-based assistance can include multiple phases involving training and problem solving efforts designed to address both the technical and social dimensions of riparian related issues.

- Malheur National Forest/Grant County – OR
 - Over the years, issues of livestock grazing and fish habitat have been at the core of conflict in the John Day community leading to continuous litigation, strained relationships and overall lack of trust between the various interests. The NRST has been working to encourage action by both the Malheur National Forest and the Grant County Court toward initiating a collaborative approach to deal with this long-standing conflict. A situation assessment was conducted to inform decisions on moving forward with efforts to begin creating a shift in community relationships and how they address issues surrounding public (and private) land grazing.
 - In 2009, a riparian workshop sponsored by the Prairie City Ranger District examined previous assessment results, current conditions, and livestock grazing options. Later, the NRST provided input to a draft allotment NEPA document. A community stakeholder meeting was held to examine people's willingness to work collaboratively on riparian grazing and fish habitat issues.
 - In 2010, the NRST led an assessment of fen areas, provided review and advice on grazing strategies, and a literature review and synthesis for allotment NEPA. The NRST spent three field days with forest staff and stakeholders examining riparian condition, recovery processes, and the effects of livestock grazing.
 - In 2011, the NRST planned and facilitated a staff and line officer meeting to help them address internal conflict and relationships issues holding back their efforts to solve problems on the forest. Additional assistance included review of the draft forest monitoring plan and site selection for 2012 training.
 - In 2012, the NRST conducted a 'Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) Assessment for Professionals' training course in preparation for upcoming PFC assessments on the Forest. The NRST worked with the District interdisciplinary team and stakeholders to accomplish the necessary pre-work, provided coaching during assessments, and helped participants understand how the assessments fit into an integrated riparian management process.

- Ranching Heritage Alliance (RHA) /Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest – AZ
 - The RHA was formed by a group of permittees concerned about increasing conflict relative to livestock grazing on the National Forest. Working closely with University of AZ Cooperative Extension, the Forest Service and USFWS, they organized with the objective of being proactive through creating learning opportunities and inviting dialogue among diverse interests to develop solutions to resource issues through collaboration.
 - A riparian grazing course in 2008 led the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest permittees and the Forest Service to ask the NRST for assistance in further education in the technical aspects of riparian management.
 - Activities in 2009 included a consensus building workshop, training in the PFC assessment protocol and a riparian monitoring workshop.
 - In 2010, the NRST provided training on the use of the Multiple Indicator Monitoring (MIM) protocol and helped establish designated monitoring sites and collect baseline data.
 - In 2011, the team provided facilitation assistance for a meeting of agency personnel and stakeholders to discuss the consequences and needed actions caused by the large Wallow fire.
 - In 2012, the NRST worked with the RHA and agency personnel assisting with additional monitoring applying the MIM protocol and using MIM data with an emphasis on addressing issues such as threatened and endangered species, invasive species and woody browse.

- Ruby Mountains Ranger District, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest - NV
 - The NRST, NV State Riparian Team, and the Forest Service initiated development of a proposal for a collaborative effort to address riparian assessment and management on the Ruby Mountains District in support of the allotment NEPA process. A community meeting was held to introduce the Creeks and Communities model and discuss the idea of piloting the approach on a selected area within the District.
 - In 2009, a PFC/Aerial Photography workshop was conducted along with an additional stakeholder meeting to talk more about the process that would be employed.
 - In early 2010, the NRST met with Forest leadership regarding assistance and overall commitment to the project followed by a pre-work session with the interdisciplinary team in preparation for doing riparian assessments during the field season. A situation assessment was completed involving more than 40 stakeholder conversations; a report was sent to all who participated. A community workshop was conducted followed by PFC assessments with stakeholder participation and coaching for the Forest and District staff and Ranger.
 - Assessment results were documented in 2011 and presented and discussed during a post-assessment community workshop where a decision was made to continue working on a second area of the Ruby Mountains RD. Another community workshop was later held to discuss initiation of this effort. In late summer a pre-assessment community workshop was conducted and the NRST, members of the State Team, UNR Extension, District Rangers and the Forest Supervisor also met to discuss issues related to the forest's Condition Assessment Matrices Protocol. This meeting was followed by two weeks of assisting and coaching staff in conducting additional riparian assessments.
 - In 2012, the NRST sent a report to the Forest with the findings and recommendations stemming from the team's assistance. The team later met with the Forest Supervisor, a District Ranger, several staff members and University Extension to discuss the Forest's rangeland NEPA decision space, use of the Forest's monitoring matrix, and future NRST involvement.

- Pinedale BLM Field Office - WY
 - The NRST was asked to provide assistance to the Pinedale BLM Field Office in their effort to complete PFC assessments as part of the allotment NEPA process in the North LaBarge Unit. The focus was on assuring assessment quality and building understanding of assessment results and the implications for livestock grazing management. Additional information was gathered and the NRST submitted a proposal for a multi-phased approach that would address the technical issues involved and advance stakeholder engagement.
 - In 2010, the NRST participated with the WY Riparian Team in conducting a PFC training course, and once the Field Office Manager position was filled they moved forward with the proposal to initiate a Creeks and Communities Project in 2011.
 - In April 2011, the team conducted a situation assessment and a report was sent to all participants. In May, the team worked with the Pinedale PFC ID team and other staff to accomplish the necessary pre-work for PFC assessments. This was followed by a pre-assessment community workshop in July to introduce the process and invite participation. The team also conducted an information session for Sublette County staff and supervisors. In August, the team assisted the local interdisciplinary team in doing PFC assessments along with SCCD staff and permittees. A follow-up report of NRST recommendations was sent to BLM staff and managers.
 - In 2012, the NRST and BLM interdisciplinary team conducted a community workshop to review and discuss the results of the PFC assessments and to examine how that information can be used in the allotment NEPA process and for guiding development of grazing management and monitoring strategies.

- Kemmerer BLM Field Office - WY
 - In 2011, the Kemmerer FO asked for NRST assistance in meeting the requirements set forth in a settlement agreement concerning management of the Smithsfork allotment. In addition to a significant monitoring workload there are long standing issues involving efforts to improve livestock management. Initial documents were sent to NRST for review.
 - In 2012, the team provided review and comment on draft Bonneville cutthroat trout habitat guidelines.

- Slate Creek Allotment Technical Review Team, Kemmerer BLM Field Office - WY
 - The NRST participated on a Technical Review Team to address issues regarding the condition and management of the Slate Creek Allotment involving field evaluation and a report of findings and recommendations.
- Salmon/Scott River Ranger District, Klamath National Forest - CA
 - The team received a request to assist the District with issues involving conflict surrounding grazing impacts in wilderness and on water quality and riparian areas. In 2012, the team and District Ranger agreed to some initial steps beginning with a situation assessment in 2013 that will inform further planning for shaping an approach that will meet their needs and build collaborative partnerships.

BLM National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) Partnership
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The NRST entered into an agreement with the NLCS and BLM's National Partnership Office to provide assistance in building capacity for collaborative problem solving on NLCS units using the Creeks and Communities approach. Individuals on NLCS units are being mentored in the multi-phased framework while dealing with an actual riparian issue – a 'learning by doing' approach.

- Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument – MT
 - There has been long standing disagreement with some of the Monument users on the condition and appropriate use of the riparian resources. In fall of 2008, the NRST conducted a situation assessment and a community workshop was held to help create a climate to enable managers and the many involved publics to engage more effectively. The workshops resulted in several agreed upon action items and planning began for future community workshops and riparian assessment on the Upper Missouri River.
 - In 2009, the NRST was asked to provide facilitation and conflict management assistance for an interagency stakeholder meeting on water flows and Cottonwood regeneration.
 - In 2010, the team brought together the BLM interdisciplinary team and several scientists who have studied the river extensively, to begin planning and preparing for the complex PFC assessment effort on the Upper Missouri River. Community workshops were held to explain the purpose and process and the opportunity for involvement. Extensive assessments were completed by the local interdisciplinary team and the NRST, with stakeholders participating. A follow-up visit was made to validate the riparian vegetation and begin discussions on a monitoring strategy.
 - Post-assessment community workshops were conducted in 2011 to review and discuss the assessment results. This was followed by a meeting to begin planning a monitoring strategy which led to the development of a vegetation monitoring protocol based on the existing MIM protocol but adapted for large rivers. The monitoring methods were tested on stratified reaches during the field season and further refined.
 - In 2012, the NRST provided additional input to the final draft of the PFC assessment report. NRST continued work with the Monument to further refine the Upper Missouri monitoring protocol, and coached the interdisciplinary team in establishing monitoring sites, conducting monitoring, and interpreting data.
- Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument - UT
 - The NRST was asked to help design and implement a collaborative approach for initiating and developing a grazing management EIS. The NRST conducted a comprehensive situation assessment involving agency personnel and stakeholders followed by a findings report that was sent to all participants. The NRST facilitated follow up meetings with BLM on a recommended course of action. Subsequent steps considered included internal and external workshops; however, these did not go forward.

- San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area (SPRNCA) - AZ
 - As part of an effort to begin working with stakeholders in a different and more collaborative way, the BLM in Arizona requested assistance from the NRST relative to the management of the San Pedro River through the SPRNCA. Beginning in 2011, the NRST has worked closely with local BLM managers, specialists, partners and other interested stakeholders to implement an integrated technical and social approach focused on understanding how riparian conditions within the SPRNCA have changed since designation, and what the BLM and larger community can do to insure management will achieve Congressional direction to “conserve, protect and enhance the riparian area” into the future.
 - In 2012, the NRST conducted community briefings and other BLM/stakeholder meetings in preparation for riparian assessments on the San Pedro River. On-the-ground work was done with the lead Hydrologist developing potential and capability descriptions that were compiled in a comprehensive report that was sent to all interests. The NRST also conducted a second technical meeting, additional stakeholder briefings and workshops, and a pre-work meeting with BLM staff to prepare for upcoming PFC assessments. A PFC for Professionals training course was held followed by PFC assessments conducted on over 50 miles of the river with NRST coaching the BLM interdisciplinary team and involving stakeholders in the process. A very detailed and comprehensive PFC assessment report was completed and community results workshops have been scheduled.

Other Projects/Involvement – National Riparian Service Team

- Revision of TR 1737-15 Riparian Area Management - A User Guide to Assessing PFC and the Supporting Science for Lotic Areas
 - The process for TR-15 revision is being led by the BLM National Operations Center. A core team was established that includes the NRST and Network members. An initial core team meeting was held in 2011 and multiple communications were sent to agency program leads. The draft revision was completed in 2012 and sent for technical review in 2012. Comments from the technical review were addressed and the document is currently being circulated on a more widespread basis to the BLM, Forest Service, and NRCS for a usability review. The revision is expected to be published in 2013.
- Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) for Resource Professionals
 - The NRST initiated and completed development of a 4-day curriculum to improve the understanding and application of the PFC assessment method. Course modules cover pre-work, advanced techniques for quantification, trend indicators, a field practicum, and summarizing, reporting and communicating assessment results. Four pilot sessions were conducted in 2012 and a review of course effectiveness and design is currently underway.
- Field Guide: Vegetation Monitoring Protocol for the Upper Missouri River
 - This sampling protocol is based on Technical Reference 1737-23 Multiple Indicator Monitoring (MIM) of Stream Channels and Streamside Vegetation (2011) and modified for application on the Upper Missouri River in the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument. This effort is the result of State and local BLM, NRST, and USGS input and decisions to address monitoring needs and is being authored by the NRST and the Monument hydrologist. Field testing and refinement occurred in 2012 and will continue in 2013. This field guide is a comprehensive, stepwise instruction reference for conducting seven vegetation monitoring procedures and includes detailed instructions on stratification and the selection of designated monitoring areas (DMAs); it also has a customized electronic data entry and analysis module for efficient data analysis and processing. It is anticipated that this approach can be used on other large river systems in other areas.
- TR 1737-12 PFC/Aerial Photography Technical Reference Review and Course Development
 - There has been a need to update TR-12 based on new technology and interest from field units. The NRST participated in the review process with NOC and NTC and provided input on alternatives for moving forward with TR revision. Discussions in 2012 resulted in plans to begin efforts in 2013 to develop an electronic TR focused on remote sensing for riparian management that can be easily updated as technology and applications change.

- Stratification Guidance Technical Bulletin
 - The NRST is developing guidance on stratification of landscapes, watersheds, stream reaches, and sub-reach units within a watershed context for riparian assessment and monitoring applications.
- Streambank Alteration Review Team Proposal
 - The NRST submitted a proposal to select BLM and FS program managers proposing to commission a University to establish a team to address the concept of streambank alteration. The intent was, and still is to build upon the work and recommendations of the University of Idaho Stubble Height Review Team, and to ultimately provide more clarity, understanding and guidance to agency personnel and stakeholders on the application of streambank alteration concepts. A number of discussions have occurred with people showing interest, but to date this proposal has not been acted upon.
- Riparian Pioneers Series
 - Several interviews have been completed for a series of articles that will feature individuals who have had a great influence on development and incorporation of scientific concepts and tools for understanding and managing riparian resources.
- Headcut Guidance, FS STREAM Team
 - The NRST asked the STREAM Team to develop guidance on headcut assessment and treatment at the urging of the Creeks and Communities Network and agency field offices. Coordination and review are ongoing and will continue into 2013.
- Riparian Grasses Field Guide
 - NRST is co-authoring with a University of Wyoming Emeritus Professor on the development of a Riparian Grasses Field Guide including collection, photography, and ecological information of each species.
- Alaska Grasses Field Guide
 - The NRST assisted with the field guide, published in 2012, to collect, photograph, and provide ecological information for 166 grass species. The guide was requested as a result of grass species collection for the riparian grass field guide. The five year project was funded by the AK BLM, USFS, NRCS, Palmer Plant Materials Center, AK Dept. of Natural Resources, Division of Agriculture, AK Forest Health Protection Program, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and the University of Wyoming.
- Nueces River Authority – TX
 - Over the past several years, the NRST and the Texas Riparian Team have assisted the Nueces River Authority in implementing a program to develop a ‘Riparian Network’ of landowners throughout the watershed interested in learning about and managing their riparian resources to ensure sustainable conditions. Riparian function workshops were conducted on multiple landowner properties. Capacity building focused on landowners and technical specialists in NRCS, Texas Parks & Wildlife, and University Extension.
 - In 2011, the NRST provided guidance to the Outreach and Education Director in designing the capstone activity – Remarkable Riparian Summit held early 2012. Team members spoke at the plenary session and helped facilitate focus groups. The NRST and Texas Riparian Team also conducted a pre-conference workshop and riparian assessments of several reaches of the Nueces River.
- Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition
 - Participated in the annual meeting of western rural and local, regional and national organizations to promote balanced conservation-based approaches to the ecological and economic problems facing the west. The NRST is also providing input to the Working Lands Working Group focusing on policy to facilitate sustainable rangelands, ranching, and public lands grazing. Activities include conference call participation, document review, and annual meeting attendance.

- Society for Range Management Annual Meeting
 - Assisted with coordination and presented at the GLCI Riparian Grazing Forum; assisted in finding an instructor to cover riparian monitoring in the High School Youth Forum Workshop; assisted in the development of a Trade Show display for the Forest Service – provided materials for FS and BLM booths; provided communication, information management and website support to the Watershed/Riparian Committee.
- Forest Service Remote Sensing Application Center Advisory Group
 - Provided input to development of remote sensing tools for riparian assessment and mapping.
- Five-Star Watershed Stewardship Program – WA
 - Participated in the development of this education, communication and certification program sponsored by the Agriculture Center of Excellence at Walla Walla College.
- BLM/DOI Alternative Dispute Resolution Advisory Team
 - Contributing to development of a BLM ADR strategic plan and serving on the DOI facilitation roster.
- BLM Aquatic Core Indicator Development Work Group
 - Providing input to development of aquatic and riparian core indicators, information needs, and measures.
- Oregon Dept. of Agriculture/Oregon Cattlemen’s Water Quality Coordination, OR
 - Participating in and contributing to regional meetings and workshops addressing water quality standards, measures and best management practices for livestock grazing.
- Rangelands Article – The Interagency Creeks and Communities Strategy: Creating Healthy Streams and Wetlands by Bringing People Together
 - Special issue developed from a symposium titled ‘Agency Accomplishments – Making a Difference on the Ground.’ at the 2011 Society for Range Management Meeting. NRST contributed an article published in August 2012, featuring a number of the participant’s efforts.
- Women as Collaborative Leaders on U.S. Rangelands
 - A 2013 SRM annual meeting symposium titled ‘Women as Change Agents on World Rangelands’ will include a panel currently being organized by the NRST featuring notable women from the ranching community of four western states who will add a range of experience and perspective to this program.
- Escalante River Restoration Workshop - UT
 - In cooperation with the Utah State Team, BLM UTSO, Kanab Field Office and the Escalante River Restoration Partnership, the NRST helped plan and present a workshop focused on restoration and management relative to tamarisk and Russian olive control/removal, treatment options, stream function, livestock grazing, wildlife, and monitoring.
- Bear Creek Cross-Section Re-Survey - OR
 - Cross-sections of Bear Creek (Prineville District BLM) at three locations were re-surveyed using a total station to gather information that will be added to over 30 years of data for this stream. Current data will be used to provide a comparison of change from previous year’s data.
- Owyhee Initiative Science Guides - ID
 - The NRST is co-authoring a Riparian Use Extension Bulletin as part of a series of educational reference bulletins designed to summarize scientific information relevant to land management in the Great Basin for use in decision making and evaluation.

Review and Advice – National Riparian Service Team

- Forest Service Groundwater Protocols
- Draft Riparian Ecological Site Descriptions
- Apache-Sitgreaves NF Thresholds Paper (restocking after fire)
- Forest Service National BMP's for Water Quality – Range
- Keigly Browse Evaluation – Guide for Tall Shrubs and Trees
- Career Technical Education Proposal – request for Title III funding
- Winema National Forest Travel Management Planning Meeting – agenda and facilitation
- SRM Applied Science Task Force inquiry
- Draft BLM Riparian Program strategy outline
- Gooseberry Allotment Denial of Summary Judgment
- Riparian Geomorphic Surfaces - reference product concept proposal
- PFC and MIM presentation for an education seminar
- Ecology and Society Journal Article Review
- Sevier River Assessment Report
- Use of Science in BLM/NLCS
- Alder Creek Restoration Design
- Ephemeral Channel Assessment, v.5 TR-1734-6 Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health
- Wallowa-Whitman NF riparian grazing management guidance

TRAINING AND WORKSHOPS

Training and Workshops – National Riparian Service Team

- PFC for Resource Professionals
 - Arizona – Conducted in Sierra Vista as part of the team's assistance provided to the SPRNCA with interagency participation from nearby units
 - California – Interagency courses in Barstow and Susanville sponsored by CA BLM State Office
 - Oregon – A session was conducted in John Day as part of the team's assistance to the Malheur NF
- Multiple Indicator Monitoring (MIM) Interagency Training
 - Wyoming – Four-day course sponsored by BLM WYSO at Worland
 - Idaho – Four-day course sponsored by the Salmon-Challis NF at Salmon
 - Montana – Three-day course sponsored by BLM MTSO at Dillon followed by two days of coaching at Missoula Field Office
 - Oregon – Four-day course sponsored by Burns District BLM at Burns
 - Idaho – MIM data collection for updating the training module on data management
 - Technical support to BLM and Forest Service field units regarding data management
- Grazing Management for Riparian-Wetland Areas
 - Washington - Conducted four workshops sponsored by WA State University under a grant from the Western Center for Risk Management, with a focus on water quality risk management and livestock grazing management (Colfax, Ellensburg, Mt. Vernon, White Salmon)
 - Texas - Conducted two workshops sponsored by the NRCS and the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (Decatur, San Angelo)
 - Colorado – Conducted a workshop sponsored by the Dolores River Partnership focusing on restoration and management of systems altered due to invasive species (Gateway)
 - Oregon – Assisted OSU Extension in conducting workshops for ranchers covering concepts and techniques for setting objectives and monitoring sponsored by the Crook County Stock Growers

- Consensus Institute – No modules were held in 2012.
- Lentic PFC Training - OR
 - The NRST assisted the OR Riparian Team in conducting interagency lentic PFC training sponsored and hosted by the Burns District BLM.

CREATE AWARENESS, UNDERSTANDING, AND INTEREST

Products for Outreach and Strategy Implementation

NRST/Creeks and Communities Website
 Creeks and Communities Network Directory
 Full Stream Ahead Quarterly Newsletter
 Place-based Problem Solving Case Studies
 Creeks and Communities Handouts and PowerPoint Presentations

Briefings, Meetings, Presentations, Key Contacts – National Riparian Service Team

- NRST/WO BLM-FS Steering Committee Meeting
- BLM Director and Staff Briefings/Presentations
- DOI Collaborative Action & Dispute Resolution Staff
- DOI Office of Policy Analysis Staff
- BLM National Landscape Conservation System Staff Meeting
- FS Deputy Chief for National Forest Systems Briefing
- FS Range Directors Meeting
- Oregon Cattlemen’s Association Annual Meeting – Public Lands Roundtable
- WA Department of Ecology Meeting
- OR Department of Agriculture Meetings

Requests for Information/Referrals – National Riparian Service Team

Summary – In addition to work listed above, the NRST responded to approximately 40 requests for information, advice, or assistance from a variety of sources, both national and international. Inquiries included questions about the Creeks and Communities approach as well as riparian assessment, monitoring, restoration, adaptive management, and further information sources. More than 15 referrals were made to help people find the assistance and information they needed.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Work Planning, Operations and Coordination

NRST Coordination Calls and Work Planning Meetings
 Creeks and Communities Network Coordination and Support
 BLM WO-220 and FS Rangelands Conference Calls, Work Plans, Budget and Staffing Coordination
 BLM/FS Interagency Agreement for Transfer of Funds Process
 ID/IQ Contract for Creeks and Communities Administration and Tracking

BLM Riparian, Range and Fisheries Program Conference Calls
BLM and FS Fish, Wildlife, Watershed, Soils Program Coordination
BLM National Landscape Conservation System Coordination
BLM and FS Partnership Office Program Coordination
BLM Collaboration and ADR Program Coordination
BLM National Operations Center Planning and Coordination
BLM National Training Center Planning and Coordination
DOI Partnership Office
DOI Office of Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution
NRCS WO Rangelands and West National Technical Support Center Coordination
Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative

Program Evaluation

A Joint Venture Agreement was entered into with Oregon State University as principle investigator for a second OMB approved program evaluation. The primary focus of this evaluation was to ascertain the effectiveness of the changes implemented since the first evaluation and subsequent revision of the Creeks and Communities strategic plan, in 2002. The OMB approval package was submitted and approved in 2010; the evaluation survey design and interview questions were finalized, and case studies determined. Interviews, case study development and data analysis occurred during 2010 and 2011, and the final evaluation report was completed in 2012. The results of the evaluation coupled with the experiences and insights gained through strategy implementation will inform the 2013 revision of the Creeks and Communities strategic plan.

Strategic Planning

The last revision of the Creeks and Communities strategic plan occurred in 2002 and with the completion of the program evaluation mentioned above, the NRST has initiated another plan revision. In 2012, a strategic planning meeting was held to review and revise a draft plan outline, and to determine a revision process and timeline for completion. In 2013, objectives, strategies and actions will be more fully developed and the NRST will seek assistance from network members in re-examining and re-defining the organization and roles/responsibilities of the Creeks and Communities Network prior to finalizing the revised strategy.

Leveraging Resources

Over half of the team's activities were accomplished through leveraging the NRST operating budget with some funding contribution from other sources.

Reporting

FY2012 Creeks & Communities Network Accomplishment Report
FY2012 Periodic NRST Updates
FY2012 BLM Annual OMB-CEQ ECR Report: Creeks & Communities Activities

State Riparian Team Activities

ARIZONA

- Assisted NRST with Multiple Indicator Monitoring training and field application sponsored by the Ranching Heritage Alliance in Springerville, Arizona and with PFC for Professionals in Barstow, CA.

CALIFORNIA

- Sponsored two interagency PFC for Resource Professionals training sessions (Barstow and Susanville).

CANADA

- Continuing with domestic and international efforts that incorporate the concepts of PFC into projects addressing the water/energy nexus in sustainable development with examples from the U.S. and Canada.
- Continuing with efforts to foster interest in the Creeks and Communities/Riparian Service Team/Network concepts and model in British Columbia, working with Provincial government and non-governmental organizations and youth education.

COLORADO

- Conducted PFC workshops in Denver and Steamboat Springs; each with 27 participants. Participated in the NRST riparian grazing course in Gateway.

IDAHO

- Conducted lentic PFC at Boise District BLM with an emphasis on correctly distinguishing between lentic and lotic sites. Conducted an interagency MIM training course in Bondurant, WY servicing personnel from the Idaho Falls District BLM, Caribou-Targhee NF, and the Bridger-Teton NF. Assisted NRST with the grazing course in Gateway, CO and with PFC for Professionals in Susanville, CA

MONTANA

- Sponsored interagency MIM training in Butte and MIM coaching for Missoula BLM Field Office personnel.

NEVADA

- Conducted PFC training in Pioche, Battle Mountain, Sparks and Gerlach and two PFC workshops for the Washoe Tribe.
- Participated with the NRST at a meeting with leadership and staff of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest to discuss the Forest's rangeland NEPA decision space, use of their monitoring matrix, and further NRST and State Team involvement.
- Included Creeks and Communities in UNR course on Range and Forest Policy and Administration, and MIM and PFC in course on Forest and Range measurements.
- Introduced PFC at the Nevada Youth Range Camp sponsored by University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, Nevada Section SRM, and Nevada Wildlife Federation.
- Worked with NRCS and landowners to address functionality issues on the South Fork Humboldt River.
- Spoke at the National Water Quality Conference in Portland, OR.
- Assisted the NRST with instruction of PFC for Professionals in Susanville, CA.
- Addressed riparian monitoring at the Society for Range Management High School Youth Forum Workshop at the annual meeting in Spokane, WA
- Finalized an evaluation assessing the effectiveness of the Nevada Creeks and Communities Team and their activities implementing the Creeks and Communities strategy.

NEW MEXICO

- Conducted PFC training in Carlsbad with diverse participation including NM Fish & Game, Forest Service, BLM personnel, and non-government organizations (NGOs) and private sector representation.

OREGON

- Conducted interagency lentic PFC training with NRST sponsored by Burns District BLM.

TEXAS

- Riparian Workshops:
 - PFC Assessment Workshop - Montell, Nueces River Authority
 - Basic Riparian Workshop - San Antonio, Nueces River Authority
 - Basic Riparian Workshop - Guadalupe River, Texas Master Naturalists
 - Basic Riparian Workshop - Pedernales River, The Nature Conservancy
 - Basic Riparian Workshop - Jacob's Well, The Nature Conservancy
 - Basic Riparian Workshop - Fredericksburg, NRCS
 - Basic Riparian Workshop - San Angelo, NRCS
 - Basic Riparian Workshop - Victoria, Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust
 - Riparian Grazing Workshop - Decatur, GLCI and NRCS
 - Riparian Grazing Workshop - San Angelo, GLCI and NRCS
 - Basic Riparian Workshop - Westcave, Texas Parks and Wildlife
 - Basic Riparian Workshop - Pedernales River, Texas Parks and Wildlife
 - Mini Workshop – Junction - NRCS Engineers
 - Basic Riparian Workshop - Devils River, Local landowners group
 - Basic Riparian Workshop - Goliad, Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust
 - Basic Riparian Workshop - South Concho River, Texas Parks and Wildlife
- Riparian Presentations:
 - Blanco
 - Brazos River Authority
 - Texas A&M Range Class Field Trip
 - Kerr Wildlife Management Area
 - Texas Master Naturalists
 - Cibolo Nature Center
- Riparian Consultation:
 - Bullhead Creek, Real County - Private landowner
 - James River, Mason County - Private landowner
- Articles:
 - “Cows and Creeks” - *Texas Wildlife*, Texas Wildlife Association
 - “Understanding Creeks and Rivers” - *Eye on Nature*, Texas Parks and Wildlife

UTAH

- Annual planning meeting attended by team members and agency coordinators focused on riparian restoration training and improving expertise related to PFC and MIM as well as increasing team member participation in activities. The team roster and brochure were reviewed and updated; opportunities for briefings identified and a call letter finalized. Team members shared information on a number of projects to foster additional communication and coordination among agency and non-agency programs and discussed a plan for 2012 team activities.
- Submitted and awarded Challenge Cost Share proposal to assist in providing funding for Utah Riparian Team Co-Team Lead position.
- Attended Utah Partners for Conservation and Development, Watershed Restoration Initiative meetings and shared information regarding the Utah Riparian Team and associated Creeks and Communities activities.
- Presented at the May 2012 meeting of The Nature Conservancy in Salt Lake.

- Distributed the Utah Riparian Service Team brochure and did outreach and marketing during each training and service trip. Recruited two new team members – a hydrologist and range management specialist.
- Conducted MIM implementation training at Birch Creeks, near Beaver, Utah. The MIM data collected on Birch Creek is being used to evaluate the success of a riparian restoration project implemented in 2011. The Birch Creek riparian restoration project included a fuels project to remove pinyon and juniper trees within a 300 meter buffer of the riparian area to improve riparian conditions and to prevent catastrophic fire in order to protect the isolated Bonneville cutthroat population. Treatment on BLM lands occurred in 2011, implementation and effectiveness (MIM) monitoring occurred in 2012 and additional restoration plans are in development for Bear Creek (historical Bonneville cutthroat population) as more data is collected and as collaboration begins with the Forest Service.
- The Utah Riparian Service Team previously participated in an assessment of the Sevier River. An interdisciplinary team conducted assessments of stream and riparian condition in the middle and lower Sevier River watershed applying both Stream Visual Assessment Protocol Version 2 (SVAP2) and Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) assessment with the use of low-level video and high resolution aerial photography. In 2012 a Utah Riparian Team member drafted a Sevier River Assessment Report that has been distributed to team members and others for review and comment.
- Organized and hosted a Riparian Complex Ecological Sites Field Tour that included discussing and viewing riparian ecological sites in Rich County, Utah.
- Coordinated with the interagency National Riparian Service Team (NRST) and other riparian restoration specialists to assist the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument, Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) and others in learning more about the restoration of the Escalante River. The workshop focused on treatment and removal of non-native woody vegetation and restoration of native vegetation; classroom followed by field application session at Russian olive and tamarisk removal demonstration project sites on the Escalante River and tributaries; discussions included woody species invasive control plans, physical functions of river systems, Russian olive and tamarisk removal, riparian restoration management (vegetation, livestock, and wildlife) following non-native vegetation removal/treatment, non-native woody vegetation treatment alternatives, pre and post treatment monitoring, adaptive management, and integrated weed management plans. Diverse participation included UDWR, Grand Canyon Trust, Trout Unlimited, Natural Resources Conservation Service, BLM, Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands, Walton Family Foundation, Escalante River private landowners, Boulder Community Alliance, Utah Conservation Corps and Grand Staircase Escalante Partners.
- Organized and facilitated Multiple Indicator Monitoring (MIM) implementation training in Rich County, Utah. Established and collected baseline monitoring data for five new locations on private land associated with the Three Creeks allotment consolidation proposal. Utah Riparian Team Co-Team Lead will manage and summarize monitoring data. Also met in the field with representatives of Western Watersheds and Utah Wildlands Project representatives to discuss MIM implementation in Rich County.

WASHINGTON

- WSU Extension sponsored four riparian grazing workshops conducted by the NRST under a grant from the Western Center for Risk Management as part of a strategy to address water quality risk management. (Colfax, Ellensburg, Mt. Vernon, White Salmon).

WYOMING

- Worked with NRST on assistance to Pinedale BLM Field Office regarding controversy surrounding riparian assessments on the North LaBarge planning unit and a community workshop reviewing and discussion results of PFC assessments and implications for riparian grazing management.
- Sponsored interagency MIM training in Worland.