

Conservation Almanac

Trinity County Resource Conservation District

Summer 2002

Hwy 299 Shaded Fuel Break

Vol. XI No. 3

Did you notice all of the work last year along Highway 299 west of Buckhorn Summit--the crew cutting small trees and the piles of brush that were burned early this spring? That was the first phase of the Highway 299 shaded fuel break project. Now Phase II of this high priority project has begun. The project is being implemented by the Watershed Research and Training Center, partners with the RCD on this project.



Before Treatment

burning, but some chipping will take place, where this is more practical.

The first phase, a 200 foot-wide shaded fuel break on public lands, was implemented last year by the Watershed Research and Training Center for the Bureau of Land Management along 4 miles treating 80 acres. There are an additional seven miles of road and about 168 acres to address on private lands to complete this project.

Approximately 40 landowners were contacted, and nearly half have already responded favorably with the District conducting inspections on these parcels. Prior to implementing the work landowners review and approve the recommended treatment. Work has been completed on 14 parcels.

The shaded fuel break is a buffer along the highway created by removing brush, limbing and thinning trees. The material will be disposed of primarily by winter

The work you have seen this summer is funded by the State Water Resources Control Board's Prop 204. The RCD has obtained additional funding from the Sacramento Regional Foundation in order to address all interested landowners' properties along this stretch of road.

The more landowners along Highway 299 that are willing to participate in this project the more effective it will be as a fuel break. Since this is such a heavily traveled road, and the buildup of fuels is great, the risk of fire

start along this road is very high. This project has significant public support—people have been very happy about the work that has taken place so far on this critical demonstration project, which is highly visible to the public. The Trinity County Fire Safe Council intends to install signage along the highway to inform travellers about this important project.

If you are a landowner along this stretch of highway and would like more information, please call the District.

After Treatment



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Trinity River Restoration Program--Organizational Structure

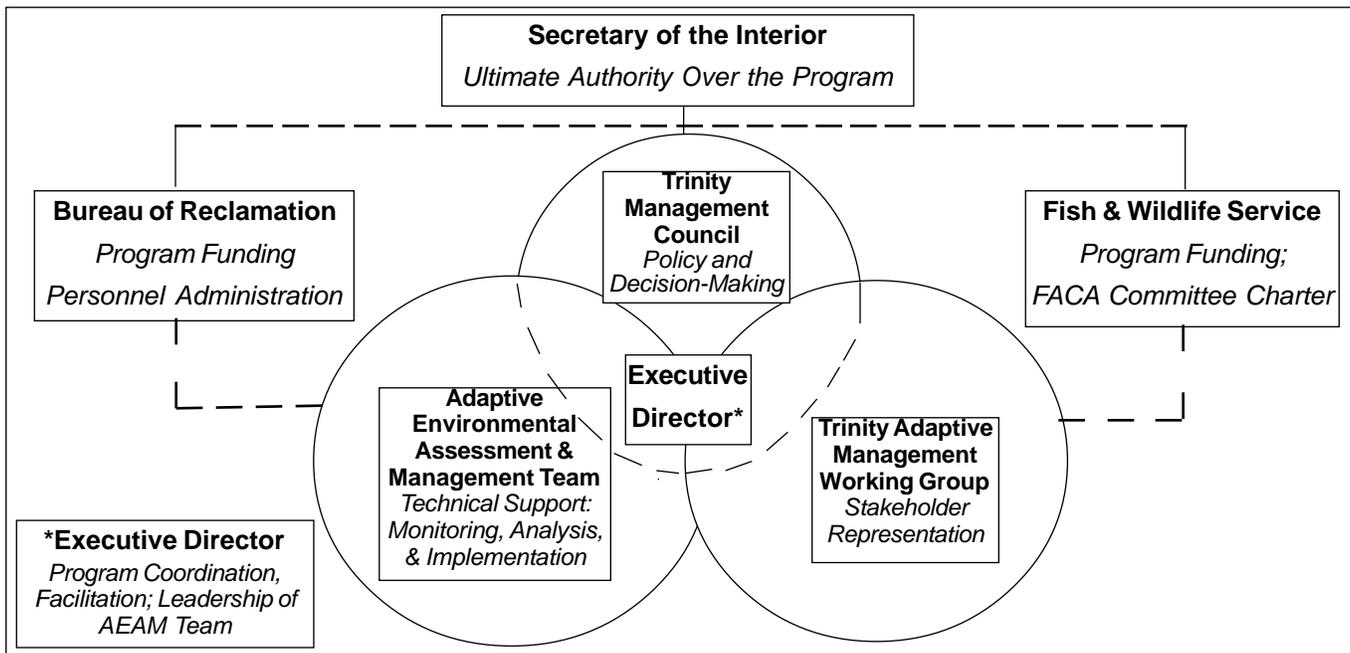
by Doug Schluesner, Trinity River Restoration Program Executive Director

The Restoration Program Organization – Picture the Trinity River Restoration Program as a set of three overlapping circles – with those three circles representing the Trinity Management Council (or TMC), the Adaptive Environmental Assessment and Management (AEAM) Team, and the Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group. The TMC was established by the original Record of Decision, and has eight members, including the Bureau of Reclamation, Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, Hoopa Valley Tribe, Yurok Tribe, the Resources Agency of California, and Trinity County. The TMC is empowered by the Secretary of the Interior to be the policy-setting and decision-making body for the overall program.



Deanna Jackson

experience with the Trinity River makes them valuable members of the team. In addition, we have hired Dr. Robert Sullivan as the Wildlife Biologist and Andreas Krause as the Hydrologist. Other positions still pending include the Modeling and Analysis Branch Chief, Fisheries Biologist, GIS Specialist, Environmental Specialist and several engineering positions.



The second part of the organization includes my immediate staff, the AEAM Team, composed of the Technical Modeling and Analysis Group and the Rehabilitation and Implementation Group. These resource specialists will have the responsibility of coordinating inter-agency activities, providing technical support to the TMC and the Working Group, implementing restoration projects, and conducting the many monitoring efforts associated with the program. We are planning to move into our new office space here in Weaverville by late August, and be fully staffed by late fall. We are now in the recruitment and hiring phase for about 12 positions. These positions have been advertised both internally (current federal government) and externally (all applicants), with announcements posted at the Job Link office and at other federal agencies. I have filled four of the positions so far. Some of you may know them from their past involvement with the program. Ed Solbos is our Implementation Group Leader, and Deanna Jackson is our Secretary and Administrative Assistant. Their past

The third overlapping circle is the Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group. Expressly identified in the Record of Decision as the way stakeholders could formally participate in the program, the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) charter was signed by the Secretary of the Interior in March. A decision is expected on committee membership in the near future. The nominations reflected the widespread interest in the Trinity River Restoration Program, including: river outfitters and guides, Trinity Lake marinas and resorts, small businesses and economic development in the Trinity River basin, Central Valley water users, trout and salmon sport fishing groups, long term local residents, scientific interests, forest land owners and managers, whitewater rafters/kayakers, electrical power users of northern California, watershed restoration and conservation groups, gold dredgers and commercial ocean fishing operations. Although its advisory role will often be focused on policy issues, this committee will also work closely with the AEAM Team on a variety of scientific and technical issues.

Fire Safe Issues--Be Prepared!!

Weather, topography and fuel are the three components that affect the likelihood of a fire starting, the speed and direction at which the wildfire will travel, the intensity at which a wildfire burns, and the ability to control and extinguish a wildfire. Although weather and topography can not be changed, the fuels (or vegetation) can often be modified. Many of the opportunities to reduce the threat of wildfire exist in proper management and manipulation of wildland vegetation.

With the huge risk of wildfire in Trinity County and the recent fires we have experienced, many residents are asking, "How do I change the vegetation on my property to reduce the threat of wildfire?" The objective of defensible space is to reduce the wildfire threat to a home by changing the characteristics of the adjacent vegetation. Defensible space practices include:

- Increasing the moisture content of vegetation
- Decreasing the amount of flammable vegetation
- Shortening plant height
- Altering the arrangement of plants

This is accomplished through the "Three R's of Defensible Space."

Removal--This technique involves the elimination of entire plants, particularly trees and shrubs from the site.

Reduction--The removal of plant parts, such as branches or leaves, constitute reduction.

Replacement--substituting less flammable plants for more hazardous vegetation.

Could your house survive a wildfire?

A dramatic question, but one we need to consider when living in an environment where wildfire is a common occurrence. Firescaping is a landscape design that reduces house and property vulnerability to wildfire. The goal is to develop a landscape with a design and choice of plants that offers the best fire protection and enhances the property. The ideal is to surround the house with things that

are less likely to burn. It is imperative when building homes in wildfire-prone areas like Trinity County that fire safety be a major factor in landscape design. Through proper selection, placement and maintenance, we can diminish the possibility of ignition, lower fire intensity, and reduce how quickly a fire spreads, increasing a home's survivability.

One of the outcomes of the Trinity County Fire Safe Council's strategic fire planning process has been to identify those areas in the county that are at **extreme** risk of fire. The following areas have been identified. They are at risk due to lack of defensible space treatments around properties, lack of safe escape routes, narrow roads, fuel build up along roads and other hazardous conditions. If you live in one of these areas it would be a good idea to look into ways to make your home and community more fire safe. Contact your local fire department, CDF office, or the Trinity County RCD for ways to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire for your home and in your neighborhood.

DOWN RIVER AREA

- Suzy-Q

MID TRINITY AREA

- Bear Creek (Weaverville)
- East Branch (Weaverville)
- Timber Ridge (Weaverville)
- Red Hill Road (Junction City)
- Ohio Hill (Lewiston)

NORTH LAKE AREA

- Lake Forest / Long Canyon (Covington Mill)
- Coffee Creek / Coffee Creek Road
- Trinity Center

SOUTH FORK AREA

- Hyampom Fire / North Side (Hayfork)
- Post Mountain Subdivision
- Camp Trinity (Hyampom)

SOUTH COUNTY AREA

- Blue Rock Road (Kettenpom)
- Ruth Lake Corridor to Wild Mad Rd
- Mc Cee Subdivision (Red Mountain)

Frequently Asked Questions: Trinity River Fisheries Restoration Program

Q: We've seen a large increase in the number of returning fish in 2000 and 2001. Do we really need the higher flows and mechanical restoration?

A: Chinook salmon have a three-to-five year life span and return to rivers to spawn in their final year. Because of this, the chinook population in any year reflects the river conditions three-to-five years earlier (as well as ocean conditions). 1997 and 1998 were wet years, contributing to great conditions for egg and juvenile salmon survival. That is why we are having a great year in 2001. Juvenile fish returning to the ocean this year will likely be much lower, reflecting the drought conditions in 2001. The old flow schedule was equivalent to an extended 38-year drought and was largely responsible for the drastic drop in fish populations. The restoration program is needed to increase those numbers and provide a long-term, more stable environment for fish.

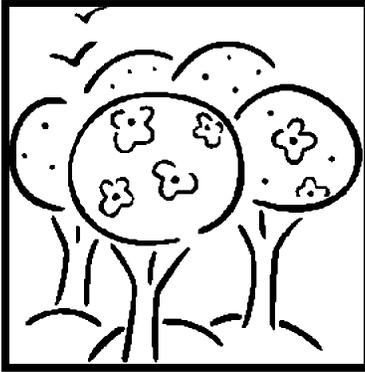
Q: Is my land targeted for restoration? What if I don't want restoration on my land?

A: No landowner will be forced to allow restoration on his/her land. The more sites that are restored, however, the higher the likelihood of increased salmon and steelhead numbers on the Trinity River. The US Bureau of Reclamation will soon be contacting landowners whose property contains a potential restoration project, for permission to restore the river on their property.

Q: Why don't you dredge the sediment-filled pools as long as you're working on the river? Can't dredging substitute for water in maintaining the deep pools?

A: The use of dredging instead of water to maintain a healthy river system is untested. Dredging would also require a perpetual expenditure of funds. The scientific study on which the ROD is based indicated that higher flows are indispensable in maintaining a healthy river. Dredging, like many other management options, may be investigated in the future in the Adaptive Management program.

Kids Page--Trees and Treats



We all need trees to live. Trees help people and animals in many ways. Trees provide shade, keep the air clean by trapping dust, and their roots help to keep our rivers clean by holding the soil in place!

An amazing amount of food is produced by trees! Humans are able to eat many tree parts depending on the type of tree. We can eat tree fruits, nuts, sap, roots, shoots, and sometimes even the tree bark! The following word find has many different kinds of foods provided by trees. It is your job to find them all. If you want help, there is a word list below and the answer to this puzzle is found on page 5.

W U K P B O P L J N B V N U T M E G U I O
 J Y G B S R Y U G E Y V U P P M N U I S X
 U L B V R A L M O N D O J M U R E S A V C
 F I G S R N A I L K C E A M O L I V E S E
 J M Y I L G A P R I C O T F P M K I E S C
 I E K J R E A C F T O B I W P O L B V C H
 O S Y H R F E C S A C L M G E D E W X Z E
 U N G T R E C S E V O L C I C K M N P V R
 U Y H B R E M P R U N E S Q A A O I E M R
 O K D N F R E W N B U Y H F N D N X A O I
 M M A P P L E U Y W T P M U S L O U C N E
 P R T M A P L E S Y R U P P R E D A H Y S
 O I E G V C D R F Z S T U N L A W E E B W

WORD LIST



ALMOND
 APPLE
 APRICOT
 CHERRIES
 CLOVES
 COCONUT
 DATE
 FIGS
 LEMON
 LIMES
 MAPLE SYRUP
 NUTMEG
 OLIVES
 ORANGE
 PEACH
 PECANS
 PRUNES
 WALNUTS

Easy & Fun Tree Treasure Treat Recipe! (makes 3 dozen balls)



- 1 cup dried apricots
- 1 cup dried, pitted prunes
- 1 small package shredded coconut
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 cup dried figs
- 2/3 cup almonds
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves

Grind apricots, figs, prunes, and almonds together into tiny bits in a food grinder or food processor. Stir in the spices. Mold the mixture into little balls and then roll the balls in the shredded coconut.

Water Conservation Tips--Some Homeowner Tips

Nothing is more basic to all life than water, and this time each summer many of our conversations center around the availability of water for use in our homes. We see the flows in many streams around Trinity County drop to a trickle. We worry about our wells going dry. We know that we simply cannot live without water. But did you know that landscaping around our homes accounts for 20 to 50 percent of residential water use?

It takes about 27,000 gallons of water to irrigate one acre of lawn in California every summer. How much IS 27,000 gallons of water:

- ◆ It is equal to 216,000 eight-ounce servings of nice cool, refreshing water.
- ◆ Enough water to make 27,000 gallons of iced tea!
- ◆ A 15 gallons per minute pump would have to run for 30 hours to give you that 27,000 gallons of water.
- ◆ One person could take a 10-minute shower every day for about 3 years using any showerhead that has been on the market since 1994.

So doesn't it make sense (actually dollars and cents) to do what we can to save water by reducing the amount that we use outside of the house every summer?

Here are some simple ways that you can cut down on your outside water uses.

- ◆ Water your lawn before 8 A.M. or after 6 P.M to avoid the heat of the day when more water evaporates.
- ◆ Avoid watering on windy days. The wind increases evaporation & reduces the amount of water that actually gets to the roots of your lawn or plants.

- ◆ Water in several short sessions rather than one long one. For example, three 10-minute sessions spaced 30 minutes apart will allow your lawn to better absorb moisture than one 30-minute session.



- ◆ Only water when your lawn is thirsty. Over watering promotes shallow roots and makes your lawn less hardy. If you walk across your lawn and you leave footprints, its time to water.
- ◆ Maintain a lawn height of 2 ½ to 3 inches to help protect roots from heat stress and reduce evaporation of moisture.

- ◆ Avoid planting turf in areas that are difficult to irrigate properly, such as very steep slopes and isolated strips next to driveways or sidewalks.

- ◆ Mulch around plants, bushes and trees to help keep the soils moist.
- ◆ Add new plants in the spring or fall when the plants will need less water to become established.
- ◆ Plan your landscaping to put plants with similar watering needs in the same planting area and match plants to the conditions of the planting area such as sunny, shady, dry or damp.
- ◆ Consider installing more efficient watering systems, like drip irrigation, that deliver the water only to the plants not the sidewalk, driveway or nearby street.
- ◆ If you have an automatic irrigation system check for leaks
- ◆ Avoid sprinklers that spray a fine mist, which increase evaporation.

These any many other helpful hints can be found at **“WaterWiser – The Water Efficiency Clearinghouse”** of the American Water Works Association at www.waterwiser.org.

Answer Key for Word Game on Page 4

W	U	K	P	B	O	P	L	J	N	B	V	N	U	T	M	E	G	U	I	O
J	Y	G	B	S	R	Y	U	G	E	Y	V	U	P	P	M	N	U	I	S	X
U	L	B	V	R	A	L	M	O	N	D	O	J	M	U	R	E	S	A	V	C
F	G	S	R	N	A	I	L	K	C	E	A	M	O	L	I	V	E	S	E	
J	M	Y	I	L	G	A	P	R	I	C	O	T	F	P	M	K	I	E	S	C
I	E	K	J	R	E	A	C	F	T	O	B	I	W	F	O	L	B	V	C	H
O	S	Y	H	R	F	E	C	S	A	C	L	M	G	E	D	E	W	X	Z	E
U	N	G	T	R	E	C	S	E	V	O	L	C	I	C	K	M	N	P	V	R
U	Y	H	B	R	E	M	P	R	U	N	E	S	Q	A	A	O	I	E	M	R
O	K	D	N	F	R	E	W	N	B	U	Y	H	F	N	D	N	X	A	O	I
M	M	A	P	P	L	E	U	Y	W	T	P	M	U	S	L	O	U	C	N	E
P	R	T	M	A	P	L	E	S	Y	R	U	P	P	R	E	D	A	H	Y	S
O	I	E	G	V	C	D	R	F	Z	S	T	U	N	L	A	W	E	E	B	W

Trinity County Salmon Festival & 5K Fun Run/Walk

The fourth annual Trinity County Salmon Festival & 5K Fun Run/Walk will be held this year on October 5th at Lee Fong Park to celebrate the fall harvest and Chinook spawning run. There will be live music, food (including barbequed salmon), arts & crafts, resource and non-profit booths, raffles, farmer's market booths, vendor booths, and more. Activities for kids include hayrides, a giant salmon storytelling tent where kids dress up as the characters, fish printing, arts & crafts, and lots more. Last year, nearly 900 people attended this fun-filled and free event.

The day will start off with the 5K Fun Run/Walk at 10am. The easy loop course starts and ends at the Lee Fong Park. Refreshments will be provided for all runners/walkers and top finishers will win prizes. If you would like to register for the Run/Walk, contact Joel Silverman at the TCRCD 623-6004. If you dress up as a salmon, you might even win a special prize for best salmon costume.



Salmon Tent and Costumes

The entire event goes until 5pm. If you would like more information about, or would like to volunteer for, the Salmon Festival, contact the TCRCD at 623-6004 or wsp@tcrd.net the TCAC at tcarts@tcarts.com or 623-2760.

See you there!

Noxious Weeds to Watch in Trinity County

Non-Native Annual Grasses

A complex of non-native, annual grasses has invaded grasslands in California, which may have been previously occupied by native, perennial and annual grasses, as well as forbs. Conversion to non-native annual vegetation was so fast, so extensive and so complete that the original extent and species composition of native grasslands is unknown. Some common annuals in Trinity County are cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), hedgehog dogtail (*Cynosurus echinatus*) and medusa-head (*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*). Annual grasses threaten areas with sparse native plant communities such as deserts and bare serpentine soils, as well as more complex communities degraded by overgrazing, fire, or cultivation.

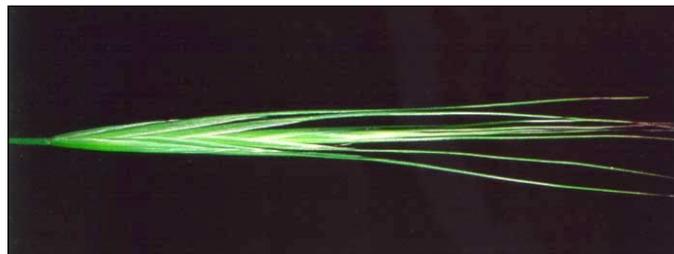
Native bunchgrasses have large, well-developed root systems that effectively hold the soil in place. Non-native annuals do not need to establish extensive root systems, because they complete their life cycle in one year and produce seed. In fact, seedling emergence and growth of medusa-head is favored by soil movement, making the success of this species linked with erosion and disturbance.



Hedgehog dogtail

Many of these non-native grasses also increase fire frequency, because of their fast production of plant material. In some areas the interval between fires becomes so short that native perennial grasses and shrubs can not recover.

Minimizing disturbance to intact native grass stands is extremely important, as well as seeding disturbed areas with native grass seed in order to establish a healthy plant community beneficial to wildlife and, in grazed areas, forage for livestock. Healthy stands of native grasses and forbs also tend to resist invasion by non-native herbaceous plants, such as yellow star thistle and diffuse knapweed.



Ripgut

District Manager's Corner--Pat Frost

Meeting the District's conservation mission requires building and maintaining many links between individuals and organizations that share in our common goals of protecting, managing, conserving and restoring natural resources in Trinity County. The *Conservation Almanac* is our way of sharing some of these partnerships with all of you.

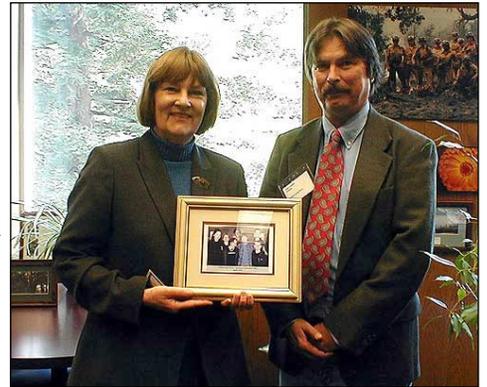
In this issue you can read the second part of an article by Doug Schleusner, the Executive Director of the Trinity River Restoration Program – an excellent example of many different agencies working towards the common goal of restoring the Trinity River and its fisheries. The District links together many individual property owners in the Highway 299 Shaded Fuel Break project (front page) to help reduce the risks of wildfire on their property and by doing so reducing the wildfire risks for all of us in Trinity County.

Sometimes the District simply provides an open door or an idea that a landowner can use to improve conservation practices on his or her property. That's the case with Elmer Barnes, the Ranch Manager of Hell'er Highwater Ranch in Zenia. Elmer



attended a Ranch Water Quality workshop that the District helped to organize in 1999. That introduced Elmer to some different conservation practices and to Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) administered by NRCS. Recently Elmer stopped by to tell me how pleased he is with the design that the Jim Spear and his staff prepared to correct gully erosion that was destroying valuable pasture, and of his commitment to start the next phase of his project.

ongoing restoration efforts throughout the county and to write grant proposals that have brought \$1,885,611 into Trinity County since March 2001. For a look at what the watershed coordinator grant program accomplished around the state go to www.consrv.ca.gov.



President of California Envirothon, Greg Lowden presents picture to Virginia Strom-Martin

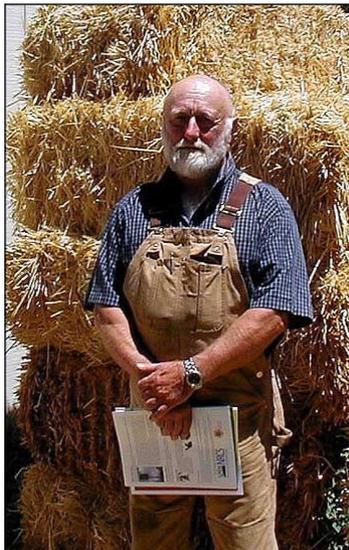


RCD Resolution given to Dick Dickerson to thank him for his support

Building and maintaining ties to our elected officials is another critical part of the conservation partnership equation. Assemblyman Dick Dickerson has shared many of the District's concerns over conservation issues and been one of our strongest supporters in Sacramento, including the Watershed Coordinator Grant Program. This grant program provided the District with funds to coordinate landowner and

Assemblywoman Virginia Strom-Martin, a former schoolteacher from Sonoma County, led many efforts that linked natural resources management and education together. This year those interests led her to participate in the California Envirothon as one of the Final Judges.

You can be one of our conservation partners, too. If you have a project idea, need technical assistance or simply need a speaker, just give us a call.



Elmer Barnes

Trinity County RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Established 1956

District Board Meetings

Third Wednesday
5:30 PM
Open to the Public

TCRCD Office

Number One
Horseshoe Lane
PO Box 1450
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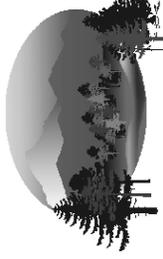
The Trinity County Resource Conservation District (TCRCD) is a special district set up under state law to carry out conservation work and education. It is a non-profit, self-governing district whose board of directors volunteer their time.

The TCRCD Vision

TCRCD envisions a balance between utilization and conservation of our natural resources. Through economic diversity and ecosystem management our communities will achieve and sustain a quality environment and healthy economy.

The TCRCD Mission
To assist people in protecting, managing, conserving and restoring the natural resources of Trinity County through information, education, technical assistance and project implementation programs.

Trinity County Resource Conservation District
P.O. Box 1450
Weaverville, CA 96093



**TCRCD Board of Directors are
Doug Nowacki, Mike Rourke, Rose Owens, Patrick Truman,
and Greg Lowden.**

The RCD is landowners assisting landowners with conservation work. The RCD can guide the private landowner in dealings with state and federal agencies. The RCD provides information on the following topics:

- Forest Land Productivity
- Erosion/Sediment Control
- Watershed Improvement
- Wildlife Habitat
- Water Supply and Storage
- Soil and Plant Types
- Educational Programs



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