



## **BLM Projects Improve River Access and Local Economy**

**P**ublic access to the Trinity River has been vastly improved at several Bureau of Land Management recreation sites, thanks to work done this past season under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that provided work for several area contractors and their employees.

Trinity County Resource Conservation District oversaw major improvements at several BLM recreation sites along Trinity River. The projects were designed to increase and enhance public recreation opportunities, plus improve habitat for wildlife while reducing sediment delivery into the river.

The majority of the work was funded with federal economic stimulus monies from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) that had been allocated to BLM by the Obama administration to help local economies. BLM's Redding office provided a list of projects the agency wanted to accomplish along the river, and turned to the TCRCDD to get the work done with area contractors. These new projects came on the heels of major work done earlier in the season that upgraded Steel Bridge Campground and improved the access road to Steiner Flat Campground in Douglas City.

Recent work included installation of two new boat ramps at Steel Bridge Day-Use Area. This involved excavation then placement of woven-steel gabion baskets that were filled with large cobble. A layer of small angular rocks was added to the surface of the new ramps to improve traction for vehicles towing boat trailers.

Elsewhere, gabion baskets were added to the boat ramp at BLM's Rush Creek launch site near Lewiston to give better public access there. BLM's boat launches at Bagdad, near Helena, and at Bucktail, off Browns Mountain Road near Lewiston, were both paved to give better access and to reduce sediment delivery



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## **BLM Projects** *(Continued from page 1)*

to the river. The District also developed a handicap parking area and paved the road to the raft put-in at Bagdad, then installed two new large concrete picnic tables with attached benches.

In other work for BLM, a spillway fortification was constructed at Union Hill Pond which incorporated a new small boat launch made of cobble-filled gabion baskets. The District used BLM's ARRA funding to lay down new asphalt overlay on the entire road system at Douglas City campground plus pave twenty-five campsite parking pads.

BLM projects that were partially funded with ARRA monies included chip-sealing Junction City Campground road system, plus road improvements on Phillips Gulch Road, just off Trinity Dam Boulevard near Lewiston which corrected drainage problems and provided rock surfacing to reduce erosion.

In addition to the two at Bagdad, three concrete picnic tables were installed at Steel Bridge Campground and Day Use Facility plus another at Union Hill Pond, all in places conducive to pleasant picnicking with family and friends.

In all, from design to implementation, these BLM projects created work for approximately thirty-one individuals and infused our local and area economy with nearly \$600,000.

Union Hill Pond, Junction City and Douglas City campgrounds are currently closed for the winter season, so be sure to visit them next season to enjoy the changes.



District crewmembers Mike Gadbury and Arrow Harrington make Boat Launch Improvements at Steel Bridge Day-Use Area.



BLM projects to improve recreation access and protect habitat along Trinity River included paving improvements at Bucktail and Bagdad boat launches.

# Young Family Ranch Happenings

This has been another great year at the Young Family Ranch in Weaverville. A lot of fun events were hosted there, and the property itself underwent some major improvements to make it more accessible and usable for community workshops, meetings and special events. Much of the funding for improvements came in grants from two different sources, and a couple of experienced community volunteers who were instrumental to getting the hard work done right.

A grant from the McConnell Fund (via Shasta Regional Community Foundation) was coupled with a safety grant from University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources Cooperative Extension to fund materials for a new concrete handicap parking space and loading space at the front of the Ranch. From there a wide new sidewalk slopes gently up to the classroom-workshop in the lower level of the ranch house. On the north side of the house a new concrete ramp with steel safety rails leads to the upper level, as do new concrete steps.

The Ranch house also received new energy-efficient windows and a new swamp cooler to make the interior comfortable throughout the year. A new water well was drilled and water storage tanks installed to provide irrigation water during the dry season.

The Young Family Ranch spans 3.2 acres of vegetable gardens, pasture and lawns along Oregon Street, just a little beyond Joss House State Park. It is a community trust and agricultural property. Brothers Bob and Allen Young, before they passed away in 2000 and 2001, made clear their desire that the gardens and fields of their lifelong home be maintained and used for the benefit of the community in ways that tie gardening and agriculture to Weaverville.

The Ranch is administered by a volunteer board of five trustees: Brenda Houston, Duane Heryford, Richard Lorenz, Rod Plew and Bob Simmons. They strive to ensure the non-profit Young Family Ranch continues to benefit the community in ways the benefactors wanted. They have engaged TCRCDC to coordinate maintenance and uses of the Ranch and to provide programs and funding development. Trustees Plew and Heryford volunteered a good amount of their time, energy and skills to completing several of the Ranch's recent improvements. Among their projects, Heryford oversaw all the concrete work and Plew plumbed the new water well.

The Ranch serves a variety of community-based activities and uses, including Summer Day Camp & Field Trips Program, 4-H Youth Development Program, University of California Cooperative Extension workshops on gardening, nutrition and small-scale agriculture; Community Plant & Seed Exchange; the summer series of evening activities and films for families; Health & Human Services Department staff trainings, and meetings by the likes of gardening clubs, trail committees, Trinity Kids CAN, the Rural Creative ReUse Project, Ascend Wilderness Experience, and similar organizations.

This year the Ranch hosted a summer series of evening family events that provided gardening workshops, fun kids activities, plenty of refreshments and movies after sun-down on an outdoor screen. The series was sponsored by a grant from the Trinity County Child Abuse Prevention Council with workshops by the University of California Cooperative Extension.

If your organization would like to use the Young Family Ranch for an activity that fits into the Ranch's mission, please contact Mark Dowdle at the District.



# Scenes from the 2010 Salmon Festival





## 2010 Environmental Science Education Camp

Sixth-grade students from Weaverville Elementary School spent three days this autumn at the scenic Bar 717 Ranch (aka Camp Trinity) near Hyampom, receiving hands-on instruction in the natural sciences focused on conservation and ecology. The sprawling ranch, which straddles the lower reaches of Hayfork Creek and abuts national forestland, has proven to be an ideal place for children to experience and learn about nature. The ranch provides separate, rustic, lodging facilities for boys and girls and has a large sheltered communal dining area with a welcoming fireplace where the very best sort of home-cooked meals (and desserts) are served in a family-style setting.



This was the 12th annual Environmental Science Education camp hosted at Bar 717. For three days, thirty-seven students, along with their teachers and parent-chaperones, were divided into groups that rotated through learning stations on forestry, water-quality monitoring, soil science, measuring stream flow, and macro-invertebrates as bio-indicators of stream health. Structured evening activities included bingo, making smores at the large fireplace and a nature adventure movie.

As with years past, the event provided hands-on environmental science learning led by local natural resources professionals from a variety of agencies who volunteered to instruct. District Conservationist Tiffany Hayes of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) taught about soil types and demonstrated the relationship of soil characteristics to water quality. Fisheries biologist Tim Viel, also of NRCS, led students in conducting bio-assessments of Hayfork Creek by collecting macro-invertebrates (stream insects) then grouping them by their level of sensitivity to water quality. Students determined that, from the large proportion of sensitive insects collected, that stretch of Hayfork Creek was very healthy.

Tim Lovitt and Susan Erwin of the US Forest Service guided students in measuring trees, assessing canopy coverage, tree identification and in a discussion of the importance of healthy forests to the watershed and wildlife. Erica Spohn, also of US Forest Service, instructed students in the use of a compass and other devices for orientation, then provided them with a series of directional bearings designed to lead them to hidden "treasures." Watershed instructor Ginny Allen led students in taking water samples from the Bar 717 ranch pond and conducting a series of tests to measure different aspects of water quality. Trinity Alps Unified School District board member George Tkach instructed students in archery with a competitive target game (that the girls seemed to win). AmeriCorps-Watershed Stewards Project members Bo Kimball and Mandy Monroe recruited the volunteer instructors, planned group rotations then taught stream science and nature journaling.

TCRCD District Manager Pat Frost instructed students in the use of binoculars and birding guides before leading groups on bird-watching hikes on the ranch. Mark Dowdle, also of TCRCD, led students in taking measurements of Hayfork Creek so they could calculate its approximate flow rate in cubic feet per second.



Water quality monitoring with naturalist Ginny Allen



Soils science with NRCS District Conservationist Tiffany Hayes



Learning about healthy forest components and measuring trees with USFS botanist Susan Erwin



George Tkach instructing archery



NRCS biologist Tim Viel teaching about stream insects and stream health



# Barker Valley Road Culvert Upgrade

This past summer, at the request of private landowners, Trinity County RCD replaced an existing culvert on a tributary to Barker Creek in Hayfork. The road crossing serves many residents living in the area and had to be closed for most of one day for the project to be completed. A temporary crossing was installed at the request of the Hayfork Volunteer Fire Department to ensure urgent needs could be met in case of an emergency.

Coordinator Cynthia Tarwater and her crew obtained landowner permissions, necessary permits from California Department of Fish and Game, and an engineered design for the project. Funding came from the State Water Resources Control Board as a grant to reduce on-point source sediment delivery into the South Fork of the Trinity River. This stream crossing improvement was designed to prevent approximately 700 cubic yards of erosion.

Two smaller older corrugated metal pipes (CMPs) were replaced with a much larger single CMP. Four rock checks were established above the inlet to ease the gradient into the new CMP and rip-rap was placed at the inlet and outlet of the new culvert installation to prevent erosion.



General overview before and after new culvert installation at the Barker Valley Road stream crossing



Downstream view before culvert upgrade shows severe erosion. If old, undersized culverts failed, upstream stretch would suffer similar erosion.



Placing of the new culvert



Four rock "checks" were constructed upstream of inlet to ease gradient.



# New AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards

**R**oslyn Lack and Donna Rupp are the two new members of AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Project (WSP) assigned to the District from October 2010 through August 2011. During their term they will be visiting classrooms throughout Trinity County to teach about the water cycle, the salmon life cycle, and ways that students and their families can help protect and conserve their local watersheds. They will also be involved in conducting the 2011 Summer Day Camp and Field Trips program in Weaverville, plus assisting the District and other agencies with a broad range of natural resource conservation projects in the county.

Donna graduated from Portland State University (Oregon) in March 2010 with a Master's degree in Environmental Management. Her studies included wetland and riparian ecology. She is excited about sharing her newly gained knowledge with the children of Trinity County and eager to apply her newly gained knowledge doing field work.

After a career in corporate marketing communications, Donna decided to change direction and focus on her love of the land. As a child, she spent days catching tadpoles and salamanders in the San Gabriel River in southern California. "I've always loved being in and around the water, even when I was a tadpole myself," she recounted. "AmeriCorps, in general, and Watershed Stewards Project specifically, are providing me with unique opportunities to explore the natural resources field. I feel privileged to be working with Trinity County Resource Conservation District and to be part of the Weaverville community."

Donna looks forward to sharing her enthusiasm about water and natural resources with the community at large and working to improve watershed health in Trinity County. In her spare time Donna enjoys gardening, hiking, rafting, cooking and reading everything from classic literature to mysteries and cookbooks.

Roslyn obtained her Associate degree in Natural Science in 2007 from Lee College in Texas with plans to ultimately become a science teacher. She worked as a substitute teacher and assisted in academic administration before heading west with her husband and dog in 2009, taking in the splendid scenery of the southwest as they traveled.

The couple soon discovered the splendor of the pristine wilderness of the Trinity Alps and found jobs with the US Forest Service in summer 2010 as wilderness patrol staff. That work involved trekking hundreds of miles on foot, providing guidance to and helping backcountry hikers, checking wilderness permits and laboring to restore campsites and reporting on trail conditions. All the while they took considerable pleasure at being in the midst of nature's spectacle, Roslyn explains, and on several occasions she was moved to exclaim her awe in hushed tones when coming upon a truly marvelous scene in the wilderness.

As a result, she explained, her interest in her natural surroundings has grown substantially, prompting her to volunteer with AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Project as a way to increase her knowledge of nature while helping to engage others in caring for the environment. Roslyn plans to return to college and complete a Bachelors degree in Environmental Management once her term with WSP is completed. The AmeriCorps program provides tuition offsets for volunteers who complete their service. Roslyn explained she constantly gleans new knowledge about natural resources conservation from books, through training provided by WSP and from her hands-on work for the District. She is excited about her opportunity to get back into the classroom and continuing the WSP Real Science program for students here in Trinity County, with its goal of increasing awareness about the importance of healthy watersheds to the survival of salmon and other wildlife.

The mission of the AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Project is to conserve, restore, and enhance anadromous watersheds for future generations by linking education with high-quality scientific practices. The District welcomes Roslyn and Donna and supports their work towards this goal.



# Meet The 2010 TCRCD Staff



Here are (most of) the District faces behind the many projects we worked on in 2010. Personnel missing from our “family photo” include Cynthia Tarwater, Zack Blanchard, Erik Flickwir and Mark Dowdle – all hard at work that day.



Celebrating the “graduation” of our “Green Crew” is Angela Lehfeldt of the SMART Business Center in Weaverville. Back row, (l-r) are District Manager Pat Frost, Green Crew members Jeffrey McGrew, Duke Klang, Mike McNeil, Assistant D.M. Alex Cousins, and Crew Supervisor Will Welsch.

## District Manager's Corner

Changes in seasons seem a time to reflect on the goodness surrounding us, and I usually like to jot down a list of things for which I am thankful. This incredible place where we live is always at the top of my list, right alongside all the wonderful people who visit here or call Trinity County home. People are also the best thing about the County Fair and Salmon Festival, two events where I get reacquainted with old friends and make new ones, and where I get a chance to find out what's on folks' minds regarding work the District does and work it should be doing.



There are some people who have a special impact on me each year. I can't mention them all, but here are a few on my 2010 list. Our District is very fortunate to have dedicated, thoughtful and hard-working team of staff and board members. I usually focus on the depth of experience we have on our team, but today my list includes a special thank you for a great group of enthusiastic trainees who came to us through two programs. The SMART Business Center and the AmeriCorps' Watershed Stewards Project have enhanced our ability to deliver services through their job training programs. We're introducing our newest Watershed Stewards members, Donna and Roslyn, to you in this issue of the Conservation Almanac. I'd like to say thank you to Bo Kimball and Mandy Monroe, our outgoing members. They did a great job.

This past year was a very busy one. I am thankful for all of you, our constituents. We have done work of all sorts throughout the county with many of you. Simply put, it couldn't have happened without your interest in conservation and your support of the District. One person I'd like to single out for recognition helped usher in a new era for the Trinity County RCD. Phill Maus lives on his property near the Weaverville Community Forest. He came to us this year, because of the work we've been doing in the Community Forest, and asked us to be a part of his estate planning through a Life Estate. This is an exciting opportunity and partnership to promote natural resources stewardship – the first of what I hope will be many similar partnerships. Like Phil, if you appreciate the work we do, please consider the Trinity County Resource Conservation District Fund through the Humboldt Area Foundation in your community gifting or estate planning. Your tax-deductible gifts can be used to leverage other funding to accomplish even more good work on behalf of natural resources conservation in Trinity County.

*Pat Frost*

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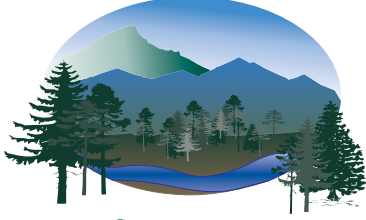
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### **District Board Meetings**

Third Wednesday  
5:30 PM  
Open to the Public

### **TCRCD Office**

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*The Trinity County Resource Conservation District (TCRCD) is a non-regulatory special district set up under state law to carry out conservation work and education. It is a not-for-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.**

**TCRCD Board of Directors are  
Mike Rourke, Rose Owens, Patrick Truman,  
Colleen O'Sullivan, 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**
- **Watershed Improvement**
- **Water Supply and Storage**
- **Educational Programs**
- **Erosion/Sediment Control**
- **Wildlife Habitat**
- **Soil and Plant Types**
- **Fuels Reduction**

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