

# Conservation Almanac

*Trinity County Resource Conservation District*

Winter 2003

Vol. XII No. 1

## Volunteer Fire Departments Begin Landowner Fire Safe Inspections

Want to know how fire safe your house is? Thanks to a grant from the Trinity County Resource Advisory Committee (RAC), you likely will have a chance to find out. The RAC is providing money from the Secure Schools and Community Self-determination Act of 2000 to support the Volunteer Fire Department Inspection Project – also known as the “Big Red Truck project”. The 16 volunteer fire departments in Trinity County will be going out to conduct fire safe inspections with their Fire Engines within the areas where they provide fire protection. Volunteer Firefighters will complete a simple inspection form that will give each landowner an idea of how safe their property is and recommendations for improving the defensibility of the property against a fire. A copy will be given to the landowner, one kept on file with the Volunteer Fire Department and one returned to the TCRC and Volunteer Fire Chiefs’ Association. At the same time, other fire safe and fuels reduction information will be given to the landowner to help them implement the recommendations.

“Having a Big Red Truck coming down your road or driveway is about the best way I know of demonstrating

the critical need for adequate access for emergency vehicles, including sufficient turnaround space, clearance, and bridge strength”, said Jesse Cox, Chairman of the Volunteer Fire Chiefs’ Association.



The idea for this project grew out of discussions between the Trinity County Fire Safe Council, the Volunteer Fire Chiefs’ Association and the RAC — all have identified forest health, reducing the amount of fuels in our forests and around residences on the forest edge as a top priority. All of us have to work together to reduce the risk of wildfires moving between the federal and private lands. The Volunteer Fire Chiefs’ Association and

Trinity County Fire Safe Council have spearheaded most of the efforts in Trinity County to develop and implement fuels reduction and forest health projects across the landscape.

The volunteer departments have been a critical link between the Fire Safe Council and the local communities. This program provides an excellent opportunity for the Volunteer Fire Departments to provide one-on-one landowner outreach and education regarding fire safety and emergency access, and

the volunteer departments receive much-needed funds to support their departments. The Volunteer Fire Departments will be paid \$25 per inspection that is completed in the wildland/urban interface zone up to a maximum of \$5,000 per Department (or 200 inspections).

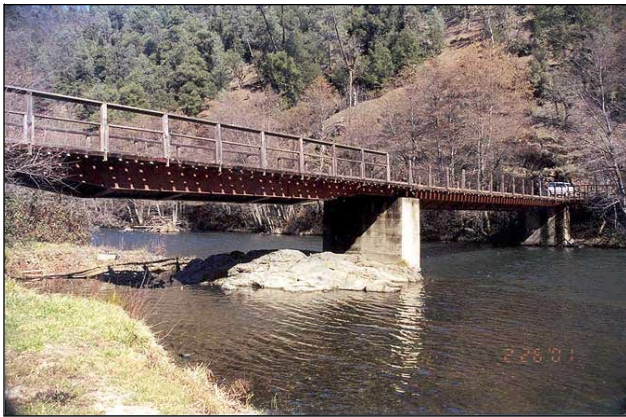
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## Trinity River Bridges Going Up

by Staff, Trinity River Restoration Program

The Trinity River Restoration Program Office, located at 1313 South Main Street in Weaverville, is charged with implementing the December 2000 Secretary of the Interior's Record of Decision (ROD) for restoration of the Trinity River and its fishery. One key provision of the ROD is the assignment of variable dam flow releases based on the amount of inflow to Trinity Reservoir that has been received during the year. In "extremely wet" years, the ROD requires Bureau of Reclamation dam releases of up to 11,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) in order to enhance and maintain fishery habitat.



**Bigger's Road**

This is a considerable increase over the maximum controlled flow release of 6,000 cfs which has been the standard operating procedure for Trinity Dam over the last 20 years. Given this flow prescription, the ROD also provides for infrastructure modifications (e.g., rebuilding or fortifying bridges) necessary to allow passage of these higher flows and provide for safe human access during these periods. Four existing bridges over the Trinity River (Salt Flat, Bucktail, Poker Bar, and the Biggers Road Bridge) are all receiving special attention to address potential problems associated with the higher flows.

Current studies indicate that the private bridges at Salt Flat, Poker Bar, and Biggers Road will need to be replaced. The existing County bridge at Bucktail can pass the higher flows, but work will be required

to raise the approach road to the Bucktail subdivision. Alternatives and preliminary proposed actions at each bridge location are being prepared. These proposals incorporate site specific designs to reduce environmental impacts of the projects while addressing private concerns. As we proceed with planning, meetings will be held with landowners from each location to incorporate their insights into the bridge designs. Recent discussions have been held with the Salt Flat homeowners association and plans are to meet with Bigger's Road Bridge residents soon.

To the extent feasible, the new bridges will meet all Federal and County guidelines for residential structures and for development within the floodplain. Due to budgetary constraints, work will be spread out over three years. Plans are to initiate construction of the Salt Flat and Bigger's Road bridges late in 2003. Construction of the new bridges and removal of the existing structures will take about one year. Replacement of the Poker Bar Bridge and the work required at Bucktail is scheduled to begin in fall of 2004, with completion in 2005.



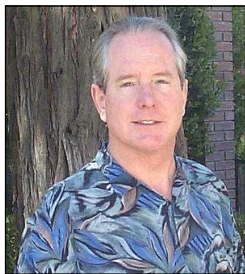
**Salt Flat Bridge**

As our bridge proposals are refined and documented, all aspects of the proposed work (and alternatives) will be described and evaluated in an environmental document which will be available in draft for public review this spring. This document will fulfill both Federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California

*continued on page 3...*

## RCD Director Elected

Trinity County RCD Director **Patrick Truman** was elected Vice-President of the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD) at its Annual Meeting and Conference, held November 13-17, 2002, in Redding.



growth from an agency with a \$3,500 annual budget, to an active District with an annual budget of over \$2M. He is a sales associate with Coldwell Banker at Trinity Alps Realty in Weaverville.

With 103 Resource Conservation Districts in California, CARCD serves its member Districts by linking federal and state resource agencies to locally led conservation throughout the State. CARCD is committed to District efforts to develop a land stewardship ethic that promotes long-term sustainability of California's rich and diverse natural resource heritage while promoting a voluntary approach to resource management.

Truman has served as a volunteer Director on the Trinity County RCD Board for 18 years, assisting in its

Truman was appointed to represent California with the National Association of Conservation Districts, after being elected as Vice-President of CARCD. At the national level, Truman will help shape policy recommendations for implementation of the 2002 Farm Bill. We congratulate Patrick on his election and appointment. All of us at the RCD applaud his dedication and commitment to resource conservation.

*...continued from page 2*

Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements. After public comments have been incorporated, a final "Bridges" environmental document will be prepared for certification of environmental compliance and project approval by the Trinity County Board of Supervisors and the Bureau of Reclamation.



**Example of Steel Truss Replacement Bridge**

For more information about this work, please contact Ed Solbos, Implementation Branch Chief, Trinity River Restoration Program, at 623-1802.

## Lewiston Trails

The Lewiston Trails Group breaks new ground with the approval of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the US Forest Service and the Resource Conservation District. The District's Board of Directors at its January meeting approved the MOU and it is expected that the document will be signed at a ceremony celebrating National Trails Day on April 12<sup>th</sup> at the new Lewiston Lake trailhead (See announcement below).

The purpose of the MOU is to allow the Lewiston Trails Group — under the guidance of the RCD and USFS — to construct and maintain the South Lakeshore, Baker Gulch, and North Lakeshore Trails. As part of this agreement, the Trails Group will learn USFS specifications for trail tread, clearing limits, trail locations and more. It will also give official recognition from both the RCD and USFS that will be useful in securing funds for the development of trails in, and around, Lewiston.

The Lewiston Trails Group was formed in 2001 and has been working towards the development of trails in the Lewiston area. The US Forest Service (USFS) has agreed to allow for the formalization of a trail along the south shore of Lewiston Lake and will assist with signage and the creation of a trailhead near Mary Smith Campground. This trailhead will be the site of a California Trails Day celebration on April 12<sup>th</sup>. The celebration highlights the importance of trails to our communities and will include refreshments, children's activities and guided hikes for all ages.

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### Put This On Your Calendar:

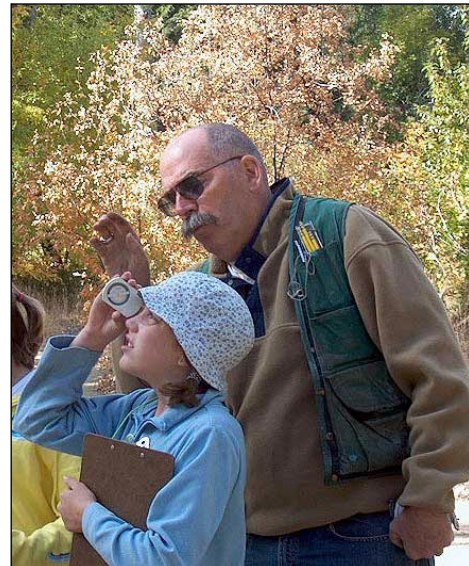
**The 2003 California Trail Day Event will be a Dedication for the new Lewiston Lake Trailhead near Mary Smith Campground on April 12th at 10 am.**

**Call the RCD at 623-6004 for more information about the Lewiston Trails Group or the California Trails Day Celebration.**

# River Day

Oct. 18, 2002

River Day at Coffee Creek Elementary School was a celebration for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Clean Water Act and National Water Monitoring Day. Students from Coffee Creek 5-8<sup>th</sup> grade class assisted at stations, led by resource professionals and AmeriCorps Volunteers. Stations included water volume/flow, dissolved oxygen, macroinvertebrates, pH/temperature/turbidity, fire suppression, forestry, and a watershed model. Approximately 60 students from Trinity County schools attended, including 6<sup>th</sup> graders from Weaverville Elementary, and classes from Burnt Ranch and Trinity Center.



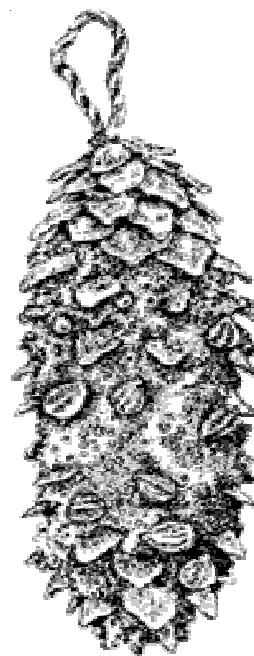
# Kid's Page

*Birds that do not migrate south for the winter may have a hard time finding enough food here in Trinity County during these months. Heavy snows and colder temperatures make insects, nuts, and seeds less available and harder to find for birds to eat. You can help the birds find food by making your own pinecone birdfeeders for your backyard.*

## Pinecone Birdfeeder

### Materials Needed:

- Large pinecone
- Peanut butter
- Cornmeal
- Shortening or lard
- Popsicle stick or butter knife
- Birdseed (millet and sunflower seeds)
- Twine



- 1. Find a pinecone that is open and large enough for birds to perch on.*
- 2. Make a mixture of peanut butter and cornmeal and shortening. (Plain peanut butter is hard for small birds to digest and gets stuck on their beaks.)*
- 3. Cover the pinecone completely with the peanut butter mixture using the popsicle stick.*
- 4. Roll the pinecone in the birdseed until the peanut butter is covered with seed.*
- 5. Cut a piece of twine or string long enough to hang the pinecone from a tree.*
- 6. Attach the twine to the top of the pinecone by tying it in a knot.*
- 7. Enjoy watching birds enjoy your treat!*

## New AmeriCorps Members Volunteer at RCD

Cassie Simmons and Kate Grossman

Meet **Cassie Simons**, our newest AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards member. Cassie joined us in February and will be working throughout the year on watershed restoration projects and environmental education.

Cassie moved to northern California a year ago, when she joined AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Project to work with the Department of Fish & Game in Ukiah. There, she performed habitat surveys and taught environmental education.

After helping at the Children's Festival last May at Lowden Park, she decided to sign up for a second year of AmeriCorps in Weaverville. Cassie is eager to work for the Resource Conservation District, she states "it will be an interesting shift from Fish & Game", and is fascinated about learning how to be part of the vital link for landowners interested in conservation.

Born and raised in the suburbs of Detroit, Michigan, Cassie attended Michigan State University in East Lansing, earning a Bachelors degree in Environmental Policy and Anthropology. During college she volunteered with Habitat for Humanity, where she helped with an after school program for inner-city schools. Upon graduation, she worked at a food co-op in Lansing as well as at a Bed & Breakfast on Lake Michigan.

She is excited about living in the Trinity Alps and getting to go on many hikes and checking out the diverse ecosystems of the area. Living so close to Mt. Shasta has her very enthusiastic about learning how to snowboard as well. "I have my season pass, and the initial bumps and bruises from learning are almost gone, so I'm all set!" she remarked. She also



enjoys belly dancing, playing guitar, and doing yoga. Her current passions are "identifying wildflowers and trees", so you may see her wandering around town in the spring with her field guide in hand.

We're happy to introduce AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Project member, **Kate Grossman**, who was placed at our office this past fall. Kate has been busy working on various projects at the RCD including, lab analysis on turbidity samples for water quality testing, teaching environmental education at Weaverville and Coffee Creek elementary schools and working on a sediment transport-monitoring program. She looks forward to working with landowners implementing restoration projects during the remainder of this year.

Born in Ohio, Kate's family moved just outside of Atlanta, Georgia where she was raised. She returned to Ohio to complete her degree in 2001 at Ohio Wesleyan University with a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies and Zoology. An internship assessing the water quality of abandoned mines fueled Kate's passion for conservation work.

Upon graduation, Kate joined the AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards

Project. Her first year was spent working for the Department of Fish and Game in Ft. Bragg. "My most memorable moment was being stung by 27 yellow jackets when I was doing field work", Kate tells of her experience there. Because of her interest in working with private landowners, Kate selected Trinity County for her second year. She enjoys being close to the mountains where she plans to ski Mt. Shasta this winter and kayak this summer. Her other hobbies include knitting, hiking, reading, and Ohio State Football.



*Cassie & Kate with students Steven & Chad*

Trinity County has proved to be quite a change for Kate who says, "In Atlanta the highways had 8 lanes of traffic, and that was just for one direction!" But the beauty of the landscape and the friendly nature of the people has made the transition pleasant. So far she has thoroughly enjoyed working for the RCD and finds herself gaining invaluable skills for the future. She plans to attend graduate school on the West Coast in the not-so-distant future specializing in watershed management and/or environmental restoration. But for now you can catch her in the classrooms and in the streams, learning and teaching about conservation.

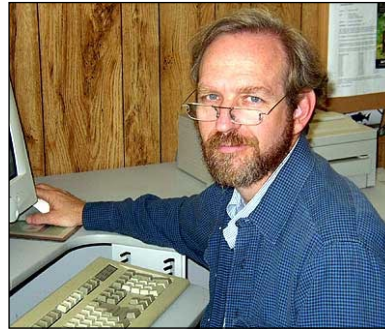
## Conservation Easement Workshop in Hayfork

The Trinity County Resource Conservation District (RCD), Trinity Resource and Development Council (RC&D), and the Northcoast Regional Land Trust (NRLT) will be co-sponsoring a workshop on conservation easements this spring. Entitled “Conservation Easements: Benefits to the Private Landowner”, the workshop is slated for Saturday, April 5 in Hayfork (Hayfork Fairgrounds).

Basic information on conservation easements and their usefulness to private landowners will be provided. Presenters will describe how landowners in other areas are utilizing conservation easements to protect their working farms, forests, and ranches, as well as other lands having ecological, educational, scenic, or historic significance. This interactive workshop will be specially geared towards landowners who want to better understand the potential benefits and drawbacks of placing conservation easements on their natural resource lands.

The workshops will be a unique opportunity to have your questions about conservation easements answered. All are invited and encouraged to attend! More detailed information will be made available as the projects develop in the coming weeks. Please direct questions and comments to the Trinity County RCD (530-623-6004) or the Northcoast Regional Land Trust (707-822-2242). Pre-registration is required.

## District Manager's Corner--Pat Frost



I joined the Resource Conservation District in January 1999. So the idea of New Year's resolutions fits in naturally with my annual assessment of our successes and shortcomings. In reviewing 2002 it was very easy for me to zero in on one important resolution for the New Year. I don't think that we have gotten out and met with enough of you, the people that the District serves. We have many things to offer, one of which is providing speakers on a wide range of conservation topics. My 2003 New Year's resolution is to make at least 12 presentations during the year – just one for each month of the year. But I'll need your help!

I need you to give me a call and invite us to come speak at your meeting. Do you belong to a service club, a scout troop, homeowners' association or a professional organization? Give us a call. I greatly enjoy speaking to groups about topics that range from the Fire Safe Council's strategic plan for the County and my own experiences installing defensible spaces on my property to stream restoration and our restoration of the Grass Valley Creek watershed or funding opportunities for your conservation projects.

Are you a teacher with a curriculum need for someone to come work with you and your students on a natural resources or science topic? The Resource Conservation District has the very capable and enthusiastic assistance of Kate Grossman and Cassie Simons, our AmeriCorps members (see their bios in the previous article on this page of the newsletter), who are experienced in teaching all about watersheds to school children. And as a former teacher, nothing gives me more satisfaction than time spent with students in a classroom or on a field trip. The Resource Conservation District is here to serve you, and one important way is through public outreach and education. So don't wait. Give me a call or send me a note at [pfrost@trcrd.net](mailto:pfrost@trcrd.net) and get us on your group's schedule today.



# 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  
Weaverville, CA 96093

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FAX 623-6006

E-mail: [tcrcd@snowcrest.net](mailto:tcrcd@snowcrest.net)  
Internet: [www.tcrcd.net](http://www.tcrcd.net)

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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.*

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## 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.**

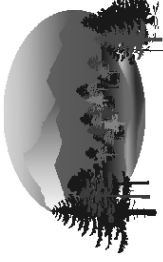
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## The TCRCD Mission

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

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



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## **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**
- **Erosion/Sediment Control**
- **Watershed Improvement**
- **Wildlife Habitat**
- **Water Supply and Storage**
- **Soil and Plant Types**
- **Educational Programs**



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