



# Conservation Almanac

Trinity County Resource Conservation District

Summer 2005

Vol. XIV No.3

## Got Weeds? Get Goats!

**P**oison oak, yellow star thistle, spotted knapweed, Himalayan blackberry thickets, or buck brush taking over your landscape? Goats may be a part of your solution. Goats possess a unique characteristic that separates them from almost all other types of livestock. They would rather eat brush and weeds than grass, because they are browsers, whereas cattle are grazers. Boer Goats have been observed in Douglas City climbing steep slopes to hit a wall of brush at a dead run in order to strip every leaf off of every stem and branch. These goats did not have their fill until they ate every brush, briar and weed. Browsing for short durations has been shown to reduce seedlings and rosettes of spotted knapweed without affecting the associated



grasses and has been effective in eradicating yellow star thistle. Another advantage to using goats to defoliate undesirable plants is their capacity to leave behind many soil building pellets. One goat can produce 1 ton of manure in a year. Fecal pellets make an excellent fertilizer, which does not normally attract flies nor breed maggots – but be careful that the goats are not kept too close to a stream, for this same source of fertilizer can contaminate the water.

Creating defensible space around the home is necessary for all Trinity County residents. For the past decade or more, the use of goats for controlling weedy and brushy areas that provide fuel for fire has greatly increased. Goats may be one tool; however, in order to effectively eliminate brush and weeds, goats must be kept in the area to be controlled until the undesirable plant species are eliminated. The cost of fencing materials needs to be taken into account. Materials for fencing a five-acre parcel could cost approximately \$1500. If you are interested in using goats for weed control call Berna at the RCD for more information.

### **Also In This Issue:**

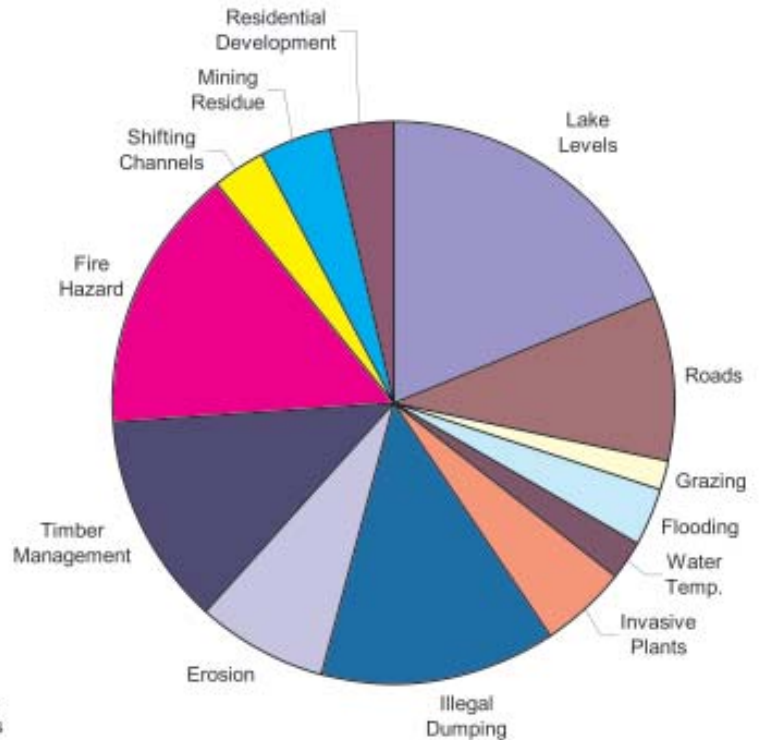
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## Upper Trinity River Watershed Survey Update

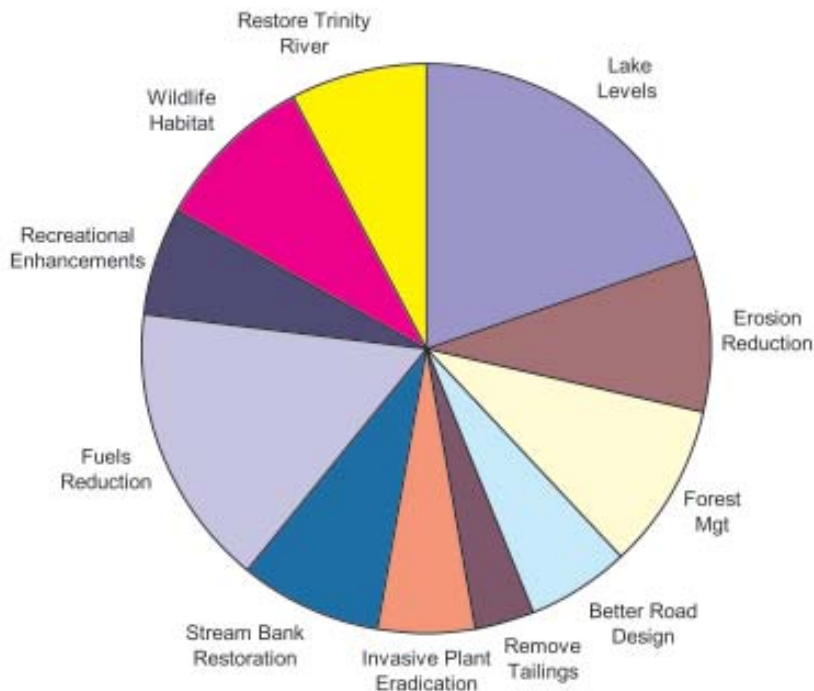
As some of you may be aware from past articles in the *Conservation Almanac*, the RCD sent out a survey in mid-January to landowners with property above Trinity Dam in the area known as the **Upper Trinity River Watershed**. The purpose of the survey, which was sponsored by the State Water Resources Control Board, was to identify areas of concern that local residents may have for inclusion in the Trinity River Watershed Management and Action Plan. A total of 341 surveys (36%) were returned and analyzed, The results are now in. Below are some charts selected as samples of the type of information gained from responses to the survey.

Anyone interested in receiving a copy of the summary should contact the District's office, or go to the [www.tcrd.net](http://www.tcrd.net) to review the full summary, which will be available sometime around mid-August.

### Problems in the watershed may be attributed to:



### Which restoration efforts would concern you ?



## Upper Trinity River Watershed Analysis

The US Forest Service recently completed a Watershed Analysis for the Upper Trinity River that fits in well with the District's Watershed Planning efforts for the areas above Trinity Dam. The Forest Service's work looked at all of the major streams that flow into Trinity Lake including the mainstem of the Trinity River, Coffee Creek, Swift Creek, East Fork Trinity River, and Stuarts Fork. Anyone who has spent any time in this part of the county knows that there is a wide range of natural resources and potential ways to manage those same resources. This watershed analysis is an important step. It provides a broad, landscape-scale evaluation and begins a discussion about how we can plan future management of these valuable resources.

This report highlights several interesting issues. It indicates that the Forest Service has not intensively managed the Upper Trinity River Basin over the past few decades, and that almost all timber management has been confined to private lands. It suggests that the forests be treated by thinning overstocked stands, and through uneven-aged management. Port Orford Cedars in the Upper Trinity River may be the only ones on the west coast that have not been infected by a water-borne root disease, and special watershed protection measures need to be taken to prevent the spread of the disease.

Stream channels are still recovering from impacts from historical mining activity and the 1997 Flood, and more work needs to be done to understand watershed conditions, such as erosion, hydrology, stream channels, and general water quality.

This report indicates that roads and timber harvest activities are acknowledged contributors of sediment to the Trinity River and its tributaries, but little information was provided regarding specific conditions or restoration opportunities that could reduce sediment sources, except to say that on-the-ground inventories of roads and streams would help address problem areas. Upper Trinity River Watershed Analysis is available on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest website at [www.fs.fed.us/r5/shastatrinity/publications/](http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/shastatrinity/publications/), or for more information on the Upper Trinity River Watershed Planning Project contact us at the RCD.



# KIDS In Conservation

Spring and summer are seasons for enjoying the outdoors, especially if you are young. The RCD has combined this with our goal of providing conservation education to our youth in some fun and interesting ways!

We have worked closely with **Trinity High School** and **Weaverville Elementary School** with grants from the California Coastal Salmon Recovery Program to conduct field days at the Trinity Alps Industrial Park Wetlands. Instructors from the RCD, NRCS, AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Program, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Reclamation's Trinity River Restoration Program, set up a series of stations around the wetlands to give students hands-on experience. Seventy students from the **High School's Agricultural Sciences** program, helped monitor the wetlands, sampling for aquatic insects and amphibians, bird and wildlife sightings, soils, hydrology, and surveying. All of the **4<sup>th</sup> grade students** from Weaverville shared a day of outdoor environmental education that drew on the same team of experts. One of the parents/instructors, John Tiedeman, the NRCS engineer, believes "4<sup>th</sup> graders understand the fundamental concepts – just present it in appropriate kid language."

A new project for the RCD is the **Weaverville Summer Day Camp** at Lowden Park. Laura Murphy and her team of counselors, six students from Trinity High School, have organized 2-week sessions filled with fun and educational activities for young "campers" that include visits to the Children's Garden, trips to the Trinity County Library, arts and crafts, bird watching, nutrition and exercise programs to encourage healthy lifestyles, and much, much more. The Trinity Trust, Trinity County Board of Supervisors, through Title III, and the California Regional Nutrition Network are funding this year's Day Camp.



**Trinity High School  
Wetlands Field Day**



**Weaverville Summer  
Day Camp**



**Weaverville Elementary 4th  
Grade Field Day**

## Trinity River Restoration Program Principals Conference

By: Doug Schleusner, Executive Director, Trinity River Restoration Program

Upper level managers of Trinity River Restoration Program agencies and tribes participated in a series of workshop panels on July 13-14, 2005, to address important policy issues, including rate of implementation, sources of funding, and Klamath / Trinity coordination. After celebrating recent accomplishments at several field locations, panelists reviewed progress on floodplain structure modifications that will allow higher flows, channel rehabilitation actions needed to create more juvenile salmon rearing habitat, and critical requirements for the science program. Participants were challenged to identify innovative ways to advance all aspects of the TRRP Record of Decision.

**Opening remarks by Executive Director, Doug Schleusner.**

**Principals seated at the front table (left to right) include:**

**Trinity County District 3 Supervisor Roger Jaegel; USFS**

**Pacific Southwest Regional Forester Bernie Weingardt;**

**National Marine Fisheries Service Regional Administrator**

**Rod McInnis; Hoopa Valley Tribal Fisheries Director Mike**

**Orcutt (not yet seated, representing Chairman Marshall);**

**Fish and Wildlife Service California/Nevada Operations**

**Office Manager Steve Thompson; Yurok Tribe, Troy Fletch**

**(representing Chairman McConnell); Bureau of Reclamation**

**Mid-Pacific Regional Director Kirk Rodgers; California**

**Department of Fish and Game Director Ryan Broddrick; (not**

**visible) California Department of Water Resources Northern**

**District Chief Dwight Russell.**



**Joe Riess, civil engineer on the TRRP staff, gives overview of Hocker Flat channel rehabilitation project at the first of three stops on the field tour.**



**Ribbon cutting at Poker Bar bridge by (from left to right) Tom Stokely, Kirk Rodgers, Ryan Broddrick, Homeowner Association Co-Presidents Jim Casebolt and Averil Carmona, and Ed Solbos.**



## Five Cent Gulch Project

The RCD is well known for the road restoration and decommissioning work that it does in the South Fork Trinity River Watershed. Additionally, this summer a similar project was completed in the Weaverville Basin. The **Five Cent Gulch Project**, about 1 mile north of the Weaverville Airport, was funded by the Trinity County Resource Advisory Committee, which has made erosion control projects a high priority. Concrete Aggregate Products, one of our local contractors, was hired to upgrade and winterize the first 600 feet of the road with rock. A parking area was constructed at the end of the road for future use as a staging area for fire fighting equipment to help defend the East Weaver Creek residential area from fires, and the remaining 1.25 miles of this severely eroded road was removed.



This project is part of the Forest Service's goal to improve the watershed conditions within the Weaverville Basin by reducing erosion sources. Roads that are no longer maintained by the Forest Service receive a low priority due to budget constraints and often develop erosion problems that can lead to sediment delivery to local streams. In the case of the Five Cent Gulch project, the road did not receive any maintenance over the last several years and traffic from off-road vehicles during the rainy season created tire ruts that continued to get worse until they became gullies. The gullies connected to Five Cent Gulch directly or to an irrigation ditch that eventually empties into Five Cent Gulch just above the Weaverville Landfill putting unwanted soils in the Weaver Creek system.

The project included the removal of a culvert at one creek crossing that no longer functioned, because it was exposed from erosion, replacing an undersized culvert at another creek crossing on the East Weaver Campground Trail with one large enough to carry the stream's flows and the removal of an undersized culvert from the irrigation ditch.



## Work Season is underway in the South Fork of the Trinity River

District staff, under the direction of Cynthia Tarwater, RCD Project Coordinator, and Jim Fitzgerald, Hydrologist for the USFS South Fork Management Unit Watershed Group, has been busy in the South Fork of the Trinity River watershed once again this year. Road decommissioning projects are scheduled in a number of drainages to help the USFS meet its management goals for reducing erosion and the potential to harm fisheries in this critical salmon habitat. The roads are selected through a detailed assessment of the Forest Service's management needs for an area, the risk that roads and their drainage systems pose to deliver sediment to streams and the public's comments. In some cases the design is to upgrade the roads (storm-proof) and in others it is to remove the road all together (decommission). The first project this year is on the 28N48A near Pine Root Saddle. Crews and equipment will then move to Wilcox Ridge to finish a project started last year on the 28N50D road. The District's Board of Directors awarded contracts for the decommissioning of two roads in the Hidden Valley Compartment (1N11B, 1N24A roads) at their June meeting, and for the end of the 28N40 Road in the Upper South Fork Compartment (Hermit Rock) at the July meeting. In addition, approximately 3 miles of roads will be decommissioned in the Butter Creek watershed, near the Indian Valley Guard station. The USFS has also asked the District to assist with the rehabilitation work that they have designed in last year's Sims Fire.

An essential part of implementing this kind of soil conservation program is building the partnerships necessary to fund the work. Noreen Doyas, the District's Grants Coordinator, has assembled an impressive network of partners in the South Fork Trinity River watershed. The District has agreements with the State Water Resources Control Board, managed by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, the California Department of Fish and Game, through its California Coastal Salmon Recovery Program, the Trinity County Resource Advisory Committee's Title II Program and the USFS. The District wishes to thank all of them for their continued support.

## District Manager's Corner Pat Frost



Looking through a draft of this issue of the *Conservation Almanac* reminded me of something I wanted to share. I was struck by the impact that our partnership with the AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Program has had on the District and the communities we serve. Laura Murphy and Abbey Stockwell are the current AmeriCorps members serving with us. Look at the various photo essays in this issue and you will see their mark – there they are with the Weaverville Fourth Graders and with the Trinity High School students. The summer day camp is theirs, too. They have brought great energy and creativity to our programs and I want to thank them.

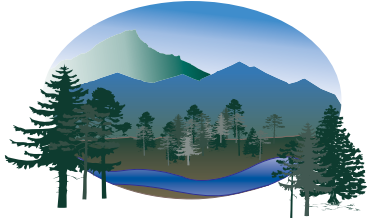
I especially want to acknowledge the inspired work of Laura, who will be leaving us at the end of August to pursue a graduate degree in Soils Sciences at UC Davis. Our Summer Day Camp at Lowden Park was her idea and became a reality, because of Laura's vision and hard work. The two, 2-week sessions have provided a wonderful, fun-filled and educational experience for many children and job experience for six high school students. Sometimes the impact of AmeriCorps lives on in our communities beyond any member's service. Take Sandra Perez. She was one of my first AmeriCorps members, moving to rural Trinity County for the greater Los Angeles area. Today she is a member of the Trinity County Planning Department, working on natural resources issues. Elizabeth Gill went on to earn her Teaching Credential at Humboldt State University after finishing her year with the RCD. This September she will begin her teaching career at Coffee Creek School.

I know that the District's programs and services are richer and more valuable to all of you, because of AmeriCorps. I also know that working in our communities with all of you and within the awe-inspiring natural beauty of Trinity County gives the AmeriCorps members rich experiences that will benefit them for many years to come. So I thank them for what they give us and I thank all of you for what you give back to them.



**Cynthia Tarwater & Noreen  
Doyas Discuss Future  
Projects in the South Fork**

Trinity County



Resource Conservation District

Trinity County Resource Conservation District  
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*Established 1956*

**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 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.**

**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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