

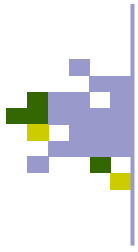
# CENTRAL CALIFORNIA CONSORTIUM



## ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

*Building Relationships and Linking Community, Education and Natural Resources*

**FISCAL YEAR 2003**



## FOREST SUPERVISOR'S MESSAGE



**James Boynton**  
*Sierra National Forest Supervisor*

Since 1996 the Central California Consortium (CCC) has provided outreach programs to underserved Hispanic and Asian communities. The program encourages students and their families to enjoy the forest and to become good stewards of the land. The CCC also promotes higher education to K-16 students and exposes them to natural resource careers with the USDA Forest Service and other agencies. Throughout the year the CCC program employs minority students and non-students in forest service positions throughout California, according to their interests. The experience introduces students to different jobs available in the USDA Forest Service in an effort to diversify the agency.

Currently the CCC has stabilized components for the Hispanic, African-American and Asian communities, with future programs for the Native-American communities in the fiscal year 2003. The purpose of these specified projects to diversify the workforce of the USDA Forest Service. This past year we have made significant progress in diversifying the workforce by hiring 87 students from a minority background.

As our accomplishment report illustrates, the Central California Consortium program has advanced the Forest Service goals contained in the agency's Government Performance and Results Act Strategic Plan.

Our accomplishments have been rewarding and with continued support from the local agency officials, school administrators, parents, and students, we will succeed in establishing our Native-American component.

I would like to personally thank all of you who have been an instrumental part of our programs and welcome all of you who would like to become involved in our success.

Sincerely,

Jim Boynton  
Sierra National Forest Supervisor



## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



**Jim Oftedal**

*Central California Consortium Director*

Dear Friends of the Central California Consortium,

This year the Central California Consortium (CCC) has made outstanding progress in building relationships and linking, community, education, and natural resources. Our success is the result of a dedicated team of individuals.

The activities sponsored by the CCC are designed to educate underserved communities in environmental education and promote higher learning. The students participate in activities that are geared to engage students in environmental issues and expose them to career opportunities within the USDA Forest Service. The students involved in the program improve academically and mentally through their experiences.

This past year with generous contributions from external agencies, the CCC program employed 56 students as interns in the USDA workforce. The opportunity for the students to work for the agency allowed them to experience occupations in the environmental and natural resource industries.

The goal of the CCC program is to expose students of underserved communities to the USDA Forest Service in an effort to diversify the workforce. To achieve this goal we have established African-American, Asian and Hispanic components.

On behalf of the Central California Consortium, thank you for your continued support. I welcome all of you who would like to become part of our future success.

Sincerely,

James Oftedal



## OVERVIEW OF THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA CONSORTIUM

The Central California Consortium (CCC) is a collaborative effort between various USDA agencies, non-profit organizations, and central California communities. The CCC is a USDA Forest Service sponsored program, which was instituted in 1996 as a two year pilot program. The piloting process proved the success and feasibility of implementing a rural Latino K-12 environmental education program in central California. The CCC quickly evolved into more than an environmental education program, incorporating outreach and recruitment into its business plan. The program targets underrepresented youth who are eligible for USDA jobs and careers, but may not be aware of the great opportunities the agency has to offer. These youth have traditionally not continued their education. Due to the CCC's efforts, students are transitioning from picking and packing fruit, to picking colleges and careers in the field of natural resources.

Our goal is to encourage higher education and careers within the Forest Service in fields including environmental science, natural resource management, and agriculture. Many students choose careers such as firefighting, wildlife biology, engineering, surveying, trail maintenance, hydrology to name a few. The CCC does this through an array of methods including leadership training workshops, paid summer work experience, and through providing mentoring opportunities.

The purpose of the internships is to provide job training, work experience, leadership skills, and confidence development. Since 1996, the CCC has employed over 400 women and minority youth into the USDA Forest Service through the STEP Program and 40 have received SCEP appointments. In 2003, the CCC employed a total of 89 STEPs and SCEPs. Students, whose only option was to pick fruit in the fields, now feel a ray of hope knowing that through the CCC, employment within the USDA Forest Service is an achievable goal. Placement is highly selective and students are matched with nurturing supervisors.

The program has become very successful gaining popularity in all segments of the community, allowing it to be sustainable and reputable. Our success is based on the idea that we can accomplish more through working with partners than individually. The program connects youth to the land by providing them the tools needed to take informed actions related to sustaining natural and cultural resources. Community involvement and dedication from the elementary, middle, and high schools have greatly stimulated the students to further their education. Reedley Community College presents the evidence with an increased enrollment of students at one of the nation's top five forestry technician schools.

Awareness of the vital need of developing a good relationship between the USDA Forest Service and underserved communities, like Orange Cove, will help the agency grow and strengthen through a workforce that is skilled and diverse. Participation by agency partners has led to expanding partnerships that allow for the community's growth and advancement. For the USDA Forest Service to meet its mission of "caring for the land and serving people," the public must have the knowledge to understand natural resource issues and the skills to participate meaningfully in the debates that surround them. Environmental education will help people develop the critical thinking skills and the knowledge base they need to understand the complexities of ecological issues. The CCC also provides human and financial resources to introduce and create awareness of the USDA Forest Service in rural underserved communities.

The program has received national awards including the Chief's New Century of Service 2003 Award, which recognized the CCC for "being instrumental in diversifying the USDA Forest Service workforce, being inclusive of all minority groups, and educating the underserved populations on natural resources." Program Director, James Oftedal, also received the national "Unsung Hero Award," for "exemplifying the best in public service through quiet, efficient dedications to the public good." Mr. Oftedal was honored for his valuable contribution in helping to diversify the Forest Service, while encouraging underserved youth to continue their education and consider careers in natural resources. The CCC is diligently working to accomplish our goal of being inclusive to all minority groups and thereby fulfilling Title VI and VII requirements. In 1999 the CCC expanded its efforts into the Asian community at the Stone Soup Asian Community Center. In 2002, the program established an African American component through partnership with the United Black Men.



## GPRA GOAL 1: ECOSYSTEM HEALTH

PROMOTE ECOSYSTEM HEALTH AND CONSERVATION USING A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO SUSTAIN THE NATION'S FORESTS, RANGELANDS, AND WATERSHEDS.

- 1.a *Improve and protect watershed conditions to provide the water quality and quantity and soil productivity necessary to support ecological functions and intended beneficial water uses.*

### TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM



Elementary, Middle, and High School students from Orange Cove, Orosi, Fresno and Reedley participate in a four-week project fishery biology, aquatic ecology and riparian habitat quality course. The course consists of adopting trout eggs from the San Joaquin Fish Hatchery and caring for them until they are fingerlings. During this time a fisheries biologist visits the schools and gives presentations to the individual classes. Once the fish have hatched and become fingerlings, the students, accompanied by the USDA Forest Service and the Department of Fish and Game personnel, release them into the Kings River. The field trip experience provides the students

with first-hand knowledge in order to build upon what they have learned while nurturing their observation skills and senses.

Throughout the project the students are required to keep a daily journal of their experiences. This activity makes the students think critically, improve on their writing skills, become acquainted with scientific methods, meet natural resource professionals, learn natural resource management and encourages them to become good stewards of the land.

Trout in the Classroom provides an indoor and outdoor hands-on living lab that enhances the San Joaquin and Kings River fish and wildlife populations. This project also gives the students direct knowledge of life cycles, habitats, environmental conservation, as well as giving them a sense of responsibility and pride.



## GPRA GOAL 2: MULTIPLE BENEFITS TO PEOPLE

PROVIDE A VARIETY OF USES, VALUES, PRODUCTS, AND SERVICES FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS BY MANAGING WITHIN THE CAPABILITY OF SUSTAINABLE ECOSYSTEMS.

- 2.a *Improve the capability of the Nation's forests and rangelands to provide diverse, high quality outdoor recreation opportunities.*

### ECO VANS



The Eco Vans were acquired in 2001 to promote the awareness of ecological principles and environmental responsibilities. The Central California Consortium partnered with The Discovery Center, a natural history museum, to provide students in central California with excellent nature based activities. The vans were painted to depict a night and day nature scene to spark the interest of the students. The vans serve as a learning tool and are equipped with environmental education supplies for teacher and student use. The vans are also used for after-school programs that educate the students on Forest Service activities. The Central

California Consortium personnel educate the students on the different habitats of plants and animals of the forest. Presentation materials include actual animal pelts, models of habitats, and plants from the forest. Once the children are familiarized with the educational materials, they take a trip to the forest and experience it firsthand. The students who attend this field trip enjoy the experience of being in the forest and are able to apply what they learned in school out in nature. Forest Service personnel participate in a variety of activities to educate the students on natural resources. Some of these activities include identifying trees, plants, and animals.

*"It is exciting when people and agencies can collaborate to bring our students the thrill of learning and knowledge they may not otherwise have access to. The Central California Consortium is broadening the world for our students and we are fortunate and grateful to be part of this wonderful program."*

*Mrs. Zalky, Sheridan Elementary School Principal*

### SCIENCE CONSERVATION (SCI-CON) CAMP EVENING PARENT MEETING

The evening meetings hosted by the CCC are to educate the parents and students from Citrus Middle School in Orange Cove, California about the programs the students are involved in. Some Spanish-speaking parents are reluctant to allow their children to attend the one-week activity program, known as Sci-Con Camp, because they do not fully understand the experience their children will receive. The meetings clarify any misunderstandings parents have about the camp and explain the details of the activities the students will be involved in. Since the meetings began approximately two years ago, student participation has consistently increased. The CCC collaborates with the City Council of Orange Cove in an effort to get students involved in USDA Forest Service sponsored activities such as Sci-Con.

- 2.b *Improve the capability of wilderness and protected areas to sustain a desired range of benefits and values.*

### **FOREST CONSERVATION DAYS**

The annual Forest Conservation Days is a two-week environmental education event held in Saratoga, California. The main goal of this event is to teach conservation education to inner-city fifth grade students from the San Jose area. This project helps students develop an understanding of the complexity of renewable resource management. As part of the Forest Conservation Days, over 5000 students were taken on a four-hour hike in a redwood forest. During the hike, students visited nineteen learning stations that were staffed by resource managers. The stations include a sawmill and an archaeology site.

- 2.d *Increase accessibility to a diversity of people and members of underserved and low-income populations to the full range of uses, values, products, and services.*

### **SECRETARY'S HISPANIC ADVISORY COUNCIL (SHAC) "SHOW ME" TRIP**



The Central California Consortium (CCC) hosted the Secretary's Hispanic Advisory Council (SHAC) the week of August 26-28, 2003. The SHAC was developed to make recommendations and assist the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Ann Veneman, on decisions which effect Hispanics. The purpose of the SHAC visit was to learn more about the national award winning CCC and hear the needs of rural underserved Hispanic communities in the San Joaquin Valley. The SHAC began their "Show Me Trip" on August 26, 2003, where they visited CCC partners and could see the program in action. The first stop was at the California State University (CSU) campus to meet with the CCC, Forest Service, Farm AG Service, CSU Fresno staff, students, program directors, a USDA Liaison, and Hispanic Serving Institutions. The next stop was a visit with Mayor Victor P. Lopez in the City of Orange Cove. The SHAC then visited Reedley High School and met with students who shared their needs including: more scholarships, better water quality, and waste water concerns, and job opportunities. The next stop was Reedley Community College, where they were greeted by President Tony Cantu and heard presentations from several students, as well as had a question and answer session.

The SHAC met twice internally at the Sierra National Forest Supervisor's office in Clovis. The goal of their meeting was to complete their business plan and incorporate ideas and concerns that they had previously heard from the community, students, and other CCC partners.

On August 27, 2003 the SHAC met informally with CCC partners and CSU Fresno Hispanic Business Association (HBSA) at a dinner banquet.

### **NATIONAL USDA FARM BILL FORUM**



The National USDA Farm bill Forum was held from February 25-26, 2003 in Fresno, CA. The purpose of the event was to outreach to all the people in the farming business from the Central Valley. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) hosted the event to provide farmers with the information and assist them in their needs. During this event the CCC staff provided translation in Hmong and Spanish to the farmers and helped staff an informational booth about the Forest Service and the CCC. The CCC also facilitated a CCC student panel for the USDA dignitaries from Washington DC. Students from Reedley College and Fresno State spoke about their experiences with the USDA and their accomplishments.

## CAMP SANCTUARY



Camp Sanctuary is a one-week environmental education program for youth in downtown Fresno. The camp exposed the inner city youth to a camping environment, which some students have never experienced. During the camp, children participate in various environmental education workshops. The program ends with a one-night camping trip to the Sierra National Forest. The Forest Service performs an important role in teaching different aspects of camping, how to preserve natural resources, proper behavior in the forest, and how to be good stewards of the land. The CCC teaches the youth some of these concepts through a skit called the “Impact Monster” in which they learn the seven principles of Leave No Trace. Smokey Bear also makes an appearance to educate the youth on fire prevention. The goal of Camp Sanctuary is to expose youth to the great outdoors and promote higher education.

## CANNED FOOD DRIVE



This year, the Central California Consortium, Radio Disney, and the Discovery Center sponsored a canned food drive. This food drive benefited the Craycroft Youth Center, Stone Soup, and the West Fresno School District. There were prizes such as CD’s, movies, coloring books, and movie passes given to every -person who donated canned food. The Reedley High School Generation Green club members provided face painting and nature-based activities for the kids.

## FOREST SERVICE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Before fire season was underway, CCC Staff made several public service announcements (PSA) to Hmong communities reaching from Bakersfield to Merced. Since language barriers exist for the Hmong population, PSA’s were used to provide fire safety awareness for Hmong hunters and campers utilizing national forests. The CCC Staff worked diligently to translate the fire safety information from English to Hmong.

## MOCK INTERVIEWS

Two times a year, the CCC hosts students for job mock interviews. These mock interviews provide students with practice of an interview situation for employment and internships. The purpose of the mock interviews is to improve both the content and presentation of answers in preparing for a real interview situation. The CCC guides students in developing answers and a style that they are comfortable using.

## YMCA WORKDAY CAMP

During the month of May, students from Reedley High School and Reedley College went on a three-day field trip to Lake Sequoia with Forest Service personnel. The college students and high school students involved received one unit of college credit and gained experience in a Forest Service career. This activity also exposed the high school students to the Forest Service and tools used to fix trails, cut fire line, and reconstruct nature trails. Other activities the students enjoyed learning included: use of the Global Positioning System (GPS), training in sharpening fire tools, and an explanation on how boundary lines are established.

The students also learned the purpose behind each activity and how it relates to everyday life in the and scholarship opportunities available if they wish to pursue a career in the USDA Forest Service Program.



## CAREER FAIR PRESENTATIONS AT HIGH SCHOOLS



Over 25 Career Fair Presentations have been given by the CCC to K-12 schools, community colleges and universities. The purpose of these presentations is to inform students about the USDA Forest Service and educate them on natural resources. The Central California Consortium staff also promoted higher education and informed them of the nationally ranked Forestry Technician Program at Reedley Community College. Students were also exposed to USDA programs and career opportunities available to them.

## CCC PRESENTATION WORKSHOP



A Presentation Workshop was held on Saturday, June 28, 2003. CCC Director, James Oftedal, welcomed students and guest speakers to the workshop. Sierra National Forest Supervisor, James Boynton spoke to the students about the importance of their role as Forest Service employees. Keith Choate, Equal Opportunity Manager, conducted a 2 hour workshop on time management. Joe Reyes, representing the Forest Service Hispanic Employee Association (FSHEA), conducted a 5 hour workshop on how to make presentations work. During the

workshop, students broke into working groups and learned many presentation and preparation techniques, and were critiqued.

"The presentation workshop gave me the confidence and technique I needed to help me communicate better in front of a large audience."

*-Estelsa Garcia  
Science Aid Intern*

## CENTER FOR ADVANCED RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY (CART) JOB SHADOW/MENTORING

Center for Advanced Research and Technology (CART) student, Crystal Nunez had the opportunity to job shadow CCC employees for a day. The purpose of the job shadowing is to provide students with the opportunity to see first-hand what the world of work is like, and more specifically, what a typical day in a career would be like. Crystal also had the opportunity to take back the information she obtained from the program and present information regarding the CCC to staff and students at CART.

## SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

The CCC has created a supportive, creative, and people-oriented work environment. The CCC staff supports and nurtures student participants and newly hired employees. The CCC provides continuous follow-up through site visits and phone calls. Students and parents are able to identify and communicate with the CCC's young multicultural and multilingual staff in English, Spanish, and Hmong. Students regularly visit the CCC's office to gain valuable information on topics such as: scholarship resources, college applications, financial aid, citizenship, and other employment resources. Staff members are available to meet with students and parents upon request. The staff delivers exceptional customer service to students, employers, parents, and community partners. The CCC office welcomes all cultures and nationalities, allowing for an accepting and nurturing work environment.

## MAKING SPIRITS BRIGHT



The goal of the Making Spirits Bright Program is to provide thirty economically disadvantaged students and their immediate family with a holiday dinner, which includes: presents, stockings, a Christmas tree, and a Santa photo. The Forest Service adopts fifteen of the thirty families, volunteer their time the day of the event to prepare the dinner and serve the families. This year the dinner was held at Carver Elementary School in Fresno, CA.

The opportunity for the Forest Service to participate in this activity helps create and maintain relationships with non-profit organizations and the community. The Central California Consortium partners with several community-based organizations such as Macy's, Pacific Bell, and California State University, Fresno to provide the families with dinner and presents. The purpose of the event is to provide a memorable holiday experience for the families involved.

## HONG NEW YEAR

In January the Central California Consortium recruited Hmong high school and college students to staff the USDA Forest Service booth at the nation-wide Asian New Year Celebration held annually at the Fresno Fairgrounds. The attendance included an audience of approximately 250,000 people. The students had reached a good portion of the attendees in an effort to diversify the Forest Service. The students also provided information of the numerous opportunities within the Forest Service, the importance of being good stewards of the land, and preserving natural resources.

## GENERATION GREEN LEADERSHIP CAMP



The Generation Green Leadership Camp offers students from different local high schools and various ethnic backgrounds the opportunity to educate the public on the USDA Forest Service. The students were able to expose and share their knowledge regarding the Forest Service with the community. Consequently, the students became more involved with the Forest Service and aware of the rewarding career opportunities within the agency.

During the month of August, high school students from Orange Cove, Reedley, and Duncan Polytechnical outreached to the Hispanic, Hmong, and the community at large. They attended the annual Sacramento State Fair and exposed the public to the USDA Forest Service. For the Spanish and Hmong-speaking audience some students were able to inform them of the services the USDA Forest Service provides in their native language. The students also informed the public on topics such as fire safety, natural resource management, and environmental conservation.

In addition, the students participated were mentored by Forest Service professionals, received recognition at an official State Assembly session, visited the State Capitol, and met their local elected representatives.

## WILDLINK EXPEDITIONS



In February 2002, eight students from Reedley and Woodlake High Schools took a backpacking trip to Sequoia National Park. Students got the opportunity to hike and gather important archaeological data for the United States Forest Service, learned about the history, flora and air quality of Sequoia Lake. The students also learned how to backpack using Leave No Trace principles. Robert Garcia, CCC Rural Coordinator and Jonathan Brooks were chaperones at the expedition and provided the students with encouragement.

## **EOC SAFE PLACE**

The Fresno County Economic Opportunity Commission Sanctuary provides a safe haven for teenagers who feel threatened or whose life may be in danger. In Orange Cove, the Fire Station serves as the community's safe place. The Forest Service, EOC, Fire Station and Sheriff's Department have joined forces to provide sanctuary to teenagers who feel threatened or afraid. The Sanctuary provides youth in the community a place to go to for help in times of need.

2.e *Improve delivery of services to urban communities.*

## **TESTIMONIALS**

The Central California Consortium is constantly involved with the underserved communities and educating the public on the various programs the USDA Forest Service and the Central California Consortium has to offer. Some dignitaries such as Mayor Lopez of Orange Cove are very appreciative of the services the program provides the students with from the community.

"Since 1996 the USDA Forest Service has become a big part of our community. The Central California Consortium/Generation Green Program has provided positive role models, continues to mentor and teach our students how to become good land stewards through environmental education, and offers employment to our community."

*-Mayor Victor Lopez  
City of Orange Cove*

Jean Fetterhoff, Superintendent of Kings Canyon Unified School District, supports the Central California Consortium and encourages students to get involved in the program. The students who get involved are encouraged to continue their education and learn about the different educational and career opportunities the Central California Consortium and the USDA Forest Service has to offer.

"The Central California Consortium is a wonderful door opener. The students who participate in the program are enlightened and encouraged to pursue higher education. Juana Rosas is a prime example of what the program can do for students. She is currently attending the University of California, Berkley. The support she received from Jim, Robert, the Generation Green Club, and the USDA Forest Service motivated her to continue her education."

*-Jean Fetterhoff  
Superintendent of KCUSD*

The CCC environmental education programs are designed to satisfy one or more of the GPRA goals and the underlying objectives. The program has developed an expanding base of partnerships and community support that serve the goals, and objectives of both Title VI program delivery and Title VII workforce diversity.

## **RAILS TO TRAILS**

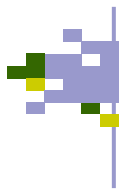
Rails to Trails is a program where students help construct a trail from what used to be railroad tracks in the City of Reedley. Students from Reedley High School and Reedley Community College adopted a portion of the trail and reconstructed it with the assistance of Forest Service professionals. The activity allowed students to take pride in their community and help beautify their city. In addition to beautification, the students learned different landscaping techniques and what plants are indigenous to the area.

This activity also exposed the students to the Forestry Technician Program at Reedley Community College and the various career opportunities within the USDA Forest Service.

## THE GREAT OUTDOORS AT GRIZZLY STADIUM



Members from surrounding rural Fresno County experienced a Fresno Grizzlies baseball game and received natural resources information. Following the baseball game and firework show, over 100 underserved youth between the ages of 8 and 11 camped under the stars in Grizzlies Stadium and participated in outdoor camp activities such as building a safe campfire, fishing pole casting contest, camp songs, and a movie on "The Great Outdoors" at Camp Grizzlies, sponsored by the Central California Consortium and community partners was held on June 20, 2003 at Grizzlies stadium. "We want to encourage family bonding and expose the public to the USDA Forest Service and natural resources," said Oftedal. Smokey Bear arrived by Forest Service helicopter and threw out the first pitch. Over 500 underserved multicultural youth and their family the big screen. For many of these students and their families it was their first time attending a baseball game and their first camping experience.



## GPRA GOAL 3: SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL, AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

DEVELOP AND USE THE BEST SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO DELIVER TECHNICAL AND COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE AND ACHIEVE ECOLOGICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY.

- 3.b *Increase the effectiveness of scientific and technical assistance delivered to domestic and international interests.*

### WEATHER STATION

A weather station on the Reedley High School campus was established four years ago. The weather station collects weather and climatic data, which is then analyzed by high school students using specialized computer software. This information is then transmitted to the local NBC television station, KSEE 24, and used in the weather forecast. This project has allowed the students to learn about such topics such as local geography, atmospheric-circulation patterns, ecosystem management, humidity and precipitation.

### HMONG NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

The 7th Annual Hmong Development Conference was held on April 13-15 in Milwaukee, WI. The CCC sponsored community liaisons, Blong Vang and Bao Vue to attend the conference. This conference gave them the opportunity to reach back to give back to their community, share their knowledge, and be role models for Hmong youth. The primary goal of the Hmong National Conference is building capacity and providing assistance to Hmong communities. Bao and Blong had the opportunity to network with families, students, professionals, and leaders as they gathered to share ideas and learn from one another.

### SCIENCE FAIRS

The annual science fairs held at different schools provide the potential to interest students into the field of natural sciences and into higher education. Various judges from the Forest Service and California State University, Fresno were able to judge the science fair projects at McCord, Navelencia, Great Western, and Sheridan Elementary. This also presented an opportunity for the science experiments to be judged by science professionals and for the judges to outreach to the community of Orange Cove.

## CALIFORNIA LATINO ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES CONFERENCE

The California Latino Environmental and Natural Resources Conference was held on October 5 – 7, 2002 in Sacramento, California. The conference included workshops and general sessions as well as a career fair and site visits to environmental facilities. Lily Ramos, CCC Urban Coordinator, obtained a travel scholarship to attend the conference and had the opportunity to network with several hundred environmental studies students and professionals.

## STUDENT EDUCATIONAL RUIZ CONFERENCE

The 12th Annual Student Educational Ruiz Conference was held on October 26, 2002 at Dinuba High School. The conference was presented by Ruiz Foods Products, Inc. and hosted by the CSU Fresno Hispanic Business Student Association (H.B.S.A.). The CCC sponsored twelve students from the Generation Green club at Reedley High School to attend this conference. The students had the opportunity to attend workshops that provided information about financing for a college education, money management, and different methods of financial aid such as scholarships, loans, grants, and work-study. Students also received information about academic planning. They were guided through the steps to prepare themselves for successful admission to a California State University.

## REEDLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE NATURAL RESOURCE EDUCATION WORKSHOP



One hundred and eighty 6<sup>th</sup> grade Citrus Middle School students participated in a pre-science conservation camp in the Sequoia National Forest Humelake Ranger District where they worked with Forestry students and toured various natural resource related stations at Reedley Community College. The stations include diverse topics such as fire management, identification of mammals, birds & plants, conservation, wilderness camping, farm and river tours, and a hawk/owl presentation. The workshop allowed students to prepare themselves for the Sci-Con experience by exploring the connection between human usage and the forests. The workshop also exposed the sixth grade students to a higher education environment and allowed them to interact with college students.

## GENERATION GREEN CAL EXPO BANQUET



On September 24, 2003 the CCC held the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Generation Green Leadership Camp banquet. The banquet is a culmination of the work that Generation Green students performed at the Sacramento State Fair this past summer. Each year juniors and sophomores throughout central California apply to the Generation Green Leadership Camp, where students interact with the public and educate all ages on conservation, natural resources, and fire safety. For many of the students, the leadership camp was their first “real” work experience outside of working in the fields. Various high schools were represented at the banquet such as: Reedley, Parlier, Sunnyside, Duncan, Roosevelt and Edison. Reedley High School (RHS) has been generous enough to host and cater this banquet for the past five years with an array of support second to none. RHS Principal, John Campbell, welcomed everyone and thanked the students’ parents for being involved in a great program that benefits the children and the community as a whole. Jim Oftedal, CCC Director, thanked the students, parents, and RHS for their support. He was extremely proud of the students. The students’ presentations ranged from their work duties to leadership activities. Individually, the students exhibited maturity and dedication in serving the public.

## **LATINO EMPOWERMENT FOUNDATION AND LATINO MOTIVATIONAL FORUM CONFERENCE**

The Latino Empowerment Foundation held the Latino Motivational Forum in Los Angeles, CA on September 6, 2003. The conference served to motivate Latino youth and professionals to reach for their highest goals. The Forest Service was among the many partners at this conference. The Forest Service recruitment team collaborated to provide an outreach and recruitment booth. The conference featured a distinguished panel of Latino speakers including Manny Medrano, a law professor and Emmy Award winner and Miss USA 2003, Susie Castillo.

- 3.c *Improve the knowledge base provided through research, inventory, and monitoring to enhance scientific understanding of ecosystems, including human uses, and to support decision making and sustainable management of the Nation's forests and grasslands.*

## **ARTICLES & PUBLICATIONS**

The Central California Consortium publishes a variety of brochures and articles, which are distributed to the general public. The brochures and articles are sent to media stations to inform them of the programs and events the Central California Consortium has available to the public. They are also used as a marketing tool to expose the Central California Consortium and Forest Service programs to the public, potential/current partners, and to schools around the valley.

## **INFORMATIONAL BOOTH**

The Central California Consortium is dedicated in promoting natural resource, and USDA careers. At conferences, meetings, open houses, and community events, the CCC has achieved this goal by setting up its large display. Shown on the display are CCC programs, internship openings, future careers in the USDA, and other important information.

## **MEDIA DAY**

The CCC acknowledges the need for the program to be publicized so that its accomplishments, goals, and aspirations may be exposed to the communities in which the CCC is involved. This had been accomplished through several media day events in which television, radio, and newspaper personnel attend CCC activities. This has helped the CCC achieve its goal of becoming a program that reaches the maximum number of people possible.



## GPRA GOAL 4: EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVICE

ENSURE THE ACQUISITION AND USE OF AN APPROPRIATE CORPORATE INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENABLE THE EFFICIENT DELIVERY OF A VARIETY OF USES.

- 4.c *Improve and integrate informational systems, data structures, and information management processes to support cost efficient program delivery.*

### INTERN DATABASE

It is the CCC's goal to financially support as many interns as possible. An intern database, using Forest Service computers, is maintained with updated records. The database is currently used to produce mailing labels, informational letters, and conference materials. The database is also used as an up-to-date source of addresses and phone numbers for agency recruiting.

### WORK EXPERIENCE



Through the Central California Consortium students had the opportunity to gain paid work experience and applied concepts they learned in school in a professional environment.

This year the Central California Consortium had the opportunity to hire 87 students, 96% were minority students, and 39% were women. The ability to hire students from different ethnic groups allows the USDA Forest Service to build a diverse workforce. In addition, the students learned more about natural resources and the Forest Service. The students also attended a workshop hosted by the Human Resource Staff at the Sierra National Forest office. The workshop included issues regarding civil rights, sexual harassment, resume development, and work expectations. The workshop was to ensure the supervisors' expectations of the students' work and what the students hope to gain from their work experience. The students who attended the workshop learned how to enhance their presentation skills and improve their public speaking skills. The temporary pre-professional employment opportunities motivated the students to pursue careers with the USDA Forest Service and other natural resource agencies. The internship program targets students, enabling them to gain an interest in USDA bound jobs with the intent to build a strong future USDA workforce.

- 4.d *Improve the skills, diversity, and productivity of the workforce.*

### COLLEGE LIAISONS

The USDA Forest Service formed a partnership with Reedley Community College and acquired an office on campus. A Reedley College student, Jonathan Brooks, is the contact person on the campus and serves as the liaison for the USDA Forest Service, Kings Canyon Unified School District (KCUSD), and Reedley Community College. Reedley Community College has one of the top five Forestry Technician Programs in the nation, which encourages students to continue their education and earn an Associate's Degree in Forestry. The program also exposes students to the different opportunities available within the USDA Forest Service.

Reedley College provides the Central California Consortium with a phone, fax, unlimited access to the campus and equipment to do activities such as restoring the trail along the Kings River bank with students from Kings Canyon Unified School District and Reedley Community College.

This year, the CCC also formed a partnership with Merced College. A Merced College student, Serena Sanchez serves as the liaison for the USDA Forest Service and West Hills College.

## NEW CENTURY OF SERVICE AWARD



The Central California Consortium (CCC) was awarded the 2003 “New Century of Service” Award in Washington, D.C. for being instrumental in diversifying the USDA Forest Service workforce, being inclusive of all minority groups, and educating the underserved populations on natural resources. The CCC embodies the spirit of New Century of Service by demonstrating excellence and dedication in “Caring for the Land and Serving People.” The CCC received a \$5,000 grant to continue work in the underserved community of the San Joaquin Valley. The

CCC was selected to receive this award based on serving people, collaboration, mentoring, and honoring Forest Service Heritage.

“It's both a privilege and an honor to be recognized at a national level. This is a tribute to my young creative staffs’ hard work in the community. We have been successful in educating the community on environmental issues and diversifying the workforce . This is an award our partners and the whole community can be proud of.”

*-James Oftedal  
CCC Director*

## OTHER AWARDS



In 2003, the CCC has received national awards including the “Chief’s New Century of Service Award”, which recognized the CCC for helping to diversify the Forest Service workforce. The CCC Program Director, James Oftedal, also received the national “Unsung Hero Award” for his dedication to public service. Oftedal was also honored with the “Bert Corona Leadership Award” by the National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives for his valuable contribution in helping to diversify the Forest Service and encouraging underserved youth to continue their education. In 2002, the

CCC received the Governor’s Award for Volunteerism in recognition of the Generation Green Club Service Learning Project at Reedley High School. The City of Orange Cove awarded the CCC the “Key to the City of Orange Cove” for their efforts in helping the community. The CCC also received the Outstanding Achievement in Environmental Education which was presented by the Salt Lake Environmental Program. In addition, the CCC received the Future Farmers of America (FFA) Honorary Chapter Degree from the National FFA Organization.

## FSHEA PRESENTATION WORKSHOP

Following the students trip to Sacramento the Forest Service Hispanic Employment Association (FSHEA) organized a Saturday workshop for the students involved in the Generation Green Club and for students who attended the Sacramento leadership camp. The workshop included topics on how to develop a creative and successful presentation and how to improve their public speaking skills. The workshop also discussed the topics of leadership, effective communication, and ethical behavior at the workplace. The workshop provided the students an opportunity to learn different techniques to assist them in their presentations at the banquet at Reedley High School.



## **FSHEA**

The Forest Service Hispanic Employment Association (FSHEA) co-sponsored a workshop for students who completed the summer work experience program with the Central California Consortium. After the students completed their work experience program they presented poster board and PowerPoint presentations to their family, friends, supervisors, and the community at the Center of Advanced Research and Technology (CART) in Clovis, CA. The presentations informed the audience of the student's different experiences such as being wildlife biologists, firefighters, civil engineers, and landscape architects. The FSHEA workshop is given to enhance the student's public speaking and presentation skills.

## **FRESNO AREA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD (FAWIB)**

In June 2002 the Central California Consortium, received a \$135,785.00 grant from the Fresno Area Workforce Investment Board (FAWIB). This contribution allowed the CCC, in collaboration with Proteus, to put 20 students to work with the US Forest Service. In 2003, the CCC received an additional \$107,000 grant from FAWIB to fund more students. The CCC is utilizing the monies to employ Fresno County youth in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service, throughout the nation.

“By creating partnerships with organizations, such as FAWIB, we have strengthened our efforts in providing jobs to the youth in our community. We have done an exceptional job hiring students and in some cases our students have experienced life-changing effects. This year we hired 56 students and placed them throughout the nation including Washington D.C., Nevada, Colorado, Washington state, and California,”

- *James Oftedal*  
*CCC Director*

- 4.f *Provide appropriate access to NFS lands and ensure nondiscrimination in the delivery of all USDA Forest Service programs.*

## **REEDLEY FIESTA PARADE**

Twenty students from the Generation Green Club at Reedley High School had the opportunity to be in the Reedley Fiesta Parade with Smokey the Bear. As the students walked down the street, they distributed candy and information regarding the Forest Service. As a result of being in the parade the students are able to promote the Central California Consortium, Generation Green Club and the USDA Forest Service. The public is also exposed with potential opportunities and involvement with the Forest Service.

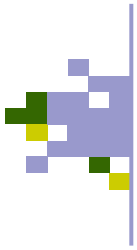
## **RIVER PARK FESTIVAL**

Several students from preschool through eighth grade had the opportunity to visit Lost Lake with CCC staff members. While enjoying their time at the lake, the students were educated on water safety, fire safety, and how to become good stewards of the land. In addition to the activities, the students were exposed to the USDA Forest Service and the different programs available to students.



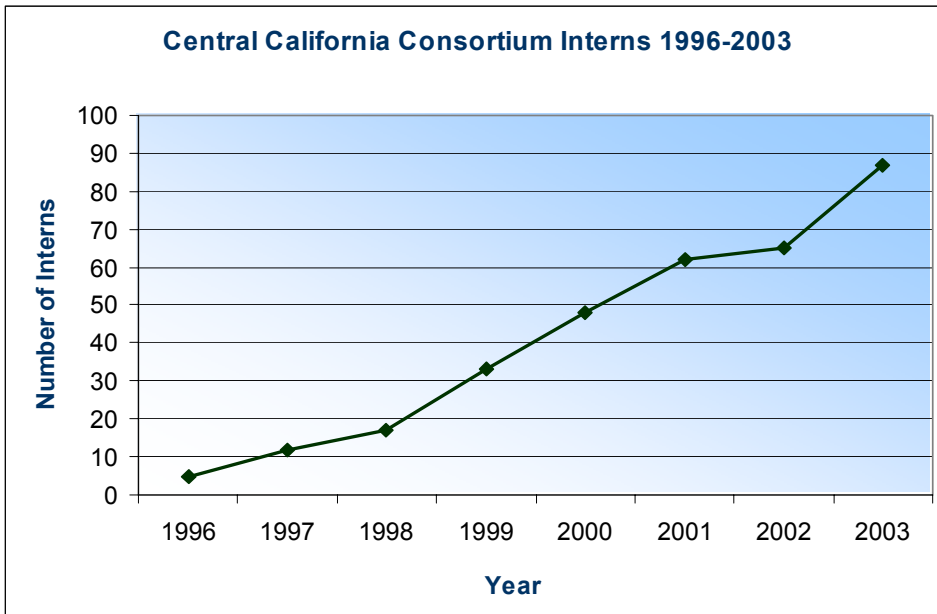
**The Central California Consortium would not be a success without the help of its many partners. The CCC would like to recognize the following organizations:**

- ABC Channel 30 News
- All Youth One System
- Backcountry Horsemen High Sierra Unit
- Bass Lake District, Fire Engine E-53
- Blue Cross
- Boys & Girls Club
- California Department of Forestry (CDF)
- California State University, Fresno
- California Urban Forestry Council
- Central California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Central Valley Astronomers
- Channel 21
- City of Orange Cove
- City of Reedley
- Coca-Cola
- CREEC Network
- Del Rey Boys & Girls Club
- Department of Fish and Game
- Department of Interior (DOI)
- Duncan Polytechnical High School
- EOC Sanctuary-Safe Place
- Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC) Sanctuary
- Exceptional Parenthood Unlimited
- Firebaugh Boys & Girls Club
- Forest Service Hispanic Employee Association
- Fresno Area Workforce Investment Board (FAWIB)
- Fresno City College
- Fresno County Office of Education
- Fresno Grizzlies
- GEAR UP
- Generation Green Club
- High Sierra District, Patrol Rig
- Hispanic Advisory Committee (HAC)
- Hmong Radio
- Kings Canyon Unified School District
- Kyle Coffman of Red Cross
- La Familia
- League of United Latin American Latinos (LULAC)
- Lowell Elementary
- Metropolitan Museum
- MH Reese and Associates
- National Hispanic Environment Council (NHEC)
- Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS)
- Orange Cove Boys & Girls Club
- Park Service
- Parlier Boys & Girls Club
- Producers
- Radio Bilingue
- Reedley Community College
- Reedley High school
- San Joaquin Valley Urban Forestry Council
- Sequoia Courts Boys & Girls Club
- Sequoia National Forest
- Sierra Helitack
- Sierra National Forest
- Stanislaus National Forest
- State Center Community College District
- Stone Soup Asian Community Center
- The Discovery Center
- United Black Men
- United States Hispanic Leadership Institute (USHLI)
- US Army Core of Engineers
- West Hills Community College
- Wildlink



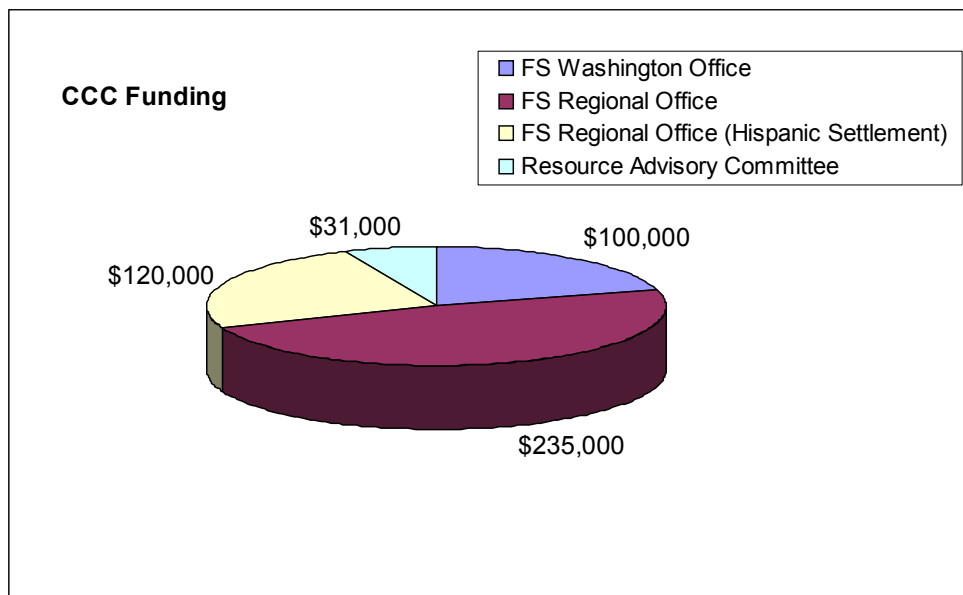
# APPENDIX

The following graph illustrates the number of students participating in the Central California Consortium (CCC) Summer Intern Program. The students who are involved in the program are exposed to the environmental and natural resource industries.



The CCC leverages human and financial resources in the following manner:

- In-Kind Contributions
- Creating Partnerships with Government, Non-Profit, Private, School Districts, Community-based organizations
- Matching Contributions





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