

Full Stream Ahead

News and highlights from Creeks and Communities: A Continuing Strategy for Accelerating Cooperative Riparian Restoration and Management

March 2003

NRST March Trip to Washington, D.C.

During the second week of March, members of the National Riparian Service Team went to Washington, D.C. for the purpose of doing internal (BLM, FS, NRCS) briefings relative to the Progress Report and the revised strategic plan. An emphasis was placed on the program evaluation findings and the subsequent adaptations outlined in the revised strategy document. Creeks and Communities: A Continuing Strategy for Accelerating Cooperative Riparian Restoration and Management was characterized as an inclusive, participatory approach that fosters local solutions and collective action, with an emphasis on building individual, institutional, and community capacity. Addressing resource sustainability in the context of community participation and economic stability, it provides a model where agencies are applying collaborative principles in a way that is responsive to public expectations and desires.

Because of the NRST role in working to gain understanding of and support for this work, specific attention was given to communicating the following things that are needed from agency leadership in order to ensure continued success:

- Additional institutional support both in terms of expectations and acknowledgement.
- Recognition of this model as a way to foster development of collaborative solutions.
- Integration into existing and future programs as an effective approach to achieve goals.
- Increased participation both in numbers and diversity of individuals and organizations.
- Support for collective action, i.e. the ability to implement on-the-ground changes.

Several briefings were done with various staff and program managers from the BLM and Forest Service. Others included individuals from the Deputy Chief, Associate Deputy Chief, and Director levels of the Forest Service and Assistant Director and Group Leader levels of the BLM. The NRST met jointly with the WO program contacts from BLM, Forest Service, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. These individuals have pledged to work more closely in support of the interagency strategy and discussed finalizing a 3-agency Memorandum of

Agreement and commitment letter. They are in the process of setting up additional briefings that they felt are needed to move this work forward. The team was fortunate to be able to meet with Lynn Scarlet, the USDI Assistant Secretary for Policy and Budget who plays a key role in the area of government performance. She was very interested in Laura Van Riper's program evaluation work and the continuing effort to develop indicators and outcome measures that can be used to determine effectiveness. Another briefing was held with Dave Tenny, USDA Deputy Under Secretary (Forestry). The discussion here centered on aspects of the interagency strategy and situations where it has been applied. It was stated that this approach represents a shift in how government functions at the community level. He asked how this strategy would fit into a larger framework of programs developed to deal with drought as this has been an important issue for him at the policy level. The team found that there is increased receptivity to collaborative approaches and a commitment to interagency cooperation. Another positive aspect was the understanding shown relative to the implications of implementing a model such as this within agency structures that are not designed to account for, or report, the activities or results. The absence of specific budget direction and targets actually creates a disincentive for participation. This theme came into each briefing because it is part of addressing the institutional barriers that need to be overcome as resource issues require increasing involvement in the human and social dimensions.

California Salmonid Restoration Federation Conference Workshop

Bill Cunningham, Randy Gould, and Julia Grim from the California Riparian Cadre invited the National Riparian Service Team to assist them in teaching a workshop at the 21st Annual California Salmonid Restoration Federation Conference in San Luis Obispo on March 27, 2003. The conference theme was salmonid restoration and urban streams. The workshop was held prior to the main conference event and over 80 people attended! Bill, Randy, and Julia gave presentations on the PFC assessment method. Ron Wiley illustrated the relationship of riparian function and the PFC assessment, to fish habitat and desired conditions. Janice Staats brought in the elements of the revised strategy, *Creeks and Communities*, presenting information on the context of riparian function and working with people to build understanding that leads to improved management on the ground. We are putting notes pages into these power point presentations so that we can share them with all the state riparian cadres, and will hand that out to cadre coordinators at the May meeting in Prineville.

Cebolla Canyon Riparian Area Assistance

The Albuquerque District BLM Office requested the assistance of the National Riparian Service Team on the Cebolla Spring and Stone House Riparian Pastures in Cebolla Canyon on the York Ranch located within the El Malpais National Conservation Area (NCA) in New Mexico. The York Ranch has been the subject of

litigation over livestock grazing for several years. The spring-fed Cebolla Riparian Pasture was fenced about three years ago and the area has not been grazed in eight years (Figure 1). During this time, riparian vegetation has developed downstream approximately two miles of the stream channel. Consensus had not been reached on the timing, intensity, and season of grazing use or whether the riparian pastures could be grazed until they have reached proper functioning condition (PFC).



Figure 1 Cebolla Spring flow into Creek

An Environmental Assessment (EA) was developed by the BLM approximately three years ago. The original decision states that livestock grazing would be permitted in the riparian pastures once the riparian areas had achieved PFC. The permittee, FNF Livestock, filed an appeal which revolves around three points:

1. Permitted livestock numbers.
2. Denying grazing in a riparian area until such time as the riparian area attains PFC.
3. A settlement agreement with Forest Guardians.

The team was asked to assist in making management recommendations designed to facilitate an upward trend in the condition of the riparian areas. The working group requested an assessment of the potential development of riparian resources in the Cebolla and Stone House Riparian Pastures and to assist in the design of a livestock grazing treatment that facilitates the development of riparian condition toward PFC as part of an attempt to reach settlement on the latest litigation. A key question is the possible effect of livestock grazing on the riparian areas upward trend prior to achieving PFC.

NRST members Steve Leonard, Rangeland Management Specialist, Cowdance Consulting and Sandy Wyman, Rangeland Management Specialist, BLM, toured the two riparian area pastures on March 25 with representatives from FNF Livestock Jim Leslie, Ranch Manager, Dee Galt and Jerry Holechek Consultants, Jesse Juen, Ed Singleton, Tom Gow, and Steve Fischer of BLM, and Red Baker, New Mexico Range Improvement Task Force. Janet Leslie, FNF, Dave Mattern and McKinley-Ben Miller, BLM joined the group on the second day.

The team met with the interested parties at the FNF Livestock Headquarters on March 25. FNF and BLM objectives and goals for the pastures were discussed prior to the field tour. Follow up activities will included collaboration on plan development in the hope that buy-in from all interested participants may prevent further litigation especially when all parties participate from the beginning of the planning process (Figure7).



Figure 7 Collaborative process leads to increased potential for successful management of resource area.

The team felt that the group has already made tremendous progress towards resolving the appeal. A flexible plan, that includes a monitoring program, will help resolve resource issues and provide written documentation of management results in the Cebolla Canyon in the event of future litigation.

Wayne's Retirement

It is true.....Wayne Elmore is retiring on May 3 from the BLM after 35 years of service. We will be having a retirement party for him on May 31, 2003 in Prineville, Oregon

Celebrate Wayne's incredible career with a family oriented potluck dinner and roast

When: May 31, 2003
5:00-9:00 PM

Where: Prineville Elks Lodge
151 N Main Street
Prineville, OR

Potluck Dinner - Please bring a main dish, salad or side dish. Dessert will be provided.

Please contact Carol Connolly at (541) 416-6892 or carol_connolly@or.blm.gov for the following:

1. RSVP with Name, Address, phone, email and number attending
2. Unable to attend and would like to send a card or gift
3. An item for a memory book that is being compiled for Wayne

4. If you would like to "Roast" Wayne at the party please email or call Don Prichard at don_prichard@blm.gov or (303) 236-0162

Local Hotels: Stafford Inn (541) 447-7100
 Best Western (541) 447-8080
 City Center (541) 447-5522
 Crook County RV Park (541) 447-2599

Upcoming Riparian Network Meeting

The NRST is currently working on the agenda for an all Network meeting on the implementation of the revised Accelerating Cooperative Riparian Restoration & Management (ACRRM) strategy *Creeks and Communities*. We are in the very early stages of planning this. Knowing how busy everyone is we want you to get this on your calendars now. More information will be sent in the future.

When: Week of November 17, 2003.

Location: Probably in Phoenix, AZ at the BLM National Training Center.

Website of Interest

Thanks to Ann Puffer for sharing this website. It contains a brochure on riparian areas in rangelands in the Pacific NW.

<http://eesc.orst.edu/agcomwebfile/edmat/pnw560.pdf>