

Annual Report 2000

TRINITY COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Board of Directors

Gregory Lowden
Chairman

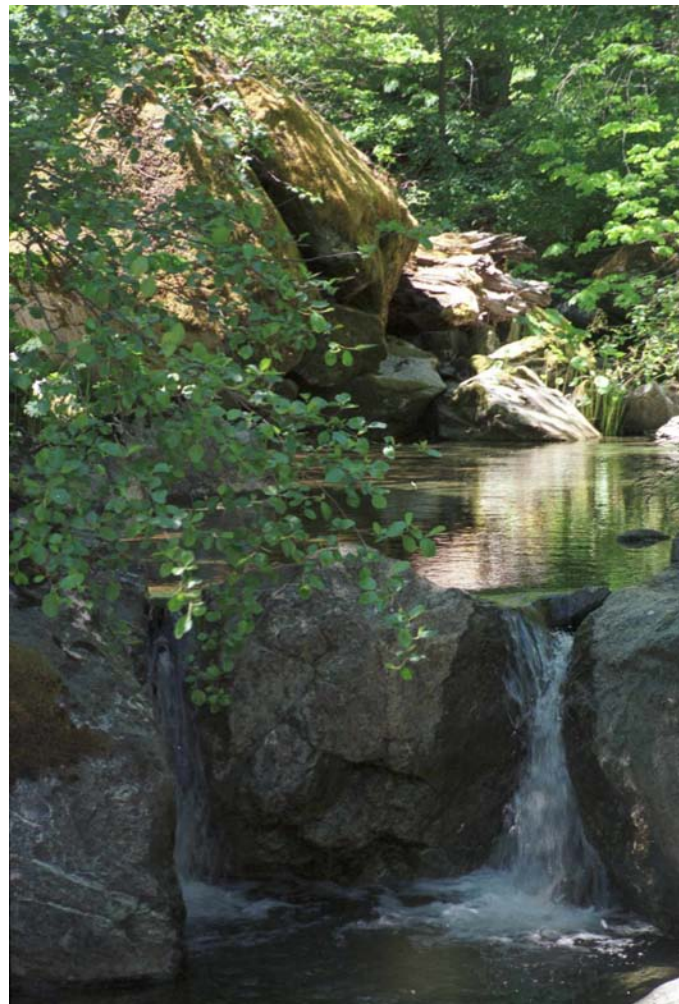
Rose Owens
Vice-Chairman

Doug Nowacki
Director

Mike Rourke
Director

Patrick Truman
Director

Patrick Frost
District Manager



Inside

Message from the Manager	2
Forest Health	3
Watershed Rehabilitation Projects	4
Revegetation Projects	6
Education and Outreach	7
Recreation	8
District GIS Services	9
Administration	10
Financial	11
Grants/Contracts Awarded During 2000	12

Mission Statement

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



MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGER...

RCD Manager, Patrick Frost



I look back on the past year and applaud all of our partners and the District staff for our accomplishments in natural resources conservation and management. This Annual Report highlights that work. What strikes me, in addition to the diversity of the projects, is the importance of the communities within Trinity County to the District's success. We would not have had the opportunity to spend 3 days with 60 sixth graders from Weaverville Elementary School at their environmental education camp at Bar 717 Ranch, if it were not for the energetic efforts of parents, teachers and the staff of the Ranch. Nor would we have had the success we had planting trees in the Lowden Fire, or building 4,000 feet of fencing to protect stream banks, except for the enthusiastic response of the landowners.

There is no better example of communities coming together to work towards a common goal than the development of the Forest Health and Fire Management Plan through the Trinity County Fire Safe Council. Over 100 individuals from every corner of the County came together in 13 meetings sponsored by the local volunteer fire departments and then to five regional meetings to work with resource professionals from CDF, the Forest Service, BLM, the Watershed Research & Training Center, Humboldt State University and the District to build a set of recommendations based on the needs and knowledge of local communities and the expertise of professionals serving our communities. All of these efforts culminated in the presentation of a set of draft recommendations to the Fire Safe Council on November 16, 2000 to a standing-room-only audience.

As comforting as it is to look back at our achievements in 2000, I know that we must keep our eyes focused on the future. The real proof of the success of this community-based plan will be successful implementation of the recommendations. This will require the continued support and participation of everyone in Trinity County not just in the New Year, but every year. Improving the health of our forests or our streams across the landscape will only happen, if each of us gets involved.



Forest Health

Trinity River Watershed Forest Health and Fuels Reduction

Significant progress has been made toward the development of a strategic fire management plan for Trinity County as part of the District's contract with the State Water Resources Control Board (Prop 204 funds). This plan will be used to assist in prioritizing and coordinating activities such as pre-fire fuels reduction treatments on both public and private lands. The Trinity County Fire Safe Council, which the District coordinates, has been working to improve cooperation and coordination in all aspects of wildfire management in Trinity County. Members of the Fire Safe Council include US Forest Service, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Volunteer Fire Departments, Trinity County, the Watershed Research and Training Center, Bureau of Land Management, Trinity RC&D Council and private citizens.

Fuels Reduction Demonstration Projects

The accumulation of wildland fuels affects much of Trinity County with the mix of timberlands and residential development in the County. Recognizing the risk of a catastrophic fire, a private landowner contacted the District for information and assistance. This led to the development of the community-based Covington Mill Neighborhood Fuels Reduction Association. The District spearheaded community outreach and education efforts, obtaining funds from California Department of Forestry and Fire (CDF) and contracting with a Registered Professional Forester to prepare a fire management plan.

Forty-three landowners in lower Covington Mill and Long Canyon areas participated in a fuels reduction/forest health improvement project. Approximately 30 acres of high-risk residential lands were treated by thinning, pruning, piling and then, burning or chipping, as a demonstration project within the community to protect approximately 217 acres of the participants' property. In Long Canyon a total of 7,200 linear feet of road was treated with a 50 ft. buffer on either side of the road.



NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), with assistance from the District, implemented projects for 10 landowners utilizing EQIP grants. Project work included: forest stand improvement, brush management, riparian planting, and livestock exclusionary fencing. Seven EQIP contracts have been signed with work to be implemented in 2001.



WATERSHED REHABILITATION PROJECTS

Trinity County Resource Conservation District has a long history of providing technical assistance and implementing projects in order to restore watersheds. Critical elements of restoration include implementation of projects that reduce erosion and the delivery of sediment to streams and rivers. The District contracted with various agencies including US Bureau of Reclamation, Environmental Protection Agency, Bureau of Land Management, California Department of Fish & Game, US Forest Service, Trinity County and Pacific Gas & Electric to implement rehabilitation projects in watersheds throughout Trinity County.

South Fork Trinity River Watershed

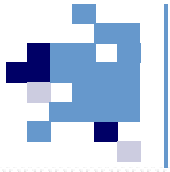
Work in the South Fork Trinity River Watershed on U.S. Forest Service lands consisted of maintenance level roadwork implemented in the Hidden Valley Compartment near Forest Glen. A total of 24.8 road miles were addressed, including high priority maintenance needs such as plugged or impaired inlets at stream crossings and construction of critical dips to eliminate diversion potential. Most of the roads were impassable due to brush on the road or severe problems at stream crossings, adding fire access to the primary benefit of erosion control. Related work included the decommissioning and hydroclosure of 1.8 miles of roads in the Upper South Fork Watershed, Smokey Creek Subwatershed, and East Fork of the South Fork Watershed.

A road inventory of the Rattlesnake Creek Watershed commenced toward the end of the season and will restart spring 2001. The implementation of an erosion control plan submitted by Pacific Gas & Electric was also started and postponed due to late season weather.



Hayfork Valley

The District works with landowners to protect riparian areas and improve water quality to support anadromous fisheries. Three livestock exclusionary fences totaling over 4,000 ft. were constructed on private lands on Hayfork, Barker and Summit Creeks; all tributaries to the South Fork Trinity River.



WATERSHED REHABILITATION PROJECTS

Grass Valley Creek Watershed

The District completed a bioengineered log revetment structure on Grass Valley Creek. The project addressed 130 ft. of eroding bank located on private property on Grass Valley Creek.

Another project completed on Grass Valley Creek involved installation of an irrigation system to replace a historical diversion ditch. The new system allows for improved passage of migrating fish.

Lowden Fire Rehabilitation- the RCD's Continued Role

The District continued to play an important role in the Lowden Fire Rehabilitation efforts during 2000. Working with the Bureau of Land Management, rehabilitation projects began on several levels to address problems created by the Lowden Ranch wildfire.

Hazardous Tree

The Lowden Fire damaged many trees on private and public lands creating a safety hazard and a potential erosion hazard. Our work involved the removal of standing dead vegetation along privately owned road corridors and near building sites where falling of hazardous vegetation posed a threat to human safety and where falling would increase erosion potential by blocking drainages and other waterways. Trees were cut down and removed within a 50-foot distance from the edge of each road used as an access route to properties within the fire area.

Damaged trees within a 100-foot radius of a home site were felled except taller trees outside that perimeter, which had the potential to fall onto the home. The scope of work was expanded by BLM to include the removal of trees impairing the viewshed.



Physical Rehabilitation

District staff repaired roads damaged during fire suppression efforts in Lewiston. To protect a private residence from flood damage, District crew rerouted the surface flow of the ephemeral stream away from the home.

Water Quality Monitoring

A 3-year water quality monitoring program was developed to evaluate possible impacts to federally listed species of anadromous fisheries in the Trinity River. This project was designed to analyze water quality data and provide indications of the effectiveness of erosion and sediment control prescriptions, and allow for interim consultations and adjustments of treatments following the fire.



REVEGETATION PROJECTS

Grass Valley Creek

The District continues to plant strategic subwatersheds following the Bureau of Land Management's *Ten Year Revegetation Plan for Grass Valley Creek Watershed*. A total of 48,040 trees, shrubs and grass plugs were planted during the Spring 2000 season. Fall 2000 was completed with 101,835 trees, shrubs and grasses planted during the 5-week season.



Lowden Fire Rehabilitation



The District, in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management, developed several components of revegetation projects to address the rehabilitation of the Lowden fire area.

One treatment focused on the reforestation of upland burned areas to aid in reducing soil loss, sediment flow, restore wildlife habitat, and improve the aesthetic values for landowners. A total of 10,500 Douglas Fir seedlings were planted by the District Revegetation staff, including the installation of vexar protection tubes with 2 stakes per tube.

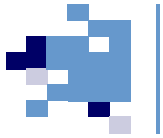
On private parcels, fifty-two Lewiston landowners were contacted and a total of 67,310 Ponderosa Pine and Douglas Fir were planted on 440.5 acres.

In addition to the tree planting, the District was contracted to monitor the effectiveness of the aerial seeding applied before the winter of 1999/2000 on approximately 1,800 acres.

Other Projects

Monitoring reports were conducted on the CalTrans Weaver Creek/ Highway 299 projects implemented fall of 1998 and 1999.

The District contracted with Trinity County Department of Transportation to conduct a botanical survey within the environmental study limits for CEQA compliance.



EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Education is an important component of District activities. Continued efforts are made to seek funding sources that include an educational element. We believe our on the ground activity that is beneficial to natural resources, should be viewed as a part of the District's educational efforts.

Our efforts are not limited to adult and community outreach and education. We are committed to serving the youth of our community and have resource professionals available to augment teacher's curriculum in the classroom or in the field. We have also expanded our outreach efforts to participate in community events such as the Salmon Festival.

The District's outreach and education programs for the year 2000 included:

- California and National Envirothon, a resource management competition for high school students
- Weaverville Elementary School Environmental Education Camp
- Day in the District, a tour showcasing District projects to elected officials
- Ranch Water Quality Workshop
- Tours of Watershed Restoration Projects for Humboldt State University Students
- Public Meetings for Input to the Weaverville Basin Trail Master Plan
- Participation in the Trinity County Fire Safe Council
- Participation in the South Fork Trinity River Coordinated Resource Management Planning (CRMP) Meetings
- Successful information booths about RCD Projects at
 - Trinity County Fair
 - Salmon Festival
- Quarterly Newsletter, the *Conservation Almanac* distributed to all Post Office Boxes in the County
- Developed and distributed 7 informational brochures

Backyard Conservation

The Trinity County Backyard Conservation Program was introduced to residents of our community. District staff provided information to landowners on the following topics: erosion control, use of native plants, riparian habitat improvement, fuel load reduction, water quality monitoring, and water conservation.

Brochures, newsletter articles, community presentations, and displays at community events have been used to announce our new program.

Salmon Festival





EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Trinity High Student Takes Part in Range Camp Wins Trip to Hawaii



Katrina Zimmer of Junction City took first place at the 16th annual California Range and Natural Resources Camp, held at Elkus Youth Ranch in Half Moon Bay, CA. Pleased not only to rank top among her peers in subjects such as ecology and rangeland management, Katrina is looking forward to her first place prize--a trip to Kona, Hawaii to attend the Society for Range Management Annual Conference.

Sponsored by Trinity County Resource Conservation District with the recommendation of her FFA advisor and Trinity High School Agriculture Science Teacher, Mike Rourke, Katrina attended camp June 18 –23, 2000. Range Camp is designed to introduce young men and women to the importance and value of California’s rangeland resources.



RECREATION

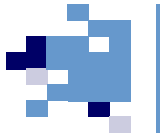
Weaverville Basin Trail

The Weaverville Basin Trail **Master Plan** was completed in 2000 through the cooperative efforts of the District, Weaverville Basin Trail Committee members, Trinity County Resource & Development Council and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Forest Service.

The Master Plan is a conceptual plan designed to show the potential of the nearly 50 miles of trail that circumnavigates Weaverville. The Trail Committee feels the information provided will assist in making decisions toward implementation of the mission and vision of a basin-wide trail system. The Master Plan will assist in securing funds for trail development.

Volunteers continue to log in many hours during the “Trail Work Days”.



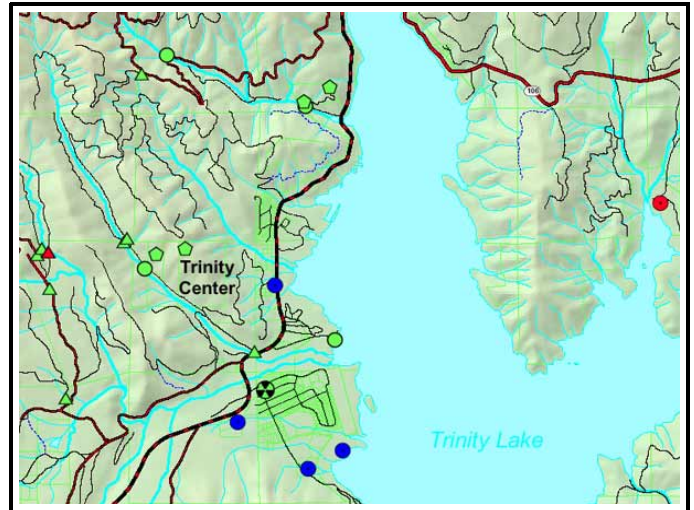


District GIS Services

Trinity County RCD has developed the capacity for Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis and display for a wide range of projects. During 2000 GIS work supported Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) development, community strategic fire planning, Trinity County parcel addressing, and updating the Klamath

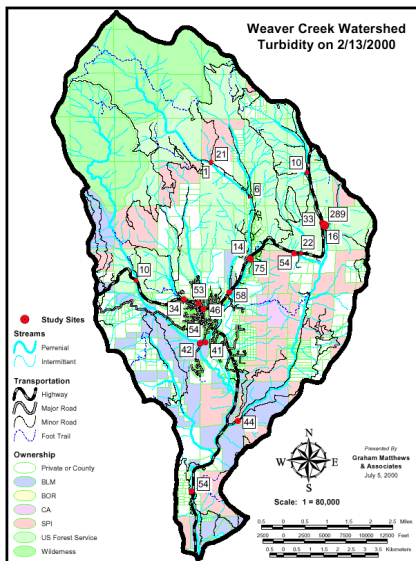
Community Strategic Fire Planning

Significant efforts for data management included the acquisition of data from other resource agencies and a series of community meetings as part of the development of a strategic fire management planning process. A seamless Trinity County GIS was created with coverages that include topography, roads, rivers, lakes, ownership, vegetation, slope, aspect, historic fire starts (human and natural), burn areas, and Digital Elevation Models (DEM). Assets at risk as well as other emergency response concerns like weak bridges, water supply sources, and locked gates were mapped and added to these GIS coverages. This information provided the basis for developing and prioritizing recommended fuel reduction projects.



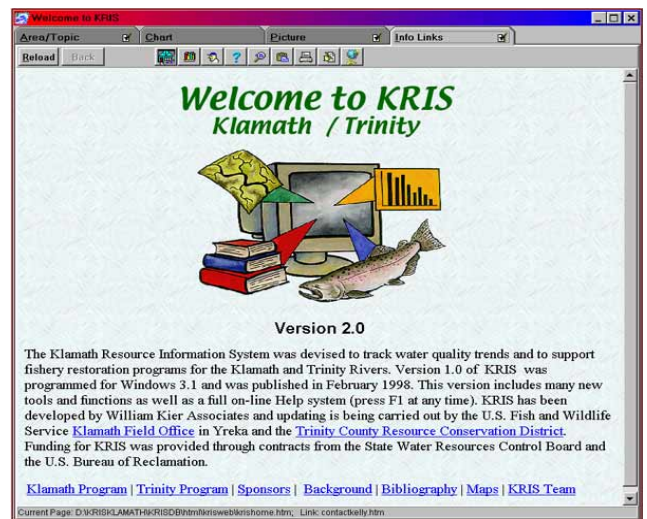
TMDL

One of the larger Fee-for-Service projects included assisting a local consultant with GIS support for sediment TMDL development. Watershed maps were created, including roads, landslides, and timber harvesting activity from digitizing historical aerial photos and other sources. This GIS information provided the basis for sediment source analysis on a subwatershed scale, by integrating existing data layers with sediment data collected in the field.



KRIS

The District took over the centralization, updating and dissemination of available data from the various agencies involved in the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP). This involves intensive data management and includes baseline and trend monitoring data, photographs, and other information with a user-friendly interface on CD. This project provides for comparisons over time of habitat conditions, fish populations, and water quality and provides a working tool for adaptive management for the TRRP.





Administration

The Board of Directors have maintained a strong commitment to support the efforts of our many partners, who recognize that locally-led activities can yield multiple benefits. Programmatic plans and initial implementation strategies are developed with Board approval. Under the Board's direction, District Manager Patrick Frost, guides activities that provide assistance to landowners throughout Trinity County. An important element of delivering assistance is securing adequate funding. The Board and staff have worked diligently at many levels to sustain funding to continue to meet the District's mission.

Local Affiliations

Director Nowacki served as the District Representative on the **Trinity County Natural Resources Advisory Council** and the **Trinity County Fire Safe Council**. Directors Owens and Truman served on the **RC&D Council**. Chairman Lowden worked closely with the **Weaverville Basin Trail Committee**. The District continued to actively participate in the **South Fork Trinity River CRMP**. Staff coordinated the **Trinity County Fire Safe Council**, and maintained active participation in the **Trinity County Weed Management Cooperative**, **Trinity River Restoration Program** and the **Trinity County Salmon Festival**.

State, Regional and National Affiliations

Chairman Lowden served as Northern Coordinator on the **California Envirothon Committee**, and was elected President September 2000. Director Truman served as the CARCD Representative on the **Pacific Fishery Enhancement Committee**.

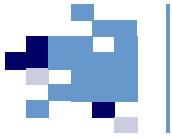
Board and Staff attended various meetings throughout the year including: the CARCD area meetings and annual conference, NACD Regional and Annual Meetings. District staff hosted the North Coast Area meeting on April 10, 2000.



Day in the District

The Board and staff hosted their first "DAY IN THE DISTRICT" tour on May 12, 2000. Led by District and NRCS staff, Assemblyman Dick Dickerson, Trinity County Board of Supervisors, Chris Erickson and Ralph Modine, NRCS Assistant State Conservationist, Linden Brooks, along with RCD Directors visited restoration projects that were recently completed.

In addition to highlighting District projects and activities, the tour gave Directors an opportunity to discuss the importance of locally led conservation, and the need for base funding with elected officials. Assemblyman Dickerson and Trinity County Supervisors were able to meet with landowners and see first-hand, completed projects on their property.



FINANCIAL

TRINITY COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Statement of Revenues and Expenditures
For the period January 1, 2000 through December 31, 2000

Revenues:

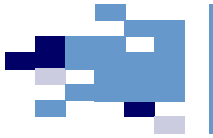
Contract Revenue	\$ 900,025.35
Fees for Service	29,026.15
Contributions	319.84
Sales Revenue	45.00
Interest	2,220.91
Miscellaneous	652.38
Release TRNA	83,209.81
Total Revenues	\$1,015,499.44

Expenditures:

Wages	\$ 492,361.36
Benefits	96,692.49
Instructional Supplies	851.87
Office Supplies	10,760.79
Other Supplies	98,316.81
Vehicle Costs	25,150.65
Contractors	168,214.41
Vendors	972.47
Travel	10,976.60
Conferences	4,050.45
Public Relations	3,055.79
Dues	4,692.00
Insurance	14,498.83
Rent/Utilities	18,125.62
Communications	3,576.28
Bank Fees	3,222.73
Equipment	12,529.59
Other Expense	1,101.28
Total Expenditures	\$ 969,150.02

Excess Revenues over Expenditures 46,349.42

Fund Equity December 31, 2000 59,142.07



Grants/Contracts Awarded During 2000

Trinity River Restoration Program-Grass Valley Creek Watershed Restoration
(\$64,000)-FY 2000

Continuation of erosion control projects including revegetation projects to reduce sediment to the Trinity River.

Trinity River Restoration Program-Grass Valley Creek O&M and Monitoring
(\$127,000)-FY 2000

Continuation of operation and maintenance restoration efforts in the Grass Valley Creek Watershed. These funds are primarily to dredge the Hamilton Ponds of sediment as necessary.

Trinity River Restoration Program-South Fork Trinity River Watershed
(\$173,000)-FY 2000

Continuation of watershed restoration projects in South Fork Trinity River on public and private lands including erosion control, riparian enhancement such as planting and cattle exclusion fencing, water quantity improvement and water quality monitoring.

Trinity River Restoration Program-KRIS
(\$50,000)-FY 2000

Maintain and update the Klamath Resource Information System (KRIS) for the Trinity River and its tributaries. This will continue the process of centralizing, updating, and disseminating available data on the effectiveness of fish and wildlife restoration in the Trinity River Basin.

US Fish and Wildlife Service-Lowden Fire Non-Commercial Revegetation Project
(\$34,118)

Revegetate private lands affected by the Lowden Fire in Lewiston with non-commercial native species to promote ecological recovery. Upland revegetation and enhancement of burned areas to reduce sediment and benefit wildlife as well as improve aesthetic values for landowners in the burn area.

Fish and Game SB271-Rattlesnake Creek Watershed Road Inventory
(\$31,000)

To conduct an inventory approximately 240 miles of the road network on US Forest Service lands in Rattlesnake Creek Watershed for inclusion in scheduled Watershed Analysis and to prioritize sediment reducing watershed restoration activities.

Fish and Game SB271-Barker Creek Fish Passage Enhancement Project
(\$10,934)

To repair a fish ladder, reinstall baffles in culvert and construct concrete weirs to create jump pools to provide fish passage to Barker Creek.

Fish and Game SB99-Indian Creek Stream Rehabilitation Project
(\$17,174)

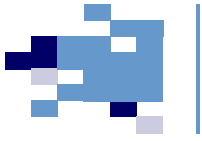
To improve fish habitat and channel stability through the construction of bio-engineered structures and extensive revegetation along a severely eroded section of Indian Creek.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation-Trinity County Riparian Education and Outreach Project
(\$10,000)

Expand on an existing Riparian Care Outreach program in order to reach other areas of Trinity County, the schools, and to allow the RCD to provide on-the-ground technical assistance to landowners that desire to improve their riparian areas.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation-Hayfork Riparian Enhanced Model Vineyard Project
(\$7,500)

Design a vineyard that will demonstrate that a vineyard can be designed, constructed and operated in a manner that balances the need to produce grapes and be beneficial to riparian functions, especially habitat values for riparian land birds.



Grants/Contracts Awarded During 2000

Bureau of Land Management-Native Grass Propagation Project
(\$9,535)

Sowing of 14,000 containers with native grass seed for planting in the Grass Valley Creek Watershed.

CalTrans-Rush Creek Bridge Revegetation
(\$30,000)

Revegetate and stabilize all disturbed areas of CalTrans bridge reconstruction project on Hwy 3 with a combination of native grass seed, certified weed-free straw mulch, and conifer and shrub plantings as well as salvage and placement of willow root wads.

Natural Resources Conservation Service-EQIP-Riparian Education & Outreach Project
(\$13,000)

Continue the process of delivering riparian health care information to residents of Trinity and Humboldt Counties. Educate landowners and residents about the importance of maintaining healthy, viable riparian zones for the benefit of anadromous fish as well as other wildlife.

Trinity County—GIS
(\$8,750)

Prepare detailed GIS coverages for roads and parcels for the County Transportation Commission.

PG&E—Powerline Erosion Control
(\$28,461)

Erosion control and restoration for disturbed areas caused by PG&E rights of way contractor.

Department of Conservation—Trinity County Backyard Conservation
(\$13,000)

Educate landowners in Trinity County in appropriate management practices including erosion control, use of native plants, riparian habitat improvement, fuel load reduction, water quality monitoring, and water conservation.

US Forest Service—South Fork Trinity River Road Decommission
(\$19,740)

Decommission the 28N10B road on USFS lands in the East Fork South Fork watershed.

Trinity County—Trinity Gateway Project
(\$44,120)

Stormwater treatment design, landscaping, riparian enhancement, educational signage, and coordination of in-kind services from various entities for an Environmental Enhancement Mitigation contract the County has with CalTrans.

Trinity County—South Fork Turbidity & Suspended Sediment Monitoring
(\$19,265)

Collect baseline data to assist in prioritizing restoration actions, evaluating the effectiveness of restoration actions to date, for implementing the South Fork TMDL, and facilitating the education and empowerment of watershed residents by organizing a community-based volunteer program for monitoring turbidity.

Bureau of Land Management-Lowden Fire Hazard Tree Removal
(\$40,893)

Removal of hazardous trees and other dead vegetation within the Lowden Fire area.

VISION STATEMENT

Trinity County Resource Conservation District 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.

TRINITY COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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