

RAC-TIVITY

NEWSLETTER OF THE
SHASTA COUNTY RESOURCE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE



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Available in Adobe format at
www.fs.fed.us/projects

WHAT IS RAC and WHAT DO THEY DO?

What is the ACT?

The Secure Rural Schools and Self Determination Act (The Act) was signed into law on October 20, 2000. The Act addresses the decline in revenue from timber harvest in recent years received on Federal land, which have historically been shared with counties. These funds have been used for schools and roads. The purpose of the Act is to stabilize payments to counties that help support roads and schools, provide projects that enhance forest ecosystem health and provide employment opportunities, and to improve cooperative relationships among Federal land management agencies and those who use and care about the lands the agencies manage.

What is RAC?

In September 2001 U.S. Department of Agriculture established 28 Resource Advisory Committees (RAC) for the

Pacific Southwest Region. The RAC's purpose is to improve collaborative relationships and to provide advice and recommendations to the Forest Service consistent with The Act.

Who are the RAC members?

The RAC is 15 members appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture that are recommended by the Board of Supervisors. Committee members represent interest groups and are assigned to three categories. Categories are made up of representatives from business, land users, recreational land users, environmental organizations, elected officials, and educators (to name a few).

What are RAC duties?

RAC duties include: Review of Title II projects; recommending projects to the Secretary of Agriculture; co-ordination of projects with Forest Service officials; and provide opportunities for citizens, agencies, and organizations to participate

in the project development process of The Act, and to monitor projects.

How are funds used?

Funds can be used for projects on National Forest land and on private land adjacent to National Forest System lands that provides benefits to the National Forest Land. Projects are limited to:

- ▶ Watershed restoration
- ▶ Road and trail maintenance
- ▶ Wildlife and fish habitat improvement
- ▶ Re-establishment of native plant species
- ▶ Soil productivity improvement
- ▶ Improvement to forest ecosystem health
- ▶ Recreation and natural resource education.

For information on how to apply for a RAC grant, please see Page 4 of this newsletter. 🌲

RARE PLANTS PROPOGATED AT WEST VALLEY HIGH



Native Riparian and Rare Plant Species Conservation Project— Award \$350,000

West Valley High School, Happy Valley Elementary School, and Sierra Pacific Industries received \$350,000 for their *Native Riparian and Rare Plant Species Conservation Project*. Construction of two greenhouses for the propagation and study of native riparian and rare plants at both schools will be complete in February 2004.

In Spring 2004, native riparian and rare plants experiments will be conducted in the greenhouses. Students at both schools will participate in performing

greenhouse research projects. In addition to propagating plants in the greenhouses, students will receive instruction on the ecological and management requirements of native riparian and rare plants. A natural resource education curricula and outreach program is currently under development and will be implemented in participating schools by Tom Vasquez and Steve Westaby.

Lectures for students and the public from local botanists and researchers are scheduled for Spring 2004. 🌲



NOXIOUS WEEDS IDENTIFIED

The goal of the **Stillwater Creek Inventory of Noxious Weeds** is to restore and improve land health and water quality in the Stillwater Watershed. *Excerpts from article by Valerie Shaffer, WSRCD.*

Arundo donax, commonly known as “Giant Reed”, is an aggressive, non-native noxious weed that is becoming established in and along our creeks and rapidly – up to four inches a day and ultimately reaches a height of twenty-five to thirty feet. *Arundo* consumes enormous amounts of water and forms dense, pure stands that can out compete and completely suppress native riparian vegetation.

Arundo grows in what is known as the riparian zone – a distinct ecosystem made up of a narrow band of trees and shrubs that border creeks, streams and lakes. Healthy riparian zones play a critical role in the health of streams and watersheds.

Detrimental changes in the health of riparian zones can in turn produce negative effects on many aspects of watershed

health – reducing habitat for fish and wildlife, compromising water quality, reducing water availability, increasing fire potential and interfering with flood control.

Beaver dams constructed on Stillwater Creek from *Arundo* are accelerating the spread of *Arundo*. *Arundo* reproduces by means of stem root segments being washed downstream. When beavers use *Arundo* to build their dams, they will accelerate the spread of this aggressive non-native weed. Additionally, beaver dams slow the movement of water and create an opportunity for *Arundo* to snag areas and take root.

Arundo donax has become established in many parts of Southern California and ongoing efforts to eradicate it have proven to be incredibly challenging and costly. *Arundo*, if left unchecked will far and away exceed the cost we face now. We need to place the eradication of *Arundo* as a high priority and take immediate action while the problem is still manageable. 🌿



NOXIOUS WEED INVENTORY AND CONTROL PROJECT

- STILLWATER CREEK
- SHASTA-TRINITY NATIONAL FOREST
- WESTERN SHASTA RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT (WSRCD)
- 2002/2003 FUNDING AWARD \$25,152

FUEL HAZARDS REDUCED



FOUR-CORNERS FUELS REDUCTION PROJECT

- 4 CORNERS NORTH
- LASSEN NATIONAL FOREST
- HAT CREEK RANGER DISTRICT
- 2001/2002 FUNDING AWARD—\$57,000

Land benefits from this project were to help protect hundreds of acres of east-side pine forest and oak woodlands, while providing a location to reintroduce prescribed fire in these ecosystems.

The 4 Corners North Fuels Reduction project utilized brush mastication and biomass removal to reduce

fuel hazards on 114 acres of forest land in northeastern Shasta County.

Fuels were reduced to enhance community and forest health, and to leverage fuels treatment that had recently been completed. Fuel removal reduced the threat of fire to an area that experiences high fire activity.

The Sandpit Road community, located north of Cassel Road junction on Highway 299, consists of a school and 12 houses. People of this area are familiar with catastrophic fire such as the Fountain Fire (Shasta County—August 1992) and supported the efforts of fuels reduction in their community.

Thanks to Title II funding, 114 acres of forest health were improved and 5 jobs were generated. 🌿

PRIOR PROJECT AWARDS

Project Description	Agency	Total Cost	2001 Funds	2002 Funds
Rare plant/endorangered species education program	Sierra Pacific Industries/West Valley High School/Happy Valley School District	\$350,000	\$175,000	\$175,000
Cottonwood Creek Watershed	Cottonwood Creek Watershed Group	20,000		20,000
Biomass harvest on 50 acres on the LaTour State Forest	Shasta County Fire Dept. (CDF)	7,081	7,081	
Spattercone Interpretive Trail	Hat Creek Ranger District Lassen National Forest	60,000		60,000
Education support to local schools regarding forest land management practices	Turtle Bay Museums on the River	83,919	83,919	
Defensible fire zone along Backbone Ridge	Western Shasta Resource Conservation District	300,000	200,000	100,000
Four Corners North Fuel Reduction	Hat Creek Ranger District Lassen National Forest	57,000	57,000	
Fire Safe Education Program	Shasta County Fire Dept. (CDF)	35,000	35,000	
Construction of brush structures to enhance Shasta Lake fishery	Shasta Lake Ranger District Shasta-Trinity National Forest	18,000	18,000	
Support for the Forestry Institute for teachers conducted at Camp Latieze	No. Calif. Society of American Foresters	20,960		20,960
Fuels reduction project in Lakehead area	Western Shasta Resource Conservation District	17,114		17,114
Fuels reduction project in Soldier Mountain area	Hat Creek Ranger District Lassen National Forest	91,500		91,500
Noxious weed inventory in Stillwater Creek Watershed	Western Shasta Resource Conservation District	25,000		25,000
Environmental Education Field Days Program at NEED Camp	Western Shasta Resource Conservation District	18,440		18,440
LaTour State Forest Roads maintenance	Calif. Dept. of Forestry	50,000		50,000
Total Costs Of Projects Approved by Resource Advisory Committee		\$1,154,014	\$576,000	\$578,014

NEED HELP ON TERMS?



Noxious Weeds:

An abundantly growing plant considered harmful and where it is not wanted

Defensive fire zone:

- ⇒ Reduces vegetation
- ⇒ Develops fuel reduction zone
- ⇒ Provides control lines that provide tactical location for fire suppression

Riparian:

On or pertaining to the bank of a river or pond or small lake



Toyon

MEMBER ARTICLE:

RAC member Gennie Seely represents the archeological and historical interest group. She grew up in Humboldt County and is a member of the Wiyot tribe. Gennie's article is on native plants and their uses.

USEFUL PLANTS

Back in the isolated logging camps, we had to depend on plants for much of our medication. Wormwood was a staple. It was used as a poultice for wounds and even used in steaming out congestion. Even now it can be used as a beautiful addition to your semi-shade garden.

Mountain balm or yerba santa was used as a tea for curing colds. Now you seldom find this plant in good soil. It seems to thrive along

rocky, oil spattered roadsides, breathing noxious auto fumes. If your present garden site fits this description, this plant with its serrated leathery leaves might fit right in.

Berries of all kinds were utilized. Huckleberries, salmonberries and wild blackberries abounded. This latter was not the Himalayan berry which has since almost crowded out the native blackberry.

There were countless other plants that grew along the coast that were edible. When I moved inland, the species changed somewhat, but I still found many plants that were useful.

The toyon berry is edible, and the plant makes a beautiful garden addition. The ceonothus also grows here. Its small branches were often used as the framework for small baskets. The plant is drought tolerant and makes a beautiful addition to any

well-drained site. Manzanita berries are edible. Its leaves and stems can be steeped or boiled to make a solution to help alleviate the itch of poison oak.

Soap root was used to make brushes. The cambium layer of the maple was stripped and pounded to make work skirts for the women (sort of like a hula skirt).

The willow, especially the blue or gray, was used as the framework for twined baskets. Black overlay from the maidenhair fern, or bark from red bud shoots was used in basket designs. Woodwardia fern, dyed with alder bark, provided the rust tones. Staghorn lichen was used to dye porcupine quills yellow for another color overlay.

Of necessity, native people learned to live with nature and to utilize what nature provided, using sensible harvesting methods. Revisiting some of those methods might be a wise move. 🌱

**Shasta County Resource
Advisory Committee Contacts**

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(follow the payments to states link)

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For additional copies of this
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530-226-2494

COOL LINKS

Calif. Native Plant Society

<http://www.cnps.org/>

Noxious Weeds

<http://www.blm.gov/education/weed/weed.html>

How do I apply for a RAC grant?**Forms are available on line at:**

<http://www.fs.fed.us/projects> — Select the payment to states link and select Title II Propose a Project.

If you do not have internet access, please contact Mike Odle at 530-226-2494 and an application will be sent to you.

Grant Requirements:

- Projects must be within the Shasta County boundary.
- Projects must provide a benefit to National Forest Lands
- Environmental studies and federal laws must be followed.
- Projects are limited to:
 - Road, trail, and infrastructure maintenance or obliteration
 - Soil productivity improvement
 - Improvements in forest ecosystem health
 - Watershed restoration and maintenance
 - Restoration, maintenance, and improvement of wild-life and fish habitat
 - Control of Noxious and exotic weeds
 - Re-establishment of native species
 - Recreation and National Resource Education
- 50% of projects may be for road maintenance/obliteration or watershed improvement/restoration
- Preference will be given to projects with matching funds

Shasta County RAC**Members**

Bob Allen
Chip Arenchild
Emmett Burroughs
Jim Chapin
Irwin Fust
Brenda Haynes
Ted James—*Chair*
Wendy Johnston—*Vice Chair*
Charles Menoher
Sylvia Milligan
Gary Nakamura
Dan Scollon
Gennie Seely
James Taylor
Molly Wilson
Sharol Schaefer-Alternate

Forest Service Representatives

Kristy Cottini
Mike Odle
Deb Romberger

**Shasta County Dept. Public
Works Representatives**

Dan Kovacich
Sue Crowe

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