

Conservation Almanac

Trinity County Resource Conservation District

Summer 2011

Vol. XX No. 1



WEAVERVILLE SUMMER DAY CAMP

**At the Young Family Ranch — 260 Oregon St.
For students entering 1st through 6th grade**

July 5 through July 8 - 1st Session

July 11 through July 15 - 2nd Session

July 18 through July 22 - 3rd Session

July 25 through July 29 - 4th Session

Day camp is 9:00 am until 1:30 pm weekdays - Call 623-6004 for more info



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Floating Field Trip Provides Insights

Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP) helped host a floating field trip April 15 to share and gather different views about river restoration projects. Participants included Trinity River guides Travis Michel and Steve Townzen, biologist Aaron Martin of the Yurok Tribe Fisheries Program, TRRP Implementation Chief Jennifer Faler and several of that agency's engineers and scientists, plus Alex Cousins of the Trinity County Resource Conservation District.

Michel and Townzen provided boats for the all-day tour which put in at the Old Lewiston Bridge and ended at Steel Bridge. The event gave TRRP's physical scientists and engineers an opportunity to show why the sites are designed and built as they are, as well as where projects are situated. Importantly, the tour gave guides the chance to point out and explain how different projects affect river recreation and to examine, with TRRP members, some of the fishing holes and other locations they are especially concerned about. Guides have expressed concern about the need to preserve deep pools favored by adult salmonids, and TRRP has agreed to develop a workplan to monitor these closely.

The field trip served to bring together individuals with a range of river-related interests so they could view and discuss projects on-site. It enabled all participants an opportunity to discuss finer points of past implementation and to learn about or to gather input for future restoration efforts.





New NRCS employee keeps busy

Carrie Nicolls' love for the outdoors led her into science and her enjoyment of being in the woods guided her into forestry. Now, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry from Humboldt State University, she is pursuing a career with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and is assigned to the Weaverville office serving all of Trinity County.

NRCS, an agency of the US Department of Agriculture, helps landowners conserve and benefit natural resources in sustainable ways through conservation planning and assistance. Nicolls and other NRCS employees work closely with individual farmers, ranchers, landowners and other agencies and entities to identify appropriate solutions for local resource concerns and challenges. The variety of the work keeps Nicolls on her toes and learning constantly. "I enjoy the diversity of my job. I deal with a wide range of issues in addition to forestry — wetlands, fencing, range management, erosion and more," she explained. "I also appreciate the opportunity to work with landowners and share knowledge on proper management of their land. It's great to see implementation of good work on the ground."

Nicolls grew up in Magalia, near Paradise in Butte County, and is succumbing to the charms of Trinity. "What I like about Trinity County is that it is rural and has a lot of recreational opportunities. It's a great place to hunt, fish, backpack, mountain bike — it's a hot spot for doing anything active outdoors."



Salmon Aquarium Program Comes to Trinity

Students at Weaverville Elementary School were intrigued by the hatching and maturing of Chinook salmon this spring in a classroom aquarium provided by the Trinity County Resource Conservation District.

The aquarium, with its special chiller unit, was funded with education grants obtained by TCRC. Arrangements were made to place it in Lisa Saulsbery's sixth-grade classroom so all students could enjoy observing the wondrous transformation of soft round pink eggs into silvery young fish. AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Project (WSP) member Roslyn Lack, who works with TCRC, set up the aquarium and obtained the fertilized eggs in January (see below) from the Trinity River Fish Hatchery in Lewiston. Hatchery personnel provided fish food and helpful advice for the project which was conducted under California Department of Fish and Game's Classroom Aquarium Education Program.

Lack instructed students on monitoring temperature, oxygen level and pH of the aquarium, as well as how to change filters in order to maintain perfect conditions for the fish. Lack noted that maintaining this temporary habitat required constant attention to detail, causing her and the students to learn a considerable amount during the course of the project.

It wasn't long after the Chinook eggs were placed into the aquarium that they began their visible transformation, with eyes becoming the first distinguishable characteristic. The small life forms immediately captured the attention of students and teachers and created many learning opportunities. Students were astonished to learn the eggs arrived from the hatchery simply wrapped in a moist cloth inside a paper cup rather than in water. The embryonic fish breathe through the soft egg casing and can survive out of water for up to 48 hours in a moist environment but need highly oxygenated water if they are to thrive.

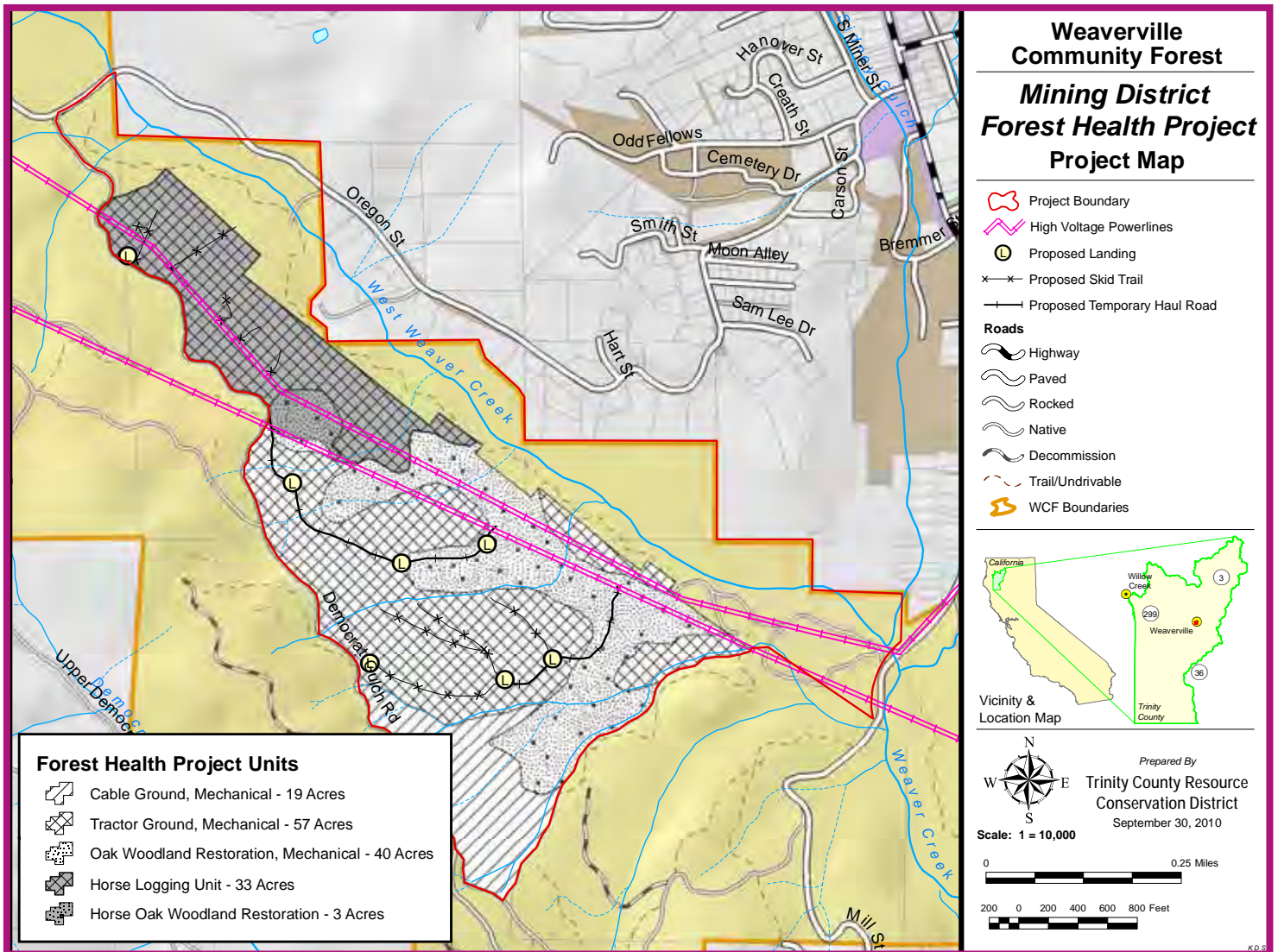
The surviving Chinook were released into the Trinity River on May 19 during a volunteer Hands on the Land planting day at BLM's Douglas City Campground. The special habitat restoration event involved students from Weaverville and Douglas City elementary schools, plus a large contingent of students from the Presidio School in San Francisco

Lack picks up Chinook eggs from Trinity River Fish Hatchery in Lewiston.





Community Forest Project to Begin in August

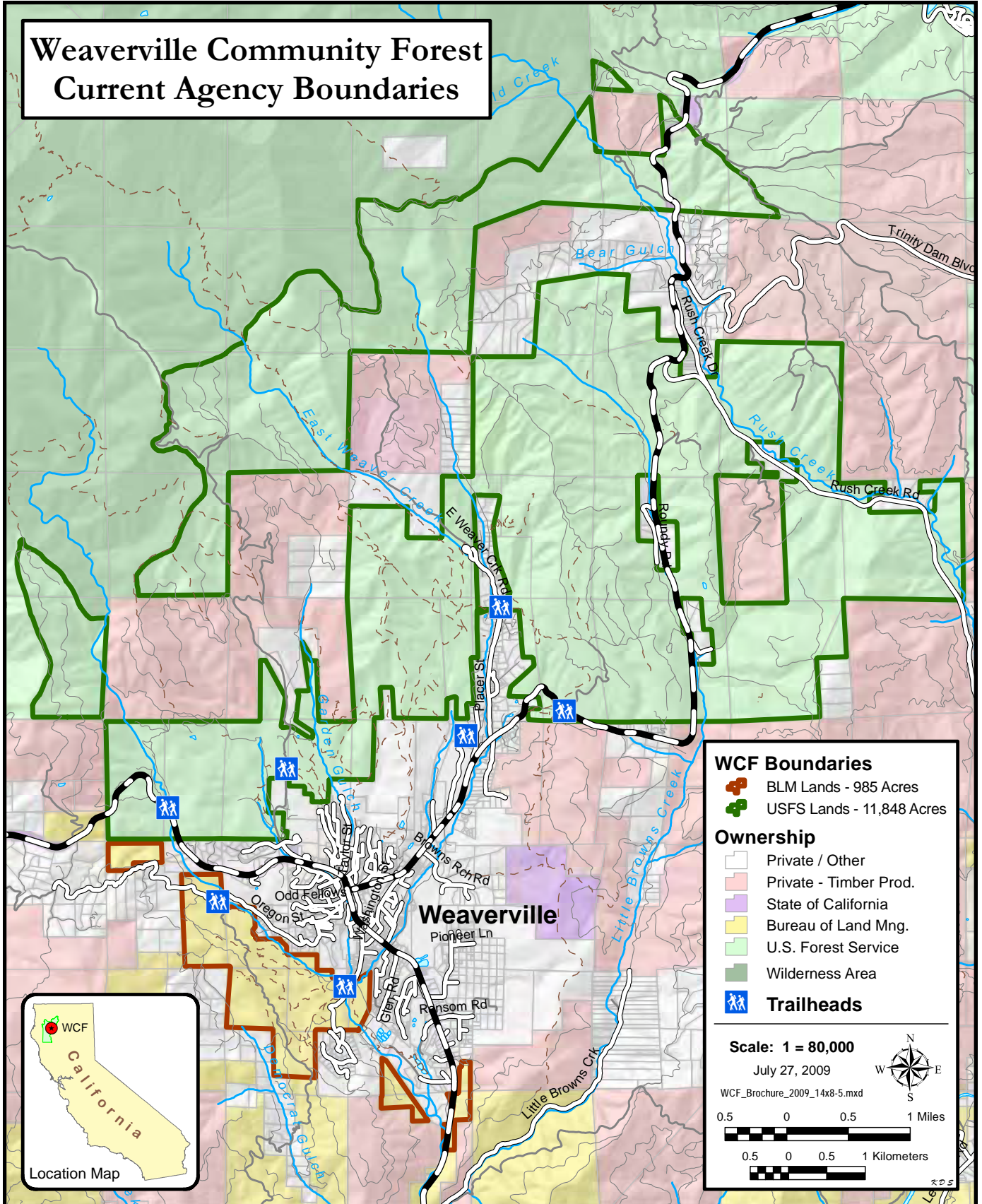


TCRCD has been working with BLM to plan the 200-acre Mining District Forest Health Project in the WCF set to begin in August. The project is comprised of five units, based on topography, site-specific attributes and desired outcomes. Units 1-3, totaling 97 acres, will be treated using standard, mechanized (tractors and cables) to remove sellable as well as non-marketable timber. Unit 4, totaling 36 acres, will be treated using horse-logging as this is a culturally sensitive area and is considered an equipment-exclusion zone. Unit 5, comprising the remaining project acreage, is an oak woodland that will be treated to restore the vigor and health of the oaks. Work will begin no sooner than August 1.

The District is working with the WCF Steering Committee to ensure the project maintains economic viability and accomplishes the goals developed in the Strategic Plan of the Weaverville Community Forest.

A mandatory site showing for loggers planning to bid on Units 1-3 is slated for 10 a.m. June 27. Bids will be opened at the beginning of the regularly scheduled board meeting July 20. We are hoping to extract 292 MBF from 97 acres.

Weaverville Community Forest Map



Students Dig In at Hands on the Land Event

Fifth and sixth grade students from Weaverville and Douglas City elementary schools joined eighth grade students from San Francisco's Presidio School May 19 at BLM's Douglas City Campground for a morning of weed removal and planting native vegetation. The event also included the release of juvenile Chinook salmon raised from eggs in a Weaverville Elementary School classroom.

Almost 800 native plants, including 222 trees, were put in the ground along the Trinity River. Native vegetation improves habitat for fish and wildlife.

The project was supported by the Bureau of Land Management Redding Office with funding from BLM's "Hands on the Land" program, Trinity County Resource Conservation District and the Trinity River Restoration Program. Over 84 students and 15 adults participated in the day's activities.

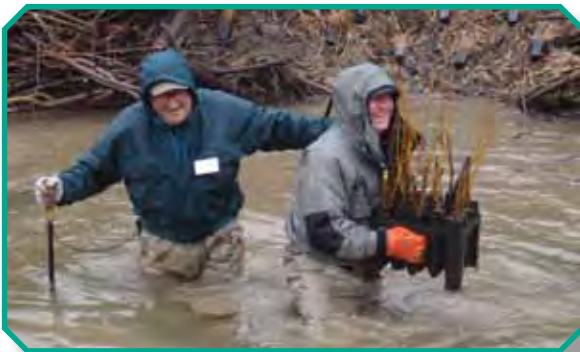
The event was organized by Roslyn Lack and Donna Rupp, both volunteers in the AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Project (WSP) The WSP mission is to conserve, restore, and enhance anadromous watersheds for future generations by linking education with high quality scientific practices. WSP is a special project of the California Conservation Corps and is administered by California Volunteers and sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service.





Shasta Trinity Fly Fishers Wade In to Help Habitat

Shasta - Trinity Fly Fishers teamed with the Trinity River Restoration Program and the District to sponsor a tree-planting event March 5 to improve steelhead habitat along Trinity River near a newly constructed side-channel at Lowden Ranch. Support and planning came from TCRCD, Bureau of Land Management's Hands on the Land Program and AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Project. Among those volunteering to plant in the rain were several families with young kids, California Conservation Corps members, Cub Scouts and Green Jobs Program recruits. About 36 volunteers planted 200 trees and more than 1,000 riparian plants to improve fish and wildlife habitat.



District Manager's Corner

The United Nations has declared 2011 the “Year of the Forests” to celebrate and to focus the world’s attention on the importance of forests to each of us. Forests are perceived in a variety of ways, but some of their most precious attributes are often overlooked. I became aware of certain aspects of forests and our relationships to them while preparing to teach a class on natural history at Shasta College this spring, and while taking field trips around our forests.



Our forests are highly complex water collection, storage, treatment and delivery systems – incredible low-tech wonders that begin their work anew with every rain or snow storm to catch, sequester and meter out flows of fresh, clean water to our streams, rivers and aquifers. Yet a large number of people don’t know the value of forests to their water supply. A recent survey of Americans by the Nature Conservancy revealed 77 percent of U.S. residents could not accurately identify the natural origins of the water that flows from their taps. This disconnect with our nation’s forests exemplifies the constant struggle we have in trying to make the case with policy makers and legislators to support forest land stewardship across the landscape. Here in California their constituents simply aren’t aware that 75 percent of the state’s residential water comes from our forested landscape and most of that from the snowy northern mountains like those we cherish in Trinity County. Likewise, the majority of all water used for agricultural irrigation comes from these forested watersheds.

This time of year, whenever I am working in the little patch of forest that I call home, I am reminded of some of the other reasons I care about forests, of how they are working for me day-in and day-out. Some of the trees that I remove in our forest-health endeavor will warm my house this winter. Remaining trees will continue to grow and provide warmth in future winters, wood for construction projects, and shade to cool us in the heat of summer. This forest land also provides simple pleasure. Every year I wait in anticipation for the annual succession of wildflowers – the Indian Warrior emerging just after snow melt, the Fawn Lilies, Calypso Orchids and Ground Irises that follow. The songs of birds perched in the trees, Western Tanagers and Black-headed Grosbeaks, inspire me to get moving in the mornings then soothe me into relaxation in late afternoon.

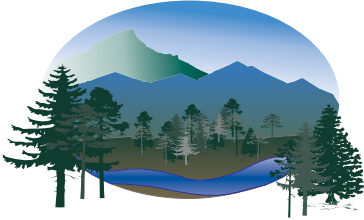
I sometimes struggle with finding ways to demonstrate just how important forests actually are to humans and to the health and well-being of communities all across the state. We need to continue to get folks into the woods so they can see the forests, the trees and other critical components of a healthy watershed. We also have to encourage people to get their hands a little dirty as we did on May 19 at the Douglas City Campground where nearly 100 volunteers – students and adults – planted more than 500 trees and other native plants. Experiencing and learning about forests and watersheds builds an appreciation for them and is a big part of our annual summer day camp at Young Family Ranch. I also think each of us living in Trinity County has to tell other Californians our own story about why forests are important to us. To follow the story of my efforts go to <http://patsnaturenotes.tumblr.com>

Pat Frost

Community Wildfire Protection Plan Revised

Trinity County Fire Safe Council completed the five-year update to Community Wildfire Protection Plan and obtained final approval from CalFire on May 23. The countywide plan helps prioritize fuels reduction projects in the wildland-urban interface. Trinity County Fire Chiefs’ Association, Willow Creek Fire Safe Council and the Trinity County Board of Supervisors also approved it. Visit <http://www.tcrd.net/fsc/> for the entire document.

Trinity County



Resource Conservation District

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Non-Profit Org.
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Established 1956

District Board Meetings

Third Wednesday
5:30 PM
Open to the Public

TCRCD Office

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The Trinity County Resource Conservation District (TCRCD) is a special district set up under state law to carry out conservation work and education. It is a not-for-profit, self-governing district whose board of directors volunteer their time.

The TCRCD Vision

TCRCD envisions a balance between utilization and conservation of our natural resources. Through economic diversity and ecosystem management our communities will achieve and sustain a quality environment and healthy economy.

The TCRCD Mission

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

**TCRCD Board of Directors are
Mike Rourke, Rose Owens, Patrick Truman,
Colleen O'Sullivan, and Greg Lowden.**

The RCD is landowners assisting landowners with conservation work. The RCD can guide the private landowner in dealings with state and federal agencies. The RCD provides information on the following topics:

- **Forest Land Productivity**
- **Watershed Improvement**
- **Water Supply and Storage**
- **Educational Programs**
- **Erosion/Sediment Control**
- **Wildlife Habitat**
- **Soil and Plant Types**
- **Fuels Reduction**

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