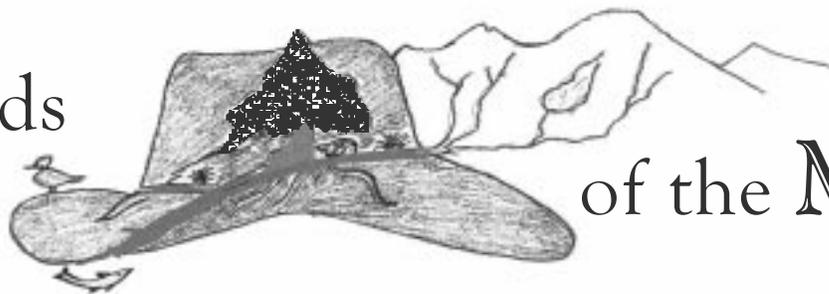


Watersheds



of the Modoc

Your source for watershed information in Central Modoc County

Published by the Central Modoc Resource Conservation District

Summer 2002

Calendar of Events

Do you have conservation or restoration project ideas or funding needs? Please let us know at the Technical Advisory Committee Meeting on Thursday, August 8, 7:00 p.m. at the River Center. For more details contact Cliff Harvey at 233-8872.

Birds and balloons will be flying during the **Alturas Balloonfest and Migratory Bird Festival**, September 13-15 in Alturas. There will be fun activities for the whole family, so be sure to mark your calendar! For more information call the Alturas Chamber of Commerce at 233-4434 or the Migratory Bird Festival Committee at 233-5085.

What kind of progress has been made on the Pit River Watershed Assessment? Find out at the Pit River Watershed Alliance Meeting on Thursday, September 19th, 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Canby Fire Hall. For questions, contact Todd Sloat at 336-5456.

Prizes for the most unusual trash collected will be awarded at the **2002 Pit River Clean-Up Day**. Help clean-up our river on Saturday, September 21, 10:00 a.m. We will meet at the River Center. Garbage bags and gloves will be provided for volunteers. Hope to see you there!

Bioengineering for Stream Restoration: A two-day seminar on November 5 & 6, led by a nationally recognized expert to help landowners better manage and restore their waterways. Full details on the seminar to be announced in September.

Erosion Prevention for Unpaved Roads: A maintenance and construction workshop. For anyone who blades roads, learn management principles that will save you money and prevent erosion. Workshop date is November 7. Details will be announced in September.

Become a *Weed Warrior* by joining the Modoc County Noxious Weed Management Group on the fourth Wednesday of every month from 9:00 a.m to 11:00 a.m. at the River Center. For more information please contact Irene Davidson, Modoc National Forest 233-8836.



What's Inside:

<i>Making a Splash in Our Watershed.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Local Artist Hired for the River Center...</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>The New Farm Bill - A Giant Step for Conservation.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Watershed Update.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Who to Contact.....</i>	<i>6</i>

Making A Splash In Our Watershed: Spring Activities



Water Quality Monitoring Workshop

March 26th • Canby, California

The purpose of the workshop was to give participants the knowledge, tools and techniques necessary to monitor water quality on their property. Several local ranches were featured as demonstration sites because of their successful monitoring programs.



Fire's Affect on the Watershed -

Was the focus of an all day field trip to the 2001 Blue Fire site on May 29th for Sally Clark's 6th Grade Science Class from the Modoc Middle School. A special thanks to Eddie Asrow and her staff from the USFS Warner Mountain Ranger District for leading the tour and to the Flournoy family for a wonderful BBQ and lunch-time entertainment.



Gettin' Dirty at Likely Land and Livestock Ranch -

In June, Alturas High School Natural Resources Academy Students dug right in and planted riparian vegetation along the creek banks at the ranch as part of a restoration project designed to minimize erosion and improve water quality.



Watershed Fun - With the use of a watershed model, Education Coordinator Paula Fields, illustrates the concepts of watershed dynamics to students from Alturas Elementary School.

Local Artist Hired For The River Center



Conceptual drawing by Sophie Sheppard

Thanks to the help of dedicated volunteers, development of the River Center has been moving steadily forward. One important step was hiring Sophie Sheppard as a subcontractor.

Sophie is a talented local artist whose work has been featured at the Nevada Museum of Art in Reno, the River Run Gallery in Ketchum, Idaho, and the Storey-Block Gallery in Bozeman, Montana. In addition to her painting she has specialized in graphic arts and interpretive work, most recently on the Klamath Basin for the Fremont and Winema National Forests.

Sophie has been working closely with volunteer committees to design fun and educational exhibits for the River Center. Exhibits will focus on the watershed and the important role it plays in our community. There will also be live native fishes and aquatic insects on display, hands-on-activities for the kids, and much more.

"The volunteers have developed a project that will

benefit the whole community. It is exciting to work with people who are so dedicated to the health of our most valued resource: water," said Sheppard about the River Center.

In addition to the exciting exhibits inside, landscape designer Bruce Wendt was hired to create the native plants garden outside. Local community members are working with Bruce to develop the landscape design. Construction of the garden will begin in September.

The grand opening for the River Center is scheduled for January 2003. Until then there is a lot of work to be done. The River Center Development Committee invites anyone who is interested to join in on the planning efforts.

Visitors are always welcome to stop by the River Center, located at 136 Henderson Street in Alturas. For more information contact Paula Fields at 233-5085.

The New Farm Bill – A Giant Step for Conservation

The 2002 Farm Bill represents the single most significant commitment of resources toward conservation on private lands in the Nation's history. The legislation responds to a broad range of emerging natural resource challenges faced by farmers and ranchers, including soil erosion, wetlands, wildlife habitat, and farmland protection.

Private landowners will benefit from a portfolio of voluntary assistance, including cost-share, land rental, incentive payments, and technical assistance.

The Farm Bill places a strong emphasis on the conservation of working lands, ensuring that land remaining both healthy and productive.

Below you'll find brief overviews of each of the Farm Bill's conservation programs, with descriptions of the new program or changes made by the 2002 act. Please note that the following descriptions are based on anticipated guidelines and may change.

Conservation of Private Grazing Land (CPGL)

- Provides for technical assistance relating to conservation on private grazing lands.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

- Raises authorization for enrollment to an overall acreage cap of 39.2 million acres.
- Makes a nationwide cap of 1 million acres for the Farmable Wetland Pilot Program.
- Allows landowners to continue with existing ground cover when practicable and consistent with wildlife reserve benefits of CRP.
- Provides for managed haying (including biomass) and grazing.

Conservation Security Program (CSP)

- Rewards stewardship and provides incentives for addressing additional resource concerns on agricultural working lands.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

- Eliminates geographic priority areas.
- Allows for expenditure of funds in the first year of the contract.
- Eliminates the cap on large confined livestock operations.
- Provides an overall payment limitation of \$450,000 per producer, regardless of the number of farms or contracts, over the authorized life of the 2002 Farm Bill.
- Specifies contract length: minimum one year beyond

- Prohibits the process of bidding-down (competitive cost share reduction among program applicants.)
- Allows up to 90% cost-share for beginning or limited resource farmers and ranchers.
- Allows the Secretary of Agriculture to provide innovation grants.
- Provides an additional \$50 million in EQIP funding to assist producers in the Klamath Basin.

Farmland Protection Program (FPP)

- Removes the existing acreage limitation, expands the definition of eligible land, and makes agricultural land that contains historic or archaeological resources eligible for enrollment.
- Allows the Secretary of Agriculture to provide grants for use in carrying out farm viability programs.

Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP)

- Authorizes enrollment of up to 2 million acres of restored, improved, or natural grassland, rangeland, and pastureland, including prairie.
- Program anticipated to be available beginning in fiscal year 2003.

Resource Conservation and Development Program (RC&D)

- Provides tools and technical support to help people address economic and environmental concerns and use natural resources wisely.

Small Watershed Rehabilitation

- Authorizes an additional \$325, subject to the appropriations process.

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

- Increases the overall program acreage cap to 2.275 million acres.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)

- Provides for up to 15% of annual WHIP funds for increased cost-share payments to producers to protect and restore essential plant and animal habitat using agreements with a duration of at least 15 years.

To take full advantage of the new Farm Bill, your conservation plan needs to be in place and up-to-date. Contact the Alturas USDA, Natural Resource Conservation Service Office at 233-4391 for more information.

Watershed Update

By Watershed Coordinator Cliff Harvey

Summer is a great time to start a monitoring program.

Summer is really gearing up for everyone, including the CMRCD crew. Jarvis Jones is back for his 3rd summer with CMRCD and James Booth is starting his second season. Cait Cook of Alturas will round out this summer's team of student interns. And they will keep busy, because we have a list of landowners requesting assistance with initiation of farm and ranch stream monitoring.

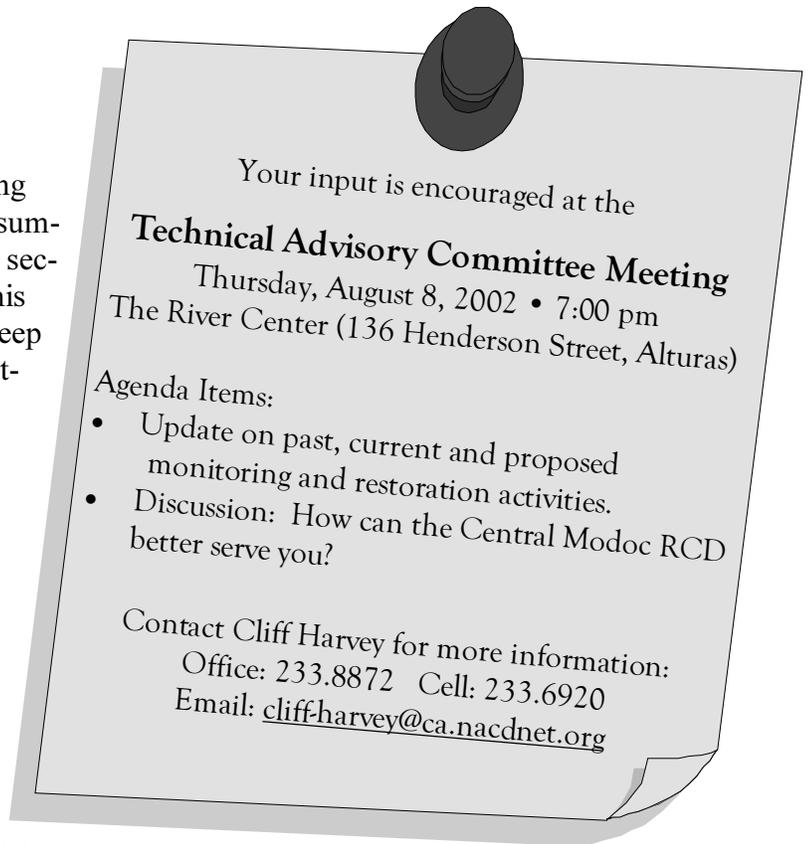
Stream monitoring for landowners is critical to managing long-term improvement of waterways. And, just as important, a good set of monitoring photos and facts can be very helpful in obtaining assistance in funding restoration projects.

We encourage landowners to initiate monitoring and conservation strategies as part of the overall operating plan for your property... not as an extra, but as an essential. If you do not currently have a conservation plan or monitoring plan for your farm or ranch, then please take advantage of the assistance offered by your local Resource Conservation District (RCD) and by our partners in the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and the University of California Farm Advisor's Office.

Why so many different agencies?

I sometimes detect a bit of confusion about who the RCD is, and how we relate to the other organizations that support agriculture in our community. Central Modoc RCD is one of five RCDs that serve Modoc County (can you name the others?) We serve as an arm of local government to promote better conservation practices at the local level.

While we work closely with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and share offices with the NRCS, we are not a federal agency. And we work closely with the University of California Cooperative Extension Service and the County Agricultural Commissioner's Office, too, but we are not a state or



county agency.

As a "Special District" we have a wide range of possible actions that we can sponsor. Our role has been to provide services that these federal, state, and county offices cannot, and to serve as a communication link to tie together various sources of assistance. When all of these entities pull together, the benefits for the landowner - and the land - can be substantial.

Take advantage of these services now in order to take best advantage of the new Farm Bill and other funding opportunities.

On-the-ground projects, coming and going.

We are wrapping up several long-term projects this summer, and just getting started on a new batch. The list is too long to go over here, but you can get all the details at our website <http://cmrcd.carc.org>. If you prefer to get your news the old fashioned way, our summer Technical Advisory Committee

Continued on page 6



Central Modoc
Resource Conservation District
804 West 12th Street
Alturas, CA 96101
(530) 233-8872
<http://cmrcd/carcd.org/>

Funding for this newsletter has been provided in part by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) pursuant to Assistance Agreement No. C9-98998901-0 and any amendments thereto which has been awarded to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) for the implementation of California's Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the USEPA or the SWRCB, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use. Additional funding and staff support from the USDA, NRCS, Modoc County Office of Education, CA DOC, CALFED, Modoc National Forest and North Cal-Neva RC & D is greatly appreciated.

Watershed Update... (cont.)

(TAC) Meeting is coming up on August 8th, and the TAC newsletter will be circulated late in July. We will be giving a rundown of all of our past and current projects in the newsletter, and will present a summary at the meeting. Let us know if you would like to be on our TAC mailing list.

The other four Resource Conservation Districts serving parts of Modoc County are:

1. Goose Lake RCD
2. Surprise Valley RCD
3. Pit RCD (Serves the Big Valley area of Lassen and Modoc Counties.)
4. The newly reorganized Butte Valley/Lava Beds RCD (Serves portions of Siskiyou and Modoc County in the Tule Lake area.)

Central Modoc Resource Conservation District

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Dick Mackey, President
David Hoxsey, Vice President
Chris Knoch, Treasurer
Jerry Hoxsey, Tim Martinez,
Larry Osborne & Chico Pedotti

STAFF:

Debra Betters, Admin. Assistant
Paula Fields, Education Coordinator
Cliff Harvey, Watershed Coordinator

BOARD MEETINGS:

CMRCD meets the **3rd Tuesday** of every month. Anyone is welcome to attend!