

Full Stream Ahead

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

Nov/Dec 2004

Arizona Agency Executives Briefing Phoenix, Arizona November 5, 2004

We appreciate the time that Elaine Zelinski, AZ BLM Director, Harv Forsgren, Regional Forester USDA Forest Service Southwest Region (R3) and their staff spent with us during a briefing at the Bureau of Land Management National Training Center in Phoenix, Arizona November 5, 2004. The Arizona Natural Resources Conservation Service, Fish & Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Reclamation were also invited but were not able to attend. Wayne Elmore described riparian-wetland function and why the Creeks & Communities Strategy uses the PFC Assessment, Laura Van Riper described the original strategy, the evaluation, and adjustments made for effectiveness in the Creeks & Communities Strategy. Janice Staats and Dan Baggeo talked about past activities and 2004-2005 work plans of the Riparian Service Team, the Arizona and New Mexico Riparian Teams. There was an hour for discussion after the PowerPoint presentations. Discussion topics included:

- We need to be able and demonstrate a process/approach that we have had success with so others will see they can have similar success
- BLM is working in many different partnerships in Arizona
- Rebuilding the Arizona Riparian Team in order to provide service trips
- Focused outreach for new Arizona Riparian Team members
 - Agency riparian program conference calls
 - Be sure we go after all the skills necessary to rebuild the Arizona Riparian Team and complement the New Mexico Riparian Team
- Recent retirees want to continue working with New Mexico Cadre if their travel is covered
- New Mexico Riparian Team help out in Arizona
- Harv and Elaine will look into how Creeks & Communities Strategy might help with the Southwest Strategy Pilot Watershed effort
- May be an opportunity to work with New Mexico Statewide Forest and Watershed Health Plan
- Link with BLM Collaboration Group is an important step in diversifying the network with more conflict management specialists
- The original Arizona Riparian Team found it difficult to develop local sponsors and demand for riparian function workshops in Arizona

- o Debby Potter will coordinate with USDA Forest Service Recreation Staff
- Possible locations in Arizona with interest/need in Creeks & Communities Strategy
 - o Hassayampa River, mixed ownership with small parcels of BLM
 - o Santa Maria River
 - o Burrough Creek
 - o Agua-Fria River with Department of Water Resources and Department of Environmental Quality involvement
 - o Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest
 - o Tonto National Forest

Train-the-Trainer for Mexico

Big Bend Ranch State Park, Texas

November 8-11, 2004

Overview and Objectives – A Creeks & Communities Train-the-Trainer workshop was requested by a group from Mexico to develop a Mexico Riparian Cadre. Mexico states represented at the workshop were Chihuahua, Coahuila, Durango, Estado de Mexico Distrito Federal, Sonora, and Veracruz. This workshop was developed to accelerate cooperative riparian restoration in Mexico. It was designed to provide improved understanding of riparian function to a broad group of professional and technical people from Mexico along with some from the U.S. who work in or with Mexico. The vision is that an extension of the Riparian Coordination Network will begin in Mexico and that broader support and shared learning/activities will occur at three levels: National, Regional and Local.

- **National** – Leadership, coordination and collaboration by Federal government and broad-based NGO's, focusing on education, watershed assessment, priorities for action by type and locale, and strategic planning.
- **Regional** – Leadership, coordination and collaboration at the State/multi-state area, focusing on education, shared technical skills to support local efforts, and developing actions to meet the national strategies.
- **Local** – Getting work done on the creeks and in the communities. This will be a variety of ongoing work such as in Chihuahua and additional demonstration and project areas. Convening interested parties from throughout the riparian network to view and learn from the demonstration areas will be an important part of the model.

The key factor for advancing riparian restoration work is that it be developed in a way that meets the needs of the people of Mexico, and that people work together with respect for success.

Participation – Our target audience was 25-30 broadly diverse participants. Actual attendance, including the three primary U.S. instructors was 30. This included university professors from the University of Chihuahua and Texas A&M, leaders and staff from Fuerza Ambiental who are working in the Madera region of Chihuahua, Secretaria de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (SEMARNAT), Instituto Nacional de Ecologia (INE), World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Chihuahua, Fondo Mexicano para la Conservacion de la Naturaleza, Instituto Nacional de Investigaciones Forestales, Agricolas, y Pecuarias (INIFAP) (Durango), Rio Grande Institute, Desarrollo Comunitario de los Tuxtlas (DECOTUX) (Xalapa, Veracruz), and Big Bend Ranch State Park. The people who attended the workshop have the potential to become major catalysts for restoration.

Methodology – The course began Monday afternoon with registration, then following dinner we did a grounding and greeting circle. The next three days included two days of classroom instruction, ½ day learning the PFC assessment on a local stream followed by a closing learning experience and graduation. Coursework included both the technical elements of riparian-wetland function and the social aspects of working with communities.

Facilities – Big Bend Ranch State Park was an excellent workshop location, with dorm lodging along with a variety of other choices. Food was prepared by Park staff, and was well-done. Access was moderately difficult, being 1½ hours from Presidio, Texas on a gravel road. But this also was an advantage as people had to stay together and enabled better participation at the evening activities. Park staff was outstanding at being flexible and meeting every need and the training area was quite suitable for the 30 person group. Weather was outstanding.

Outcomes – The Mexican people will be meeting and communicating over the next few months to work on next steps, and a Workshop Report was prepared by Gina Uribe of Fuerza Ambiental (<http://www1.or.blm.gov/nrst/Mexico.htm>). Tentative agreement or high levels of interest were expressed in the following specific actions:

- **Publication of Technical Reference 1737-15 in Spanish.** The group was asked to provide editorial comments on the draft translation available in their workbooks by December 15, 2004 to Gina Uribe. The group also has been asked to find suitable photos from Mexico to replace those in the current appendix of TR 1737-15, so it will be more truly a Mexican document. Eduardo Peters of INE plans to work with his publication staff to print the first 1000 copies, and is looking at a date of July 1, 2005 to have this accomplished.
- **Riparian Network** - Gina Uribe agreed to be included on the National Riparian Service Team's listing for the Riparian Coordination Network as Coordinator for Chihuahua. In that capacity, she will receive updates from the NRST and others, and share them appropriately with the Cadre in Chihuahua. Others may also be named in this capacity for more extensive inclusion and distribution.
- **Chihuahua Cadre** - Gina Uribe and Cliff Mathies from the Chihuahua Cadre had their first solo Creeks and Communities Workshop November 22-24, 2004 in Dr. Belisario Dominguez (100 kilometers south of Chihuahua in the San Pedro/Conchos catchment), and they reported that it went very well. The workshop included classroom time and two field sites.
- **Web Services** – Enrique Cisneros, Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza, will be working to increase the availability of riparian information and chatroom opportunities utilizing his organizational website.
- **Future Service Trips** – A variety of service trip opportunities were discussed informally with several groups of participants. We explained that our purpose is to help them work with communities and expand the network, and that we do not plan to be instructors at the community level in future meetings, but if financing was available would coach and mentor cadres of Mexican instructors to provide the training. We also talked about the possibility of briefings for meetings of government and non-governmental organization staff and leaders that could lead to increased emphasis on working with creeks and communities.

PFC and Grazing Management for Riparian-Wetland Areas San Angelo, Texas

A three-day PFC and Grazing Management for Riparian-Wetland Areas Workshop was held in San Angelo, Texas October 26-28. Steve Nelle, Biologist, NRCS organized the workshop that

was attended by 44 people from Natural Resource Conservation Service, Texas Cooperative Extension, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Texas Wildlife Association, The Nature Conservancy, Texas Department of Ag, and others. Don Prichard, Steve Leonard, and Sandy Wyman were course instructors. Bob Welling, Research Research Support Manager, Ridley Block Operations provided information on the latest research on the effectiveness of using low moisture supplements and herding to distribute livestock.