

Conservation Almanac

Trinity County Resource Conservation District

Summer 2004

Vol. XIII No.3

Road Stabilization and Improvement Demonstration Project

Sponsored by the Trinity Resource Conservation & Development Council

The disposal of the small trees, brush and branches that are removed during fuels reduction or defensible projects has frequently been one of the big challenges with these important projects. Everyone is always looking for ways to find a use for this woody material. This summer the District, in cooperation with private landowners and the Trinity Resource Conservation and Development Council tried a new approach.

The District completed a demonstration project using chunks of chipped wood (Chunkwood) for road surfacing material this summer. One parking area and two roads in the Oregon Mountain area were selected for this innovative project that used wood chips and chunks from the District's fuels reduction project in the same area.

The concept of chunkwood for road surfacing was introduced in the mid-1970's. It provides a clean and stable material for stabilization and erosion control on light duty, low-use roads, parking and access areas. It is an alternative to more costly materials such as rock or shale, and in this demonstration the chips are produced nearby on the fuels reduction project.

Initially, the project sites were prepared by correcting minor drainage concerns. Next, the areas were graded and shaped. Geotextile fabric was installed over the prepared road surface. Finally a 4 to 8 inch layer of wood chunks/chips was applied. Project Manager John Condon described the benefits of this project. It tied it into an existing fuels reduction project; allowed the District to expand the fuels treatment area, because of cost-savings on both projects; used the biomass generated from the fuels project (the wood chips) on-site; and reduced our reliance on the more costly disposal method of burning.

This project was completed with funding from U.S. Forest Service under the Economic Action Program of the National Fire Plan through a grant to the Trinity Resource Conservation & Development Council (RC&D), *which, sounds a lot like the Trinity County Resource Conservation District (RCD).*

For additional information contact:

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Construction to Start on Trinity River Bridges

Construction is beginning at four road crossings of the Trinity River to prepare for releases from Lewiston Dam of up to 11,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) to enhance and maintain fishery habitat. Bridges at Biggers Road (off Steel Bridge Road), Poker Bar and Salt Flat will all be replaced, and the west

Restoration Account. The Trinity County Resource Conservation District will be responsible for designing and implementing revegetation of the sites with native plant species after construction is completed.

Efforts are also underway to identify and address possible impacts of the higher flows to other structures in the floodplain such as homes and access roads. Designs are currently being prepared to raise approximately 1.1 miles of road in the Poker Bar area that will be inundated by some of the fishery releases. Inundation maps of the river are being prepared from Lewiston Dam to the North Fork Trinity River. Property owners will be notified if it is believed that they could be adversely affected by the higher flows which could be implemented as early as the spring of 2005.

These activities are being performed through the Trinity River Restoration Program Office located at 1313 South Main Street in Weaverville (next to Tops Market). The Executive Director of the program is Doug Schleusner who can be reached at 530-623-1800. If you have any questions specifically concerning the floodplain modification program you can call Ed Solbos at 530-623-1802.



approach road to the Bucktail Bridge on Browns Mountain Road will be raised. Construction schedules show contractor mobilization and the start of construction at all sites during July and August, with all four crossings completed and opened to traffic by the end of this calendar year. Detours will be established during construction to maintain access.

Designs for the bridge crossings were prepared by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), with project funding provided by Reclamation, the Central Valley Project Improvement Act Restoration Fund, and the California Department of Fish and Game Salmon and Steelhead Trout



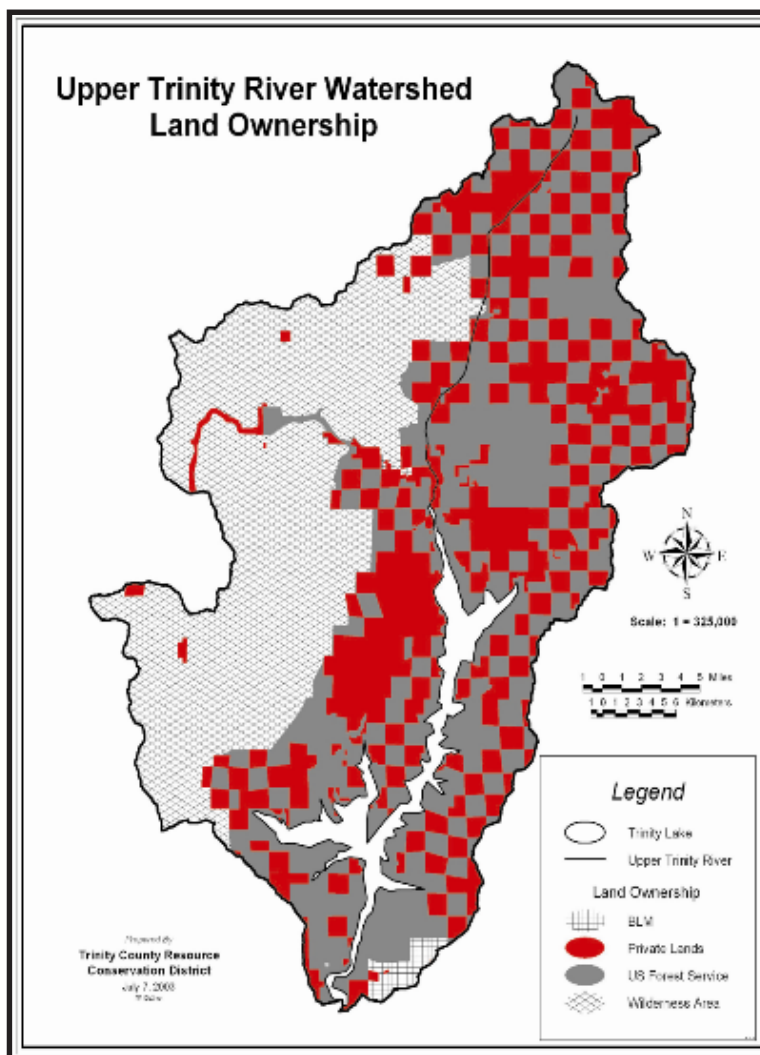
Upper Trinity River Watershed Management Planning Project Underway

Trinity County Resource Conservation District has obtained funding from the State Water Resources Control Board through the Costa-Machado Water Act of 2000 (Proposition 13) to conduct watershed management planning in the Upper Trinity River watershed above Trinity Dam – a part of the Trinity River basin that has not been looked at comprehensively.

The Upper Trinity River watershed is 692 square miles and over 70% is publicly owned, most of which is administered by the US Forest Service. The Trinity Alps Wilderness Area accounts for 32% of the total area. Private lands account for 29%, including the small communities of Coffee Creek, Covington Mill and Trinity Center, recreational facilities, and resorts.

This is a community-based project with active local leadership that address issues like high turbidity levels seen in Trinity Lake following big storms and will look to the communities to develop recommendations in a comprehensive watershed assessment and action plan.

The District intends to meet with interested landowners, land managers and other watershed stakeholders in



public meetings and individually in the various communities. Existing studies are being summarized and a list of prioritized concerns will be compiled. Look for future articles in the Conservation Almanac, on the District's website, and in the newspaper for information on community meetings, and field trips.

The goal is not just to write a plan, but also to identify issues and implement recommended projects that will reduce sediment and turbidity levels in the lake, improve water quality for the Trinity River Basin and the Central Valley Project and promote good natural resources

conservation and stewardship. For example, the District has already begun to conduct road inventory in cooperation with Timber Products in the very upper portion of the watershed. (See photo below), with funding from the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

"I really look forward to working with my neighbors, resource management colleagues and all of the other stakeholders in the watershed," commented Pat Frost, District Manager and landowner in the Covington Mill area. "I've gotten know a lot of folks in the watershed through other projects the District has done in the watershed. So, if you'd like to participate in this collaborative planning

project or need more information, please give me a call or email me at pfrost@tcrd.net.



Roadside Fuel Management Project

During the summer of 2004, the Resource Conservation District fuels crew is implementing 5 miles of a 300 foot wide fuel management zone for the protection of Weaverville (which is considered a "community at risk"), residents of Rush Creek Estates and the homeowners along Rush Creek Road. This project will reduce the risk of catastrophic fire by reducing current fuel ladder and surface fuel buildup to levels that reduce the probability of crown fire development and fire growth.



The crew of six is removing 1" to 6" trees, ladder fuels, and brush on US Forest Service lands along the Highway 3 and Rush Creek road corridors. Fire wood is being provided where it is feasible. The remaining material in excess of other resource concerns will be chipped, lopped and scattered, or hand piled and burned. This project is expected to improve 238 acres of forest along these roadways, which are high risk areas for fire starts.



Monitoring the success of this project will include before and after photo comparisons on four selected plots. Material removed for utilization will be measured based on per board foot and material utilized for firewood will be measured based on cords removed.

Come See Us Again at the Trinity County Fair

The Trinity County Resource Conservation District will have a booth at the Trinity County Fair again this year, August 27-29, 2004. We will be highlighting our children's education programs.

Kids come and take the conservation quiz and you could win a prize!

We hope to see you there!

Kids Page--Gardener's Puzzle

(Donated by Steven and Chad Blanchard)



There are fifteen words from the garden buried in the box below.
To find them look up, down, forward, backward, and diagonally.

L	G	B	E	K	A	R	I	M	T
E	U	Y	N	O	E	P	H	O	R
V	X	L	I	W	U	G	M	N	Q
O	W	A	H	O	E	A	F	B	E
H	A	N	S	O	T	E	S	U	H
S	T	W	N	O	Y	V	D	G	S
O	E	C	U	T	T	E	L	S	R
K	R	J	S	O	I	L	W	O	O
S	P	A	D	E	B	E	A	N	S
P	M	A	R	I	G	O	L	D	E

WORD LIST



- RAKE
- HOE
- SPADE
- WATER
- ROSE
- SUNSHINE
- PEONY
- TOMATO
- BEANS
- LETTUCE
- SOIL
- MARIGOLD
- BUGS
- SHOVEL
- WEEDS



Noxious Weeds to Watch--Ailanthus



“Tree of Heaven” sounds wonderful doesn’t it? Well, names can be deceiving. That’s the case with *Ailanthus altissima*, Tree-of-Heaven, which also is

known as “Chinese Sumac”. Many residents of Trinity County may not be acquainted with this tree, or be aware of the problems it presents in some areas of the county. Tree of Heaven often is confused with Black Walnut, sumacs, and other trees. That’s because they all have similar leaves, which are compound leaves made up of leaflets arranged on a central stem called a rachis. *Ailanthus* can get 30 to 60 feet tall and has smooth gray bark. Flowers occur at the ends of branches and produce a distinctive, offensive odor described as “burnt peanut butter”.

This fast-growing tree was introduced to California during the Gold Rush, possibly by Chinese miners, and was used in urban areas, because of its tolerance to a wide range of conditions.

In its native land, China, the wood is used in construction and furniture making. Its’ leaves are used as fodder for goats and sheep; and its bark juice and gum resins are used medicinally. Its flowers are used in creating fragrances and dyes. In California; however, Tree-of-Heaven is a noxious and highly invasive, non-native species. The Trinity County Weed Management Cooperative Group has

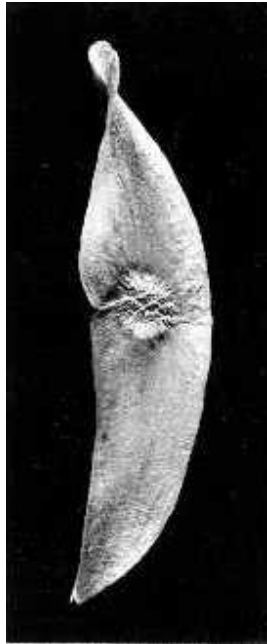
included this tree in its list of species to be targeted for control, because of the many problems that it poses. It can overwhelm native plants, forming dense thickets by producing prolific numbers of sprouts from its roots and through its ability to reproduce from seeds – one tree can generate up to 350,000 seeds per year. On top of that, Tree-of-Heaven releases chemicals into the soil that inhibit the growth and survival of other plants. The toxin is so effective that it is being tested for use as an herbicide. It has a very well developed taproot that gets established within three months. Its roots may undermine foundations and roadways.

This species, like many of the noxious and invasive species that we deal with in Trinity County, is a tough plant that can colonize locations that have been disturbed such as recent construction sites and the edges of roadways. Most concentrations of Tree of Heaven in Trinity County are found along roads, like Highway 299 in the Junction City to Big Flat area, and around old mining sites and Chinese settlement areas.

Tree-of-Heaven is very difficult to remove once it has become established. Cutting it stimulates the roots to produce many sprouts. The Trinity Weed Management Group is looking at

control methods and ways to test them. The Virginia Department of Conservation recommends that seedlings be removed by hand as quickly as possible after germination and before the taproot has become established, preferably when the soil is moist. They suggest cutting larger trees before they seed, and point out that two cuttings may be necessary, once early in the growing season, the second, late in the growing season. This will not stop root sprouting, but will stress the trees over a period of time, and reduce their stature. Replanting an area with native species after removing *Ailanthus* may help reduce its re-sprouting and it is recommended that you begin controlling the seedlings from the outer edge of the infested area and work inward.

If you have *Ailanthus* on your property, we would like to know about it so that we can get a better picture of the size and distribution of the populations in Trinity County. Call us or email us at info@trccd.net



Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) seed.



Ailanthus in flower

Pictures from William S. Justice @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database



District Manager's Corner *Pat Frost*

It's time for the County Fair again. It doesn't seem like a whole year has gone by since the District set up its booth. Fair time is a unique opportunity for us to get out and meet you – the folks we serve. The theme of our informational booth changes every year. One interesting observation is that the time and energy that the District has spent designing and staffing our booth to include our “partners in conservation” has created enough interest by these other natural resources and conservation organizations that they now have their own booths. If you stop by our section of the Commercial Exhibits you should be able to chat with members of the Trinity River Restoration Program and learn about their plans and schedules for the upcoming year. The Trinity Weed Management Cooperative has signed on for this year's fair. Stop by their booth and join in on their raffle of some wonderful landscaping plants that have been donated by local nurseries. Fair time is our chance to share information about our ongoing projects – forest health and fire management issues like defensible space around your house or our restoration work in the South Fork Trinity River. It is a time to let you know the new projects that we are just starting, like the Upper Trinity River Watershed Planning project for the entire area above the dams and the Rush Creek watershed assessment that we are helping to coordinate with the Trinity River Restoration Program, Trinity County and others.

This year we are going to focus on “children in conservation”. Bring your children or grandchildren by the booth and let them win prizes by taking part in our conservation quiz. Learn about some of our exciting education programs and how we might bring them to your school. Find out what the Sixth Graders at Weaverville Elementary School have been learning at environmental education camp held every September at Bar 717 Ranch near Hyampom, about the River Day Celebration sponsored by Coffee Creek School every October, and this year's Salmon Festival scheduled for October 16th.

Just as important as what we have to offer at our booth is that the fair is our chance to learn from you – learn what your needs are so that we can be serve you better. So stop by and say hello.

Trinity County RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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 non-profit, self-governing district whose board of directors volunteer their time.

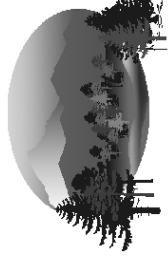
The TCRCD Vision

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.

Trinity County Resource Conservation District
P.O. Box 1450
Weaverville, CA 96093



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
- Erosion/Sediment Control
- Watershed Improvement
- Wildlife Habitat
- Water Supply and Storage
- Soil and Plant Types
- Educational Programs



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