

**EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY IN-
VOLVEMENT IN NATIONAL
FOREST RESTORATION AND
RECREATION EFFORTS:
OBSTACLES AND SOLUTIONS**

OVERSIGHT HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FORESTS AND
FOREST HEALTH

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

March 29, 2001

Serial No. 107-10

Printed for the use of the Committee on Resources



Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.access.gpo.gov/congress/house>

or

Committee address: <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov>

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

71-408 PS

WASHINGTON : 2001

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
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**EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN
NATIONAL FOREST RESTORATION AND
RECREATION EFFORTS: OBSTACLES AND
SOLUTIONS**

**Thursday, March 29, 2001
U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Forests and Forest Health
Committee on Resources
Washington, DC**

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m., in Room 1324, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. Scott McInnis [Chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Mr. MCINNIS. Good morning. The Subcommittee on Forests and Forest Health will come to order.

The Subcommittee is meeting today to hear testimony on effective community involvement in National Forest restoration and recreation efforts: obstacles and solutions.

Under Committee Rule 4g, the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member can make opening statements. If any other Members have statements, they can be included in the hearing record under unanimous consent.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE SCOTT McINNIS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF COLORADO

Mr. MCINNIS. I have watched, as many of you have watched, communities being torn apart by the raging resource battles that have become almost commonplace in towns across rural America. While these issues, in themselves, are contentious, they are made even more so by the legal and administrative structures that are currently in place.

The forest planning process, for example, is structurally polarizing. Typically, the Forest Service develops a range of planning alternatives, then releases them to the public for comment, basically leaving the different factions in the community with no choice but to fight like hell for their alternative. This pits neighbor against neighbor in an unconstructive winner-take-all process, leaving communities polarized and ultimately disenfranchised from the forests surrounding them. Instead of promoting collaboration and consensus, these processes invite conflict and cynicism.

In recent years, we have begun to see some attempts to find better ways of dealing with these contentious issues. These efforts have come in a number of different forms, some being assisted by the Forest Service in the form of stewardship contract pilots, some by the States, such as the Blue Mountain demonstration area in Oregon, and some by Congress, as in the resource advisory committees created in the recently passed county payments law. But most of these partnerships have been initiated by the communities themselves, exhausted from battle, in search of processes that promote inclusive and peaceful collaboration.

Unlike the “hired guns” in Washington, who are paid to fight, it makes sense for communities to try and solve these issues for themselves. While folks in these communities may disagree on some issues, their children go to the same schools, they hike on the same trails and fish the same rivers. They have many needs in common, and are more likely to find creative solutions than are others that live hundreds, sometimes thousands, of miles away.

The purposes, therefore, of today’s hearing is to explore opportunities for and barriers to community-based forestry, with a focus on what Congress can do to reduce conflict and confrontation while promoting constructive and inclusive problem-solving processes.

[The prepared statement of Mr. McInnis follows:]

**Statement of The Honorable Scott McInnis, Chairman,
Subcommittee on Forests and Forest Health**

I’ve watched, as many of you have watched, communities being torn apart by the raging resource battles that have become almost commonplace in towns across rural America. While these issues, in themselves, are contentious, they are made even more so by the legal and administrative structures that are currently in place. The forest planning process, for example, is structurally polarizing. Typically, the Forest Service develops a range of planning alternatives then releases them to the public for comment, basically leaving the different factions in the community with no choice but to fight like hell for “their” alternative. This pits neighbor against neighbor in an unconstructive winner-take-all process, leaving communities polarized and ultimately disenfranchised from the forests surrounding them. Instead of promoting collaboration and consensus, these processes invite conflict and cynicism. In recent years we have begun to see some attempts to find better ways of dealing with these contentious issues. These efforts have come in a myriad of forms, some being assisted by the Forest Service in the form of stewardship contract pilots, some by the states, such as the Blue Mountain Demonstration Area in Oregon, and some by Congress, as in the resource advisory committees created in the recently passed county payments law. But most of these partnerships have been initiated by the communities themselves, exhausted from battle, in search of processes that promote inclusive and peaceful collaboration.

Unlike the hired guns in Washington who are paid to fight, it makes sense for communities to solve these issues for themselves. While folks in these communities may disagree on some issues, their children go to the same schools, they hike on the same trails and fish the same rivers, they have many needs in common, and are more likely to find creative solutions than are others that live hundreds, sometimes thousands, of miles away.

The purpose, therefore, of today’s hearing is to explore opportunities for, and barriers to, community-based forestry, with a focus on what Congress can do to reduce conflict and confrontation while promoting constructive, and inclusive, problem solving processes.

Mr. MCINNIS. The Ranking Member is not here. When the Ranking Member comes, I will give him an opportunity to make an opening statement. We will go ahead and proceed forward.

I would now like to introduce our witnesses. On panel one we have Mr. Randy Phillips, Deputy Chief of Programs and

Legislation, U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, and Miss Sally Collins. She is the Associate Deputy Chief of the National Forest System, USDA Forest Service.

I will remind the witnesses that under our Committee rules you must limit your statements to a period of 5 minutes, but your entire statement will appear in the record. The timer there indicates where you are on your time.

I now recognize Mr. Phillips for a statement. Mr. Phillips, I appreciate both you and Miss Collins' effort to come and make your presentation in front of the Committee. You may proceed, Mr. Phillips.

STATEMENT OF RANDY PHILLIPS, DEPUTY CHIEF, FOREST SERVICE, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE; ACCOMPANIED BY SALLY COLLINS, ASSOCIATE DEPUTY CHIEF, NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM, USDA

Mr. PHILLIPS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you and this Committee for the opportunity to discuss Forest Service efforts in working with local communities and partnerships to accomplish natural resource objectives.

With me today is Sally Collins, Associate Deputy Chief of the National Forest System. I will make a few brief comments and then ask Sally to do the same, and ask that the written testimony be included in the record, with your permission.

Mr. Chairman, many factors over the last several years have led to a decline in the traditional uses of national forest lands. As a result, communities that have relied on these traditional uses as a significant component of their economies have struggled to retain their vitality and resilience.

Our local forest managers have turned to new tools and methods to maintain the health of the forests and to involve the local communities in natural resource decisions that affect them. These changing conditions have been the catalyst for many success stories of communities and local forest managers working together to improve the health of the land and their communities. We would like to share with you today some of those success stories, and discuss challenges that lie ahead for us in the future.

There are many examples of community partnerships as we look across this country. No two are alike, and they are unique in their makeup and their objectives.

For example, in October 1998, Congress passed the Herger-Feinstein Quincy Library Forest Recovery Act. This Act implements an agreement by a coalition of representatives of fisheries, timber, environmental, county government, citizen groups and local communities that formed in northern California to develop a resource management program that promotes ecological and economic health for national forest lands and communities in the Sierra Nevada area.

In the Blue Mountains of Oregon, there are more than 40 partners working together to achieve shared goals of forest restoration, community economic and social health, transfer of scientific knowledge, and working together in a collaborative manner.

Also, Congress greatly added to the ability of the agency to work with partnerships for natural resource and community benefits

through the National Fire Plan. Congress has directed the agency seek the advice of governors and local tribal governments, representatives, in setting priorities for fuels treatment, burned area rehabilitation, and public outreach and education.

Funding for the implementation of the National Fire Plan affords the Forest Service many opportunities for building new partnerships for community assistance and resource protection. Title IV of the FY 2001 Interior Appropriations Act provides new authorities for the Forest Service to enter into agreements that implement fire plan objectives through local businesses and cooperatives. In addition, the Four Corners Initiative, in which the Forest Service is a major participant through our Economic Assistance Program, is building capacity in local communities to utilize the small diameter material that much of the fuel reduction efforts will generate.

The 106th Congress also passed the Secure Rural Schools and Communities Self-Determination Act, or county payments legislation. This landmark legislation allows counties containing national forest land to work with local forest officials to reconnect their communities to the land that sustains them. Counties and local forests are working together to solicit nominations for people to serve on the resource advisory committees that will make project recommendations to local forest officials. These projects will create additional opportunities for employment, while making investments that restore forest health and water quality.

Now, along with these opportunities come new challenges. Agency teams and others are evaluating the lessons we have learned from cooperative approaches to natural resource management. These teams will be identifying what changes, if any, might be needed in policy, regulation, and statute in order to better work together with our many partners and others interested in the health of the land and our rural communities. We are looking forward to working with this Committee and other members of the Subcommittee on ways to improve our partnership programs.

At this time I would like to ask Sally Collins to provide some additional comments.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Phillips with attachment follows:]

**Statement of Randy Phillips, Deputy Chief, Forest Service, United States
Department of Agriculture**

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss Forest Service efforts in working with local communities to accomplish natural resource objectives. I am Randy Phillips, Deputy Chief for Programs and Legislation, USDA - Forest Service. Accompanying me today is Sally Collins, Associate Deputy Chief for the National Forest System. Involving communities in national forest management activities is a long-standing tradition in the Forest Service.

Many factors over the last several years have led to a decline in the traditional uses of national forest lands. As a result, communities that have relied on these traditional uses as a significant component of their economies have struggled to retain their vitality and resilience. Our local forest managers have turned to new tools and methods to maintain the health of the forests and to involve the local communities in natural resource decisions that affect them. These changing conditions have been the catalyst for many success stories of communities and local forest managers working together to improve the health of the land and their communities. I would like to share with you today some of those success stories.

Ponderosa Pine Forest Partnership

The Ponderosa Pine Forest Partnership effort in southwest Colorado involving forest managers and users, neighbors and interested citizens is one such story. The San Juan National Forest has been working with communities of interest in Montezuma County, Colorado to create a new model for improving the condition of ecosystems while sustaining small, rural timber businesses considered as necessary tools to perform the work of forest restoration.

The Pine Zone Partnership, as the Ponderosa Pine Forest Partnership is informally called, traces its formation back to 1992 when its original members, representatives from Montezuma County, Colorado, the San Juan National Forest, Fort Lewis College, and the Colorado Timber Industry Association, met in the forest near Dolores, Colorado to discuss ecosystem health and the declining state of the local timber industry. Drawing on the authorities and technical support of the Forest Service economic action programs, the partnership has operated through the years as an informal network of these and additional interests, including individual loggers, and local environmental and community activists. From the initial gathering grew a multi-disciplinary network committed to testing adaptive-management techniques in a restoration harvest demonstration. They pooled institutional resources to design and conduct a harvesting demonstration on the San Juan National Forest where participants could conduct ecological research and monitoring, test new harvesting utilization techniques, reintroduce fire in its historical ecological role, conduct a detailed cost benefit analysis of harvesting, and begin researching the development of small-diameter pine products and markets.

The Pine Zone Partnership began producing on-the-ground results in 1995 by restoring natural characteristics and functions of ponderosa pine forests on 493 acres of national forest and adjacent private land. Partners thinned even-aged, small-diameter pine stands in order to reintroduce fire to its once natural ecosystem role. The results will reduce insect, disease, and wildfire risks; re-establish an uneven-aged stand structure, improve and increase wildlife habitat, and increase plant diversity, as well as help re-establish steady wood supplies.

While Pine Zone partners sought to integrate ecology and economic research with Forest Service administration, management and timber harvesting, the new relationships that evolved as they cooperated informally and face-to-face are perhaps their greatest accomplishment. They were able, through an acceptance of a mutually shared responsibility for community and forest sustainability, to restructure traditional relationships into new arrangements. As one partner, Dr. Dennis Lynch, Professor Emeritus, Colorado State University emphasizes, in this partnership ecology drives the economics of forest restoration.

Deschutes Watershed Assessment

Another success story in working with our local communities is the watershed assessment work being done on the Deschutes National Forest in Oregon under the leadership of District Ranger Phil Cruz. Large-scale assessments have focused discussion with local community representatives on forest health needs at the watershed level rather than on the particular methods used to accomplish individual projects. Those interested in natural resource issues now have a context in which to place a 100-acre treatment area. Analysis of cumulative effects can be more accurately represented and displayed. A spin-off benefit has been a more efficient approach for the Forest Service and other regulatory agencies in ensuring compliance with NEPA and ESA. There are benefits as well as some challenging concerns associated with this particular method of planning. In the words of Phil Cruz, Success depends upon people and passion. From the interdisciplinary team members to the leadership, no one can take a holiday from the process or the project.

Challenge Cost-Share Program

The Challenge Cost-Share Program is another successful example of partnering with groups interested in management of our national forests. It has provided the Forest Service and our cooperators with a means to jointly identify and accomplish recreation management and fish and wildlife habitat improvement projects. Begun in 1986, the fish and wildlife portion of the program has grown from 57 partners and 120 projects to 2,500 partners and over 2,800 projects in 1999. In 1999, a variety of State agencies and private organizations worked with the Forest Service to leverage \$16.8 million of appropriated funds into \$43.4 million of habitat improvement projects benefiting wildlife, fish, rare plants, and people. The Forest Service is committed to expanding its capacity to work with partners in accomplishing the Agency's mission via the Challenge Cost-Share program and other venues, and to actively working with partners to identify and remove impediments to achieving this

objective. Toward this end, the Forest Service is working to improve the use of existing authorities and reducing the time necessary to formalize partnerships.

Quincy Library Group

In October 1998, Congress passed the Herger–Feinstein Quincy Library Group Forest Recovery Act as Section 401 of the fiscal year 1999 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (Public Law 105–277). This Act implements an agreement by a coalition of representatives of fisheries, timber, environmental, county government, citizen groups, and local communities that formed in northern California to develop a resource management program that promotes ecologic and economic health for national forest lands and communities in the Sierra Nevada area.

Stewardship Pilot Projects

Congress has provided us another opportunity to work cooperatively with our local communities under Section 347 of the fiscal year 1999 Omnibus Appropriations Act (Public Law 105–277) and expanded by Section 338 of the fiscal year 2001 Interior Appropriations Act (Public Law 106–291). This stewardship pilot provision authorizes the Forest Service to test several new processes and procedures including the following:

- The exchange of goods for services;
- The retention of receipts;
- The awarding of contracts on a best value basis; and
- The designation of timber for cutting by prescription.

Although it is still too soon to tell whether these new authorities should be continued beyond the test period, the early results indicate that the authorities are providing a new context in which to discuss resource management. The pilot projects have enabled the Forest Service to bring people to the table to talk about what they leave on the land rather than focusing on what they take from the land. Groups involved in the pilot projects find that there is common ground. In the words of Regional Forester Dale Bosworth, It brings people to the conference room rather than the court room.

National Fire Plan

In addition to the opportunity afforded us through the 1999 Omnibus Appropriations Act, Congress greatly added to the ability of the agency to work through partnerships for natural resource and community benefits through the National Fire Plan.

The severe fire season of 2000 captured the attention of the American people on the need to find ways to protect life and property and minimize losses of natural resources. In response, a report entitled, *Managing the Impact of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment*, was prepared and released by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture in September of 2000 and is referred to as the National Fire Plan.

Based on the recommendations in the report, Congress and the Administration increased funding for agency firefighting, fuels reduction, resource restoration, and community assistance. The Conference Report for P.L. 106–291 directs the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture to work closely with States and local communities to maximize benefits to the environment and to local communities. It directs the agencies to seek the advice of the Governors and local and tribal government representatives in setting priorities for fuels treatments, burned area rehabilitation and public outreach and education. The Appropriations conferees also directed the agencies to work together to develop a list of all communities within the vicinity of Federal lands at high risk from fire. Funding for the implementation of the National Fire Plan affords the Forest Service many venues for building new partnerships for community assistance and resource protection. For example, in communities, we are assisting State and local partners by providing funding assistance to rural and volunteer fire departments to increase local firefighting capacity. We are also helping to educate community planners and homeowners through partnerships with the States, the National Fire Protection Association, and local firefighting organizations to take actions to reduce fire risk to homes and private property through a program called FIREWISE. Title IV of the fiscal year 2001 Interior Appropriations Act (Public Law 106–291) provides new authorities for the Forest Service to enter into agreements that implement fire plan objectives through local businesses and cooperatives. We also expect implementation of the National Fire Plan may create as many as 8,000 new jobs in rural areas providing additional economic opportunities for rural forest dependent communities. In addition, the Four Corners Initiative, in which the Forest Service is a major player through our Economic Assistance Program, is building capacity in local communities to utilize the small diameter material that much of the fuel reduction efforts will generate.

County Payments

The 106th Congress also passed the Secure Rural Schools and Communities Self Determination Act of 2000. This landmark legislation allows counties containing national forest land to work with local forest officials to re-connect their communities to the land that sustains them. Counties can reserve 15 to 20 percent of the historical payments they received under the 25 Percent Fund Act to make investments on national forest lands, adjacent private lands, or other county services. Counties and local forests are working together to solicit nominations for people to serve on the Resource Advisory Committees that will make project recommendations to local forest officials. These projects will create additional opportunities for employment while making investments that restore forest health and water quality. The counties should receive funds for these projects beginning in October, 2001.

Conclusion

There are many more examples of success stories across the country. Agency teams and others are evaluating the lessons we have learned from cooperative approaches to natural resource management. These teams will be identifying what changes, if any, might be needed in policy, regulation, and statute in order to better work together with our many partners and others interested in the health of the land and our rural communities. We look forward to working with you and the other members of the subcommittee on ways to improve our partnership programs.

This concludes my testimony. I would be glad to answer any questions you or other members of the subcommittee may have.

**STATEMENT OF SALLY COLLINS, ASSOCIATE DEPUTY CHIEF,
NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM, FOREST SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

Ms. COLLINS. Thanks, Randy, and I want to thank you also for the opportunity to be here today to talk about partnerships and the role that plays in accomplishing work on the ground, which is near and dear to my heart.

Prior to coming to Washington, D.C., a little less than a year ago, I was the forest supervisor for 8 years in Deschutes National Forest in Oregon, where I came to understand how critical partnerships are to the Forest Service and to the communities we live in.

When we have these strong community partnerships, creative things happen. They emerge from places that we don't think of and that we can't anticipate. It is simply because the Forest Service is at the table with people in the community listening and talking about what is important to them and to us. Together, we're forging ways to solve problems.

Let me just share a couple of examples with you. The Ponderosa Pine partnership effort in southwest Colorado, which you may be familiar with, Mr. Chairman, is really a great story. The San Juan National Forest, like a lot of forests throughout the West, experienced a dramatic shift in the timber program in the late 1980's and early 1990, decreasing gradually from 76 million board feet a year to close to 12 in 1993.

People from all different backgrounds and views were distressed about these upheavals that were created, with mills closing and jobs being lost. There was a lot of social and economic turmoil. People saw a growing forest health problem and they saw increased fire risks.

In 1992, Montezuma County, the San Juan National Forest, Fort Lewis College and the timber industry in Colorado, decided to meet and discuss the problems facing all of the communities in the county. The Pine Zone Partnership, which is what it became known as, was created that year, and really is an example of how

communities can improve the conditions of ecosystems while at the same time sustaining small, rural timber businesses.

They pooled institutional resources to design and conduct harvesting demonstrations on the San Juan National Forest. They tested new harvesting utilization techniques, reintroduced fire into its historical ecological role, and they conducted a detailed cost benefit analysis of harvesting, basically looking at researching the development of small diameter pine products and markets. Since 1995, they have experienced a lot of success, not the least of which is the thinning of small diameter material and reintroducing fire into the ecosystem.

You know, like similar partnerships all across the country, the real success is in the restructuring of traditional relationships. The culture of collaboration there on problems is now firmly in place.

The second example for me is closer to home. It's on the Deschutes National Forest. About 6 years ago, we decided to start experimenting with large-scale NEPA documents, looking at whole watersheds as part of a single planning effort to consider holistically what was needed to restore the land. For example, in the Crescent Ranger District, the District Ranger, Phil Cruz, conducted planning NEPA and ESA consultation on 150,000 acres of watersheds. This environmental assessment considered the treatments that were needed to restore the landscape and included acres of prescribed burning, timber harvesting, restoration of streams, and recreation opportunities. People could see the context for an individual 100-acre treatment and understood more clearly the reasons for it.

Consultation on ESA was done at this scale as well, and not only did lots of work get accomplished with a single planning effort, which saved a lot of time and money, but the planning and the proposed actions together made more sense to people. We didn't get any appeals, we got no lawsuits, and his outyear program was established. His workforce, which is normally working on 15 or so different environmental documents, was more focused and less frazzled.

It certainly isn't perfect, and it doesn't work everywhere, but it is definitely a tool I think we need to consider, where it makes sense to do that.

Finally, I just want to mention the stewardship pilot projects, where Congress provided us, again as Randy said, another wonderful opportunity to test some new authorities, including the exchange of goods for services, retention of receipts, awarding contracts on a "best value" basis, and the designation of timber for cutting by prescription.

The early results indicate that the authorities are proving that a new context for decision making is being discussed. We want to really continue working with you on that.

So, again, finally, working in partnerships with people requires new skills and new incentives. We are really looking forward to working with you and doing whatever we can on this. Thanks.

Mr. MCINNIS. Thank you, Ms. Collins.

Before going to the panel for questions, I will first yield to the Ranking Member, Mr. Inslee, for opening remarks.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JAY INSLEE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

Mr. INSLEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies for being late. I just have a couple of brief comments.

I am interested in this issue because I think there is a real balancing act for the Forest Service, between adopting means of local input and some of the sustainable issues that we have, and the recognition that these are national forests and serve national purposes, and all 250 million-plus of us have an interest in every square foot of each forest.

That is a difficult balancing act, and I am interested in ways to try to improve that, to give local communities the sense that they have input into these decisions appropriate to their geographical location and the fact that it affects their lives, but still maintaining a sense that the Nation has ultimate decision-making authority over these areas.

I am interested in your comments about where friction has developed in that regard. I would be interested in the comments of all the witnesses today on how to improve that, and also particularly where there's been successes and what you think the reasons for those successes are, where we had some problematic issues in that regard in the past.

I would also be interested in knowing from all the witnesses today of any conflict that has occurred between local input and local efforts and our roadless area policy. That's a growing concern of some of us.

With that, Mr. Chair, I appreciate this opportunity to say hello this morning. And I may have to listen to some of your testimony in writing because I have to leave here in a while. Thank you.

Mr. MCINNIS. I understand, and appreciate the courtesy, Mr. Inslee.

I'm going to begin the questioning with a couple of brief questions. First of all, Mr. Phillips, after working with the Blue Mountain Demonstration Area strike team, what administrative changes would you recommend be made to create an environment where community relationships, like the Blue Mountain Demonstration strike team, can better succeed, and what modifications are needed in law. That would be my first question.

Let me ask the second so you can answer both of them, one after the other.

Are there any authorities you need, or any that get in the way, for the implementation of these types of partnership agreements?

Mr. PHILLIPS. Thank you.

The strike team that I was responsible for leading went into the Blue Mountains back in October of last year—that's after visiting the Denver area, the South Platte District, and looking at some of the issues there. We went in expecting to find a number of statutory problems that the employees were wrestling with.

What we found in many cases was probably our inflexibility in using contracting authorities that already exist, and so we've been focusing on those kinds of issues, clarifying for our contracting officers where they have greater authority, to use those existing authorities, if you will. We found a tremendous working relationship among the people there.

It was interesting that everybody I talked to during the week I was there agreed that the number one priority should be restoration, that the devil was in the details. People had different ideas about how that should be accomplished.

We are still trying to evaluate where we think there is some statutory changes that need to be made. We looked very closely at NEPA and ESA and found that—we didn't focus on the law so much as we did the procedures and the processes that the Forest Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Marine Fisheries were using to comply with the law. The report I have provided to the Committee details some of the actions that need to take place to improve those processes.

Now, as I mentioned in my testimony, we are, as a part of several other efforts, looking across the country to where we need some statutory changes. The National Fire Plan is due to report back to Congress on May 1st, and that will also include some of our ideas.

Mr. MCINNIS. Thank you, Mr. Phillips.

Ms. Collins, my question for you is, given the experiences that you've gone through in regards to some of these partnerships, what changes in either the statutory or regulatory environment would you say are most needed to make the community partnerships really viable, both on a community and national scale?

Ms. COLLINS. That's a great question.

I spent about an hour and a half yesterday at a meeting with some of the speakers who will be following me today. They had some good ideas about this, too. I'm excited by the energy that I see in that group.

One of the things that they mentioned that I would say was true for me, and I think true for many of the people that were working the field, is trying to come up with a mechanism or an agreement that allows more flexibility in the contracting end of things. We really want to explore the idea of participating agreements as opposed to just challenge cost-share agreements. Again, that's kind of technical. We need another set of tools that will allow more flexible partnerships. I think you will hear some of that.

I think, beyond that, what people really want from us, and are expecting from us, is again more administrative and less legal in terms of authorities, although some of the legal issues could help us, particularly, potentially, some appeals reform, which I think we'll be talking about later.

But what we can do administratively to help people and to help these partnerships is working earlier in the process with people, encouraging and providing incentives to our employees to do this. I think you will hear people say that it's almost like a second thing they have to do and not part of what we do naturally, organizationally. So all of those kind of things are what we're working on and what we need to put some energy into.

Mr. MCINNIS. Thank you.

Mr. Duncan.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

A later witness, in part of his testimony, says, "However, Federal land management agencies, particularly the Forest Service, is

consistently failing to be an effective partner in those forest management collaboratives, for the following reasons:"

"Agency delays and inconclusive planning processes are using up the limited supply of volunteer time and hope existing and rural communities."

"Long delays in implementing projects are resulting in the loss of the limited base of industrial infrastructure left in these communities."

He goes on, "Frequent errors and missteps are discrediting the notion of community-based conservation, both locally and nationally."

What do either one of you have to say about that? Do you think you are filled with agency delays and inconclusive planning processes?

Mr. PHILLIPS. Well, my experience is really as a forest supervisor for many years and as a district ranger, a forest supervisor in North Carolina, your neighbor down there.

There is a planning process we have to go through, and we do have right now an appeals process that we have to go through. When I talk to a lot of our partners, Congressman, they tell me they get frustrated because they come to the table and work with us on ideas and try and find solutions, and then we have a process that allows people to object to that. It creates a delay of as much as 105 days after a decision has been made.

Frequently, those appeals are upheld, in many cases, but it does add additional time and resources. In terms of dollars, I can't tell you exactly how much it adds to the cost of a project.

Mr. DUNCAN. Another later witness says the number one barrier to private sector investment is the plethora of disincentives that are laced throughout the tax codes and the permit systems.

Do you see a plethora of disincentives in your permit systems? Do you think that's fair?

Mr. PHILLIPS. In the permit systems?

Mr. DUNCAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. PHILLIPS. That's difficult for me to answer. I think, as Ms. Collins indicated, some more flexibility in creating those partnerships, whether it be participating agreements that don't necessarily require an exchange of money between partners, might add some benefit, some flexibility.

Mr. DUNCAN. You know, I think what some of us want to see is some balance and common sense brought into these policies, instead of always giving in to these extremist groups who don't want to cut any trees and who destroy jobs, drive up prices and hurt the poor and the working people in the process.

You know, in my home area of east Tennessee, it's another area, but in the late Seventies we had 150 coal companies up there, I think it was, and now we've got five. The reason is they moved in an Office of Surface Mining. A Federal agency moved in.

When you come in with all these rules and regulations and red tape, it first drives out the small companies; then it drives out the medium-size companies. So these radical groups end up helping extremely big business. But they hurt the little man and they hurt the small businesses, and they hurt the poor and the working people, because it just drives up prices on all these things.

So what we hope you will do is try to bring some balance and common sense into some of these policies, and we've been lacking in that for several years now.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MCINNIS. Thank you.

The gentleman from Colorado, Mr. Udall.

Mr. UDALL OF COLORADO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At this time I don't have any questions.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Holt?

Mr. HOLT. No questions, Mr. Chairman, at this time.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Simpson.

Mr. SIMPSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Do you find that the local forestry personnel and so forth are engaging in this in a cooperative manner, that they want to do this, they like this community-based forestry program, or that they are fearful of it?

Ms. COLLINS. I think it's mixed. I think, in all honesty, there are places where it comes real naturally for people, and where you've got leadership that just expects it and it happens.

You also have places where the community has expectations that it will happen, and that sort of creates a dynamic that's very positive.

I think one of the things that we've got to do internally is not only put leadership in place that supports that and encourages that, but that supports their employees to do that as well.

I guess, in response to that question, as well as the previous comment, the real value in these partnerships—I mean, we have so many examples of them all over the place, they're happening everywhere—is the way around red tape. I think this is why you're seeing more Forest Service people really understanding them. Because partnerships take time. You have to maintain them, you have to work with people on a regular basis. It's just like any relationship. Relationships take a lot of nurturing.

But you cut through red tape and you cut corners and you make your way to solutions in ways that are almost magical. But they do take time, and there is that frustration of understanding how to maintain those relationships.

Mr. SIMPSON. Let me put it this way. In 1996, because of the frustration that many people in Idaho felt in dealing with Federal agencies, whether it was the Bureau of Land Management or the Forest Service or whatever, because of all the red tape and all of that that was going on, when I was the Speaker of the House and my seatmate here was the Lieutenant Governor, we created the Federal Lands Task Force.

The idea at the time—I should say it was the misperception at the time—but the word going around was the state taking over management of Federal lands. Over the last 5 years, they created this task force and came up with some proposals, not for the state to take over management of Federal lands, but for the state and local governments and local communities to be involved with the Federal Government in managing these Federal lands.

They just published this year—our State Board of Land Commissioners and the Federal Lands Task Force sent it to us. It has five

recommendations for management, cooperative management, using different types of models within the State of Idaho.

Have you seen this yet?

Ms. COLLINS. I haven't, but I would really like to see it. I would be very interested.

Mr. SIMPSON. I will make sure that you get a copy of this.

When it first started, they put together groups of people interested in this, and they had people from the environmental community on it and so forth. About a third of the way through, the environmentalists they had on there dropped out because they felt they were outnumbered, I guess, or whatever.

I would like you to take a look at this and look at some recommendations, because we're going to be looking to push this through Congress, or at least parts of it, through Congress. I would like to know what kind of suggestions you might have that might make it work better or whatever. So we will send your office a copy of this.

Mr. PHILLIPS. I've seen parts of that. I know our regional forester, and forest supervisors, have also been working with the state on this, so they have been engaged with you in this process.

Mr. SIMPSON. I know that they have some concerns in some areas, and I would like to take those into consideration when we do anything like this. So I look forward to working with you on this, because I do think the best way we can move forward with positive land management is to have local communities, local people involved with the Federal people, instead of having them feel like everything is dictated from Washington, D.C. and they have no input in the process. So I look forward to working with you on it.

Thank you.

Mr. MCINNIS. Ms. McCollum, you will accept my apologies. I got out of order here. You're next.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. That's fine, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

I have a couple of questions. Similar to what the former Speaker of the House was just describing, we have sort of a forestry roundtable. But what we have done in there is we have kind of agreed upon some definitions of best practices, and they are spelled out.

I'm wondering if the Forest Service could provide me with some information on, for example, what is your definition of restoration, some of those kinds of things, so that everybody knows, when they're sitting down and talking about something, that these are the best practices of what's going to be put into use.

The other item then goes to some of the points you were making. The question I have is, have you been funded enough to really make this a meaningful project? I know we had to put funds in, and continue to put funds in, and things were slow happening in the State of Minnesota, in order to make our forestry roundtable work, because at first it takes a lot of time for people to break down barriers and trust one another, and with part of that comes our obligation to fund that.

Could you tell me if you have "best practices" managements and provide those to me, and then also tell me, what are your needs in funding so that you're not short-changing other areas of the Forestry Division?

Mr. PHILLIPS. The roundtable that you referred to, I was talking to one of the forest supervisors from your part of the country, Jim Sanders. He was explaining to me that that is an excellent example of how various interests have come together to find solutions.

As far as a definition of restoration, I mentioned in my testimony, or in one of my answers, that when we went into the Blue Mountains, most everybody I talked to agreed that the number one priority should be restoration. They had some different ideas about how that should take place.

My feeling is that the definition of restoration depends on what the situation is locally and the various methods that people can work together to define how best to make that happen.

As far as the funding information and the best practices, we can follow up with you on some information for that. Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Otter.

Mr. OTTER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask that the report, "Breaking the Gridlock", referred to by my colleague from Idaho, be entered as part of the record, this record.

Mr. MCINNIS. If there's no objection. That's going to cost us a lot of money to print that many pages.

[Laughter.]

Mr. OTTER. It's probably the best bucks you'll ever spend, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MCINNIS. We'll take it out of your office allocation.

[Laughter.]

Mr. OTTER. You got it.

Mr. MCINNIS. If there's no objection, so ordered.

[The report entitled "Breaking the Gridlock" has been retained in the Committee's official files.]

Mr. OTTER. The other thing I would ask, Mr. Chairman, if we could prevail upon this present panel to stay the course until after we've heard the second panel. Because like many of the other people who have already asked questions of this panel, and have referred to some of the testimony offered to us by the written testimony of the second panel, I think once that second panel testifies, it could generate some very interesting questions for this first panel.

Mr. MCINNIS. Without objection from the guests we have today, we would appreciate if you would sit through the second panel.

Mr. PHILLIPS. We had planned on it. We are very interested to hear what they have to say.

Mr. MCINNIS. I would advise everyone, though, that this Committee will adjourn at 12 noon sharp.

Mr. OTTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your indulgence.

Mr. Phillips and Ms. Collins, perhaps both of you would like to respond to this question.

One of the things that I see lacking in a "true partnership" is the partnering of the potential solution, and the partnering of the potential solution doesn't mean that everybody agrees a hundred percent, but that everybody does agree at least to an extent that they're willing to live with.

It has been my experience, from what I have heard, that perhaps that hasn't been the partnership which both of you have spoken to this morning, that perhaps there is a directing partner and a participating partner in this program.

Would you like to respond to that?

Ms. COLLINS. I think that when we see really great successes in partnerships is when we, the Forest Service, or other Federal agencies like the BLM, step back and share power, or share responsibilities with our communities. That's when we really see things happen. So it's not that we're giving up our decision-making or statutory responsibilities at all, but that we're effectively working with everybody's interest in mind, not just our interest taking the top priority. I think that's what we really find works.

When it doesn't work, it is often because there is somebody trying to presume that their interests are more important than somebody else's interests, and at least acknowledging that everybody has got something important to say and put it on the table. Sharing that and acknowledging it, and not presuming to have all the answers I think is the key. I think that's where you see success and you see problems.

Mr. OTTER. Ms. Collins, do you think that has ever been the position of the Forest Service, that they presume perhaps a lead role or a more knowledgeable base?

Ms. COLLINS. Oh, absolutely.

Mr. OTTER. Thank you.

Ms. COLLINS. I mean, we have had a lot of those situations. I think what we have learned is that they don't work that well, okay?

Mr. OTTER. Right.

Did you want to respond to that, too, Mr. Phillips?

Mr. PHILLIPS. No. I would just say I think the model is changing in the way we reach decisions. Personally, my experience is, when we lost the use of advisory committees in the late Seventies, it took the Forest Service out of the circle, so to speak, where people were trying to find solutions, and it put us right in the middle of the controversy, to where the model was people would come and they would participate, give input, and then the forest manager would make a decision. Then we would go through the appeals litigation process.

We're trying to change that model. It's going to take some time, and it's going to take some different skills of our people.

Mr. OTTER. One of the most successful programs I have seen—and I don't know that we have been successful with any of these in Idaho thus far, these partnerships you're talking about—but one of the most successful programs that I have seen in Idaho has been carried on in north Idaho by The Nature Conservancy. They have been probably a big surprise to "Butch" Otter, because I did not expect to be convinced so easily that they were going to be as effective as they were. But their program up in Boundary County, which is in the shadow of Canada, has just been a tremendous success as far as I'm concerned. You know, in my personal estimation, and also I believe in the surrounding community.

One of the reasons they have been so successful is because they subject themselves continually to peer review.

I have not seen any evidence that your program of partnerships has exposed itself to the near level of peer review as I think people would like to see it. Would you respond to that, please?

Ms. COLLINS. Well, actually, I think one of the reasons why, for example, this Ponderosa Pine Partnership has been so successful in Colorado is that they did have this rigorous sort of self-reviewing process, and scientists looking at what they were doing, and a very aggressive monitoring piece.

I think where you begin to build trust in these partnerships is when you're taking actions on the ground, that some people may be somewhat uncomfortable with, that that's when you institute monitoring to check back later to see what the impacts really were. I think a lot of these partnerships build that in. I think that's how you build trust.

Mr. OTTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Udall of New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL OF NEW MEXICO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

During the last session of Congress, we passed the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000, which I believe was an act that tried to do as much as possible to have communities be involved in the restoration process. And as part of that bill, I worked with our Senators on the other side—Senator Dominici and Senator Bingaman—to have a title of that bill on facilitating collaborative restoration projects, specifically in New Mexico.

I wonder if you have any information on how that is progressing and, if you don't, if I could get somebody to brief me on that.

Mr. PHILLIPS. I just happen to have some information.

I have been very involved in trying to facilitate implementation of that law. I'm also a member of the long-term committee that the act prescribes. I have been real pleased to see the way our employees have really stepped out to implement this. We are in the process of giving concurrence on it to a number of our regions on the geographic boundaries for these RACs that they have submitted. Virtually every region has come in and working with their counties to identify where those Resource Advisory Councils should be set up. They are getting read to start the recruitment process—some counties have already started that—but to complete the recruitment process for the membership to those advisory councils.

It's interesting to see our employees so excited about it. It is already improving relationships between our employees, our field organizations and counties, where there may have been some friction in the past.

Mr. UDALL OF NEW MEXICO. Have you found that the collaborative projects are ones which, if they bring the entire community in, folks that are interested in small-cut, out of the forest environmental types, any other people that are interested in recreating in the forest, if they bring everybody in, that that's the way they can be successful?

Mr. PHILLIPS. Well, the chances of success are much greater when you bring all the interests in at the beginning, rather than late into the end of process and have people come in and voice concerns. And it's not just people who live in the local community

but the broader spectrum of people that are interested. We have got to get them involved at the beginning of the process.

Mr. UDALL OF NEW MEXICO. And if you—Go ahead, Sally.

Ms. COLLINS. I was just going to say that, over the last 5 years, I have been managing an advisory committee under FACA that is similar to the one that's being created here. The diversity on that committee, and the kind of challenges we put before that committee, and their willingness to rally behind an issue and provide support, I have never felt that kind of support for what I was trying to do before in my job.

What happens when you sort of give up power is you end up getting power. I was amazed at how many ideas came to me that I hadn't thought of from the group. So when you have a group like that, that works effectively, and you manage effectively, and just as diverse as you describe, they can be immensely helpful and actually provide the support for the implementation on the ground of lots of work, and minimize the controversy and the challenges that come in from all sides. It's a very effective tool, and I think once you see it work, you want to have that yourself.

Mr. UDALL OF NEW MEXICO. My experience has been the same thing, that the more you have—whether it's a forest issue or any other issue—the more you have all the interests represented at the table, bring all the stakeholders in and make sure everybody has notice, and then move forward from there, it can be very productive. So thank you for your comments.

Mr. Chairman, I applaud you for this hearing today. I think focusing on these kinds of collaborative partnerships is very important. Thank you.

Mr. MCINNIS. It is the Chair's intent to recess the Committee until after the votes. I would expect the Committee to be back at around five or 10 minutes after 11. So if the second panel will be prepared, we will go right to the second panel, with the idea of concluding by 12 noon.

The Committee will now stand in recess until the final vote.

[Recess.]

Mr. MCINNIS. I will now introduce our second panel. Let me begin by telling everyone we appreciate your patience. As you know, these votes cannot be anticipated, at least as to an exact time.

I will now introduce the second panel, as I mentioned earlier. On panel two we have Mr. Thomas Brendler, Executive Director, National Network of Forest Practitioners; Maia Enzer, Program Officer, Sustainable Northwest; Bruce Ward, Executive Director, Continental Divide Trail Alliance, Inc.; Brett KenCairn, Director, Indigenous Community Enterprises; and Sungnome Madrone, Director, National Resources Services of Redwood Community Action Agency.

Again, I will remind these witnesses, as I have the other witnesses, you have 5 minutes to present your comments. I would appreciate your paying attention to the timer, which gives you your time remaining.

I will now proceed with Mr. Brendler.

**STATEMENT OF THOMAS BRENDLER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
NATIONAL NETWORK OF FOREST PRACTITIONERS**

Mr. BRENDLER. Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. I am Thomas Brendler, Executive Director of the National Network of Forest Practitioners.

The Network is a grassroots alliance of rural people, organizations, and businesses who are helping to build a forest economy that is ecologically sound and socially just. The work of our members includes watershed protection, restoration, ecotourism, job training, nontimber forest products, and value-added wood manufacturing.

Rural communities plagued by scarce jobs and depressed economies view restoration and stewardship not only as an economic opportunity, but as the beginning of a new conservation economy. This potential does, however, raise several important issues, which I would like to bring to your attention.

First, we feel it is essential for concerns about poverty and social justice to be considered in the development and implementation of forest policies. The two principle reasons for this are that rural areas are sites of immense poverty and historic injustice. Twenty-five percent of rural counties are classified as persistently poor, and more than half of all rural counties are within a hundred miles of a national forest boundary.

Also, much of the work on national forests is carried out by working class people and people of color. In the Pacific Northwest, for example, over 80 percent of the tree planting is carried out by Latino crews.

Forest management is inseparable from issues like access to capital, job training, and forest work, the ideal living wage, the treatment of forest workers and the impacts of forest management decisions on surrounding communities.

The issue of collaboration is also important to us, and most recently the NFFP and its partners have been working with the Forest Service to ensure that the new fire plan is implemented in accordance with collaborative stewardship. Our concern from the beginning has been that the fast pace and enormous scale of the fire effort will leave small rural communities and struggling micro-businesses behind.

Although our work with the agency is in its early stages, there have already been some reports of resistance to collaborating with nonagency partners. Such critics view the fire plan as strictly an interagency initiative and question the role of community-based organizations. These reports appear to contradict explicit directives set forth in Title IV of the appropriations bill—for example, working with nonprofits and employing innovative contractual tools for carrying out work.

I would like to draw your attention to a couple of critical needs under this theme of collaboration. First, agencies need a better understanding and appreciation for how these local groups can be effective partners. For example, on helping them create a bridge between agencies and communities.

Risk taking and innovation within agencies is a critical element of partnerships for problem solving and must be rewarded at all

levels. Agencies like the Forest Service also need the resources for necessary training and staff to forge partnerships.

Also, community collaboration and investment needs to be a priority for which all agency staff are held accountable. In the past, agency staff have been evaluated based on measures of commodity production, and a new direction that we would propose would be to create social, community and ecological measures of performance.

Investment is also another issue that we're concerned with. Rural communities continue to suffer from an inability to capture, add to and recirculate the value that comes off their neighboring forests. These groups need support for R&D, research and development, plain and simple. We envision a community forestry investment fund which would provide grants and low interest loans to stimulate nationwide innovation and small-scale, conservation-based businesses.

In closing, I would like to draw your attention to a program that we feel embodies and offers a working model for agency/community partnerships. It's call the Economic Action Program. It's run through the Forest Service's Cooperative Forestry Division. EAP has been easy to overlook because it represents such a small percentage of the budget, but it does offer a number of significant advantages. It leverages five to ten dollars for every dollar spent by the program, those five to ten dollars being leveraged from other sources, most of them private. EAP, for a lot of communities, is the only source of support for the kind of work that they would like to do in the early going.

Also, we feel that the lasting contribution that EAP makes will reduce the reliance that a lot of communities fall into when crises emerge.

With that, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today, and look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Brendler follows:]

Statement of Thomas Brendler, Executive Director, National Network of Forest Practitioners

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. I am Thomas Brendler, Executive Director of the National Network of Forest Practitioners. I will begin with a brief overview of my organization and the community forestry movement, followed by a discussion of what I see as some of the issues and challenges associated with community involvement in national forest restoration and recreation efforts. I will then briefly address national forests of the eastern United States, and close with discussion of the Forest Service's Economic Action Programs, which in my view represent a working model for effective community-agency partnership.

THE NNFP & THE COMMUNITY FORESTRY MOVEMENT

The National Network of Forest Practitioners (NNFP) is a grassroots alliance of rural people, organizations, and businesses finding practical ways to integrate economic development, forest conservation, and social justice. The Network's mission is to promote the mutual well being of workers, rural communities, and forests by supporting individuals and groups that build sustainable relationships between forests and people. Formed in 1990, the Network now boasts over 500 members in 48 states and British Columbia. NNFP members are engaged in a wide variety of enterprises in rural communities including watershed protection and restoration, ecotourism, job training, non-timber forest products, and value-added wood manufacturing. The membership includes people of Native American, Latino, Asian, African American, Caucasian and other ethnic backgrounds. Together, NNFP members are striving to build a forest economy that is ecologically sound and socially just.

The NNFP and its partners represent the vanguard of a growing movement which has come to be known as community forestry. Practitioners of community-based forestry or practitioners for short first appeared about a decade ago in rural American communities that had traditionally relied on forests for their economic, social, and environmental well-being. Their emergence represented an attempt by rural communities to combat trends that seemed beyond their control: ecological degradation and the export of forest wealth; extreme unemployment, emigration and the decline of community capacity; rising national pressures on forest policy and consequent federal agency withdrawals into more centralized modes of decision-making; and a rapidly globalizing economy. Communities began to organize to gain greater control of their future, and to ensure the environmental soundness, economic viability, and social justice of forest management.

Everywhere it seems people are talking about the need to balance concerns for environmental protection and economic development. People from rural, forest-dependent communities know that this is no easy task. Across the country, changes in the way forests are managed are bringing about significant social and economic transformations. These changes are particularly acute in traditionally forest-dependent communities, communities which represent the majority of rural America. Faced with the challenge of survival, we are trying to find ways to strengthen our communities by creating economic opportunities which, while forest-based, will be ecologically sound in the long term. By finding creative ways to integrate economic development, environmental protection, and social justice now, community forestry practitioners hope to strengthen their self-reliance, avert future crises, and forge their own prosperity.

While practitioners come in all shapes and sizes, they tend to be community-based non-profit organizations. In many communities, these organizations have risen from the ashes of poverty and resource degradation, in abandoned storefronts and church basements to become engines of grassroots change. Many groups represent the first efforts by communities to come together to solve difficult problems, and many of these have grown up to become community institutions. While they often serve as incubators for partnership and collaboration, their focus is ultimately on action and tangible change. They are the doers in the community forestry movement: they translate vision into practice, they know what policies look like when they hit the ground. They are living examples of a paradigm shift that is taking place across the country.

ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

Rural communities plagued by scarce jobs and depressed economies view restoration, stewardship, and environmentally sound recreation not only as an economic opportunity, but as the beginning of a new conservation-based economy. Practitioners are making a living harvesting and processing undervalued species and diameter classes, restoring stream banks, maintaining trails, and leading pack trips and ecotours. The economic impact of these activities can be enormous: a 1995 report by the Forest Service showed that, for example, recreation on national forests accounted for a \$97.8 billion contribution to the Gross National Product, compared with \$3.5 billion for logging. Renewed focus on restoration afforded by the fire plan and the large scale watershed projects hold enormous potential to strengthen rural communities in an ecologically sound manner.

The potential of rural communities to benefit from forest restoration efforts does, however, raise several important issues.

Social Justice

At the same time, rural areas are sites of immense poverty and historic injustice: 25 per cent of rural counties are classified as persistently poor. Because more than half of all rural counties are within 100 miles of a national forest boundary, it is essential for concerns about poverty and social justice to be taken into consideration in discussions about national forest policies. Moreover, much of the forest work on national forests tree planting, thinning, road closures and maintenance, and non-timber forest products harvesting is carried out by working-class people and people of color. In the Pacific Northwest, for example, over 80 per cent of tree planting is carried out by Latinos. This recognition has heightened longstanding concerns about marginalization, discrimination, and racism by land management agencies, natural resource professions, and interest groups.

The NNFP believes that traditionally disenfranchised groups can make an essential contribution to the advancement of sustainable forestry, and forest restoration, particularly because they have a direct impact on the land and because their communities are often most severely affected by forest trends, such as the depletion of non-timber forest products. Most importantly, these groups represent a significant

portion of the existing restoration workforce, which has been present for more than 20 years, and as such represents a wealth of historical knowledge about restoration and a set of potential partners.

- We firmly believe that engaging underserved and minority groups and addressing the associated, fundamental issues of cultural diversity and social justice will help overcome societal barriers to achieving lasting forest stewardship.
- Forest management is inseparable from issues like access to capital, job training, and forest work; the elusive living wage; the treatment of forest workers; and the impacts of forest management decisions on surrounding communities.
- In general, there is a need for a more complete understanding of the full range of work being carried out in the woods an appreciation of the true diversity of the workforce engaged in it.
- We fully support the notion of a nationwide assessment of the forest and watershed restoration workforce, which could serve as valuable reference in the development of forest policy.

Collaboration

The NNFP has had a long and amicable relationship with the Forest Service. In 1999, the NNFP and the Forest Service negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), whose goals include expanding access to information for practitioners and agency staff alike, and promoting cooperation at the national, regional, and local levels. Partnerships between community-based non-profits and federal agencies like the Forest Service continue to emerge, and have proven an effective tool for accomplishing mutual goals.

Most recently, the NNFP and its partners have been working with the Forest Service to ensure that the new fire plan is implemented in a fashion that strengthens small rural communities and promotes collaborative stewardship. Our concern from the beginning has been that the fast pace and enormous scale of the fire effort, which has, for example, led many practitioners to fear that their skills, experience, resources, and small size will make it difficult to compete for and carry out restoration contracts. As a result, those who have worked over the past decade to open up opportunities for small, local, light-on-the-land enterprises, and local and mobile contract workers of all kinds, are concerned that rural communities will once again become dependent on large, non-local firms.

Although this work is in its early stages, there have already been some reports of resistance at the local and regional level to collaborating with non-agency partners. Such critics view the fire plan as a strictly inter-agency initiative, and question the role of community-based non-profits and other potential partners. These reports appear to contradict explicit directives set forth in Title IV of the fiscal year 2001 Appropriations Bill, for, for example, working with non-profits and employing innovative contractual tools for carrying out work. This confusion about the role of non-profits also seems ironic, considering that ordinary citizens have been approaching community-based non profits for information about the fire plan, before they contact the Forest Service, if at all.

In our other work with the Forest Service, I have observed a similar dynamic: the Washington office is readily supportive and willing to issue national directives, while the at local and regional level in some areas perhaps specifically in reaction to such directives is resistant to working differently. It is important to point out, however, that at the same time, the local and regional levels have been wellsprings of innovation there are some Forest Service staff who our members would like to have cloned. In addition, support for community forestry at the national level is far from universal, as illustrated by the limited internal support for the Economic Action Program, which I will discuss later. In general, we are optimistic with the support for community collaboration thus far by the Forest Service as it begins implementing the fire plan, but the Committee's help to ensure that the Forest Service fulfills its commitment to rural communities.

I would like to draw your attention to several critical needs:

- Agencies, especially at the local and regional level, need a better understanding of and appreciation for how community-based non profits can help them implement their work, for example by serving as a bridge between these agencies and local communities. We are supportive of the Forest Service's Collaborative Stewardship Team's recommendation for joint workshops that would bring communities and agency staff together in an educational setting.
- Some agency staff resist using unconventional tools (like those identified in Title IV) because they do not receive internal encouragement to do so. Risk-taking and innovation within agencies is a critical element in forging new partnerships and solving complex natural resource problems. It must be rewarded at all levels.

- Agencies like the Forest Service cannot be expected to employ new tools without adequate resources for necessary training and staff. For example, the Forest Service currently lacks a sufficient number of contracting officers (CO's) the agency will need in order to meet the expectations of Title IV.
- Community collaboration and investment needs to be an agency priority for which all staff are held accountable. In the past, agency staff have been evaluated based on commodity measures, and we would propose that staff should instead be evaluated based on community and ecological criteria.
- We need to take a long term view that extends beyond the current crisis, while at the same time uses it to leverage a permanent, meaningful role for rural communities in national forest management.

Investment & Capacity

Forests and communities must be seen as a target for long-term investment, not just as a source of endless, short-term dividends. Conventional methods for measuring the worth of forests have failed to take into account non-market values, such as forests role in maintaining air and water quality, and as a result have hampered effective forest management. Accepting forests as providers of public goods will require us to make investments for which short dividends are not necessarily guaranteed.

Similarly, rural communities continue to suffer from an inability to capture, add to, and recirculate the value that comes off of their neighboring forests. As you are probably aware, the economic multipliers at each successive link in the value-added chain are significant. One observer has gone so far as to propose man years per thousand board feet as an alternative measure of mill productivity. We feel that adding value to what comes of the not only forest communities, but, by increasing the value of each acre, reduces the number of acres that need to be cut to generate the same amount of income.

Ultimately, the ability of community forestry practitioners to be effective partners and to create lasting change in forests and rural communities, depends on their capacity to solve problems and capitalize on emerging opportunities. Because most community forestry practitioners operate on shoestring budgets, often relying on volunteers and in-kind support, they often lack the resources to build their own capacity. With narrow profit margins, many small, innovative community-based business find themselves in a similar predicament. These groups are breaking new ground, and the new economy they are helping create built on conservation and restoration requires investment. This is R&D, plain and simple. At present there is no significant source of such investment. The Forest Service's Economic Action Program represents the beginnings of such a resource, but its funding has always been tenuous.

- We envision a Community Forestry Investment Fund, which would provide grants and low interest loans to stimulate nationwide innovation in small-scale, conservation-based forest enterprise and document lessons learned.

Information

Rural communities and groups like ours have become accustomed to the fact that information on Forest Service activities is difficult to access, rarely comparable across regions, and in some cases lacking altogether. While was encouraging to see that the General Accounting Office identified this need in 1997, I mention this issue at every opportunity, because information is a building block of trust, and a key to community involvement. The Forest Service appears to have acknowledged this need, but it is important that it be a priority. For example, there is no easily accessible, comparable data (current or historic), for example on the Economic Action Program. This situation has made it difficult for communities to learn about the program, and for groups like ours to support it effectively. We have similar concerns about the new fire plan, and have been urging the Forest Service to make basic information on the plan (including opportunities it offers and how to access them) widely accessible.

- We have proposed to the Forest Service the creation of a regularly updated, web-based database of proposed and ongoing fire plan projects, which would be searchable by forest, locality, and other criteria. Such a tool could serve as model for EAP and other Forest Service programs.

Monitoring

Well-designed restoration projects require a commitment to track or monitor work so successes and failures can be identified, and actions modified—or halted—if necessary. Diverse interests are more likely to support each other when they have common objectives and safeguards to protect their interests. Monitoring is the first step, but it is incomplete by itself. It must be accompanied by reporting mechanisms and the establishment of processes that ensure prompt corrective actions when

necessary. These steps are part of adaptive management, which views every management action as an experiment and acknowledges the uncertainty associated with each action.

For many years monitoring has been seen as an important activity in public policy and management models but done in a limited fashion, if at all. Looking forward and putting new projects on the ground has always been more captivating than looking back and monitoring what has been done. Yet, monitoring is the linchpin in efforts to understand and learn from our actions, as well as to begin to build accountability for them. Building accountability requires, first, engaging diverse local and distant stakeholders in monitoring processes and practices, and, second, developing ways that monitoring and learning inform and even obligate subsequent actions.

Community-based monitoring efforts pose a number of technical and political challenges, including:

- Adequate funding: some propose that projects should not be approved if a monitoring plan and necessary funding are not in place at the outset
- Tension over the level of scientific rigor required to achieve objectives
- Differing perceptions and expectations
- Inclusiveness in multi-party monitoring; and
- Integrating social and ecological factors into the monitoring process

A Footnote from the East

While I am the head of a national organization, as a resident and native of New England, and the sole witness from the eastern United States, I thought it important to draw your attention briefly to my backyard. As you might imagine, national forests in the east are easily overshadowed by their western counterparts, because they represent a fraction of the national forest system's total acreage. Yet, they are no less capable of serving as crucibles for innovation and partnership.

Two examples from the Northeast are:

- The Green Mountain, White Mountain, and Finger Lakes national forests have just received approval to resume their forest plan revision process. Important new regulations (and interpretations of them) have changed fundamentally the way these forests will go approach public involvement. Key among these is a new awareness of the need for local advisory committees (both scientific and citizen-based), the need for greater integration of forest planning with more landscape (ecosystem and community) perspectives, and stronger emphasis on building broad principles and goals into the planning process. Another important philosophical change that is influencing the planning process is a strong focus on sustainability as the principle objective of forest management.
- In Vermont, one of our members is attempting to develop the first stewardship contract in their local district of the Green Mountain National Forest, focusing on headwater stream restoration in past and ongoing timber sale areas. They report it has been a slow process of education of mid-level agency officials about the stewardship contracting process and the opportunities it presents—but hope to begin work this summer.

One last point is that while national forests in the east will benefit from the same tools and programs as their western counterparts, the predominance of private lands will heighten the importance of developing parallel, private-sector, market-based innovations as well, such as green certification, and cooperatives among landowners and manufacturers. Such innovation would certainly have application to the West, where private lands issues, while overshadowed, are far from nonexistent.

ECONOMIC ACTION PROGRAMS: A CASE STUDY OF WHAT WORKS

Through its Cooperative Forestry Program, the Forest Service has played, and can continue to play, a critical role in assisting communities like those of our members. We are grateful for the official recognition of this role in the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978, the National Forest-Dependent Rural Communities Economic Diversification Act of 1990, and in the Forest Service's 1990 strategic plan.

As you are probably aware, the Forest Service's Economic Action Programs (EAP) have traditionally consisted of five programs: Wood in Transportation, Forest Products Conservation and Recycling, Rural Development, Economic Recovery, and Economic Diversification Studies. Network members have found these last three programs, which we shall collectively refer to as Rural Community Assistance (RCA), to be particularly effective mechanisms for enabling the Forest Service to carry out its rural assistance role. In fact, in many areas of the country, RCA is the only resource of its kind available to struggling rural communities. Furthermore, while many communities have benefited from RCA many more across the country are fac-

ing growing challenges that RCA's minimal but critical assistance can help them address before these challenges balloon into major crises.

As you may know, rural communities can apply through the Rural Development program for grants that serve as matching funds for local projects to stimulate improvements in long-term economic and social well-being. Economic Recovery assists rural communities in or near national forests, which are experiencing acute economic problems associated with changes in resource management policies and decisions. Economic Recovery has been used to help community leaders facilitate community-based planning, develop job- and leadership skills, develop business plans, and devise and implement market strategies for new and existing technologies. The Economic Diversification Studies program, which was discontinued in fiscal year 1996, provided cost-share funds to study ways of diversifying local economies in communities that were heavily dependent on one industry. Projects ranged from tourism and value-added manufacturing to historic preservation and recycling.

We have found EAP and RCA to be instrumental and cost-effective for several reasons:

- On average, every dollar spent RCA leverages \$5 to \$10 from other sources. For example, the \$80,000 in RCA funds which supported the development of the Watershed Improvement Network in northern California leveraged some \$500,000 in state and federal funds for watershed improvement.
- EAP offers a helping hand, not a handout. It strengthens the capacity of rural communities to solve problems by (for example) providing access to technology and expertise, and by building working relationships among community residents, organizations, businesses and governmental agencies. The end result of the agency's EAP approach is both a strengthening of the internal resources of a community, as well as improved access to the external resources available to it.
- The community capacity built with the help of EAP often provides a necessary foundation for future economic development. It has been a major catalyst in the development of economic opportunities emerging around forest conservation and restoration.
- The lasting contribution the EAP efforts have made to the social and economic infrastructure of rural communities will lessen their reliance on federal assistance in the long term, and help avert future crises that would invariably involve further public expenditure.
- As rural communities take their critical first steps toward capacity building and economic development, EAP is often the only source of funding. EAP support to communities during these early stages strengthens their competitiveness and in many cases simply makes them eligible for better known, but less accessible programs. In this respect EAP again acts as a source of leverage.
- EAP starts at the community level, engaging Forest Service staff (often local residents themselves) directly with community leaders, and developing solutions from the ground up. In many areas, EAP is the only agency approach with such an intensive delivery system. This local orientation produces solutions appropriate to unique local circumstances, and in which local residents feel invested two characteristics which our experiences have shown to be determinants of lasting success.
- EAP does not presume to hold the answers to the problems of rural communities. Nor does it assume that all rural communities are alike. Instead, EAP is structured to be adaptive both to unique local circumstances of client communities as well as to changing social and economic conditions and emerging crises. For example, RCA has adapted to the unique landowner patterns in the northeast, where Rural Development monies are implemented through the Rural Development Through Forestry program.
- The Forest Service is uniquely positioned to administer EAP. With branch offices in small rural communities, the Forest Service is able to reach communities other agencies cannot reach. The Forest Service also brings to the table an enormous land base, access to national resources, and internal reserves of expertise in forest management, economic development, and forest products technology.
- While state agencies often function as invaluable partners in EAP projects, EAP's status as a federal program offers several unique advantages. It affords consistent service delivery, draws upon a national pool of expertise, and facilitates the transfer of knowledge among rural communities nationwide. As EAP monies are not limited to federally-owned land, the program provides a useful tool for reckoning with challenges at the watershed level and other areas of mixed ownership. All of these strengths as a federal program help make EAP more cost effective.

Yet, EAP's usefulness and effectiveness have built a growing constituency of past and potential beneficiaries who want to see the effort flourish. A closer examination of similar EAP projects around the country reveals that as the projects mature beyond implementation the leveraged dollars often increase dramatically and the social, emotional, economic and environmental benefits to the communities multiply. We are not talking about hand outs or government grant dollars thrown into the wind, but rather investments that pay off in big dividends to communities.

The Forest Service's EAP effort has been easy to overlook because it represents such a small percentage of the Forest Service's budget about half of one percent. It is further isolated within the agency by being treated as a separate program. If it is to be as important a part of the agency's programs as many Forest Service leaders hope and contend, then it must be fully integrated into all Forest Service programs, and must receive a greater share of the budget. We are appreciative of Congress \$12.5 million additional appropriation for fiscal year 2001 under Title IV, and hope that it signals the beginning of a new era for the program, and for the communities who benefit from it.

- We are interested in seeing the annual appropriation for EAP increase beyond its 1997 high of \$20 million, to more on the order of \$50 million. I must point out, however, that unrelated earmarks undercut the program's potential at any funding level: last year earmarks accounted for two-thirds of the EAP appropriation.

As one of our members put it, Cutting this program is like cutting a lifeline between rural areas and the rest of the world. And this, from the director of a top-ranked Resource Conservation and Development District: EAP is the most responsive, accomplishment oriented, least bureaucratic program of them all. There are federal programs that have out lived their purpose and should be eliminated. EAP is not one of them. We feel very strongly that EAP can serve as a model for other federal programs that seek to build partnerships with communities while carrying out restoration efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Subcommittee today.

NOTE: The report and pamphlet submitted for the record can be viewed in the Committee files.

Mr. MCINNIS. Thank you for your presentation.

Ms. Enzer, we appreciate your testimony. You may proceed.

**STATEMENT OF MAIA J. ENZER, PROGRAM OFFICER,
SUSTAINABLE NORTHWEST**

Ms. ENZER. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, thank you so much for holding the hearing on this topic. I am very happy to share my experience in working with rural communities and micro-businesses.

I am the Program Officer at Sustainable Northwest, for the Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities Partnership. We are based in Portland, Oregon, and our mission is to assist rural communities to implement strategies that benefit both the land and the people. The Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities Partnership is aimed at building rural community capacity to produce and market the byproducts of ecosystem restoration in a fashion that is ecologically and socially responsible.

Our partners include small and microbusinesses, community nonprofits, land management agencies, environmental interests and others dedicated to building an economy that reinvests in the land and in people.

I'm going to start by giving you a little bit of background on the people and places that constitute what we call a conservation-based economy, as Thomas alluded to. The communities and businesses affiliated with Sustainable Northwest are committed to finding a new path through the woods. By diversifying into conservation-

based businesses, they hope to create a more sustainable economic system. They want to move beyond the “boom and bust” cycle which clearly failed from a biophysical and community standpoint, and they want to adopt a more sustainable stewardship role in watershed restoration and ecosystem management. But they want one that provides family wage jobs.

The businesses that I work with face common challenges. Northwest communities have felt the burden of polarization over forest issues, and so have the businesses that I work with. The combination of reduced and inconsistent funding, delays in budget approval, and the shifting direction of the Federal agencies, have made it very difficult for the private sector to prepare to serve the restoration economy.

The members of the Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities Partnership face challenges such as making use of traditionally low value species, being located in communities surrounded by public lands, high in poverty, remote from transportation corridors, and limited in infrastructure. They also suffer from having unpredictable supplies of wood sources, whether that’s from restoration or traditional timber sale projects.

They have difficulty in finding a skilled workforce, both on the land management side as well as on the manufacturing side. They lack access to capital to invest in and expand their businesses. But in spite of these obstacles, small producers are starting to create economic opportunities for conservation-based business. But their success is dependent on Congress and the American public being willing to invest in our natural and human capital.

We like to think of it as moving from the watershed into the woodshop, and we need to support a consistent program of work for conservation-based business if they are going to be able to enter this new economy. And while we support public-private partnerships, it’s important for Federal agencies and Congress to understand that, with every change in policy, when the pendulum swings from one extreme to another, it is the communities and the businesses that get caught in the middle.

A commitment to building a climate for conservation-based business will take time and consistency at the Federal level. Short-term or politically expedient solutions don’t help. Congress needs to examine ways to support conservation businesses and be a catalyst to stimulate this private sector.

We do have some suggestions on where to start with that. We think that it would be helpful to create small restoration and value-added training centers for rural development. These should be located in rural areas to build that capacity.

We need to invest in research and technology development through the Forest Products Lab, which needs to be adequately funded and supported to work with small and microbusinesses in rural communities.

Finally, in working with the land management agencies, we do feel it’s important to make an investment in them. Collaboration takes time and trust, as you heard from the Forest Service this morning, and communities and businesses are willing to take the time to engage in those long-term partnerships. But we need to

help the Forest Service to rebuild their capacity to be good partners.

We support the economic action programs—and I'm just going to talk about one aspect of it. The Forest Products Conservation and Recycling Program, which is part of the Economic Action Programs, is the best avenue for small and microbusinesses interested in doing value-added manufacturing. However, nationwide, there are only about six full-time employees working on that, compared to about 16 10 years ago. So it's a very small program but it has a lot of opportunity. In some places, like New Mexico and California, the Forest Service doesn't even have somebody working in the Forest Products Conservation and Recycling Program.

We also need support for stewardship contracting.

Lastly, just to sum up here, we feel strongly that the agencies need direction and support for monitoring of ecological, social and economic conditions.

The rest of my remarks are in my written testimony, so I will stop there. Thank you very much for this opportunity.

I will just end by saying the way in which we care for the land directly affects the well-being of our rural communities. When our forests are healthy—

Mr. MCINNIS. Ms. Enzer, we need to wrap up.

Ms. ENZER. Okay.

Mr. MCINNIS. The reason that we're strictly adhering to time limitations is so everybody on your panel has an opportunity to not only testify but also take questions, because the Committee will adjourn at 12 noon.

Ms. ENZER. Okay.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Enzer follows:]

Statement of Maia J. Enzer, Program Officer, Sustainable Northwest

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am Maia Enzer, Program Officer at Sustainable Northwest for the Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities Partnership. Thank you for your interest in this topic and for gathering so many practitioners from around the country to share their hands-on experiences and perspectives regarding community involvement in forest restoration. Sustainable Northwest (SNW) is a Portland, Oregon-based nonprofit organization founded in 1994 and dedicated to forging a new economy in the Pacific Northwest one that reinvests in the people, the communities, and the landscapes of the region. The mission of the organization is:

To build partnerships that promote environmentally sound economic development in communities of the Pacific Northwest.

The Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities Partnership (HFHC) is a regional collaborative dedicated to building capacity in rural communities to perform forest restoration and ecosystem management services, and to produce and market the by-products of such activities. The Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities Partnership has members in northern California, south-central and eastern Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. Our partners are small and micro-businesses, community non-profits, land management agencies, environmental interests, and others interested in building a conservation based economy. A Vision and Values Statement serves as the constitution of our Partnership, which our members sign as a symbol of their commitment to strive towards environmental and social responsibility. My remarks today will be based in part on that Statement, which reads: We are a group of people, organizations, and businesses working together, able to think beyond ourselves to embrace the entire biological community, beyond one generation to the needs of many.

We value and support those who refuse to sacrifice the long-term good of the land for the good of the people, or the good of the people for the good of the land, and who seek to find a new path which honors and sustains both.

We are committed to working towards:

- Integrating ecological, economic, and social objectives in everything we do
- Obtaining our raw materials in a manner that restores and/or maintains forest ecosystem and watershed health;
- Processing our products to maximize quality and value to the consumer while benefiting the people and communities closest to where the raw materials originate;
- Marketing our products through commercial partners who understand and can communicate our vision, values, and principles;
- Working cooperatively with landowners, managers, and with each other, in a way that honors our respective cultural backgrounds, roles, and responsibilities.

Today I would like to highlight some of the critical steps necessary to building a conservation-based economy reflective of our Vision and Values Statement. This includes the need to develop a high-skill, high-wage workforce to perform activities in forest restoration and value-added manufacturing. I will also identify several challenges and needs associated with making the transition from a traditional extractive economy to one based on restoration and ecosystem management. Finally, I will offer some recommendations for what can be done to overcome these challenges and what opportunities the Forest Service and Congress can embrace to make this transition successful. First, I would like to provide you with a little background information on the people and places that constitute this restoration-based economy:

Rural Communities and Public Lands

Across the Northwest, isolated rural communities surrounded by public lands have undergone major environmental and economic transitions. Some of these changes result from significant shifts in public land management policies, some are due to structural changes in the forest products industry, and still others are connected to global trends towards an increasingly urban-based service economy. Such changes have deleteriously impacted the ecological integrity of many of our forests and watersheds, reducing the natural capital of the surrounding rural communities. The concomitant decline of these communities social and economic capital is also leaving its mark: Businesses have left or closed, and skilled people have outmigrated to find work elsewhere, leaving fewer people to address and mitigate the impacts of these changes.

Despite the challenges they face, many rural communities have, as Betsy Rieke said, Optimism beyond reason. They love our public lands and feel the deep connection between those lands and their communities. They stay because they know they can provide the skills and stewardship ethic to care for both. They believe our public lands provide numerous ecological services yet to find their value in the marketplace: services such as clean water, biodiversity, carbon sinks, etc. These people hold generations of local knowledge about the land. And, they have every intention of building a sustainable future for themselves, their children, and our public lands.

The communities and businesses affiliated with Sustainable Northwest are committed to finding a new path through the woods. They want to move beyond the boom and bust cycle, which clearly failed from a biophysical and community standpoint, to adopt a stewardship role in public and private lands management—one focused on restoring ecological integrity and providing long-term maintenance. They also want to stimulate a more favorable economic and political response to that stewardship role. Rural communities and businesses are eager and ready to help redefine the value of our public lands and to offer the stewardship services we will need to achieve those values. But their success is dependent on the commitment of Congress and the American public to reinvest in our natural and our human capital.

Common Challenges of Conservation-based Businesses

Sustainable Northwest works with a variety of small rural communities and businesses through many of our programs. Our partners all share a commitment to building sustainable conservation-based economies; they also experience similar constraints and challenges to fulfilling that commitment. Small and micro businesses join northwest rural communities in feeling the burden of the polarization over forest issues. The combination of reduced and inconsistent funding (and delays in budget approval) and the shifting direction of federal agencies have made it very difficult for the private sector to prepare to serve the restoration economy. The members of the Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities Partnership face several challenges, which include:

- Making use of traditionally low-value species (the byproducts of forest restoration)
- Being located in communities surrounded by public lands, high in poverty, and remote from transportation corridors and limited in infrastructure

- Having unpredictable supplies of wood sources (from restoration projects or traditional timber projects)
- Difficulty in finding a skilled workforce
- Lacking access to capital to invest in and expand their businesses

However, the HFHC Partnership is committed to working together to overcome these challenges and make local businesses profitable through their commitment to environmental and social responsibility.

From the Watershed to the Woodshop: Steps to creating a conservation-based economy

The success of a conservation-based economy is dependent on many factors, including where we make investments and how the market rewards environmental and social responsibility. In the arena of forest and watershed restoration, the success of the conservation-based economy will depend on how work is structured and byproducts are utilized on public lands. This includes three components: Building a high-skill, high-wage workforce which can respond to the needs of the landscape; investing appropriately to get the work done on the land, and adding value to byproducts that result from restoration work.

From the Watershed ...

The cornerstone of public lands restoration is on what the landscape needs to bring back its ecological integrity and resiliency. Those ecological needs must drive restoration and management. After that we need to look at utilizing the byproducts, if any, from those activities. Although progress has been made towards these ends, it is often inhibited by land management agencies that are not structured for this type of work. It is time to put in place policies, procedures, and regulations that encourage restoration to occur at an appropriate scale, utilize site-specific conditions, and allow managers to deal with whole landscapes.

One critical step is to make restoration work accessible to local contractors, nonprofits, and other appropriate private entities. Our current system is biased towards large, mobile crews and sets up a system that may not treat the worker (local or mobile) fairly and may not, in the long-run, be the best value for the American taxpayer. Large contracts are written in the name of efficiency, limiting the ability of small and micro-businesses to successfully compete. A greater emphasis on quality of the work, rather than lowest bid, is needed. In addition, contracts offered locally are often of low value, low skill, and short duration. That is, even when awards are made to local contractors, they tend to be less significant. Some examples: in Lakeview, Oregon, an assessment of service contracts showed that local contractors received less than 20 percent of the awards. In Hayfork, California, a study by Dr. Cecilia Danks showed local contractors getting about 7 percent of the contract awards. In both cases, the contracts were for lower-value, shorter-duration work. A more balanced approach to contracting needs to take place. Restoration contracts need to be designed and released in a timely manner (with respect to field seasons), and when possible, packaged for smaller contractors. This would create a fairer and more equitable atmosphere for competition. The new authorities offered through the National Fire Plan are an excellent beginning to correcting this situation.

... To the Woodshop

Sustainable Northwest is committed to ensuring the restoration economy makes the link from the Watershed to the Woodshop. Many of our community partners, who work collaboratively to find agreement on forest restoration goals, want to take the next step toward ensuring that the byproducts of their projects are used to build a local value-added manufacturing sector. Through our HFHC Partnership we work to identify and access urban markets for the products manufactured. In addition, the HFHC Partnership provides businesses with a way to share inventories and jointly fill orders, allowing them to increase their capacity and capture a larger share of the market, within the limits of the local resources.

But let us be clear on this point. Building a value-added manufacturing sector with the byproducts of forest restoration is not about the volume of product extracted. Rather, it is about ensuring that byproducts that enter the manufacturing stream are utilized by local secondary and tertiary manufacturers. Look at the data: In the Pacific Northwest the value-added industry is a key part of the region's wood products sector, and a segment that has shown steady growth in the past decade. Studies conducted in Oregon and British Columbia reveal that typical primary mills employ only about 3 persons annually per million board feet (MMBF) of lumber produced. Compare that to, manufacturers of moldings, millwork products and components employ approximately 12 to 18 persons annually per MMBF or furniture manufacturers who employ 60 persons annually per MMBF of wood processed. As you can see, by adding value locally to the byproducts of forest restoration we have the

opportunity to create high-skill, high wage jobs, diversify the local economy, and connect rural communities to the urban marketplace.

HFHC business partners are working towards these goals, creating viable value-added businesses that reflect their commitment to environmental and social responsibility. They work primarily (but not exclusively) with small diameter wood (suppressed Douglas Fir), underutilized or lesser-known species (i.e. Madrone, Tan Oak, and Juniper), or recycled, reclaimed, or reused wood. The range of products these small rural businesses provide is impressive, and include:

- Flooring, paneling, and molding;
- Post and poles;
- Custom and roundwood furniture, designed for the home or the office; and
- Gifts and accessories (puzzles, wine and magazine racks, bird houses, hampers).

The Old Growth Diversification Program, authorized by Congress and delivered to the states of Oregon and Washington through the Forest Service, has allowed significant investments of technical and financial resources to expand the region's secondary manufacturing sectors. In fact, Sustainable Northwest has been able to use these funds to help our business partners access urban markets. This funding has been critical to the success of the Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities Partnership.

So what can we do together to move these efforts forward? We have some ideas:

1. Support Conservation-based Businesses

A successful shift from the traditional extractive economy to one based on restoration and maintenance will require that businesses both on the land management and manufacturing sides invest in new equipment, train and recruit new employees, and partner with communities and agencies. Finding markets for the byproducts of forest restoration is another important part of this equation. Community-based nonprofits and local businesses are working together to identify these markets, to research and develop new technology, and to raise private dollars to train workers and test restoration techniques on public lands. The Ford Foundation has a five-year Community-based Forestry Demonstration Program, which is supporting efforts like HFHC.

Many businesses are willing to engage in this new economy. However, without a strong commitment from federal agencies and Congress to a consistent program of work, businesses will become reluctant to take these risks.

Wallowa County, Oregon, provides us with an example of the current situation. The community has been working on a number of light touch approaches to restoration. In anticipation of restoration work announced by the Forest Service, some local contractors purchased special Scandinavian equipment designed to handle small-diameter material and have minimal impact on the land. Unfortunately, few projects have been brought to fruition. Further, the remaining mill in the region also invested in new equipment based on the Forest Service's projections. However, due to several factors, this mill has been in curtailment since November, although it hopes to reopen one shift in April. Compounding this situation, adjacent industrial private landowners usually award contracts to crews from outside the community rather than utilize a local workforce.

While we support public-private partnerships, it is important for the federal agencies and Congress to understand that with every change in policy when the pendulum swings from one extreme to the other it is the communities that get caught in middle. A commitment to building a climate for conservation-based business will take time and consistency at the federal level - not short term or politically expedient solutions. Therefore, Congress needs to examine ways to support conservation-based businesses and serve as a catalyst to stimulate this sector. Some suggestions to explore are:

1. Create Small Restoration and Value-Added Training Centers

There has been little or no public investment in value-added manufacturing in forest-based communities. One idea is to create sub-regional centers focused on serving small and micro-businesses involved in restoration and creating a conservation-based economy. These centers could be formed through partnerships between local non-profits, universities, the Forest Service, and others. For example, the Centers could provide technical assistance in the areas of:

- * Restoration and ecosystem management
- * Processing techniques for the byproducts of restoration and sustainable forestry
- * Accessing capital from public and private sources
- * Workforce training for value-added manufacturing and restoration

* Marketing and business support to help conservation-based businesses penetrate urban markets.

2. Invest in Research and Technology Development

Creating a restoration economy necessitates that the public and private sectors develop new techniques and approaches to treat the land and handle restoration byproducts. The Forest Products Lab in Madison, Wisconsin has been an excellent resource and has worked with a number of Sustainable Northwest partner communities and businesses. For example, one of the HFHC founding business members, Jefferson State Forest Products, worked with the Lab to improve the utilization of Madrone, traditionally considered a non-commercial species due in part to its color inconsistency. The Forest Products Laboratory helped develop a formula to pre-steam the wood, making its color consistent and thus increasing its commercial viability. This will help Madrone move to a furniture grade wood.

To ensure the success of the Forest Products Lab, it is essential that Congress provide adequate support and direction to enable its employees to work with more communities and small businesses to:

* Test and develop value-added products;

* Create and understand light touch management techniques and equipment; and

* Understand the impacts of restoration forestry.

3. Make Better Use of Existing Programs. There are a number of programs, like the Economic Action Programs, which I will discuss later, that are very effective and need to be fully funded and supported. We also need to determine how the Small Business Administration targets forest-based businesses. The HUB Zone program seems to be one SBA program that is proving itself useful in helping local contractors win contracts.

2. *Understand Community Capacity Through Assessment and Monitoring*

The Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities Partnership believes the health of our forests and well-being of communities are interdependent. In order to fully understand this interdependence, we must look at assessment and monitoring as the linchpins to successful restoration and to building the capacity of communities and the agencies to reach those goals.

Community Capacity is the ability of a group to respond to external and internal stresses and to find solutions to those stresses. Rural communities, and the Forest Service, need to understand what capacity they possess to build a conservation-based economy and perform the work of restoration. By directing the Forest Service to participate in assessing and monitoring social and economic conditions, and making the appropriate investments, we will increase the likelihood that restoration projects will be successful from an environmental and social perspective. The work of the Pacific Southwest Research Station in partnering with communities to understand social and economic conditions is an excellent example of participatory research.

For restoration, we need to understand the capacity of the existing workforce and business sectors in our rural communities. This will require the Forest Service to partner with nonprofits and other entities to assess the current workforce, identify the type of restoration work needed, and match the two together. Communities and the agency will then be able to respond to this information by rebuilding where gaps exist and making necessary changes in procurement to allow local businesses to successfully compete for contracts on the public lands.

Lake County, Oregon, provides us with an example of what can be done. Based on the results of the workforce assessment conducted, Sustainable Northwest is providing technical assistance for contractors signing up as HUB Zone contractors. We are simultaneously working with the Forest Service to ensure that service contract work on the Fremont National Forest (the adjacent public land) is sized and offered in a way that allows local contractors to compete. This is an example of how community-based nonprofits can work in partnership with federal agencies and private entities to reach common goals.

Similar assessments will need to be made on the manufacturing side, with the results allowing for further investments in training and capacity building if necessary. Rural communities need to know what is left of their manufacturing base, infrastructure and workforce. There is a need to identify what kind of wood supply will be available and what capital is needed to build inventory. Local nonprofits, small businesses, and federal agencies can work together towards these objectives, conducting feasibility studies, demonstration projects and market research to understand how to access urban consumers.

3. *Work With and Investing in Land Management Agencies*

Collaboration takes time and trust. Community-based organizations are willing and able to undertake long-term partnerships with the Forest Service and other agencies. However, these agencies have limited capacity to partner with community groups and other external partners. Forest Service staff is constrained in their attempts to provide funding, direction, incentives, and rewards, because they are trying to meet today's challenges with yesterday's tools.

There are several opportunities to improve the ability of communities to work with the Forest Service and other agencies:

- Increase access to information. Often when new directives come through the Agency it is difficult for field staff and communities to get consistent and timely information about what is expected. There is a lack of accountability and rewards to ensure that new directives are followed. By strengthening partnerships with nonprofits, we can work together to improve information flow. Often, nonprofits are able to get information from a variety of sources and get it into the hands of community partners and ironically, sometimes into the hands of field level agency staff.
- Provide clarity on existing and new authorities. There seem to be numerous interpretations and comfort levels in using different contracting arrangements to achieve the goal of restoration. There needs to be more clarity and consistency of interpretation to ensure that communities and agencies can work together in project planning and implementation. When there are various interpretations of the flexibility new authorities provide it is confusing to communities, businesses, and Forest Service staff.
- Promote Agency staff in-place. Forest Service staff are frequently shifted from project to project or promoted out of the local area. Forest Service staffs need to be able to be promoted to increase consistency. Too often projects are delayed or redirected because a new person is in place and isn't yet comfortable with the new way of doing business.
- Congress needs to fully fund the Forest Service and regulatory agencies, like the Fish and Wildlife Service. Staff reductions at the field level have hampered their ability to work collaboratively with communities. While this is a problem across the board, there is a need to focus on the contracting staff and increasing the ability of the agency to complete NEPA accurately and in a timely manner. In the Northwest projects have almost come to a halt because of the agencies lack of capacity to complete consultation and survey and manage correctly and efficiently. Working in partnership takes time and the agencies need the staff to be good partners.
- Give the Agencies direction and support to monitor ecological, social, and economic conditions. Monitoring needs to be done in partnership with communities and other external partners to ensure that learning takes place and adaptive management occurs. As mentioned earlier, the need for monitoring of social and economic conditions is critical to understanding the interdependence between the health of our forests and communities. Partnerships with nonprofits, universities and others is important to make research relevant to communities and local forest conditions. Further, these type of partnerships could also help the Forest Service conduct a full accounting of the range of ecological services provided by our public lands, such as water, energy conservation, clean air, carbon sequestration, and others.
- Support the Forest Service Economic Action Programs (EAP). The Economic Action Programs, specifically the Rural Communities Assistance and the Forest Products Conservation and Recycling (FPCR), are essential to the success of rural communities in building their capacity. There is probably not a better use of federal dollars than to invest in Economic Action Programs. Unfortunately, this program is chronically under-funded and earmarked for a variety of projects, mostly unrelated to the program purpose. For example, in fiscal year 2001 of the 30 million allocated for the Economic Action Programs, approximately two-thirds were ear-marked for other purposes. This year there will be an infusion of EAP funds through the National Fire Plan, which is very appreciated. We hope this will demonstrate the benefit of making a long-term commitment to this program. Furthermore, the EAP are inadequately staffed; for example, nationwide, there are only about 6 fulltime staff dedicated to working in Forest Products Conservation and Recycling, with key regions having vacancies in this position.
- Continue Support for Stewardship Contracting. One critical factor in building a restoration economy is changing the contracting mechanisms used by the Forest Service. Traditional timber sale contracts are focused on outputs. When the land management goal is restoration, a different contracting mechanism is

needed to ensure that the objectives are reached. Stewardship Contracting is a collection of mechanisms that can be used to integrate the ecological integrity of public forestlands and the well-being of rural communities. The Forest Service can utilize it to create contracts for high-skill, high wage, long duration jobs, training and capacity building by focusing a larger percentage of the contracts on the best value system, rather than lowest bid. A continuing challenge for communities working on this issue is the agency's lack of clarity in how to use the various tools and their lack of confidence in what is permissible and what is not.

We are in the process of learning about the effectiveness of various Stewardship Contracting mechanisms through the 28 Stewardship Pilots authorized by Congress. It is critical that the all-party monitoring process required for those pilots be supported so we can translate the lessons learned to real solutions in contracting. We hope you will have an oversight hearing, after this year's field season, to evaluate the success of those efforts.

As a final note on this topic we believe it is safe to say the communities that are working on Stewardship Contracting are generally groups of diverse people who came together initially around more general forest related issues. Rural Community Assistance dollars helped build the capacity of these groups and positioned them to work on the complex array of projects that Stewardship Contracting affords. It is important to recognize that programs like RCA can help the National Forest System learn to work in partnership with communities.

- Continue Support for the Wyden Amendment. The Wyden Amendment allows the Forest Service to work more holistically across ownership boundaries. This tool is critical to effective watershed restoration. We hope that the use of this tool will be secured and more widely applied.
- Support Innovative Funding of Restoration. Senate Bill 597 was recently introduced that directs certain hydroelectric charges to be used to support restoration activities such as, recovery of threatened and endangered species, watershed analysis, multiparty monitoring. This bill also directs that employment and job training opportunities be offered to rural communities near the restoration project. This is an example of the type of linkages we need to make to ensure that we build an ecologically and socially responsible conservation-based economy.

Conclusions

Thank you for the opportunity to share our experiences in working with rural communities and businesses and our efforts to create a restoration economy built on the principles of sustainability. While many of the issues we have raised relate to appropriations, we believe it is important that the Resources Committee advocate for these important programs in addition to providing the Forest Service with direction and authority to conduct its business.

The main messages we would like to leave with you are:

The way in which we care for the land directly affects the well-being of rural communities. When our forests are healthy, we believe our communities are better off. For us, there is a strong correlation between degraded land and poverty in rural communities. We need to restructure the way we take care of the land to create a healthy interdependence. This will take time and its success depends on communities, land management agencies, environmentalists, industry, and others working together to find solutions.

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. KenCairn, you may proceed.

STATEMENT OF BRETT KENCAIRN, DIRECTOR, INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY ENTERPRISES

Mr. KENCAIRN. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Subcommittee. I bring you greetings from the deserts and forests of Arizona.

My name is Brett KenCairn. I work for Indigenous Community Enterprises at Northern Arizona University. I will describe more of that work at Tuesday's hearing. Today I have been asked to testify regarding my experience with the agencies in collaboration, so I will focus my remarks there.

You have a paper that I've written, entitled "Public Agencies in Collaboration", and most of my remarks come from that. In today's testimony I would like to focus on seven of the recommendations made there.

First of all, I would make the summary statement that my experience has been that, despite their best intentions, the agencies have not been effective collaborators in partnerships with communities. Moreover, this is, in fact, jeopardizing the well-being of both forests and communities and, in fact, questions the credibility of collaboration and stewardship more broadly.

As a consequence, I would like to suggest the following. First of all, agencies must be given adequate resources to collaborate. Collaboration almost always takes more time and effort, and frequently we are dealing with an agency so downsized that they simply cannot participate effectively.

Secondly, innovators and risk-takers within that agency need to be given support, perhaps even line officer authority, and we need to be selecting those folks to participate in collaborations based on competence and motivation, not simply because they don't have something else to do.

Third, often it has been my experience that the Washington office and regional levels do not maintain an adequate attentiveness to the activities of these collaborations. I have been a part of two collaborations, both the Applegate Partnership and the Grand Canyon Forest Partnership, both of whom had very high profile, public embarrassments in which regional offices sided in favor of environmental appeals on issues that could easily have been resolved if they had been discussed beforehand.

Fourth, again, we need to fund the Economic Action Programs and recognize that that's one of your most effective tools at spawning and supporting innovation at the community level. We also need to recognize that this is not simply a problem of the West, but that issues like the south and the southeast have substantial issues that could also be effectively addressed through this program.

Also, I think the Congress and the agencies need to recognize that collaboration is not the solution in total to the public participation issues. There are many groups that have legitimate issues that will not be participating in the collaborative process, and if we do not actively work to reach out to those groups in other forums, we will continue to have the conflicts that we're seeing.

Five, we need to also recognize that scale is at the heart of much of the conflict over forestry, both in terms of the scale of implementation and the scale of economic alternatives that are being selected to work on this.

I have heard repeatedly agencies, and even members of my own group, who consistently try to dismiss those who are concerned about commercial motives driving forestry when, in fact, I think we have failed to adequately respond to those issues. We all know that if you come in with a substantial amount of capital, and you have investors who are relying on you producing a certain amount, you're going to begin to exert some influence over supply. Therefore, we need to develop safeguards that protect both forests and communities from that kind of unrestrained economic concern.

We would like to see Congress actually develop some kind of advisory committee or task force that could develop a specific series of recommendations that would protect communities and forests from that kind of unrestrained economic interest.

Finally, I think we also need to recognize the impact of other policies as they reflect on forest management and communities, trade policies in particular. One of the interesting consequences of being a part of this network is, as we have shared stories, we realize that things like NAFTA have had an inordinate influence on our communities. In many cases, in fact, the remaining infrastructure that we've had, in terms of forest products, has been driven out of business by NAFTA. We need to recognize—in fact, I would suggest that Congress order a study to see how those trade policies are affecting our ability to implement both forest management and to protect community well-beings.

Let me just conclude by responding to a question that I hear frequently: Why should we care about rural communities and continue to invest in them? Often I hear the statement that perhaps it's a regrettable but inevitable consequence that rural communities would disappear because of modernization and globalization. But it has been my experience—and I think this is confirmed in both cultural anthropology and restoration ecology and many other fields—that it is a well-skilled people living in close proximity to the land, supported by an adequate and appropriately scaled infrastructure, that can adequately implement restoration and forest stewardship. If we do not protect our rural communities, we will not have that base of infrastructure that will be able to actually support these forests and their restoration.

We believe that the existing infrastructure of rural communities is the most logical foundation upon which to build a stewardship and restoration economy.

I would like to conclude by saying that I believe the community forestry movement has the guts, the brains, and the heart to be a part of pioneering a new approach to stewardship of both forests and communities, and we look forward to working much more closely with you in bringing that into being.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. KenCairn follows:]

Statement of Brett KenCairn, Director, Indigenous Community Enterprises

Dear Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee:

Good morning, my name is Brett KenCairn. I am the Executive Director of Indigenous Community Enterprises, a non-profit organization based at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Arizona. ICE was founded to work with tribes in northern Arizona to identify new economic development opportunities utilizing the small diameter wood resources being removed in thinning and forest restoration treatments. Our first product is affordable housing for Navajos in the shape of traditional hogans. The project is creating a state-of-the-art pole processing infrastructure that will be used to develop a much larger set of products using the thinning products most difficult to economically remove, particularly material less than 9 in diameter.

Before helping to found ICE, I was the Director for the Grand Canyon Forests Foundation, the non-profit organization founded to coordinate restoration activities in the urban wildland interface around Flagstaff. I have also worked for over 10 years in the Pacific Northwest as Director of the Rogue Institute for Ecology and Economy. In this capacity I was a founding member of the Applegate Partnership and a variety of other natural resource collaborations in that area. I am founding member of the National Network of Forest Practitioners and am familiar with many of the leaders of partnerships and collaborations around the West.

From this base of experience I make the following observations regarding collaboration in public lands management:

- I believe collaborative processes have great promise for developing innovative approaches to land management.
- However, federal land management agencies, particularly the Forest Service, is consistently failing to be an effective partner in these forest management collaboratives for the following reasons
 - * Agency delays and inconclusive planning processes are using up the limited supply of volunteer time and hope existing in rural communities.
 - * Long delays in implementing projects are resulting in the loss of the limited base of industrial infrastructure left in these communities.
 - * Frequent errors and missteps are discrediting the notion of community-based conservation both locally and nationally.
- This failure jeopardizes the well-being of many of the participating rural communities and is substantially undermining the public credibility of community-based organizations in their attempt to champion active stewardship and restoration of public lands.
- There are a series of steps that can substantially improve the effectiveness of collaborative efforts.

I have attached a report I wrote for the Forest Service entitled “Public Agencies in Collaboration: Panacea to Gridlock or the Next Big Debacle.” This report outlines five case studies profiling many of the problems consistently being experienced by community forestry advocates across the country. It also summarizes the views of over a dozen community forestry advocates across the West and offers 17 recommendations for improving agency performance in collaboration.

In my time remaining, I would like to highlight 5 of these recommendations for your consideration.

Recommendations

Demonstrate Agency commitment to collaboration at the top by insuring and promoting support for innovators and risk takers. The best collaborative work taking place in the agencies right now is the result of a few brave risk takers that often have to work against huge institutional resistance to make effective partnerships work. The agency must create a culture that supports and encourages this type of innovation. This may require the established liaisons to priority collaboratives. These will need to be individuals with a high degree of commitment and personal investment in these efforts and line officer or greater authority level.

Provide Agencies with adequate resources and training to be effective partners. Despite the best intentions of many agency units, they cannot be effective partners in collaboratives because they lack two key resources: training in how to be effective collaborators, and money and personnel to support their roles in these projects. If Congress wants agencies to be more effective partners, it must provide the agencies with adequate resources to do so. This may require a specific national line item in the Forest Service budget to support staff working specifically community-based collaboratives.

Develop more proactive outreach to key stakeholders, especially personal and informal. Too many collaboratives and partnerships assume that their obligation for involvement is fulfilled by simply issuing invitations to participate in formal group meetings. Very often the groups most likely to challenge the work of these initiatives will not participate despite such invitations. If agencies want to be effective, they must recognize that involvement requires both formal and informal outreach. Agency line officers, Supervisors and Regional Foresters should be expected to and evaluated on their conducting regular ongoing informal contact with their most outspoken and effective critics to establish and maintain effective communication.

Develop safeguards that prevent preoccupation with economic efficiency and profit maximizing from exploiting forests and communities. One of the issues that the agencies has consistently failed to respond directly to is the role of commercial motives and economic efficiencies in implementing forestry and restoration activities. Consistently we hear agencies and others attempt to dismiss the Zero-cut activists and those who question commercial uses of public land resources as simply out of touch with reality. This dismissal fails to recognize how significant and pervasive this distrust of commercial motives runs in the broader public. A recent Business Week front cover stated that over 60% of the American public now distrusts corporations and their commitment to civic responsibility. Backlash against Home Depot and other forestry and wood products firms is also an indication of growing public skepticism of commercial motives in forestry.

We need to recognize the historical legitimacy of this concern. Much of the past management of public forest was based on maximizing timber harvests. At the same

time the average wage in rural communities was dropping into the basement due to agency lowest bidder contracting mechanisms designed to maximize economic efficiency. If we are to rebuild public confidence, Congress needs to seek balanced council on how to protect both forests and communities from the unrestrained pre-occupation with economic returns. Congress should direct the formation of special task force or advisory committee comprising all of the major interests affected by this issue needs to formulate a set of safeguards that can protect both forests and communities.

Develop relevant measures of success with the public. Fund monitoring, both ecological and social/economic. Without extensive and clearly defined monitoring programs, both ecological and social/economic, there will be no way to assure a skeptical public that the Agency is really conducting activities that are beneficial to the land and communities. Others have emphasized the importance of developing robust ecological monitoring programs. Most efforts, however, have little or no clear criteria for evaluating the quality and durability of purported economic benefits. More than the number of jobs created, we need to know: what these jobs pay (including benefit availability): what kinds of skills and abilities they require or develop in the local workforce: who will get the jobs (local, migrant, imported); how long they are likely to last and the key factors in their durability (public subsidies, market forces, mobility of the target industry); and where the profits generated by these labors will be deposited will they be retained locally, or will they be exported; what the impact on local services and infrastructure will be; what the likelihood is of the enterprises being locally owned and controlled or foreign (external to the community) controlled.

Finally, as a collective of community-based forestry initiatives, we are becoming increasingly aware of how larger policies, particularly trade, are adversely affecting both forests and communities. The passage of NAFTA and its impact on the trade of wood products in particular are responsible for dismantling much of what remains of the forest products infrastructure in our communities.

The loss of rural communities is seen as the regrettable but inevitable result of the modernization and globalization of trade. What we are rapidly learning, however, is that the maintenance of healthy forest ecosystems requires a sustained investment by a well-trained workforce supported by an adequate infrastructure that can utilize the byproducts of this stewardship. The existing infrastructure of rural communities is the most logical and effective foundation from which to implement and maintain this preventative maintenance and stewardship. Without them, many ecosystems will continue to unravel, fires like those in Los Alamos will become common, and the larger health and well being of both American lands and American communities will suffer. The perceived benefits of free trade must be considered in this larger view of consequences and effects.

To bring these issues back home, Indigenous Community Enterprises is designed to make use of the most difficult to utilize byproducts from forest restoration (trees less than 9 in diameter). We are using limited amounts of public money to leverage over \$750,000 in private charitable investments in the creation of a local enterprise and local workforce capacity to create new uses, particularly affordable housing, from materials the agency currently can't afford to take out of the woods. We will create employment and affordable housing in rural communities with over 40% unemployment, a per capita income 1/3 of the national average, and a high school drop out rate approaching 50%.

If however, Congress and the agencies do not make a significant and sustained investment in supporting and protecting these community-based efforts, we will likely witness the continued deterioration of both the forests and the forest-based communities of the American West.

I appreciate the opportunity to have made this presentation in front of you today. I would be happy to answer any questions regarding the issues I have raised before you today.

[The report "Public Agencies in Collaboration: Panacea to Gridlock or the Next Big Debacle," by Mr. KenCairn has been retained in the Committee files.]

Mr. McINNIS. Thank you, Mr. KenCairn.
Mr. Madrone.

**STATEMENT OF SUNGNOME MADRONE, DIRECTOR OF
NATURAL RESOURCES SERVICES OF REDWOOD COMMUNITY
ACTION AGENCY**

Mr. MADRONE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Subcommittee. I appreciate the opportunity to be here today with you.

My name is Sungnome Madrone, and I'm the Director of Natural Resources Services of Redwood Community Action Agency, or RCAA. It's a community action program in northwest California. CAP programs are all over the country, but there are very few that have natural resource programs. We created it because we wanted to help renew the health and wealth of our natural resource base, and that would ultimately help our community to become more self-reliant.

I am also a regional watershed coordinator for the three northern coastal counties of California, and I have been doing this kind of work for 28 years, ever since the Redwood National Park expansion effort in the 1970's.

In that 28 years, or in the 20 years at RCAA, we have completed over 350 projects in watershed restoration. Of those 350, 100 of them were completed in the last 6 years, using cooperative agreements in the Jobs in the Woods Program with the Forest Service and the BLM, primarily involved in road decommissioning and large-scale watershed restoration efforts, working with displaced heavy equipment operators, giving them the new training and the new science in this work.

It has been a very rewarding experience and we continue to have an agreement with BLM, but at this point our agreement with the Forest Service has not been renewed, but we're very hopeful that that is going to be renewed. We are hopeful of the strike team's efforts and the effort with the tool box that the Forest Service has developed to go around the country and help forest supervisors and others understand the authorities they have to do these cooperative programs.

The self-worth that I spoke about, in our communities a lot of the forest workers and loggers have really been beaten up a lot over the last 20 years. This work of restoring the watershed is helping them with a feeling of self-worth returning to themselves and their families. They take great pride in this work.

It is full-circle training that we're doing. We're not just training these operators. They're training us, and together we're helping to train the government on how to do an effective collaboration between the private and the public sectors.

We are also bringing forth a conservation ethic and a stewardship approach to all of this work. None of these projects are using the stewardship pilot authorities. Yet, every one of these projects had stewardship-like ethics and stewardship results by the technique of using cooperative agreements. There are many tools, and those are two of them.

Comprehensive training is needed, and again, I really look forward to the training the Forest Service is bringing to the table. Again, as community practitioners, we intend to bring the whole element of the community training to the table at the same time.

A couple of barriers out there and some solutions. One of the barriers to many who work around the country is a lack of program support. There is a lot of project dollars out there, but it's very difficult for watershed councils and restoration community practitioners to get program dollars. So I recommend that Congress develop a natural resources block grant program, similar to the community services block grant program, that has so successfully sustained the community action networks in this country for over 30 years.

There is disincentives—and I appreciate Congressman Duncan's comments earlier about the disincentives. That plays mostly into the private sector. But why we need incentives is to take some of the pressure off of our public lands and to be clear that, when we're talking forestry, we're working with all of the forests of the country. It is incentives in the tax codes and permit systems that will help those land owners in private sectors invest into this new industry.

Third is land use planning. In this country, all of our county land use plans are based on geopolitical boundaries. We need to have land use planning that is based on watershed principles and watershed boundaries. EPA had a program called the Sustainable Economic Development Program that could fund those kinds of planning efforts, but it didn't receive any appropriations in the last couple of years.

Fourth is co-op agreements. We need to amend the participating agreement authorities and bring them in line with an ability to be able to train our workers and to collaborate effectively.

Also, we need to extend the Wyden amendment and the Title IV authorities and make them permanent. One year at a time doesn't work. We need permanent authorities for those collaborative tools.

Lastly, there has been a lack of funding in Jobs in the Woods lately. We would like to see Jobs in the Woods replicated across the whole country.

So that's the last piece I wanted to leave you with, and again, with your help, we will continue to restore our forests and our communities. I appreciate this opportunity, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Madrone follows:]

**Statement of Sungnome Madrone, Director of Natural Resources Services,
Redwood Community Action Agency**

Dear Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee:

My name is Sungnome Madrone, and I am the Director of Natural Resources Services (NRS), a Division of Redwood Community Action Agency (RCAA). RCAA is one of only a few community action programs (CAPs) in the US with a natural resources program. We combine the CAP mission of helping communities and individuals become more self-reliant with the stewardship ethics of community-based ecosystem management (CBEM). By helping to improve the health and wealth of our natural resources we believe our social service work will become more sustainable. For the past twenty years our organization has assisted and engaged our local community. In that time the NRS division has completed over 350 projects in ecosystem management in rural, wild-land, and urban settings, as well as on public and private land. This broad base of projects, completed over a long period of time, gives us a unique perspective on CBEM. There have been many successes, some failures, much learned, and much more opportunity still to explore.

My comments are based on this experience and 10 more years experience before RCAA. In the 1970s and early 80s I was involved with the expansion and restoration of Redwood National Park, as well as the creation of the Mattole Restoration

Council. These efforts were early forays into CBEM and much has been learned along the way.

We thank the Chairman and the Subcommittee for holding this hearing. It is an important forum for local and national interests to discuss what is being learned across the country. In our area these new efforts have brought great hope. Jobs have been created and a new industry is emerging. Woods and mill workers are beginning to be re-employed and a brighter future is emerging for them and their families. Self worth is returning and communities are trying to move past the polarizing past.

The procurement tool used dictates stewardship or not. For the past six years RCAA's NRS division has been engaged in stewardship-like contracting and CBEM training programs with the USFS, BLM, and multiple other state, local and private parties. We were also actively involved in displaced worker training programs in 1978 after the expansion of Redwood National Park and in the mid 80's with Native American woods worker training programs. Through these direct experiences we have gained valuable insights into what is working and what is not. We have been involved with an array of procurement tools over that time and I am convinced that the tool used dictates stewardship or not.

You can't get collaboration, cooperation, and quality stewardship with a procurement tool that dictates divisive competition and adversarial relationships. What is important is to use tools that encourage stewardship ethic. Often we have focused on the Stewardship Pilots authorized under Section 347 of the Interior Appropriations Bill fiscal year 1999. Stewardship contracting is actually much broader than these pilots currently being implemented around the country. There is a lot of opportunity to encourage stewardship ethics in more projects, than just the pilots.

Our Experience in Stewardship-like Contracting and CBEM

So how have these new federal strategies of collaborative stewardship been working? From our perspective from our little corner of the world there have been many successes, much has been learned, but significant barriers still exist.

Projects have been completed and environments restored; training has been given and jobs created; new procurement tools have been developed and advances in value-added product manufacturing have been made; new public-private partnerships have formed and collaboration has reached a new level of bi-partisanship; these are all great successes and only the beginning of a transition to a way of doing business in the future.

Unfortunately, barriers to stewardship work still exist. Often these are just attitude or mind-set, but sometimes they are imbedded in existing authorities. We can overcome these obstacles by increasing our knowledge base of opportunities and through comprehensive training in the private and public sectors.

Cooperative Agreements

While RCAA has not had a stewardship contract pilot per say, we have implemented nearly 100 projects, for a total of over \$3 million dollars in contracts with the USFS and the BLM in stewardship-like contracting over the past six years. All of these projects have been implemented using existing cooperative agreement authorities. These authorities have allowed us to develop a number of new public-private partnerships and implement a wide array of CBEM projects. These projects have ranged from inventory, analysis, and design, to implementation and monitoring of CBEM projects. For the most part the existing authorities have worked well. Their use varies across regions and in some cases the BLM has embraced the concepts and tools of CBEM more vigorously than the USFS. In some regions the USFS seems to be in the lead with innovation and partnership development. More often than not, these barriers are in attitude and mind-set, in particular with the contracting officers, who although well meaning, often become a barrier when that is not necessary. In some cases the authorities themselves are the barriers.

The USFS's planned efforts to provide comprehensive training to regions around the country should be supported and applauded. It is one way to change the attitudes of contracting officers and others and build their knowledge and skill level. The USFS/BLM development of a tool box and an assistance or strike team to explain and teach proper use of these existing and emerging authorities is well conceived. We are working on developing the complimentary support and training systems for the non-governmental and tribal components of this growing collaborate training. Our efforts are at the local, regional, state, and national levels and these hearings are a part of that effort.

The primary authorities we have used for cooperative projects are contained in the Cooperative Funds and Deposits Act of December 12, 1975, Public Law 94-148 (16 U.S.C. 565, a-1-565, a-3). The authority is generally adequate to develop

cooperative agreements, but the application of the authority and its results have been as varied as the people and landscapes of this country. The most recent Participating Agreement (PA) offered to Region 5 partners contained the following statement: As a consequence of this productive and harmonious six year working relationship, the parties have expressed an interest in and desire to continue their active collaboration. Both acknowledge that the conduct of effective and meaningful job training and development activities coupled with individual skill enhancement and the creation of employment opportunities is of paramount importance. Thus the single objective of this successor agreement is the creation of diversified training experiences for the residents of Humboldt/Trinity County.

While these words clearly convey success and willingness, it is unfortunate that the language used in the balance of the PA does not match this statement with action. There are very real barriers placed on these agreements. Some of these barriers need attention from Congress and some of them need to be dealt with through the USFS/BLM's comprehensive training programs being implemented soon.

One of the barriers is contained in the Grants and Agreements Handbook Sections 1585-1587, pg. 19 of 30 of the WO Amendments 1500-95-5, effective 4/21/95. Under 7. Applicability of Contracting, b. Cooperator Contracts, it states that When the work is not jointly performed and the cooperator contemplates contracting all or part of the work, the cooperator must provide a substantial cash contribution (50 percent or more) towards the cost of the contract. The Forest Service is required to award the contract in situations where the cooperators cash contribution is less than 50%.

While this authority is clear in terms of attempting to prevent an abuse of cooperative agreement authority (where a contract might be simply passed through a NGO to a for profit contractor, without any mutual benefit to the government), it does not provide clarity for collaborative training efforts. An example of such an opportunity might be one that would involve a cooperator subcontracting out work without a 50% match and yet due to their training expertise or other capacities, there may be significant benefit to the government to do so.

The above requirement for a 50% match on cooperator subcontracted work has led to the elimination of some of the most successful displaced forest worker training programs in the Pacific Northwest. This training is for heavy equipment operators doing road decommissioning and erosion proofing. There is an ever-increasing demand for this training as restorative work spreads across the public and private landscapes. The models have been developed to provide this training and your help is now needed to modify or clarify these authorities under the Cooperative Funds and Deposits Act of 1975.

The following new wording is recommended for 7. B. Cooperator Contracts.

If the work is mutually performed, and the cooperator contemplates contracting all or part of the work, the cooperator may provide less than 50%, although not less than 20%, toward the cost of the contract, if the benefit provided by the cooperator provides significant value to the government by way of implementing critical training programs in a timely manner. When considering the cost share required of the cooperator the USFS will highly value, although sometimes difficult to quantify, the opportunities created through willing partnerships to accomplish mutual objectives. These values can be used as the required match.

This simple change would allow NGOs and tribal entities to effectively partner with the USF, BLM, and other federal agencies across the country. These productive and respectful relationships will lead to bi-partisan support for sustainable economic development and environmental restoration and protection.

The Need for Training and Capacity Building is Great

With your help to remove remaining barriers to collaboration, and with the USFS and BLM's continued commitment to CBEM and comprehensive training of its employees, we will succeed at restoring our watersheds and our communities. The demand for CBEM is increasing. As a regional watershed coordinator for a three county area in NW coastal California, funded through a contract with For the Sake of Salmon (FSOS), we hear over and over again the need for qualified training of CBEM workers. Funding for CBEM work is increasing at the state and federal levels, but unfortunately it is mostly project dollars. What is missing is funding for collaborative training programs in CBEM and general program support funding for co-operators willing to collaborate for community benefits.

Sustainable Capacity Building Funding Needed-Natural Resources Block Grants (NRBGs)

As the need for a trained workforce in CBEM continues to grow, the need for program support funding for the private collaborators becomes even more critical. Most

of the funding is for project specific work, not for programs. Increased funding through a predictable means is needed. A solution may be the creation of a Natural Resources Block Grant Program (NRBGs), similar to the Community Services Block Grants Programs that have been a part of the CAP world for decades thanks to ongoing support from Congress.

A parallel program of NRBGs could provide a crucial missing link to qualifying NGOs such as 501-c-3 watershed councils, land trusts, and road maintenance associations. NRBGs could provide funding for general program support allowing a NGO to invest in public-private partnerships and collaborative efforts. Stabilizing program support funding allows a NGO to expand its efforts incrementally to accomplish more than ever imagined.

At RCAA, a CAP since 1980, we have received a \$160,000 a year CSBG grant for general program support. In the early 80s this \$160,000 was about 8% of our total gross program budget. The CSBG grant today is still \$160,000, but RCAA has used that kernel of program support to build one of the most successful CAP programs in the US. Today that CSBG seed money is only 1% of our total program budget of about \$16,000,000 per year.

This is the kind of leverage that can be expected of a NRBG program. These block grant programs have history. They work well and they help to maximize the potentials for collaboration.

Watershed-based Land Use Planning Needed—Sustainable Economic Development

Another barrier to CBEM is the way that all land use planning is done in this country. All local land use plans are based on geo-political boundaries and old principles of development. Our restorative efforts for our watersheds and our communities will be for not if we continue to operate with modes of planning that are not holistic. Funding is needed to support the creation of new land use planning models that are based on watershed boundaries and principles and are coupled with sustainable economic development concepts. One such program in EPA was the Sustainable Economic Development Program, which did not receive any appropriations the past two years and was therefore canceled. We recommend that you provide ongoing funding for these innovative programs that seek real long-term solutions. Without sound watershed-based land use planning, all of the stewardship pilots and CBEM efforts in the world, will not save us from ourselves.

Incentive Based Approaches

The number one barrier to private sector investments in CBEM are the plethora of disincentives that are laced throughout our tax codes and permit systems, and the lack of effective incentives for stewardship. What is needed here is a revamping of tax code and permit requirements to encourage stewardship and provide direct economic benefit to the private landowner that manages their land sustainably and with endangered species present. Without incentives and good land use planning, we will always be putting Humpty Dumpty back together again. Restoration is not sustainable, only prevention is. It is time for change. We ask for your continued help.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on CBEM and collaboration. Once again, we thank the Subcommittee for its ongoing interest in these issues.

Mr. McINNIS. To this point, I have found the testimony of the panel very impressive. I think you're hitting several points right on target.

Our next guest is Mr. Ward. Mr. Ward, you are to be congratulated. The extensive and difficult efforts of you and your wife, Mrs. Ward, have proved very successful. Your bill on the Continental Divide Trail was one of the first bills passed out of the House this year. For the panel's awareness, I also have had experience in the Colorado canyons, in the great sand dunes, in the Spanish peaks and, of course, the Continental Divide Trail, and this kind of community partnership. I consider Mr. Ward one of the leading advocates and one of the leaders in Colorado in regards to that kind of community effort.

Mr. Ward, you may proceed.

**STATEMENT OF BRUCE WARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
CONTINENTAL DIVIDE TRAIL ALLIANCE, INC.**

Mr. WARD. Thank you very much, Congressman. I literally wouldn't be here without you, in many ways, so I really appreciate not only the opportunity to come and speak to this panel, but the composition of the panel. If you could just get the Congressman from Montana on board, we would have the whole line-up of the states that the Trail goes through.

I spent a lot of time thinking about what I would say in the relatively short amount of time that I have, and so I went to my "quotation area" and started looking for quotes that would somehow say, maybe more articulately than I could, why I'm here and what it is that our organization represents.

I came up with two that I think really sum it up. One of them comes out of our volunteer guide. We will do over 40 volunteer projects from Canada to Mexico this year. We will literally have people from all over the country assisting us in this effort.

Last year, our Volunteer of the Year—we have a quote in that guide. It says, "It is not often that something this big, this beautiful, and this rewarding, grabs me by the shirt collar and demands my attention. That's how it has been since the first moment I heard of the Continental Divide Trail. Perhaps at no other time will I have the opportunity to be involved in a grassroots movement to save and share one of the world's greatest treasures. What could be more worthwhile? What could be a better use of my time?"

I feel that I'm here representing the volunteers who care about our public lands, about the land managers, many of them who are trying very hard to be good stewards but are finding a number of reasons that they aren't able to get the job done, and those members of the private sector, the corporations that have donated over \$3 million to this effort, that are looking for ways to give back. We need to find ways to make it easier for them and to reward them for those efforts.

The other quote, which really sort of speaks to my testimony, comes from a woman by the name of Beth Timson. I think it's particularly appropriate. She said, "When you work in a bureaucracy trying to make program changes, it sometimes seems like trying to slow dance with a cow. It's not much fun, it annoys the cow, and you step in a lot of manure."

I think that that's, unfortunately, the situation that we have come across, that there are a lot of people out there who recognize the value in what we're doing and understand the importance of this effort, but the bureaucracy gets in the way. I think that's really partially why we're here, trying to address these issues.

Briefly, I just wanted to mention some of the success stories that have occurred on the Continental Divide Trail. Two years ago we had an effort called Uniting Along the Divide, 500 volunteers, Canada to Mexico, hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, doing a lot of work that the land management agencies just didn't have the resources to do. It would have cost the Federal Government tens of thousands of dollars. Maybe that's not much money coming from here, but that's a lot of money that we've saved the Federal Government because we've been able to do that kind of work.

We gave Ray Hanson, from the BLM, our Agency Person of the Year Award because he orchestrated hundreds of miles of trail designation utilizing volunteers.

Tim Pohlman of the Forest Service in Gila National Forest, we got a call from a group of students looking to do something other than hanging out on the beach during spring break. They were looking to do some work on the trail. We sent them down to Tim and since that time he's been able to put over \$185,000 worth of work done on his land by these kinds of volunteers. These are students in this country, looking for ways to give back.

Lou Tyler of Grand County, Colorado, a retired gentleman, who we gave our first Volunteer of the Year Award to. He got up in front of a hundred people, a little guy. He spent most of his summer working on the trail. He said, "This trail has given my life a whole new meaning." He got choked up and really felt that his ability to give back was important.

I got a call from him, saying that he thinks his ability to continue to help the Forest Service will be greatly diminished because of a lack of attention to the volunteers in the recreation programs that we're seeing vastly diminished because of other priorities.

Let me speak, in 30 seconds, to some of the things that we see need addressing, which we can't obviously address here, but we would certainly like to be a part of the process of dealing with them.

The first one is money to the ground. The money is not getting to the ground. "Taps" are occurring at every level within the agency, and as a result, the people in the field just aren't getting the support they need. We don't have the staff, we don't have the seasonals, we don't have the recreation people. It's a huge problem, especially in the great State of Colorado, that has so much interest in recreating on our public lands.

The other issue that we are concerned about is accountability. We have been very successful in your efforts to give additional funds to the Continental Divide Trail. Sometimes finding out how that money was spent is a hard thing for us to nail down. But we're doing a very diligent effort—and you know Paula. She's on them, wanting to make sure that all those things are taken into consideration.

Interagency collaboration is a major issue for us, and making sure the recreation agenda that the Forest Service did such a great job on gets the full attention and support of this Committee that it really needs.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ward follows:]

Statement of Bruce Ward, Executive Director, Continental Divide Trail Alliance, Inc.

Dear Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to talk to you about our experiences as a partner with the land management agencies, especially the USDA Forest Service. My wife Paula, and I have been working on the effort to complete and maintain the congressionally designated Continental Divide National Scenic Trail since 1994. We helped to found the Continental Divide Trail Alliance with then vice-chair of the National Forest Foundation, Stephen Fausel. Our organization was specifically formed to assist the Forest Service with its congressional mandate to complete and maintain this national treasure.

We have come a long way in a relatively short time, thanks in many respects, Mr. Chairman to your encouragement and support. Our successes have been many, but yes we are faced with some challenges and frustrations.

I would like to start out by providing a few examples of the successes we have had and then turn to areas of concern and problems that need to be addressed.

- In 1997 we coordinated an effort called "Uniting Along the Divide". This massive volunteer undertaking brought corporate supporters, land managers and volunteer organizations together for the first time to help us inventory the status of the Trail. It was truly an historic event that focused unprecedented involvement on the needs of the Trail. It also helped us gain insight as to how our efforts could be utilized to assist increasingly hard pressed land managers. Since the completion of this effort we have developed a Ten-Year Plan, to complete the Trail by the year 2008.

Ray Hanson, an employee of the Bureau of Land Management in Rawlins, Wyoming is a fine example of how volunteer enthusiasm for this project could be harnessed. He recruited a variety of users, including equestrians, mountain bikers and hikers to investigate various routes for a critical linkage of the Trail in southern Wyoming. This effort would have cost the federal government thousands of dollars. Ray got it done for next to nothing. His efforts earned him our Land Manager of the Year award for 1997.

- Tim Pohlman, a Forest Service employee on the Gila National Forest in New Mexico is another great example of a land manager making the most of the momentum we have developed for the CDT, often called the "King of Trails". We received a call at our office from a college in Texas that was seeking to put some of the students to work, instead of participating in the usual spring break activities. We called Tim and he quickly seized the opportunity to maximize the potential of this free labor offer. Since then he has expanded the program to include students from many other states as well as from overseas. The value of their work is estimated at \$185,000 over the past three years.
- Steve Stratton, a volunteer from Boulder, Colorado is another example of how our organization has accomplished so much with minimal resources. Steve called our organization to say that he had read about our efforts and felt he just had to be a part of "our cause" and offered his services. More than just coming out and working on the Trail he has helped to develop our "Adopt-A-Trail" program and in mapping to identify the Trail's needs and help track our progress. Essential and "behind the scenes" work is being done by Steve.
- Lou Tyler is a retiree in Winter Park, Colorado who also exemplifies the kind of people that are breathing life into this magnificent Trail. Lou and his group of fellow senior citizens have adopted an especially breath-taking section of the CDT in Grand County, Colorado. For several years they have dedicated a significant amount of time and energy to the Trail. They have helped in clearing, signing, trailhead and fence building, just about every aspect of trail maintenance. Steve and Lou have been recognized as Volunteers of the Year by the CDTA.
- Our success in gaining private sector financial support should also be mentioned. We have raised well over a three million dollars from private foundations and corporations like the Fausel, Richard King Mellon, Gates Family, Amgen and Great Outdoors Colorado Foundations and REI (Recreational Equipment Inc.), L.L. Bean, Kelty, Vasque, Vibram, Coleman, Jansport, Eastern Mountain Sports and a myriad of other have that have provided us with essential funds to help our organization grow. We also have received contributions from well over 3000 individuals.
- We also have been fortunate in getting assistance from dozens of other local and national outdoor recreation organizations. The Backcountry Horsemen of America have been especially key to our success in getting the Trail built and maintained in remote locations. The Partnership for the National Trail System, the Colorado Mountain Club, Volunteers for Outdoors Colorado, the Colorado Trail Foundation, New Mexico Mountain Club, New Mexico Volunteers for the Outdoors, the Montana Conservation Corps, the National Outdoor Leadership School, the Helena Outdoor Club, American Hiking Society, and the International Mountain Biking Association are just a few examples of organizations that have joined in this effort to build and maintain the "King of Trails."
- The CDTA took part in several of the Forest Service Recreation Agenda public meetings last year and we are pleased with the final document produced. The key now, obviously, is getting the necessary support internally for the fulfillment of that shared vision.

I think you will agree that the support and desire of the United States Congress, the American people, both those near to the Trail and from across the country, and at least some of the land managers is strong, so what are the challenges?

- Money to the ground: Part of our frustration, and that of many people, both in and out of the Forest Service, has been the siphoning off of precious resources at many levels. So called “Taps” taken at virtually every level of the agency result in a relatively minimal trickle down to the field.
- Accountability: For the last few years we have been successful in getting substantial “add-on” earmarks to the Forest Service budget specifically for the CDT. We have been included in the agency’s allocation discussions and feel that significant progress is being made in prioritizing Trail projects. We have also found, in some instances, that some districts are unable to track how those additional funds have been utilized. Needless to say, this can be extremely frustrating.
- Personnel in the field: As the efforts of the CDTA and many other volunteer groups become more and more successful we have the potential of making a tremendous impact on the deteriorating recreation infrastructure on our public lands. However, we have found it to become increasingly difficult to gain the necessary agency supervision and enthusiasm for working with the volunteers.
- Aging workforce: A related concern has to do with the demographics of the Forest Service personnel. Much of the hard earned expertise and experience in critical backcountry skills is being lost to an aging workforce that is on the brink of (or already has) retired. We must rebuild the agency’s ability to maintain recreation infrastructure, much of which was created by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s.
- Inter-Agency Collaboration: The Secretary of Agriculture and ultimately the United States Forest Service has the overall responsibility for the completion and maintenance of this National Scenic Trail. The Trail does, however, travel through three National Parks, one National Monument and eight Bureau of Land Management Resource Areas. Getting all of these jurisdictions on the same page has been, shall we say, a challenge. Increasing interagency cooperation to minimize frustrations is another obstacle we must overcome. Involving all the agencies in the completion of the CDT Ten-Year Plan has been a great tool to develop that collaboration.
- Another important area that needs attention is what many would call a lack of leadership. Making volunteerism and partnerships with non-profits and corporations looking for a way to “give something back” has been lacking and should be an important part of the agency’s agenda.

I would like to conclude by saying that many of the people that count on us to be their voice for the Continental Divide Trail are frustrated, but ultimately hopeful that we can be part of a team that will insure the future of recreation on our public lands. Thank you again for giving us this opportunity to be heard.

Trail History and Background

Thirty years ago Congress devised the framework for developing a nationwide system of trails in America by passing the National Trails System Act. The Continental Divide Trail is the backbone of today’s system of nineteen Congressionally designated national scenic and historic trails. In 1978 Congress designated the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail due to its magnificent and unique character. When completed, the Trail will stretch 3,100 miles and travel from Canada to Mexico through some of the most beautiful and challenging country in the world. The route goes through 25 National Forests, 13 Wildernesses, 3 National Parks, 1 National Monument and 8 Bureau of Land Management resource areas. The CDT represents the most scenic, challenging and culturally diverse trail in America. Traveling along this corridor is the ultimate journey for any outdoors person. Knowing that this precious resource is protected is just as important for many others. Due to limited budgets and resources, the federal agencies have not been able to allocate sufficient funding and resources to complete the Trail. In Colorado, approximately 90% of the nearly 760 miles is usable, but much of that trail is in very poor condition and not up to National Scenic Trail standards. The CDTA has identified 526 miles of the CDT in Colorado that need either planning, new construction, reconstruction, relocation out of sensitive areas and off roads, and/or sufficient marking. In addition, the CDTA is targeting areas along the CDT that may experience heavy use and would benefit from interpretive signing.

Continental Divide Trail Alliance

The Continental Divide Trail Alliance (CDTA) was formed in 1995 to assist the federal land management agencies in the completion, management and protection

of the Trail. The CDTA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with over one thousand members. Increasing pressures from development, rising land costs, popularization of the West, and decreases in federal funding are threatening the completion of the Trail. It was imperative that the CDTA be established to increase the public's awareness and involvement in completing one of the most unique and scenic ecosystems in the world.

CDTA Mission Statement

"To construct, manage and preserve a public back country trail along the full length of the Continental Divide from Canada to Mexico and to link its significant resources with the assistance of volunteers and public and private partnerships. To develop an appreciation of and enjoyment in America's natural lands through education and the opportunity to experience the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail."

Continental Divide Trail Alliance Goals and Objectives

To build, maintain, manage and protect the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail by:

- Developing an efficient and effective membership organization that fulfills the needs of the public and supports the federal land management agencies.
- Coordinating with local and regional grassroots groups, individuals, private businesses and government agencies to plan, design, build, maintain and manage the CDT.
- Increasing the visibility of and developing a constituency for the CDT.
- Developing and implementing a fundraising plan for the CDT.
- Educating the public about environmental and recreational ethics, and the historical, cultural and recreational significance of the CDT.
- Encouraging the public to become more actively involved in land management decisions.

Current Programs and Activities

Current CDTA programs and activities include:

- CDTA Adopt-A-Trail Program. Key to long-term protection of the CDT is a fully developed maintenance and reporting program. The CDTA is recruiting and coordinating volunteers to maintain segments of the CDT.
- Implementation of the CDT Ten-Year Strategic Plan. An action plan to complete the CDT by the year 2008 was initiated by the CDTA and adopted by the land managers in 1998. The CDTA coordinated land manager workshops to identify CDT related issues, projects & estimated costs.
- Volunteerism. Volunteers are key to the development and maintenance of the CDT. The CDTA is coordinating sixteen volunteer projects in 1999 to work on 60 challenging miles of the Trail. Others will help us scout new routes and work with the land managers. In addition, we are working with many clubs along the Trail to perform trail work. The CDTA expects volunteer labor to exceed \$200,000 in 1999.
- Trail Construction and Maintenance. The CDTA works with the land managers to identify and rank CDT needs each year. Needs range from building new trail to purchasing rights-of-ways. The CDTA raises money, recruits volunteers & works on issues to benefit the Trail.
- CDT Long Distance Planning Guide. To better serve CDT users, the CDTA wrote and published a planning guide booklet specifically to educate and inform the public about the CDT. This publication will help to ensure safe and enjoyable experiences.
- Advocacy Work. The CDTA travels to Washington DC at least twice a year to meet with land managers and to increase Congressional support and funding for the Trail. The CDTA requested a \$2.5 million add-on earmark from Congress to the Forest Service budget in 2002. This request is being supported by Congressman McInnis.

Mr. MCINNIS. Thank you, Mr. Ward.

Panel, I would also like to thank you. I understand that later this afternoon the practitioners will be meeting with some of our staff, and I look forward to hearing your suggestions in more detail.

As you understand, when we have the kind of limitations we do on Committee hearings, that's why we have to rush through. Mr.

Ward started at a rate of about 30 words a minute and ended up at about 300 words a minute toward the end.

[Laughter.]

You know, in my comments, I would just like you to know that with a little more detail. But in Colorado we put together several major projects last year that was based—Mr. KenCairn, your pin there that has “they” with a red cross through it, that’s exactly the practice that we followed out there. In Colorado Canyons, we brought all of the different users together. We brought the ranching community. We were able to create 88,000 acres of wilderness, while at the same time preserving through a national conservation area the multiple use of lands that surround the wilderness and, on my own personal concern, preserve the water rights for the Colorado people that held the rights.

We did the same thing, as I mentioned earlier, with the Spanish Piece, and we did the same thing with the Great Sand Dunes. Assisting me in those efforts was my colleague sitting to my left, Mr. Udall. So we also unified across the party aisle, which is important. So what you said in your testimony is well-taken. It’s impressive, and it works.

With that, I will go ahead and yield to my colleague for any questions or comments that he may have.

Mr. UDALL OF COLORADO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to add my voice to that of Mr. McInnis’, when he commented on the impressive nature of your testimony and the efforts that all of you are undertaking in your communities.

There is a Chinese symbol for a crisis, and when you break it apart, one part of that symbol is the symbol for danger, and the other is for opportunity. I think we have enormous opportunity in these communities of which you speak. I know this Committee is interested in doing all it can to work with you, to enact policies that would make the vision you all presented us become real.

Maybe I would start with Mr. KenCairn. I was interested in your discussion of the suspicions that many have about the role of commercial motives in forest restoration work. I notice you suggest a special task force or advisory committee to address this.

Could you elaborate on your idea, and if you have any examples of where you think this approach might be helpful, please share that with us as well.

Mr. KENCAIRN. Yes, thank you.

As a veteran of collaboratives for over 10 years now, I really believe that the core conflict that we’re dealing with right now is this question about commercial motives. I think what’s important about this issue, and I think the reason the zero cut movement and others have surprised many of us in their power, is because there’s a pervasive sense in the larger public that the economy is sort of out of control in many areas of our lives.

I think that we have not been very successful in demonstrating to those with these concerns that we understand, that we hear that issue very clearly, that there’s a long legacy of maximizing timber cuts, there’s a legacy of dropping wages in rural communities because of lowest-bidder contracting approaches.

The first step we need to take is demonstrate to our critics that we hear that issue very clearly. The second step is begin offering

specific, tangible safeguards that can do something about that. The first possible safeguard is scale, that we look at supporting the very types of enterprises that we're talking about, things that require only a million to maybe even five million board feet a year, biomass opportunities that are at the scale of kilowatts to one megawatt, not 50 to 100 megawatts, facilities that create demand for hundreds and hundreds of thousands of tons of material. So scale is the first.

Second is a whole range of other things that we really haven't looked at yet in detail. But things like perhaps we should require those depending on Federal resources to amortize their equipment over shorter timeframes, so that they are not depending on longer returns to make their investments pay for themselves.

I don't know what all those different safeguards would be, but what I'm suggesting is that we need to form some kind of a group, the best and brightest of all those who are concerned about this issue, to profile all the safeguards we could put in place. Otherwise, I think those who have this concern will continue to capture the public's concern about this issue, until we offer very specific responses to it.

Mr. UDALL OF COLORADO. Those are very enlightening comments.

I would add that I hear, and I know Congressman McInnis hears, comments from people who care deeply about the forest, but from different points of view. When you hear someone say "forest health", the folks who would be labeled environmentalists think that means clear-cutting, a return to the old ways of doing things. When you hear the word "ecology" used, ecological principle, sustained management of our forests, I think some of the old traditional interests think that means hands off, we're never even going to enter the forest. Somehow we have got to find some common ground and you have brought up some great suggestions. We would like to see what we can do to work with you and others to put some of these additional ideas on the table.

I want to ask Ms. Enzer a question that's a little more specific. You mentioned in your written testimony that local contractors purchase special equipment designed to handle small diameter trees, but that few of these projects have been brought to fruition.

Why is that the case?

Ms. ENZER. Why have the projects not been brought to fruition?

Mr. UDALL OF COLORADO. Yes.

Ms. ENZER. I think there are several reasons for that. I think that some of the contracting mechanisms, when collaborative groups get together, agree on the restoration goals, they agree that restoring ecological integrity is their main focus. Then when they try and use existing contracting authorities to implement that, there isn't a good fit. It does sometimes have to do with scale, the size of the operations, the kind of equipment being used, but also sometimes how to pay for the project.

With the stewardship contracting pilots, there are some new authorities that people are testing, and some of those authorities relate to how to pay for the project. But there are other authorities that aren't funding mechanisms, like best value, that would really help get these projects on the ground, going and committed.

I think there is a lack of clarity on how to use the existing authorities, as well as on how to use the new authorities that are also in Title IV of the Fire Plan. So I think we need Congress' help to work with the agency and to support them in understanding how to use their existing authorities, but also, when new ones are offered, that they get some technical assistance to do that.

I believe that Mr. Phillips referenced that this morning, that there's a tool kit that the Washington office has been working on for many years, and the release of that tool kit would be of a great benefit to communities and the contracting officers in getting those projects completed on the ground.

Mr. UDALL OF COLORADO. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the time I don't have. The Chairman has granted me additional time.

I wanted to ask Mr. Brendler a question. Your testimony discussed the need for greater rural development emphasis in the Forest Service. Can you expand on that, how you perceive the role of the Forest Service with respect to rural development, and some of the mechanisms or programs the agency might use to promote those outcomes? Mr. BRENDLER. The role of the Forest Service, as I understand it, in rural development has been one that's been, in a sense, related to the work that they have been doing since their inception. It became explicit in 1990 in the strategic plan and the development of the rural development programs, the Economic Action Program being one of them, that we support.

I think those have been focused on capacity building, realizing that, as a number of my co-panelists have mentioned, that what we need is to achieve the conditions in the forest that we would like to see, that healthy communities can reinforce that.

I think an interesting point about the Forest Service's role in rural development is the structure of delivery, which I think is unique to it and a real advantage, as we see it. It has, in a sense, branch offices. It has over time developed a wealth of knowledge. You know, we heard about the Forest Products Lab, rural development staff and so forth, that are able to help rural communities. I think we would just like to see that expanded. In addition to having those field offices, it is also able to draw on national resources as a national agency.

One issue that comes up a lot is that other programs within the Department of Agriculture have rural development programs. I think we need to realize that the Forest Service's place in a lot of these rural communities, these regional offices, so to speak, as well as the specific needs of forest-based communities, are unique. I think that does require separate investment.

Mr. UDALL OF COLORADO. I want to give everybody on the panel a chance, if I don't run out of time.

Mr. Madrone, I apologize if I mispronounced your name. But you talked about the Jobs in the Woods Program. Suggest how we might broaden that or replicate that approach in other parts of the country, if you would. Mr. MADRONE. It has worked extremely well in the Pacific Northwest, which isn't to say there aren't some problems. But in the last 6 year's experience of completing many hundreds of projects in those three States, we have learned a lot, both within the Forest Service and in BLM, and there are other Federal

agencies working with this, the National Park System. We're working with these authorities with state agencies as well.

The problems that have been identified, people are now starting to tackle those, with the tool box, with training, and we're working in the private sector to bring that through the community end of it.

I believe that by removing those remaining barriers, by creating a little more flexible participating agreement authorities, for instance, we have the essence of a very successful program that you all supported in the Pacific Northwest.

We heard a lot of complaints from people all over the country. Our network is nationwide. People want this. They want the opportunity to have Jobs in the Woods in their area. So I believe the model is there, we know what some of the barriers are, and we need to remove those. We're ready to take it nationwide. It's going to take funding and support consistently to make that happen, but the community is in place and ready to help you.

Mr. UDALL OF COLORADO. Mr. Ward, Mr. McInnis implied you always have the last word. Would you like to add any additional comments to the ones you made earlier that would help the Committee further understand how we can continue to forward these efforts? Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Udall, let me just correct one comment. Paula Ward always has the last word.

[Laughter.]

She said to say hi.

I just want to reinforce that what we're seeing is a huge outpouring of desire of the American people to be a part of the solution, a desire to get out there and help the land managers, the Forest Service, do the job that they have become strapped for a variety of reasons and are unable to do, due to a degree that we feel is appropriate, and not just on the Continental Divide Trail, though that's our specific area of interest, throughout the country.

We want to give them the support that they need. I think we need this Committee's help to reinforce your desire to see that need being met.

Mr. UDALL OF COLORADO. I want to thank the Chairman for the additional time.

One last comment to Mr. KenCairn. I thought you were very articulate, even eloquent, when you talked about the important role that rural communities can and should and must play. I think if we could hold that in our mind's eye as we begin to work more in these areas, we could be very successful and in the process support those communities for all that they have given to our culture, our value system. Your optimism that these communities can thrive with this new regime and this new approach has given me additional hope as well. So thank you very much.

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Udall, I notice a very young guest has just entered the room. Maybe you would like to introduce that fine young lady and her escort.

Mr. UDALL OF COLORADO. I just noticed that my daughter, Tess Udall, and my wife, Maggie Fox, are here. Tess, do you want to stand up and let everybody see you?

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Udall and I both have something in common, in that our daughters are both named Tess.

Let me just real quickly, to wrap this up—and if you will cooperate with me, I would appreciate it. But if we could start with you, Mr. Brendler, if you could, in just a couple of sentences, tell us what you would like us to take away from this Committee. Let's go right down the line on the panel and then we can conclude.

Mr. Brendler, if you would proceed.

Mr. BRENDLER. I would like to leave you with the idea that communities do play a critical role in forest management. They are often overlooked and they need to be at the table. I think it is all of our jobs to invest in their capacity to solve problems.

Ms. ENZER. I guess I would just leave you with the idea that we need a consistent program of work that is focused on restoration and maintenance, if our communities and forests are to be healthy.

Mr. KENCAIRN. I believe scale matters, and that it's important to create economic safeguards, and that it's your job to create adequate safeguards to protect our communities and our forests from unrestrained economic interests. Mr. MADRONE. Incentives are the solution to prevention, and I want to submit this document to you for the hearing, a document for financial incentives for stewardship of nonindustrial timberland. Mr. WARD. I guess I would just leave you with the thought that last year we participated in a number of summits that addressed the recreation agenda of the Forest Service, and they produced a document, the recreation agenda. I would just implore this Committee to work with the Forest Service to see that this is implemented, because it is the result of a lot of work, a lot of interest from communities, and a wide spectrum of people. The tools are there. We just need additional emphasis.

Mr. MCINNIS. Thank you.

I would like to thank Ms. Collins and Mr. Phillips of the Forest Service on panel one for attending, and Mr. Brendler, Ms. Enzer, Mr. KenCairn, Mr. Madrone and Mr. Ward, thank you very much. We look forward to your meeting this afternoon.

Obviously, these partnerships are very important. In my opinion, having experienced and worked through them with some groups that were from very opposite sides of the spectrum, and seeing the success at the end, they work, they work very efficiently, and everything from scale to saving our rural communities is vital.

I also thank my colleague, Mr. Udall, and also to let any of those who are new to the Committee hearing process, you have to understand that, with the conflicts we have, the lack of Committee attendance is not lack of interest. It is numerous conflicts. In fact, I rarely have a Committee hearing where I don't have another Committee hearing that conflicts with it. So please take that into consideration.

Again, thank you very much. The Committee stands adjourned. It's 12 noon.

[Additional material supplied for the record follows:]

[A paper prepared by David C. Schen, Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands, and Kim Kostelnik, New Mexico Forestry Division, submitted for the record follows:]

FOUR CORNERS SUSTAINABLE FORESTS PARTNERSHIP

PREPARED BY DAVID C. SCHEN, UTAH DIVISION OF FORESTRY, FIRE & STATE LANDS, AND
KIM KOSTELNIK, NEW MEXICO FORESTRY DIVISION

BACKGROUND

A forestry based initiative was conceived in 1997 under the leadership of State Foresters from New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado. The structure of the regions forest resources has been heavily impacted by extractive industries during the settlement period and nearly a century of effective fire suppression in fire dependent ecosystems. The State Foresters saw, throughout the Four Corners region, increasing risks for catastrophic fire and insect outbreaks in forest ecosystems as well as a declining capacity in communities to provide services and economic opportunities associated with forest restoration and maintenance needs on the region's private and public lands. These conditions exist across social and jurisdictional boundaries in the four corners states of New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, and Arizona.

There was a need to focus national attention and resources on issues common throughout the region. A coalition of diverse interests formed to identify clear goals for the Initiative and seek Congressional support for associated programs. In Federal fiscal year 2001, Congress appropriated \$2,000,000 to the U.S. Forest Service, State and Private Forestry, Economic Recovery & Rural Development Programs to further the Initiative. These funds go toward community-based projects and other collaborative efforts which encourage long-term solutions to both community and forest resource concerns.

GOALS

1. Merge environmental and economic concerns by linking forest restoration and maintenance needs with the production and marketing of value-added products.
2. Strengthen and diversify rural economies through community led collaborative stewardship projects that illustrate creative solutions to forest restoration needs.
3. Facilitate the development of an information sharing and technical assistance network among businesses, local leaders, non-profit groups, tribal interests, state and federal agencies, and individuals concerned with forests.
4. Develop value-added products from small diameter timber and other non-traditional forest resources and identify markets for those products.
5. Reduce the loss of natural resources to catastrophic fire, insect, and disease by restoring at-risk forest ecosystems.

OUTCOMES TO DATE

1. Regional Assessment. A regional assessment was completed by the Forest Trust in cooperation with Northern Arizona University. The assessment included resource, economic, and social elements.
2. Round Table. The Four Corners Steering Committee sponsored a Sustainable Forestry Round Table in Taos, New Mexico in August 1999. The purpose was to encourage and support participation in this important strategic event by local leaders and other stake holders from the four corners region. Recommendations by various working groups at the Roundtable are being used to guide the Partnership's activities.
3. Demonstration Protects. The steering committee has solicited a third round of demonstration project proposals. In the second round, forty-six proposals were received. Of those, eighteen demonstration projects were awarded grants. \$670,000 was committed to these projects. Twenty-eight additional projects were proposed but unfunded due to lack of funding. The forty-six proposals submitted requested \$2,409,799 and committed \$4,806,417 in matching funds.
4. Forest Products Utilization. A Utilization Specialist was hired by the partnership to provide forest products utilization technical assistance to primary and secondary manufacturers in the Four Corners Region. Tim Reader came on board in June 2000 and will operate out of the Durango office of the Colorado State Forest Service. The Partnership is also collaborating with the national Network of Forest Practitioners to provide other forms of technical assistance to forest based businesses in the region.
5. Straw Planning. The Steering Committee engaged a consultant to guide us through a strategic planning process. This process is scheduled to be completed in 2001.
6. Public Relations. The Denver based firm of Kostka-Gleason Communications, Inc. has been hired to develop and implement a public relations campaign that focuses on the value of sustainably managed forests to both our environment and rural communities. A central feature of this campaign will be success stories from the Community-Based Demonstration Projects administered by the Partnership. A

desired outcome of the campaign is that people nationally and locally, begin to understand and support sustainable forest management as a critical link to economic, social, and ecology well-being.

7. Revolving Loan Fund. Many communities rely on nearby forest lands for their economic health but need more technical, marketing and financial resources to adapt to the new opportunities in forest-based communities. The Rocky Mountain Home-Based Business Association is assisting the Partnership with a program to provide capital lending for the creation, retention and expansion of jobs in specific areas in the four corners region. Loans would be available under this program for start-up and existing businesses. Credit and collateral requirements are generally less stringent than those of traditional lenders. This loan fund will be offered to finance a gap in the business community with the intent of creating new opportunities for partnerships through a combination of public and private financing, thus lessening the risk for the primary lender. These funds will be offered through existing Revolving Loan Funds in each state.

[A paper prepared by David C. Schen, Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands, and Ruth Steed, TreeUtah, submitted for the record follows:]

UTAH COMMUNITY FORESTS PARTNERSHIP

PREPARED BY DAVID C. SCHEN, UTAH DIVISION OF FORESTRY, FIRE & STATE LANDS, AND RUTH STEED, TREEUTAH

BACKGROUND

In 2002, Salt Lake City and other Utah Communities will host the Olympic Winter Games. These games will greatly impact the residents and resources of Utah. With the assistance of Senator Robert Bennett, Congress appropriated \$500,000 for tree-planting projects in local communities at venue and gateway sites. The funds are being distributed through the USDA Forest Service, State and Private Forestry, Urban and Community Forestry Program, and delivered by the Utah Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands.

PARTNERSHIP GOALS

Utah communities, some of which serve as gateways to Olympic venue sites, provide opportunities to demonstrate arboriculture, tree planting & maintenance practices, and the stewardship of urban resources. The Partnership hopes to reach the following goals:

1. Develop a tree planting program in association with the 2002 Winter Olympic Games that will serve as an Olympic legacy for Utah (Salt Lake) and which will serve as a model for future Olympic host cities.
2. Demonstrate arboriculture, tree planting & maintenance practices in gateway communities and at Olympic venues.
3. Engage residents and community leaders to expand their awareness of the value of urban forest resources and the importance of these resources in sustaining healthy, viable communities.
4. Encourage private investment in establishing healthy urban forests.

THE COMMUNITY FOREST PARTNERSHIP TEAM

- TreeUtah
- Utah Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry Fire and State Lands
- USDA Forest Service, State and Private Forestry
- Utah Office of Energy Services, Cool Communities Program
- Utah Nursery & Landscape Association
- Utah Community Forest Council

HOW IT WORKS

The Utah Community Forest Partnership (Utah CFP) was formed to facilitate tree plantings and involves seven different federal, state, and non-profit entities. Through costshare grants, Utah CFP is funding community tree plantings, creating green buffers, shade, parks and trails, wildlife habitat, and beautifying community entrances. The Utah CFP also provides technical assistance, training, and education to enable communities to care for their trees after planting. TreeUtah, a non-profit organization, works with local communities to coordinate volunteer efforts and carry out community tree plantings projects. The Utah Community Forest Partnership is

an excellent example of private-public partnerships working to serve the citizens of Utah.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN UTAH COMMUNITIES.

City growth, development and urban sprawl all take their toll on our trees. When a city loses trees, it loses more than beauty. Publicly owned trees are part of a community's infrastructure just as are streets, sidewalks, sewers, public buildings and recreational facilities. When communities plant trees they get benefits that last for over 30 years. Because trees:

- Reduce pollution.
- Connect people with the natural environment.
- Reduce crime.
- Create homes for wildlife.
- Provide shade.
- Save energy.
- Increase property values.

OUTCOMES TO DATE

- Tree-Planting Projects. Thirty-five community based projects have been supported by grants from the Utah CFP
- Volunteers Recruited. TreeUtah and community leaders have recruited 2,334 citizen volunteers to plant trees on city streets and parks.
- Volunteer Hours Logged. These volunteers have logged over 8,269 hours of service under this program.
- Trees Planted. Federal, community and private funds have helped support the purchase of 2,491 trees for gateway and other partnership projects.
- Leveraged Funds. The partnership has leveraged 2.5 dollars for every dollar provided by Congress.

VIEWPOINTS FROM COMMUNITY PROJECTS

West Valley City

- Planted 23 trees to enhance beauty of two gateways and planted 28 trees at the E-Center.
"We are thrilled to work with the Utah CFP to showcase the resources, beauty and pride in our community. This planting has engaged every aspect of West Valley City's diverse community."—Kevin Astill, Parks and Recreation Director

Kearns

- 503 volunteers joined together to plant the new tree-lined gateway into their community
"Utah CFP has been a spark which formed a fire of community pride, unity and vision. They provided the resources to make our dream of turning a street side into a beautiful forest in an urban setting. We cannot wait to welcome the world to Kearns during the 2002 Olympic Winter Games."—Eric Hutching, Economic Development Director for Kearns

West Jordan

- Planted 30 trees on the Regional Soccer Complex and planted 20 along neighborhood streets.
"This project created a sense of camaraderie, community service and civic pride in every volunteer. The Utah CFP has made an important and lasting difference in our community."—Julie Hess, West Jordan City Forester

Murray City

- Planted 40 trees along the Jordan River Parkway to restore wildlife habitat.
"The Utah CFP created a buffer between a highway and a neighborhood, making a pleasant park-like atmosphere for wildlife and recreation."—Kim Sorenson, Murray City Parks Superintendent

South Jordan and Sandy, 10600 South at Interstate 15

- Planted over 250 trees to create inviting gateways.
"We couldn't have done this without the help and leadership of the Utah CFP. This cooperative effort will benefit the visitors and residents of our two communities."—Scott Earl, Assistant Director of Sandy City Parks and Recreation

[Whereupon, at 12 noon, the Committee adjourned.]

