



#### **Minutes**

## January 27, 2011 TCRCD Conference Room Horseshoe Lane Weaverville 7:00 p.m.

#### **Welcome & Introductions**

Jesse Cox opened the meeting with introductions. We had 9 attendees and a special welcome to Tina Lynsky, the Weaverville District Ranger

#### Willow Creek CWPP

Pat Frost gave an introduction and d brief overview before turning things over to Joe O'Hara, from the Willow Creek Fire Safe Council. Joe explained the CWPP process and close coordination that the Willow Creek FSC has had with Trinity County FSC on the CWPP. The Willow Creek CWPP is before the Trinity County FSC, because their "sphere of influence includes the communities of Salyer, Hawkins Bar and Burnt Ranch. The community meetings were conducted jointly (Willow Creek & Trinity County FSCs) and the project priorities in the Willow Creek plan are the same ones that will be I the Trinity County CWPP. Jaegel reminded that we should keep biomass opportunities in mind with the CWPP process. There was discussion and the group agreed to have Jesse Cox, as chair, to sign the Willow Creek CWPP and to send it to the Trinity County Board of Supervisors for acceptance, as well. Frost will take the lead on the process with Trinity County Board of Supervisors. He will try to get it on a meeting in February, but it could slip to early March.

#### **Funding Opportunities**

CA FSC -- Currently the application period is open, but there is no funding committed by the federal agencies, due to the FY 2011 budget being stuck in short-term continuing resolution mode and the 2012 budget has not been released yet by the administration.

FEMA – Frost shared an RFP that is out with a very short turn-around. The RCD will submit a proposal with broad, countywide application, including defensible space implementation and public education outreach.

#### **Project Updates**

**Trinity River Management Unit (USFS):** Tina Lynsky, Pat Butler and Alex Mc Bath shared a status report for their projects (dated January 2011). This very informative report included

information on implementation by treatment type (mastication, hand pile & burn, etc.) and projects under planning. One project of note on the planning side is the Down River project, which has been elevated to the D.C. office for review. It was noted that this project is the complement to the work the RCD is implementing on private lands in these same communities. The group suggested a letter to the Regional Forester. Frost will draft for J Cox's signature.

**Weaverville Fire Department:** Mike McMillan reported that their crew is in winter lay-off. They will begin a new public outreach campaign in the later winter to get things rolling again.

Watershed Research & Training Center: Their crew also is off and the staff are in the planning/outreach phases to get ready for spring.

**RCD:** Crews still are working on variety of projects, primarily in Junction City area and on the senior citizen defensible space project in a variety of communities.

Next Meeting will be February 24 7:00 PM TCRCD Conference Room





#### **Minutes**

## February 24, 2011 TCRCD Conference Room Horseshoe Lane Weaverville 7:00 p.m.

#### **Welcome & Introductions**

Jesse Cox opened the meeting with introductions. We had 8 attendees.

#### "All Lands" Planning & Implementation

Tiffany Hayes, the NRCS District Conservationist summarized the multi-agency meeting held earlier in the month to promote the idea of seamless project planning across the landscape regardless of landownership. NRCS has a focus on private lands and it seems logical to find ways to coordinate efforts with [a] agencies like BLM and USFS responsible for managing federal lands and RCD & Watershed Center, who work with both federal & private landowners/land managers. The FSC will have a quarterly agenda item for "all lands" discussions to further the idea and promote "out-year" planning.

#### **CWPP Update**

Cousins gave an overview of status – draft should be out by mid-March for review, with a target of approval/acceptance in April. Kelly Sheen then gave a presentation of the GIS analysis that was done to rank projects, which put a focus on [a] relationship to WUI and [b] location with regards to previous wildfires. Group discussed other possible information to include [a] projects being proposed by federal land managers [b] completed projects.

Frost noted that the Willow Creek CWPP would go before the Trinity County Board of Supervisors on March 1 for review and acceptance.

#### **Prescribed Fire Brainstorming**

Nick Goulette (WRTC) reported on the Northern CA Prescribed Fire Council and the recognition that there still are a number of challenges to wider use of prescribed fire as a tool. That said, there also are more efforts underway to look at fire as a tool in the landscape, for example the Trinity Alps Wilderness project that is being proposed. It seems that there are two primary tasks [a] finding where there are opportunities for cooperative projects using existing capacity (like Fire Storm) and [b] a focused outreach campaign. The Watershed Center has some funding for

burning in one of its CA FSC grants, and this might provide an opportunity to work with private landowners on some prescribed fire demonstrations.

#### Fire Season Outreach

It is still winter and hard to focus on wildfire season, but it is just around the corner. Frost handed out copies of last year's "Living with Wildfire" newspaper insert and asked that folks think about what we should put in the insert for 2011. T Hayes suggested some USDA/NRCS/USFS information and she'll take the lead on this. Mark Dowdle at the RCD takes the lead with *Trinity Journal* on the insert, so get your write-ups, advertisements to him in March.

#### **Project Updates**

**Trinity River Management Unit (USFS):** Tina Lynsky and Chris Prindiville said that they have gotten a lot of the burning done on the Croften project (40 acres of piles) and they noted that the Down River project is still in D.C. office for review. It was noted that this project is the complement to the work the RCD is implementing on private lands in these same communities. The USFS is responding to comments on the Trinity Alps Prescribed Fire project and hope to have a draft out this spring.

**Watershed Research & Training Center:** Nick Goulette said they are in the planning stages right now on a number of projects, including Forest Glen residential treatments, Wallow Fire hazard tree removal, the various Hayfork Community Protection projects and a "Progeny sites" project with USFS.

NRCS: Tiffany Hayes said they received 100 EQIP applicants, which is a very heavy workload.

**RCD:** Crews still are working on variety of projects, primarily in Junction City area and on the senior citizen defensible space project in a variety of communities. Spring will see work start up on the North Lake projects and hopefully some RAC-funded projects in the Weaverville Community Forest. Two harvests are likely to occur this summer in the Community Forest this year – the Browns Phase I (USFS) and the Mining District (BLM).

Next Meeting will be March 24 7:00 PM TCRCD Conference Room





#### **Minutes**

## March 24, 2011 TCRCD Conference Room Horseshoe Lane Weaverville 7:00 p.m.

#### **Welcome & Introductions**

Jesse Cox opened the meeting with introductions.

#### **Review Draft of Trinity County CWPP Update**

Cousins gave an overview of the draft CWPP update and the group discussed the document in general and some specifics, the most notable being **Appendix B** – **Fire Guard Concept** and how to refine this section. The document is on the Trinity County Fire Safe Council website at <a href="https://www.tcrcd.net/fsc">www.tcrcd.net/fsc</a> and comments will be taken until April 21st. The goal will be to then finalize the document, bring it back to the FSC on April 28th, and then to Chiefs' Association, Board of Supervisors, Willow Creek FSC and Cal-Fire for acceptance. Frost offered to go to the Chiefs' Association meeting on April 4 and to the Willow Creek FSC on April 7.

Frost noted that the Willow Creek CWPP was accepted by the Trinity County Board of Supervisors on March 1 and is now final.

#### **Project Updates START HERE!!!!!**

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Next Meeting will be April 28, 2011 7:00 PM TCRCD Conference Room





#### **Minutes**

## April 28, 2011 TCRCD Conference Room Horseshoe Lane Weaverville 7:00 p.m.

#### **Welcome & Introductions**

Jesse Cox opened the meeting with introductions.

## **CWPP Update – Review Final Draft of Trinity County CWPP Update 2010**

Frost provided an overview of the Update and the changes made based on comments received through April 21, 2011. Most notable change was the deletion of Appendix B, which dealt with the concept of a "Fire Militia". The overall view from reviewers, including the Chiefs' Association was that it was a little too conceptual and needed more discussion, possibly in the context of the Chiefs' Association. An appendix was added. It contains the information that Trinity County provided for the Willow Creek CWPP. There are two sets of edits still being worked on, but they don't affect the project priorities or narrative sections. BLM suggested we add ownership to the project tables and USFS asked that we reference road numbers. Both of these are GIS exercises and will be completed next week and inserted.

The group had no objections to accepting the CWPP Update 2010 and Jesse Cox signed the originals. Frost described the schedule for completing the CWPP "approval" process: May 2<sup>nd</sup> Trinity County Chiefs' Association May 5<sup>th</sup> Willow Creek FSC May 17<sup>th</sup> Trinity County Board of Supervisors And then CalFire.

#### **Project Updates**

**Trinity River Management Unit (USFS):** Alex McBath said that they have pretty much finished burning and they completed about 400 acres of piles. Trinity Hazard Tree project is in contracting, Browns Phase I is awarded and should happen this year, Trinity Alps Prescribed Fire notice for comments should come out this summer; Pettijohn NEPA is moving forward and Down River Community Protection is pushed back a little. He also described a Region 5 Gap Analysis that has been done on Fire Prevention Programs in the region, one of the few regions

with a discrete prevention program. A final report will come out in 2012 and it likely will affect prevention programs, but no way knowing in what ways. TRMU will be fully staffed for Fire this season, with crews on by May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Mad River Ranger District (Six Rivers NF): Nancy Curran gave an update. Beaver Slide Timber Sale (Stewardship) NEPA has been signed and they are working on the mark. The Watershed Center is laying out the Kelsey project and she is excited about the Lamb Gap CE, which is an important project in the CWPP that links fuels reduction work on USFS lands with the work on private lands that is being done with the RCD/Southern Trinity VFD and CA Fire Safe Council grant. They've gotten 70 acres of burning done & hope to get a little more before it gets too dry.

Lower Trinity Ranger District (Six Rivers NF): Andrew Spain reported on a number of projects. Plantation Thin CE footprint has been finalized & they have some Humboldt RAC funding to do some biomass analysis. Hope for a decision in August. Waterman West is getting close to having final reports from specialists for cumulative effects; Waterman East they are working on the footprint and hope for a decision by early next year. They are hoping to do some broadcast burning in the Trinity Village area with RAC funding that they have remaining. They also are looking to hire a Fuels Planner and their District Ranger has taken a position in Idaho.

**Cal-Fire:** Andy Reiling gave an overview of the Strategic Fire Plan that they will be working on. It has an over-arching goal of melding state fire planning with CWPPs and to produce GIS layers that will be available through FRAP. Cal-Fire staffing for fire season is down from the past with only two firefighters and an operator on each engine. They will be fully staffed in July.

**Willow Creek FSC:** Joe O'Hara reported that 3 of the 4 projects are done, with only Bigfoot Subdivision to do. They also are waiting on NEPA to be done to do some broom removal at he Kimtu site (USFS).

**Weaverville Fire Department:** Mike McMillan reported that they are working on their community defensible space/fuels reduction project with Title III funding. The focus is on disadvantaged homeowners. They have treated 190 sites in 2 years and are very pleased with the work that Firestorm is doing. A new approach is to work on the gulches in Weaverville – the land between neighborhoods that is "out of sight, out of mind" to homeowners. It is strategic, but a bit tedious to get a swath of homeowners on board all at once. Currently working on Ten-Cent Gulch neighborhood.

**RCD:** Frost reported the RCD crews still are working on variety of projects, primarily in Junction City area and on the senior citizen defensible space project in a variety of communities. Spring will see work start up on the North Lake projects and hopefully some RAC-funded projects in the Weaverville Community Forest. He also shared copies of the 2011 "Be Prepared for Wildfire" insert (there are plenty more, if folks want them as handouts) and a new sldie that will begin to be shown at the Trinity Theatre.

Next Meeting will be May 26, 2011 7:00 PM

#### **TCRCD Conference Room**





#### **Minutes**

## June 23, 2011 TCRCD Conference Room Horseshoe Lane Weaverville 7:00 p.m.

#### **Welcome & Introductions - Cox**

Joe and Pat O'Hara, Barbara and Don Darst, Joseph Bower, Alex Cousins, Nick Goulette, Mike McMillan, Carrie Nicolls, Pat Butler

#### **Down River Community Protection Project – A. McBath.**

The Down River project is out for comment, with three weeks remaining. Joseph voiced concerns of the prescription, stating that it needed a prescription that would help maintain its function (not to grow brush). Nick mentioned that brush alone isn't the problem, rather its brush and ladder fuels combined.

## Catastrophic Wildfire Prevention & Community Protection Act (Proposed Legislation by Congressman Herger) – N Goulette

This proposed legislation will negate NEPA under certain instances, similar to the defunct categorical exclusion10.

## Summary of "Continuous Improvement in Fire Management Stakeholder Meeting" of June 16<sup>th</sup> – N Goulette

This was a public meeting to discuss fire management, it was the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting following the 2008 fires.

#### Region 5 Fuels Management Strategic Plan – N Goulette

The management strategic plan is in draft and is the first of such plans to be developed. It deals with issues such as fire suppression and fire management for the region.

#### CA Fire Safe Council Grant Proposal Ideas - All

Discussion of a county wide proposal with the WRTC and the TCRCD asking for funds to work in the Hayfork and Burnt Ranch area

#### CWPP Update – Final is available at www.tcrcd.net/fsc

The document is completed, but still need to get the shape files on the internet

#### **Project Updates - All**

WVFD- Working on fuels reduction projects within the District WRTC- Various Fuels reduction project, including a prescribe burn. Willow Creek Fire Safe Council- Inmates doing fuels reduction, Blue dot program, signage, Flash program.

#### Next meeting will be July 28, 2011 TCRCD Conference Room





## Minutes September 22, 2011 Musser Hill Weaverville 6:00 p.m.

#### Welcome & Introductions - Cousins

Alex Cousins, Pat Butler, John Knight, Wade Martin, David Horne, Pat Frost

## **Coffee Creek Community Fuel Reduction Project – J Knight** (NRCS)

John Knight provided an overview of this potential project, which would have some similarities to other "all lands" approaches in development. John is finalizing a plan that was started by a predecessor at NRCS in about 2008. The plan looks at private lands for fuels reduction & forest stand improvement, but also looks at the possibility of some harvesting under Forest Practice Act exemptions to help landowners recover some of the cost of the work and to leverage funding from other sources (like grants the RCD obtains and EQIP cost-share from NRCS to landowners). SPI has shown an interest in being a partner in this Coffee Creek project, too. The group registered its support for the project concept.

#### Tour of Browns Phase I Forest Health Stewardship Project

Alex Cousins led the group into the Browns Phase I project area to look at this stewardship project. He described some of the process that the Community Forest Steering Committee and USFS went through to get a signed NEPA document. This phase is not yet finished, but is close to being done.

#### Fire Safe Survey – David Horne & Wade Martin

David and Wade are visiting Weaverville from CSU Long Beach, where both are faculty members. They described the homeowner survey that they have developed. They have been working with RCD and Trinity County Fire Safe Council since late in 2010, when they came to Weaverville for a preliminary visit and meeting with landowners arranged by Frost. These individuals then reviewed a draft survey, provided comments and the final survey was built with those comments in mind. The RCD provided a database of Trinity County residents from which

a random sample of 250 was selected to receive the survey. The survey was being mailed today and should hit the mailboxes early next week. Frost agreed to get a short article in the Trinity Journal next Wednesday to help encourage participation.

#### **Burnt Ranch All Lands Pilot Project – Alex Cousins**

Alex described the recent meeting (September 20, 2011) in Burnt Ranch and is encouraged by the collaboration. Each agency (NRCS, USFS, TCRCD) are working to obtain funding and develop related projects across the landscape. The meeting was to gather community input and develop community input into future projects

### Next meeting will be October 27, 2011 TCRCD Conference Room 7:00 PM





#### **Minutes**

## October 27, 2011 TCRCD Conference Room Horseshoe Lane Weaverville 7:00 p.m.

#### **Welcome & Introductions - Cox**

John Knight, Nick Goulette, Mike McMillan, Roger Jaegel, Jim Gonzalez, Ken Boucher, Andy Reiling, Alex McBath

#### Field season recap/FY '12 field season outlook

SFMU- Hayfork South Fuel Break, almost complete, 290 acres to burn, including begum rock, dobbins, and Sidney Gulch.

CalFire- BLM Burn in Grass Valley Creek, around 200 acres

Weaverville VFD- Fuels reduction program condtinues

TRMU- Region 5 completed 111% of expected acres, Shasta Trinity Completed 15,000 acres of fuels reduction, TRMU completed 3,000. They are expecting to complete 18,000 in 2012, but the budget is down 5-10%. Projects include the Down River, and the Petti John.

TCRCD- East Branch, China, Browns, Mining District, and the North Lake

#### **NRCS**

Coral Bottom, North Weaverville, and other various projects scattered throughout. They are focusing on one-year, small projects, the projects focus on smaller tree removal, submerchantable.

WRTC- Hayfork South, Hayfork Forest Health, Hayfork Community Protection, some private landowners, NRCS clients, BLM mastication, private Rx Burn, BLM broadcast, and Mad River mastication.

#### **Northern CA Prescribed Fire Council**

The next meeting will be November 16-17 in Fortuna, with a full agenda, including a field visit to Rx burns in the redwoods, then presentations, including looking into the legal aspect of burning.

#### **Hayfork Prescribed Fire Initiative**

The WRTC is working with private landowners to complete a cooperative burn on private and public lands. It will help the resources, and also provide training for those interested. They are going to start small, but hope to spread to all of Trinity County.

#### Winter Firewise activities from the FSC

Be good to look into nationwide fire treatments and assess what worked during the recent fires throughout the west.

#### **Burnt Ranch All Lands Pilot Project – Alex Cousins**

NRCS, TCRCD, USFS are working across boundaries to develop projects and have each agency focus on their area of expertise and influence.

This is the opportunity for the community to get involved and express the need for work.

Added items

#### Coffee Creek, John Knight (NRCS)

In 2008 there was a draft fire plan for the Coffee Creek area, but due to personnel change, the project was slowed. John has re-invigorated it, and is working with landowners, especially those with timber as a value. New state laws in forestry allow projects to happen fast. He is proposing a meeting to let the community know of its options. There is a new biomass grant that could help with haul costs, and he is hoping to apply for those funds. He asked for the Fires Safe Council's support. All present supported the project.

#### **Kellogg Fuels Reduction CE**

Ken Boucher presented the projects, which is a fuels reduction project on the borders of the community of Hayfork. The project will treat 473 acre through the thinning of small diameter trees, removal of understory brush and then burning excess fuels. There may be mechanical mastication on the more brushy sites. Riparian corridors will be excluded.

Boucher asked for support from the Trinity County Firesafe Council. All present supported the project.

#### **Soldier Collaborative**

Members of the community are working with the USFS to develop a project in the Solider watershed. There is a meeting/field visit on November 14<sup>th</sup>, and the Trinity County Firesafe Council is invited. More information to follow.

### Next Meeting – To Be Determined for Late November or early December







# Minutes December 15, 2011 Trinity County Resource Conservation District Conference Room Horseshoe Lane Weaverville 7:00 p.m.

**Welcome & Introductions** — Pat Frost welcomed everyone and started introductions. We had 15 attendees. See attached attendance sheet.

#### **Soldier Forest Health Project**

Nick Goulette (Watershed Research and Training Center - WRTC) thanked the Fire Safe Council for scheduling this project for discussion. He stated that the project is in a pre-scoping mode of providing public outreach and seeking early input in to the project. WRTC helped to host a field trip in mid-November that was well attended where participants brought up a variety of issues (see below). He then turned things over to Stephanie McKee and Randi Paris with the Trinity River Management Unit of the USFS.

They provided an overview (their PowerPoint Presentation will be available on the fire safe council website at www.tcrcd.net/fsc). Some basics on the area:

- 27,000-acre planning area (approximate)
- 76% in WUI (Trinity County CWPP 2010 Update)
- 10,644 acres Matrix
- 4,200 acres LSR

#### Why Soldier Creek & why now?

- USFS completed Watershed Analysis in 2009
- Prioritized in Community Wildfire Protection Plan Update in 2010
- Integrated Vegetation Management Plan (2010) shows it as a high priority area based on high fire behavior probabilities, WUI areas and watershed condition class.

Some input from the November 14<sup>th</sup> field trip.

• Folks appreciated the ability to provide input before projects are designed.

- Interest in variable density prescriptions, site-specific prescriptions
- Use of stewardship authorities would facilitate getting various kinds of work done
- Focus on setting learning objectives and practicing adaptive management
- Concerns about how to work in Late Successional Reserve areas some urged being conservative
- Some urged not to open up the canopy too much betting on future maintenance with fire
- Don't cut big fire-resistant trees, but also don't include too many small trees and make the project uneconomical

There was a lengthy and in-depth discussion based on the above, and some very preliminary results from Forest Vegetation Simulator (FVS) modeling was presented. The initial idea is that there likely are four categories of treatment types to be considered.

- Fuel treatment units
- Forest Health Treatment units
- Fuel and Forest Health Treatment units
- Plantation units

This discussion included the following issues for consideration:

- Comparisons of current conditions and post-project conditions as related to purpose & need
- Build learning objectives into projects to facilitate adaptive management (especially in Matrix/Adaptive Management Area)
- Models & selecting most appropriate models is important, but this needs to be balanced against common sense and actual observations
- Designing projects that are economically viable
- US Fish and Wildfire Service (USFWS) is comfortable with variable density prescriptions and the local office of USFWS is even comfortable with moving below certain thresholds in Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) habitat to ensure habitat sustainability. This is even supported in the new recovery plan. But this is hampered by higher-level agency risk-aversion
- We have the opportunity to implement ecosystem restoration on a watershed scale, and this should take into account
  - Resilience to future disturbances
  - Long-term forest sustainability and the sustainability of treatments related to needing future fuel treatments
- Economics is critical, including socioeconomics, specifically how projects (or lack thereof) affect local communities
- Project operability (feasibility of designs/prescriptions). This has been a challenge with several recent projects on both Trinity management units of the USFS
- Don't create diameter limits and don't manage to canopy closure as the only proxy for habitat objectives
- Don't take all the small trees and remember to look at whether biomass harvest is feasible based upon operational and economic factors
- Current and near-term prospects of federal budgets mean we have to learn to do more acres with less appropriated funding
- Be careful about selecting the metrics for designing prescriptions and post-project monitoring (stand density indices, basal area, diameter limits, canopy closure)

- Continuing to collaborate with the public (adjacent land owners) is important
- Bring in logging systems expertise early in the process

Nick brought this discussion to a close with some final thoughts – A key purpose of this early outreach and collaboration is to find a path to design(s) that folks can support and not challenge. Towards that end, it was agreed that we should have another Fire Safe Council and/or community meeting discussion and possibly another field trip in late winter/early spring. In the mean time, the USFS will continue to do more field work to get more site-specific information and the FSC will put the materials from this meeting on the website and make it available to the public.

#### Post Mountain Fuelbreak Project

Keith Rohrs (USFS – South Fork Management Unit) summarized the status of this project. It was originally a stewardship project developed in 2004-05 that was litigated, so they are reworking it. A new factor is the limited access into the general area due to the illegal marijuana grows. The proposed project will include the following features:

- Basically a shaded fuelbreak (or fuel management zone) on the west & south sides of Post Mountain (about 200 acres) in WUI
- Mostly along ridges
- Limited to ladder fuel and brush material ≤ 6 inches dbh
- No commercial component
- Maybe firewood
- Hand-piling/burning
- Possibly some mastication

#### **Project Updates**

South Fork Management Unit (K Rohr): Another project being planned is the Kellogg (formerly Hayfork Forest Health), which was discussed at the October FSC meeting.

Lower Trinity Management Unit (A Spain): They have a number of projects coming up. RAC funding will help support work on the boundaries of Salyer-Hawkins Bar. They are re-scoping the Plantation Thin project, and Waterman West may also go back out for scoping.

NRCS (C Nicholls): They have pretty much completed agreements on their 2011 EQIP (about \$1.2M) and are working with the FSC on Burnt Ranch (all lands pilot) and Coffee Creek

WRTC (N Goulette). They have received funding, including funding from The Nature Conservancy for prescribed fire project on private land sin the Hayfork Valley. The goal is up to 2,000 acres to be treated.

Trinity River Management Unit (S McKee/R Paris): Working on the Blue Rock Road project area and there is a good bit of plantation work in the "Middle Hayfork" project area where there

are about 6200 acres under a NEPA documents, but they have only treated about 10 percent so far.

TCRCD (A Cousins): Field season is pretty much wrapping up for this year.

Clarence Rose (Weaverville Community Forest Steering Committee): The recent article in the *Trinity Journal* stating that there were virtually no harvests on lands managed by USFS in 2010 has really hit home with folks who are deeply concerned about community economic and social well-being and are willing to get involved to work for positive change. We are on the brink and it is essential that we come together, bring common sense back into the equation for the good of our community.

Debra Chapman (Board of Supervisors): She greatly appreciates this up-front process of reaching out to communities and she wants to underscore her earlier comment of the importance of forest projects on our local economy.

### Next Meeting January 26, 2012 Happy New Year