

# Colorado Forestry

## 2006 Annual Report

March 2007

### La Junta District

The following is a selection of 2006 Forestry Highlights within the La Junta District last year. We hope you enjoy!

#### **Tackling Tamarisk on the Purgatoire (TTP) 2006 Activities**

TTP saw some great accomplishments in 2006! Stellar partners this year included Trinidad State Park, Spanish Peaks-Purgatoire River Conservation District, Purgatoire River Water Conservancy District, Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District, The Nature Conservancy, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Trinidad Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Colorado Water Conservation Board, Colorado Farm Bureau, Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS), Colorado Division of Wildlife, Sangre de Cristo Rural Conservation & Development (RC&D), Upper Arkansas Weed Management Coalition, US Forest Service Comanche National Grassland, and the Tamarisk Coalition.

The purpose of TTP is to restore the native riparian communities of the Purgatoire River

Watershed by removing non-native woody species, such as tamarisk and Russian olive. This in turn will protect water resources, improve native riparian vegetation and wildlife, protect communities from wildfire, and enhance agricultural production.

TTP received \$50,000 from the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) this year. Three Ag producers, with property along the Purgatoire River, were able to sign up for the program and are in the process of removal efforts. 100 acres is the goal, and they are well on their way and doing a great job!

TTP partners also assisted Trinidad State Park with their Colorado Cares Day volunteer program. Volunteers from the Colorado Youth Corps, local 4H and Boy Scout clubs, and local citizens and private landowners came out and tackled ~35 acres of tamarisk removal at the State Park, which is located in the upper reaches of the Purgatoire Watershed. A BIG thanks goes out to Russ Pallone, Trinidad State Park Manager, for organizing and overseeing this project!



*Trinidad State Park volunteers observed Colorado Cares Day by removing 35 acres of tamarisk at the Park*

#### **Society of American Foresters Hosts Noxious Weed Workshop in La Junta**

30 people from around Colorado joined the Society of American Foresters Southeastern Colorado Chapter in La Junta this past fall for a very informative workshop aimed at noxious weed management. The workshop entitled, "Managing Tamarisk and Other Noxious Weeds: Tools for your Toolbox", included speakers from the Colorado State Forest Service,

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**Colorado  
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Colorado State University, Native Communities Development Corporation, and the Colorado Department of Agriculture. Topics covered included biology, ecology, and control methods for tamarisk (Shelly Van Landingham); web-based noxious weed management utilizing the National Institute of Invasive Species Science website (Greg Newman); utilizing high resolution satellite imagery for noxious weed mapping (Ian Hanou); and overview of the Colorado Department of Agriculture's noxious weed program, assistance programs, and mapping techniques (Crystal Andrews). A field trip was also made to the Colorado Division of Wildlife's Oxbow State Wildlife Area, 10 miles east of La Junta, where participants were able to view first hand different tamarisk infestation levels, and results from different removal techniques.

Thanks to the SAF SE CO Chapter Board members who made this workshop a success: Naomi Marcus, Chair; Bruce Short, Vice-Chair; Ian Hanou, Treasurer; and Shelly Van Landingham, Secretary.



*'Technical transfer' time for workshop attendees at the Oxbow State Wildlife Area*

## **Ernie Orahood and the Millenium Trees: A Tribute to a Community Leader**

Ernie Orahood has been making La Junta a better place to live for decades, and this year is no different. In the millennium year of 2000, a special tree was cut from the Pike National Forest: a 65 foot tall, 77 year old Colorado Blue Spruce. This tree was the Millennium Tree and was sent to our Nation's Capital as the National Holiday Tree to grace the lawn of the White House during the Christmas season. It was decorated with over 4,000 ornaments and lights. This tree, on its journey to the White House made several stops in the Arkansas Valley.

As a thank you to the many people who helped with the Millennium Tree event, the committee distributed actual Millennium Tree seedlings. The seedlings were grown from actual seeds of the Millennium Tree. Eleven of these seedlings were given to communities in Southeastern Colorado.

This is where Ernie comes in. At only inches tall in 2000, three of these seedlings were left in Ernie's care until they were large enough to transplant. For six years Ernie has been tentatively nurturing these trees, which are now about 3 feet tall with the root ball weighing over 150lbs! Ernie balled and burlapped these trees for transplanting this past spring: one went to Kiowa County,

one to Crowley County, and the third was planted at the La Junta City Building.

For over 20 years, Ernie was a member of the La Junta Tree Board. He has always shared his passion and knowledge about trees with the community. He has planted hundreds of trees, cared for hundreds of trees, and educated hundreds of people about trees and why they are such an important resource in our windswept Southeastern Colorado communities. This year a special thanks and deep appreciation goes out to Ernie for caring for our Millennium Trees and for making sure these living tributes grace our communities in the Arkansas Valley.



*Shelly and Ann Randall by one of Ernie's trees*

## **Eastern Colorado Community Forestry Conference Held in Crowley**

The annual Eastern Colorado Community Forestry Conference was held at the historic Crowley Heritage Center on Saturday, March 4, 2006. Nearly 40 attendees participated in the conference this year including presenters, Tree Board members, interested citizens, and community and agency representatives from southeastern Colorado. Presenters from the

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Colorado State Forest Service, Southeast Colorado Water Conservancy District, Colorado State University, and the City of Littleton presented the information. Workshop sponsors included the Colorado Tree Coalition, Colorado State Forest Service, Crowley Heritage Center, and included a special welcome by the Town of Ordway's Mayor, Nancy Moore. Special thanks to the Southeast Colorado Water Conservancy District and the Lower Arkansas Water Conservancy District who provided funds to print the "Recommended Trees for Plains Communities of Southeastern Colorado" booklet that was unveiled at the conference.



*Over 40 people gathered at the Crowley Heritage Center to learn more about tree care in SE CO.*

## On the Lookout for Emerald Ash Borer with APHIS

Emerald ash borer (EAB) was first discovered in southeastern Michigan near Detroit in the summer of 2002, probably arriving in solid wood packing material originating from its native Asia. It has rapidly spread to other states including Indiana, Ohio, Illinois and Maryland. EAB has killed more than 20 million ash trees in Ohio, Michigan and Indiana. Animal and Plant Health

Inspection Service (APHIS) officials are attempting to be proactive and detect new invasions before they become catastrophic.

Late this fall, the City of Rocky Ford removed green ash trees from the periphery of their City Hall due to their poor health. CSFS connected the City of Rocky Ford with APHIS officials, and the hunt was on for EAB! CSFS was able to receive hands-on training with the APHIS folks and will now be able to keep a knowledgeable eye on ash trees in the area. Fortunately, EAB was not found in Rocky Ford, and has not been found anywhere in the State of Colorado to date.

For more information on EAB, please visit [www.emeraldashborer.info](http://www.emeraldashborer.info).

## Fire

### National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) Training on Eastern Plains

Hosted by the Cheyenne Wells Rural Fire Protection District several fire personnel attended the Introduction to National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) 5.0 Course.

The 2-day National Fire Academy course provided students the tools necessary to successfully implement the NFIRS 5.0 in their respective jurisdictions, and to achieve uniformity in their incident and activity reporting.

Students were provided detailed instruction on the NFIRS 5.0 coding structure and rationale, comprehensive information on the NFIRS 5.0 modules, and strategies

to promote, implement, support and manage the NFIRS 5.0 system. Participants were also introduced to the federal client tool (FCT) and web-based reporting.

**Thank you** to Mike Smith, Cheyenne Wells Fire Chief and Marlinda Acevedo, CFIRS Program Manager for the Colorado Division of Fire Safety for all their efforts in bringing this successful training to our area.



*Fire South of Holly During Tom O's Visit 6/20*

### 11 Departments receive VFA Grants in 2006!

Through the National Fire Plan, much needed dollars came to rural fire departments in southeast Colorado. The Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant Program, administered through the Colorado State Forest Service, offered 50/50 cost-share for organizing, training and/or equipping rural fire departments serving communities under 10,000 in population. A big **thank you** to these firefighter personnel who initiated application. Through their efforts and others, their departments received the amounts listed:

- LeRoy England, Asst. Chief, Campo VFD - \$1,150
- Michael Smith, Chief, Cheyenne Wells FPD - \$4,462
- Randy Corsentino, Chief Fowler VFD - \$ 466

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- Ty Harmon, Chief, Granada VFD - \$1,070
- Clay Hasser, Chief, Hasty-McClave VFD - \$10,000
- Aaron Eveatt, Chief La Junta FD - \$3,462
- Jim Pryor, Chief, Las Animas/Bent County FPD - \$3,980
- Dale Dillon, Chief, Ordway/Crowley County VFD - \$5,000
- Marvin Rosencrans, Chief, Prowers County RFD - \$8,576
- Harold Self, Asst. Chief, Springfield VFD - \$6,463
- Kim Schallenberger, Monty Weeks, West Cheyenne FPD, Kit Carson VFD - \$9,964

Notably Springfield VFD received the first Rural Fire Assistance 90/10 Grant (RFA) administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Counties with Annual Operating Plans containing signatures from BLM and/or National Park Service are eligible. Springfield received \$1,000.

### **Kiowa County Fire Diesel Re-fabrication 6X6 Replaces Older Gas Engine**

Kiowa County Fire replaced their old gas Fire Engine, with a new Diesel 6X6 this past summer. Many thanks to Kiowa County, and the CSFS Fire Shop for all their work and efforts to upgrade this engine!



## **Washington State get a Taste of Tamarisk!**



*Washington State volunteer youth group helps remove tamarisk at the Oxbow SWA*

A group of youth volunteers from the State of Washington made their way to the heated plains of Southeastern Colorado this past summer. Twelve high school students, along with three counselors, descended upon the Oxbow State Wildlife Area, ten miles east of La Junta, to perform the arduous task of removing young tamarisk plants. CSFS volunteer coordinator, Ryan Staychock, also got in on the action, helping the La Junta District coordinate logistics for the project. The students worked hard for two days, using loppers to cut 15 acres of young tamarisk plants, while the adult counselors, Ryan, and Shelly applied herbicide to the stumps with backpack sprayers. The students also learned about the functions of a State Wildlife Area, helped seed wildlife food plots, and removed an isolated infestation of Canadian thistle.

A BIG thanks goes out to these students for volunteering their time and efforts in Colorado!

## **Administration**

### **Welcome Aboard Teradette Wilson!**

Welcome Teradette Wilson, Administrative Assistant I, to the CSFS La Junta District. She works 20 hours per week and provides much needed administrative support to our office. Teradette has a Bachelor of Science in Business Management with an emphasis in Marketing. Now that's helpful to us technical forester types!

Teradette has been on board since November 2nd. She is in learning mode, but her initiative and attention to detail are already contributing with outstanding results. She's tackling and setting up data systems; answering questions for the public in a very positive, professional manner; and contributing to the overall effectiveness of this office.

Teradette always brings a smile to our office, and during the Holiday Season she even brought a Christmas tree to add decor. Now that was a first!

Teradette, we are very, very pleased to have you on board! Welcome!

### **We Couldn't Do It Without You!**

*A special note and big **thank you*** to the many partners who worked with us this past year to combine and strengthen efforts! Here are just a few additional partners we'd like to acknowledge – Tim Reader with Colorado State University (CSU) Dept of Natural Resources (DNR) Wood Utilization/Biomass; Craig Jones, CO Dept of Energy; CSFS Staff with Eastern Colorado Community Forestry Conference (ECCFC); Colorado Springs Utilities with Tree Line USA;

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CO Division Of Wildlife (DOW) with Teaching Environmental Science Naturally/Project Learning Tree (TEN/PLT); Otero Jr. College with Girls in the Middle Conference; Tamarisk Biomass Study with Paul Evangelista, CSU NR Ecology Lab; Fire Depts – Monte Vista, Baca Grande, Littleton with National Wildfire Coordination Group (NWCG) qualified crew support on E6131 supporting training/experience opportunities for our cooperators; Division of Fire Safety with local NFIRS workshop; Rocky Mtn Bird Observatory with Tamarisk/Ranch Mgmt Workshop; CSU Contracting Amy Kugelman; CSU Kristy Preston, Administrative Assistant Hiring; BLM with Colorado SEAT Manager (SEMG) training.

***Internally, a big thanks*** to Karyl Scarlett – support with ‘creatively’ creating engine crews, with much TLC; Franktown Engine Boss (ENGB), Randy Newgren for providing Firefighter (FFTR) experience for one of our red-carded cooperators; Allen Gallamore for sending ENGB support our way; Jon Stocking for ‘magically’ pulling together a copier/fax when in dire need; Barb Berg for her help with a District Forester trying to hire an Administrative Assistant; Tom O for his insights into agroforestry & Community Forestry in our Strategic planning; Fred Winkler & Josh Malm for training a SEMG trainee (t) & Sergio Lopes for providing the opportunity; Dave Dilling, Inventory Forester for offering much appreciated Forest Inventory Plot intro training.

There are more – Thanks to each and every one of you!



*La Junta District Staff (left to right):  
Donna Davis, Shelly VanLandingham,  
Teradette Wilson*

We're Very Much Looking Forward to 2007!

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact us:

Colorado State Forest Service

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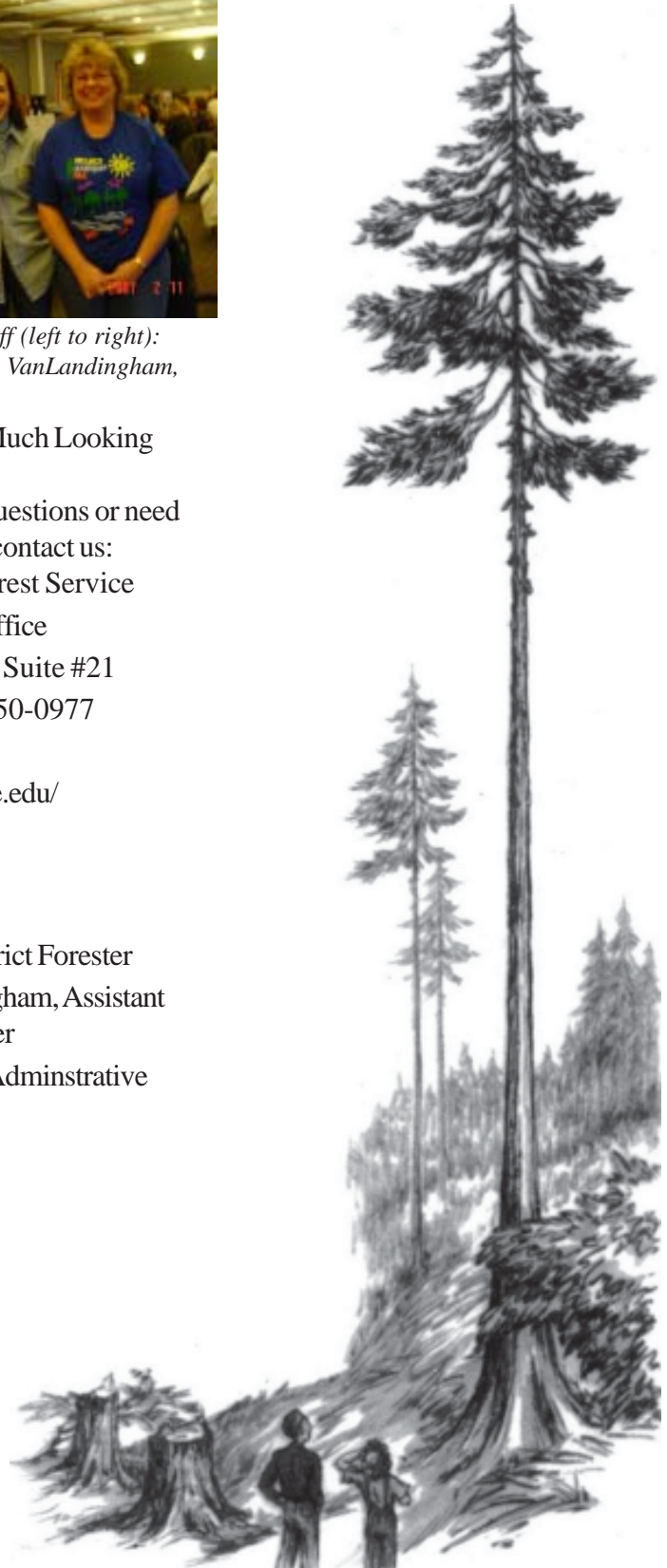
<http://csfs.colostate.edu/>

Sincerely,

Donna Davis, District Forester

Shelly Van Landingham, Assistant  
District Forester

Teradette Wilson, Administrative  
Assistant I



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