



EMAIL NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2008 – VOL. 1-08



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
MILTON OLLERTON

Spring is in the air and exciting things are starting to happen in the RC&D area. With the thawing of the winter months we will see runoff increase, trees start to bloom and the forest start to turn green. Spring will affect each area the RC&D works in: Forest health, Watershed and water management, weed management, and tourism. Spring is also a great time planning for the grant seasons ahead.

Take an extra moment to look around your community and identify opportunities in each of these areas. Pay attention to the runoff and watch for changes in the waterways and opportunities to improve the watershed. As the roads dry, you may see an increase in thinning and trucks on the highway. Look for ideas to help in the process of continued thinning of the forests, as we know wet years lead to extra growth in the forest and heighten the concern for fire. This includes identifying ways to use excess materials from the forest.

The trail of many tracks is another way many communities can participate in the RC&D. This program provides an incredible tour through the highlights of Northeastern Arizona. Finally, as you tour the area noticing the beauty that comes with spring, there are weeds growing that are noxious and take the place of good viable plants. The weed management program is working to identify invasive weed species and educate the communities about how to get involved.

The RC&D is actively involved in all areas of the both Navajo and Apache County. There are programs that benefit every community. The best way to use the RC&D is to identify with programs currently being implemented and participate. Send a representative to the quarterly meetings, send representatives to the sub committee meetings held each month, and participate in the progress that the RC&D provides to our area.

This is a great time to be involved in the RC&D. Look for grant writing programs and further communication regarding the above topics in the coming months.



COORDINATORS MESSAGE

DENNIS CHANDLER

Every five years the RC&D area Plan needs to be updated. The area plan is a five year list of goals that the local Resource Conservation and Development council has put together to address the issues of local communities. The first step in updating an area plan is to do a wide spread survey to get people's views as to what they feel is important issues that need to be addressed. After the surveys are collected, they are reviewed and the issues ranked. Once the issues are ranked, solutions are then formulated and timelines are assigned so that over a 5 year period, those issues are addressed. Some issues may take over five years to address and so when the timeline is developed, it may go into the next area plan phase to complete. The time line is then developed into an annual business plan. The business plan basically tells everyone, what issues are addressed, what projects are anticipated to be funded to address the issues, and finally, who is going to do what work so that the goals of the annual business plan are achieved.

The area plan is a "moving" or "ever changing" document. What we mean by this is that it changes as the needs of the community change. If we have our area plan done and two years from now we have new pressing needs or issues, would not it seem logical that the area plan would reflect a new priority needs listing? Things do change, so we adapt the area plan to address those changes. And the annual business plan is developed to methodically plan the means by how those issues will be resolved.

So help us by distributing those surveys that have been mailed to you and then collecting them so that our area plan really is based on the needs of the people of our communities.

ARIZONA RC&D COALITION FALL FORUM

The Little Colorado River Plateau RC&D volunteered to host the Arizona RC&D Coalition Fall Forum at the Western RC&D Conference in Las Cruces, New Mexico back in January. We are putting together a committee to plan and formalize this forum. We are looking at an October time frame to hold the forum. As the committee gets the dates and place formalized we will begin to spread the word about the forum. We have every intent to make this a very educational forum for everyone who attends.



FORESTRY PROGRAM COORDINATOR

HERBERT HOPPER, III

The Little Colorado River Plateau RC&D has partnered with the Southwest Sustainable Forests Partnership to co-sponsor the creation of a company called Community Renewable Energy Resources, LLC. CRER is an Arizona based, 100% locally owned and operated company, is leading a community-based initiative to construct a biomass conversion

Facility in Eagar, Arizona. The facility will use woody-biomass greenwaste from the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest, particularly that generated by the thinning treatment underway today under the long-term stewardship contract. The facility will produce marketable bio-fuels, electricity and heat. With the Eagar facility as a template, Community Renewable Energy Resources, LLC proposes to assist communities throughout northern Arizona and northern New Mexico to develop the capacity to implement their own bio-conversion facilities, especially where there is plentiful forest greenwaste. The proposed facility will enhance forest health and support forest restoration efforts, reducing our dependence on fossil fuels. The project also includes a small revenue stream back to the participating communities, providing funds that can be used for myriad community projects, perhaps even college scholarships. The project will also generate jobs, promote economic development in rural Arizona, and grow the tax base. CRER hopes to announce a financial backer before the end of March, which could lead to construction in Eagar this summer.

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE, AND.....??

The Little Colorado River (LCR) Watershed Coordinating Council has been very active in the past few months. You may have seen the excellent article in the *White Mountain Independent* reviewing our first Winter Watershed Conference. The Conference received high praise from everyone that attended and even made a little money. Please mark your calendars now for next year's Conference, scheduled for Wednesday evening through Friday noon, 28-30 Jan 2008.

Among the various issues facing the Watershed are some of the following.



**Watershed Project Director
David Newlin**

Funding:

The Watershed works under the Little Colorado Plateau RC&D as an Action Team. Our funding has come from the Hopi Tribe, the Bureau of Reclamation and seven of the nine cities and towns in Navajo and Apache Counties. By the end of April, the non-municipal funding will be spent, leaving the WCC with approximately \$35,000 of municipal funds. Additional funding is being sought from ADEQ Education Grants, more contracts with the Bureau of Reclamation, support from the Navajo Nation and additional funds from Navajo and Apache Counties. The expenses of the WCC are relatively small; the benefits are many. Your assistance is always appreciated, particularly at the municipal and county levels.

Executive Committee:

The current members of the group are Barbara Teague, Mayor of Pinetop-Lakeside, Kay Dyson, Mayor of Springerville, Ron Solomon, Public Works Director in Taylor and Sharon Adams, private citizen. More people representing the many areas of the watershed are needed. If you are interested in serving, please contact David Newlin at (928) 524-6063, ext. 123 or via e-mail at dmnewlin@aol.com.

Meetings:

Our next Quarterly Meeting will be held in Taylor at the Fire Station next to the Town Hall, Thursday, 10 April 2008 beginning at 11:30 AM. Lunch will be provided by Ron Solomon and the Town of Taylor and their Fire Department. Beginning in April, the WCC will have a monthly meeting EVERY second Thursday at 11:30 with lunch followed by a Keynote Speaker. April's speaker is Michelle Davalos who will speak on the Apache Sitgreaves National Forest Revised Management Plan. After lunch, the Quarterly Meeting of the WCC will be held. Officers need to be selected, presentations will be made by Arizona Game and Fish and the Little Colorado River Heritage area and a review of all activities will be made. Please plan to be there. Reservations are requested by calling (928) 524-6063 ext. 123 or e-mail to dmnewlin@aol.com.

Please mark you calendars for the Second Thursday of each month at 11:30 for an ongoing Luncheon Lecture series sponsored by the WCC. As part of our education goals, the Executive Committee has approved this program. Sponsors are being sought (we need someone to pay for the food!) and speakers from all areas of the watershed are being invited and scheduled.

The next scheduled meetings are 8 May and 12 June. The next Quarterly Meeting of the WCC will be in Springerville at 11:30 on Thursday, July 10.

Projects and Activities:

The Watershed is actively working with the three ADWR-recognized rural watershed partnerships in the area: Show Low Creek, Silver Creek and ULCR. In addition, the WCC is working to actively participate in the Coconino Plateau Water Advisory Council, the Navajo County Drought Planning programs, the NRCS Rapid Watershed Assessment review, the ULCR 2005 Watershed Management Plan and the Bureau of Reclamation Draft Watershed Management Plans.

Regular information and news on water is being sent out to all members of the e-mail list. If you are not a subscriber, contact dmnewlin@aol.com or call (928) 524-6063 ext. 123 to get on the list. Regular mail will be sent if you do not have e-mail access – just let us know.

What's going on in the Watershed?

A summary of the major issues in our watershed may be listed as follows (this is *informal* and subject to plausible deniability):

- Water pipelines sponsored, in part, by the Bureau of Reclamation, are all around us. The areas under active consideration include the Western Navajo Nation pipelines, the San Juan-Gallup pipeline, the Flagstaff/Page/Grand Canyon pipeline and the Washington County/St. George (Utah) pipeline, all of which rely on appropriations for water from the Colorado River, both upper and lower basins, and all of which will require an Act of Congress for water rights, feasibility study and construction.
- Little Colorado River Adjudication. Much is going on about this right now with David A. Brown and his associates having been in court in Phoenix earlier in the month. Some of you who sit on Councils or Boards may have had briefings on the results of the recent hearings. More to come on this soon. There is a *great* deal of pressure to settle this adjudication before the new President and Congress take office next January.
- Water *quality* is a big issue in the LCR watershed. Within most areas, there is not an issue with *quantity* (and there are very limited funds to study and improve *quantity*). The NEMO maps (go to their website by typing in Arizona NEMO in your search engine) very clearly show the impaired waters and other concerns about water *quality* in our watershed. These maps bear some serious study.
- Bureau of Reclamation Rural Water Supply Act of 2005 is in the process of promulgating the administrative rules. This is an excellent opportunity for water providers to seek upgrades and improvements to their systems. The Bureau will be speaking on this issue at our Luncheon Lecture series soon.
- Rural Water Legislation at the State level is generally at a standstill because of budget concerns. However, look for future action on the “domestic” well situation both in terms of measuring *quantity* and *quality*. Some studies show that up to one-third of the water usage can come from unregulated domestic wells.

If you have suggestions or thought, concerns or issues, please contact the Watershed Project Director, David M. Newlin, at (928) 524-6063, ext. 123, cell phone (928) 322-6146 or via e-mail at dmnewlin@aol.com.