



A Newsletter for Employees and Retirees

ISSUE 3

Fall 2003

No Swan Song for Trumpeters

By Kenda Kitchen, Helena National Forest

Four years ago a pair of trumpeter swans—the largest and rarest swans in the world with wingspans up to seven and a half feet—took residence in the ponds below Boumas' Post and Pole just east of Lincoln, Montana. The following spring, three swans arrived at the ponds, although only two remained through the summer.

In 2002, a pair returned only this time becoming territorial, chasing away the no-longer welcomed geese. When the pair returned this May, they constructed a nest on an island in one of the beaver ponds. On May 25 the female began brooding her clutch of four eggs.

On the morning of June 18, tragedy struck. The female swan was found dead in the Post and Pole yard. She had been electrocuted in a collision with an overhead powerline that resulted in a power outage. The clock inside the shop had stalled at 12:45 a.m., indicating several hours had passed since the female had been on the nest. With the eggs now more than two-thirds of the way into their 33-37 day incubation period, the embryos would be well developed and time was critical if they were to survive.

After a series of phone calls that cascaded from one contact to another, it was discovered that the Montana Waterfowl Foundation on the Flathead Reservation had a pair of trumpeter swans that had lost their clutch of eggs to ravens. The female had been sitting on an artificial egg, and hopes were that she would produce another clutch of eggs. But that had not happened. With this information a swift course of action followed.

With the use of an old wooden skiff that leaked profusely and a snow shovel as an oar, the eggs were rescued from the nest. They were carefully placed in a straw-filled bucket, covered with a heating pad, then driven approximately 50 miles to Clearwater Junction between Lincoln and Missoula where they were handed off to another driver.

After a couple of stops along the way to rehear the heating pad, the eggs finally arrived that afternoon at the Montana Waterfowl Foundation where they were temporarily placed in an incubator. That same evening when the unknowing surrogate mother left her nest to feed, her artificial egg was replaced with the four from Boumas' Ponds. Eleven days later—35 days after their biological mother began brooding the clutch—three of the four eggs hatched.

The cygnets remained with their surrogate parents until September 10, when they were captured, banded and returned to the ponds at Boumas' Post and Pole. That night the young cygnets were placed in a holding pen at the edge of the pond. The lone male, who had remained at the ponds throughout the summer, watched curiously.

Anticipating that it would take several days for the father and the young swans to bond (if in fact they did), the aggressiveness of the male the following morning suggested he had already assumed the role of parent and guardian. The cygnets were released that morning and eagerly swam to the male who proudly led his family further out into the pond (see photo above).

The Bouma ponds are quiet now beneath their winter layer of ice and snow. With fall rapidly approaching, the male led his young in their first short and awkward flight on October 13.

Just 10 days later, the three swans, following their fathers' lead, began their first winter migration. Their destination remains unknown at this time. One can only hope that with the return of spring, the male—with a new companion at his side—finds his way back to Boumas' Ponds and that one or more of his offspring follow his lead to claim the Blackfoot Valley as their summer home for generations to come. That in itself would be the most gratifying and rewarding recognition of success and achievement for all those individuals who played a role in saving the trumpeter swans at Boumas' ponds.



Rescuing the trumpeter swan eggs.

Editor's note: The male and two of the young swans were spotted by a biologist on November 11 on the National Elk Refuge outside Jackson, WY.

Message from the Regional Forester

The end of the year will soon be upon us, and what a year it has been. Fire dominated our summer with over 350,000 national forest acres burned in the Region. Unlike 2000, every unit experienced large fires, and often, many more than one fire. Very quickly the Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation work was underway, while at the same time record numbers of fire payments were processed, and tools and equipment were refurbished. Despite the tremendous effort required to manage these events, we continued to work on our assigned regional targets and to do so safely. Thank you for your extra efforts!

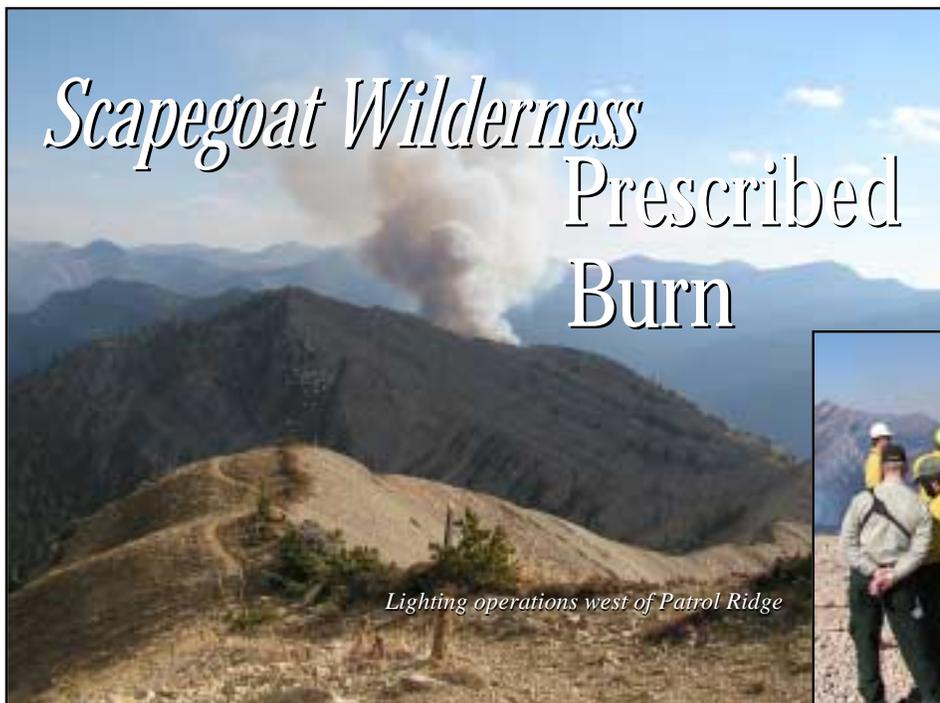
In this new fiscal year we will once again emphasize forest plan revisions, sound fi-

nancial health, National Fire Plan activities, and public health and safety. Two of these elements include fire preparedness and response as well as post-fire forest restoration and rehabilitation. The National Fire Plan emphasis includes focus on reducing hazardous fuels, especially fuel accumulations near communities. Work will involve many disciplines pulling together to achieve even more fuels reduction than in past years.

I wish you all a happy and healthy holiday. Take this time to relax and to enjoy family, friends and festivities, and please travel safely. We thank you for your hard work and dedication and look forward to working together in 2004.



Brad Powell



By Paula Nelson, Regional Office

On a gorgeous, cloudless fall day, the Rocky Mountain district of the Lewis and Clark National Forest took the first giant step in lighting the South Fork Sun River Prescribed Burn—a project in the planning and coordination stages for over 8 years.

The burn, located within the Scapegoat Wilderness west of Augusta, Montana, will ultimately introduce fire into 16,500 acres. This first lighting opportunity brought to-

gether forest personnel, the Swope/Clifford Type II Incident Command Team, air quality, aviation and fire behavior specialists from across the Region. After three days of hand lighting, helitorch and plastic sphere dispenser (PSD or ping pong ball dispenser) ignition, nearly 4,200 acres had fire introduced. Forest fire managers will hope for the right fuels and weather conditions next spring or fall along with the necessary resources to continue the work.

Since inception, the project has received public scrutiny and criticism regarding fears the fire would escape control and race eastward through private forest and ranch lands and on to Augusta. The district held numerous public meetings and worked with local landowners, media and representatives over the planning years. The night before

lighting commenced, another meeting and power point program was offered in Augusta.

In an effort to share information with the greatest number of people in the quickest time possible, the forest arranged for representatives from television stations, newspapers and Congressman Denny Rehberg's Great Falls office to fly to Patrol Look-

out to observe lighting operations. District Ranger Mike Munoz, Incident Commander Tom Clifford and others were at the lookout to answer questions so that participants could learn more about the reasons for and the techniques employed to carry out a project of this complexity. Local news media were updated daily as were key community contacts to maximize this educational opportunity.



Media members at Patrol Lookout

Signs of the Times

By Ellen Davis, Bitterroot National Forest

The lives of motorists and firefighters depend on motorists slowing down and being able to maneuver safely past fire camps. It is not an insignificant problem in that the Forest Service is responsible for wildfire suppression throughout 192 million acres of National Forest System lands. In the course of a fire season, hundreds of work zone areas related to fire suppression are created nation-wide, many in the urban interface.

These work zone areas are often times made more confusing and congested because of road closures in and around fire areas, smoke impairing visibility, as well as the increased volume of traffic. More than 1,000 persons die each year in accidents at highway work zones, said Donna Sheehy, R1's regional sign coordinator. Most fire accidents and fatalities are, in fact, traffic related.

In the past, firefighters made their own signs to indicate work zone areas, using whatever supplies were available, including cardboard and paper plates. Since 2000, thanks to the R1 Traffic Safety Teams, most fire camps in Montana and northern Idaho have had signs professionally produced to

the standards for highway work zone signs.

Working with Donna and the Traffic Safety Teams, area sign contractors produced signs for 30 separate fire priority sites this year, for a total of \$110,000. Special signs were also produced for the fire camps themselves for traffic control and to identify areas within camp, such as supply, information, medical services, or personnel.

In future years, Donna hopes that sign kits of professionally-produced signs will automatically be included with other supplies when new fire camps are being established.

In fact, highway signs for fire camps and camps used to manage other incidents, such as hurricanes or earthquakes, may have their own color—coral (a fluorescent pink). The Federal Highway Administration worked with Donna and Regions 1 and 6 to experiment with the proposed new Incident Sign color. It was found that the coral color made it much easier to find the fire camps and associated incident locations than the standard orange.

Comments from all individuals involved with camp management or transportation and deliveries have praised the improved



Makeshift signs of the past.

level and quality of signing at the fire incidents.

The 2003 Traffic Safety Teams members and support personnel include: Jim Abernathy, R6 regional sign coordinator; Dave Walter, R6; Robert Coats, Lewis and Clark NF; and RO employees Joe Knudsen, Carl Cain, Mary Alice Stoner, Fred Bower, John Kattell, Tony Bachman, Brian Story, Steve Oravetz, Marcia Hughey, Sharon DeHart, and Mary Ester Betson.

By Nan Christianson, Bitterroot National Forest

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded a \$1 million grant recently to benefit water quality projects throughout western Montana and northern Idaho, including projects in the Bitterroot Valley.

The 26,000 square-mile Clark Fork-Pend Oreille Watershed collaborative was spear-headed by the Tri-State Water Quality Council and includes partners in the Bitterroot, Clark Fork, Blackfoot and Flathead river basins in Montana. EPA representatives cited the vast geographic area and the large number of local entities who partnered together as a primary reason for this project's selection. The agency found the proposal attractive because its scale allows for well-orchestrated accomplishments throughout a significant watershed.

The Bitterroot Watershed Partnership will use a portion of the EPA funds to further projects started in 2001. These projects include assisting in the design of a livestock grazing rotation system to reduce pressure on riparian areas, noxious weed management, the reduction of sediment and nutrient inputs in Threemile Creek, and the development of a waste management system for a dairy farmer near Victor.



Designing a livestock grazing rotation system to reduce pressure on riparian areas is one way EPA funds will be used to benefit water quality projects.

The partnership is a collaborative group working to invest in the social and environmental capital of the Bitterroot Watershed in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of our community and its natural resources. Primary partners include Bitterroot Trout Unlimited, Bitter Root Water Forum, Tri-State Water Quality Council, Bitterroot Audubon, Bitter Root RC&D, National Forest Foundation, Hackett Ag-Consulting and the Bitterroot National Forest.

Fuels for Schools is Off and Running

By Angela Farr, Regional Office

By now you have probably heard the catchy phrase “Fuels for Schools”—a State & Private Forestry Program (S&PF) designed to heat rural public schools with “waste” wood from hazardous fuels reduction work. With \$2.5 million in S&PF grants in 2003, Fuels for Schools is off and running in Idaho, North Dakota, Montana, Utah and Nevada.

Phase 1 of the program wrapped up this summer, as three schools in Darby, Montana, installed a brand-new wood chip-fired boiler, storage and delivery system. An added bonus of the Darby demonstration was experience gained by Bitter Root RC&D, with whom we have partnered to coordinate future feasibility studies throughout Regions 1 and 4. The program is also benefiting from the leadership of the state foresters, who are the primary partners for the program.

Following Darby’s lead, Montana’s program is progressing rapidly—schools in Eureka and Victor are well on their way to new wood-fired systems, with the financial

and technical assistance from S&PF and the Forest Products Laboratory.

Phase 2 of Fuels for Schools is in progress, with feasibility studies for four more schools complete, and another 12 studies underway. By early January, we will select additional demonstration sites for construction, with one each in north Idaho, south Idaho, Nevada and North Dakota. Establishing demonstration sites in each major geographic area within our two regions will help us showcase the program using state and local community leadership.

In Phase 3 of the program, also currently underway, we are designing a funding scheme to supplement traditional financing while maximizing the scope and effectiveness of our grants.

Fuels for Schools solves multiple problems for rural communities. Annual school fuel bills are reduced by over 50%, while



Construction at a Darby, MT school for a wood chip-fired boiler, storage and delivery system to heat their school.

forests become healthier and more fire resistant. Because our schools are located throughout forested areas, the cost of transporting fuel is low, making its economic use more viable. Local, non-fossil fuel sources help reduce our dependence on foreign oil. And today’s biomass heating systems are extremely efficient, producing a tiny fraction of the emissions associated with open burning, and they are comparable to the systems they replace. In short, Fuels for Schools is good for our schools, our communities, our air and our forests.

Madagascar Gets Some R1 Advice

By Jack de Golia, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest

Madagascar is a former French colony off the southeast coast of Africa. Just slightly smaller than Arizona, Madagascar is renowned for its unique wildlife. The tropical climate of the coast contrasts with the temperate conditions of the high



L to R - Jeff Trejo, Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF, and Rex Baumbach, WO.

inland plateau and mountains. Agriculture—including fishing and forestry—is a mainstay of the economy. Deforestation and erosion are serious concerns, escalated by the demand for firewood as the primary fuel source.

When the Malagasy government began to examine its natural resource management, it found that the country’s forest-product-permit system had big problems. They turned to the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for help. In August, USAID sent Jeff Trejo, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, and Rex Baumbach, Washington Office, to Africa to review the current permitting system used by the government forestry agency, called the Directorate General des Eaux et Forêts (DGEF), and help the agency create a system that works.

After 10 days touring the country, meeting with officials and visiting with locals, Trejo and Baumbach came up with a series of recommendations for the DGEF. First and

foremost, the team recommended that the DGEF consider preparing a resource management plan that would allow the agency to choose where trees are cut based on what’s best for the forest. They urged officials to begin the permitting process at the lowest possible level, and to allow only the DGEF to issue permits. The team also suggested that the agency determine the value of and monitor each area under permit. Finally, Trejo and Baumbach urged that permits for more than 1,235 acres be subject to environmental impact statements, as required by Malagasy law.

Trejo said similarities exist between the U.S. and Madagascar when it comes to the managing public lands by trying to balance people’s demands with the needs of the land. “There are some inherent elements here that make it easier to set up a process,” stated Trejo. “People over there are really poor. When you ask somebody to enforce a law and yet their compensation is minimal, it’s tough to expect them not to be thinking of other ways to support their families.”

An Old Friend Returns

By Bernadette Heckle, Clearwater National Forest

While revisiting Powell Ranger District on August 30, Chief Dale Bosworth was presented with a Powell Fire Crew “red card” making him an “official” Honorary Powell Fire Crew member.

The qualifications on his red card were accrued through Dale’s many years of experience on the Powell District when he was district ranger. They include BRDE-Bathroom Design Engineer, pertaining to his contributions to the district office’s second floor urinal that is placed unusually higher than normal, and PLEO-Pretend Law Enforcement, for his perseverance in enforcing laws around the district. Dale’s perseverance drove him and another employee into the mountains at night in the middle of winter in his 2-wheel drive Subaru in pursuit of an escaped criminal. Perhaps thankfully, the two eventually turned around with-

out a successful catch.

Other qualifications included a VYLO-Volleyball Lookout and SMKC-Smokechaser. Dale earned these qualifications while employees were finishing the second floor of the Powell district offices. One evening the employees were playing volleyball on the lawn, when one of them saw what they thought was steam coming off the roof of the building. Dale quickly realized it was *smoke*—coming from abandoned, stained rags combusting on the second floor. The rags were extinguished and the building saved.

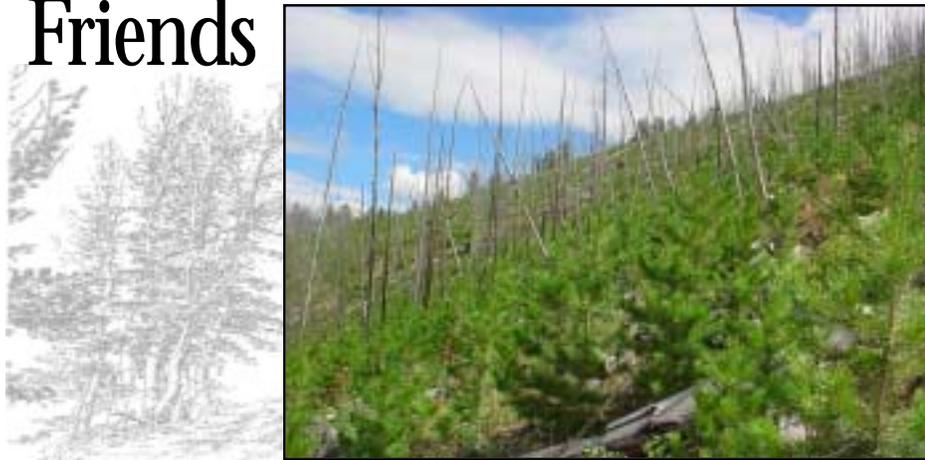
Finally, the card lists Dale’s on-the-job



L to R: Powell District Ranger Joni Packard with Honorary Powell Fire Crew member Dale Bosworth

training needs (forester, carpenter) that he’s still working on and should be checked off when he masters those skills. Until then, the Powell district is always happy to welcome Dale and his wife Carma home.

With a Little Help from Friends



A forest under regeneration after fire on the Gallatin NF.

Help with fire restoration has come from some unusual sources. *Country Living* magazine is asking its readers this fall to join in creating the *Country Living* 25th Anniversary Forest, a project co-sponsored by the National Arbor Day Foundation. The project aims to assist reforestation efforts in five national forests across the country. One of the five is the Gallatin National Forest. Supervisory forester Tim Hancock is the Gallatin’s liaison with the magazine on the project.

The premise is that for every \$25 donated, 25 trees will be planted in the forest of the

reader’s choice. The concept originated in 1990, when *Country Living* approached the National Arbor Day Foundation to assist with efforts to reforest areas devastated by the Yellowstone fires of 1988. A total of 10,000 people responded to the call with donations. Now, 13 years later, Marylou Krajci was able to report in the October 2003 issue of *Country Living* that “lodgepole and whitebark pines, Douglas fir and Engelmann spruce provide food and habitat for grizzly bears, moose, elk and birds, among other wildlife.”

RTA Will Return Because R1 Employees Want to Learn

By Joyce Pritchard, Regional Office

No doubt about it—the Regional Training Academy (RTA) can draw a crowd. Last year, nearly 1,000 employees attended a variety of classes at the academy. In 2004, RTA will be held March 29-April 2 in Missoula.

The course catalog for RTA will be available on-line in mid-December. You can access the RTA web site from the left side of the R1 homepage. The web address for the RTA website is: <http://fsweb.r1.fs.fed.us/rta/index.htm>

The general session will be a brown-bag lunch on Wednesday, March 31 from 11:30- 1:30. Plan now to grab some lunch, enjoy the speaker, and join the Regional Forester and his staff for this special session!

If anyone has comments or questions concerning RTA, please contact MaryAlice Stoner in the Regional Office, 406-329-3449, mstoner@fs.fed.us.



Movin' In, Movin' On



Nez Perce National Forest

Clearwater National Forest

Paul Christy “Chris” Jenkins is the new heritage program manager at the Supervisor’s Office, Clearwater National Forest. Chris first worked for the Forest Service as a district archaeologist on the Umpqua and Klamath National Forests in Oregon. After a 21-year hiatus, Chris returned to work for the Forest Service in June 2001 as a resource area archaeologist for the Jemez and Cuba Ranger Districts on the Santa Fe NF.

Chris and his wife Deborah live in Orofino with their eight-year-old son, Asahel.

Helena National Forest

Jane Kollmeyer has accepted the deputy forest supervisor position on the Helena National Forest. Jane has been the district ranger at the Tally Lake Ranger District, Flathead National Forest for the past seven years. Her previous managerial assignments include the Fortine district ranger on the Kootenai National Forest, deputy district ranger at Wallace Ranger District on the IPNF and district FMO/resource officer at Happy Camp Ranger District, Klamath National Forest. Jane’s also worked for the BLM as a forester in Oregon and with a private consulting firm in California in land reclamation.

Mike Oliver was recently selected as the Montana Capital City coordinator. Mike began his career as a fuels management specialist at the West Fork Ranger District in 1982. He then spent eight years serving as a public affairs officer for the Bitterroot and Helena National Forests. From 1997-98, Mike served as natural resources leader before assuming the duties of operations team leader for the Helena National Forest until December 1999. For the past three years, Mike has served the Forest Service as a congressional liaison. He was detailed to the coordinator position in January 2003.

Lewis and Clark National Forest

Rolando Ortegon recently took over as the new forest supervisor for the Lewis and Clark National Forest. He hails from Washington, where where he served as the acting forest supervisor for the Colville National Forest. Prior to his current assignment, Ortegon was the regional legislative affairs officer for the Pacific Northwest Region. From 1989-92, he was the assistant ranger at the Seeley Lake Ranger District, Lolo National Forest. His next job was as Evans Notch district ranger at the White Mountain National Forest in Maine. Earlier in his career, Ortegon worked as the lands and recreation forester on the Chippewa National Forest in Minnesota, and soon after served as the assistant ranger on the Hiawatha National Forest in Michigan.



Rolando Ortegon

Randall Walker has joined the Nez Perce National Forest as the forest silviculturist. Previous jobs were in R6 and include: silviculturist, Umatilla National Forest, Pomeroy Ranger District (1975-87) and the North Fork John Day Ranger District (1988); zone silviculturist, Wenatchee National Forest, Entiat/Chelan Ranger District (1989-95); and district silviculturist, Umatilla National Forest, Pomeroy Ranger District (1995- 2003).



Randall Walker

Randall and his wife Kathy have two daughters, ages 4 and 8 months.

David Wilcox is the new forest facilities and bridge engineer for the Nez Perce National Forest. David recently worked for private industry at an engineering firm. His work has taken many interesting directions over the years, from a surveyor’s aid on the Tonto National Forest and an engineer in training on the Stanislaw National Forest, to testing nuclear power plants aboard naval ships, to writing software at Microsoft.

Dave’s wife Verna is a published writer of mystery series. They have five grown daughters.

Regional Office

Tom Puchlerz, former Region 1 employee and most recently supervisor of the Tongass National Forest, is the region’s new director of Recreation, Minerals, Lands, Heritage and Wilderness. Tom had served as the Tongass forest supervisor in Alaska since 1999. Some of his previous positions include: forest supervisor, Bridger-Teton National Forest (R4); national grizzly bear habitat coordinator, R1 Regional Office; Fortine district ranger, Kootenai National Forest; and wildlife biologist, Hebgen Lake District, and resource assistant on the Gardiner district, Gallatin National Forest.

Tom and his wife Gerry have two grown daughters Molly and Megan.

Ed Monnig recently accepted the deputy forest supervisor position on the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. For the past seven years, Ed has been the Fortine district ranger on the Kootenai National Forest. Prior to his present position, Monnig held a variety of positions in the Regional Office in Missoula, Montana. Those assignments included working as a pesticide specialist on forest and range health and weed problems, serving on the Region’s timber salvage implementation task force, and overseeing the Region’s appeals and litigation review process.

Regional Forester's Honor Awards

Customer Service Category: Awarded to **Rita Allison**, receptionist, Flathead NF, for her exceptional service as a frontliner in the Supervisor's Office. The award recognizes individuals with an outstanding level of customer service contributions and who demonstrate the spirit and intent of a "customer-driven" Forest Service.

Ecosystem Management Category: Awarded to two recipients: **Slough Creek Willow Project, Gardiner RD, Gallatin NF**, for the cooperative efforts between forest staff and outside organizations to reduce the erosive effects of Slough Creek through a successful willow planting project. **Nez Perce Fire Zone Leadership Team, Clearwater NF** for safely and cost effectively accomplishing a difficult and aggressive fuels treatment program in the face of a very complex and busy fire season nationally.

Budget and Financial Accountability Category: Awarded to **Flathead National Forest Budget and Finance Section** for providing exemplary service to the Flathead NF and the entire Region by adopting, adapting, and implementing a "Work Chunk" process of program planning that defines basic "chunks" of work with their associated activities and anticipated costs. This program aids and assures that the highest priority projects are worked on first.

Safety and Occupational Health Category: Awarded to **Darcy Pederson**, District Ranger, Clearwater RD, Nez Perce NF, for her exemplary support and promotion of safety and occupational health since her arrival on the Clearwater RD eight years ago. Darcy's strong role in having staff take an active role in making the district safety program a success helps guarantee that all employees go home safe at the end of the day.

Technology Transfer Category: **Northern Region Structures Group - John Kattell, David Scovell, William Fowler** for their work and collaboration with their Wilderness colleagues in identifying a unique resource issue associated with wilderness management and identifying a need for a packable trail bridge. They developed a packable bridge design that has been proven in the field and accepted as a national standard.

Gridlock Breaking Category: Awarded to **Little Missouri National Grassland Dragon Assessment Team** for completing a landscape scale assessment of the Little Missouri National Grassland. The product provided essential information needed to revise the management direction for range allotments on the Little Missouri grassland in a cost effective manner.

Labor-Management Partnership Category: Awarded to **Kootenai National Forest Partnership Council** for their highly successful and uniquely cooperative efforts in facilitating the forest's reorganization process. Council members actively participated in every phase of the reorganization effort to assure that employees' views and concerns were given careful consideration.

Law Enforcement and Investigations Category: Awarded to three recipients: *Special Agent Awards* went to **Lorney (Jay) Deist** and **Kimberley West**, R1, LE&I, Kalispell, for their involvement and dedication to the war on illegal drug trafficking on the northern border. Both agents played critical roles in establishing the North-

ern Border Drug Task Force in western Montana and northern Idaho which has conducted over 20 missions. *Law Enforcement Award* went to **John Allendorf**, supervisory law enforcement officer, R1, Helena, MT, for his involvement and commitment in the issue surrounding bison migration out of Yellowstone National Park and the activities of a protest group known as the Buffalo Field Campaign. Also noted was John's networking with the Gallatin NF line officers on both the bison and snowmobile issues.

New Century of Service Category Awarded to three recipients: **Dixie Dies**, public affairs officer, Bitterroot NF, for her extensive involvement and leadership in the Bitterroot Valley community. The forest has greatly depended on Dixie and her local networks as the community has moved from a landmark fire season in 2000 through fire recovery processes and planning for the future. **Skip Hegman**, human relations specialist, RO, for outstanding achievement in the New Century of Service values of collaboration, mentoring, and devotion to serving employees and the public. **Gregory Beck**, AFMO, Tally Lake RD, Flathead NF, for his mentoring, leadership, dedication, and innovative ideas regarding the National Joint Fire Apprenticeship Academy. Greg has worked laboriously to track the completion of the program for each apprentice on the forest, offering support wherever possible.

Stewardship Category: Awarded to two recipients: **Guenter Heinz**, district resource staff, Kootenai NF, and **Ed Monnig**, district ranger, Fortine Ranger District, Kootenai NF, for their work on the replacement of Graves Creek irrigation structure, and the successful development and completion of the Graves Creek diversion modification and screening project. They have worked for several years to maintain relations between the partners, working through complex issues that could easily have stopped the project at any time. Their diligence resulted in a successful stream enhancement and a strong partnership on which to build future success.

At the Regional Leadership Team meeting October 15, recognition was given to the following employees for work accomplished in 2003:

For their efforts with wildland fire use fires: **Cathy Barbouletos, Larry Dawson, Bruce Bernhardt.**

For leadership on competitive sourcing: **Bob Kirkpatrick**, Regional Office.

For exceptional work on competitive sourcing: **Judith Fraser**, Bitterroot NF; **Doug Gober**, Clearwater NF; **Gordon Ash** and **Chuck Harris**, Flathead NF; **Rick Ellison** and **Gene Gibson**, Gallatin NF; **Fred Fischer**, IPNF; **Frank Votopka**, Kootenai NF; **Bob Gardiner** and **Neil Wynn**, Lewis & Clark NF; **Marty Schmidt** and **Brian Webber**, Lolo NF; **Daryl Mullinix**, Nez Perce NF; **Bruce Fahrni**, Prescott NF, R3; **Willie Boyer**, **Dave Browder**, **Debbie Charley**, **Bruce Crockett**, **John Favro**, **Marcia Hughey**, **Jane Kipp**, **Joel Krause**, **Terry Knupp**, **Marge Schafer**, **Christine Sopko**, RO.

For wildlife expertise and assistance to Rocky Mountain Research Station: **Cindy Swanson** and **Jim Claar**, RO.

For leadership in safety: **Dave Piper**, Dakota Prairie Grasslands.



More Awards

Rick Stowell, recently retired regional fisheries biologist with the Regional Office, was presented with the national *Rise to the Future Mentoring Award* by Chief Dale Bosworth in Washington D.C. in June. Rick was cited for his ability to build programs with a limited budget, always with a goal of getting as many dollars to the ground as possible. Noted was Rick's passion for fish and his untiring efforts to help other biologists. Rick's talents and his fostering of new staff have helped to leave the agency with an incredible pool of talented fisheries biologists.



L to R: Rick Stowell with the Chief.

The Small Business Administration has named the **Forest Service, Region 1**, *Agency of the Year for the State of Montana*. This award is in recognition of the Region's support to minority-owned businesses in Montana through our acquisition programs. The Forest Service awarded over \$22,000,000 in contracts to Contractors under the 8(a) minority program.

Lochsa Ranger District Recreation Forester **Carol Hennessey** was recently given the *Clearwater Forest's Spice of Life* award, given to a forest employee who makes outstanding contributions in the areas of equal employment opportunity, civil rights or community relations. Carol has assisted with the implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Nez Perce Tribe that allows tribal members to camp free-of-charge in Lochsa District campgrounds. She also recruits and manages a diverse workforce, including retirees, for the Lochsa Historical Ranger Station, students for intern positions, and individuals from all walks of life for the summer seasonal workforce.



Carol Hennessey



L to R: Lynn Kaeding, US Fish & Wildlife Service, and Bruce May.

Bruce May, multi-regional inland cutthroat trout coordinator, recently received a *Star Award from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS)*. Bruce, who works out of Bozeman at the Gallatin National Forest, was recognized for his role in developing and implementing the procedures used in status updates for both the Yellowstone and westslope cutthroat trout. These updates are key to the FWS's assessment of the status of cutthroat trout subspecies as part of the Endangered Species Act listing considerations. Bruce was cited for his "tireless efforts to foster cooperation among the western states and their respective federal agencies."

Butte Sheltered Workshop Honored

By Jack de Golia, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest

Butte Sheltered Workshop (BSW) was selected as the top national contractor in its class by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. BSW contracts to do grounds keeping at the Butte Ranger Station. The grounds around the office looked so nice that the Butte-Silver Bow Chamber of Commerce gave the Forest Service an award for its contribution to civic pride.

BSW works with the Forest Service under the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act (JWOD), a 1938 law allowing federal agencies to buy services and products from disabled people and groups.

The Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest nominated the workshop for the JWOD "contractor of the year" award. The group won Region One's recognition and later became the Forest Service's choice for JWOD contractor of the year. The icing on the cake came in early 2003, when the Agriculture Department named the Butte Sheltered Workshop the top JWOD contractor in the nation.

The BSW received the national award on July 8 at a ceremony at the Butte Ranger District, with Forest Supervisor Tom Reilly as emcee. Speakers included Cliff DeWitt from National Industries for Severely Handicapped, a federal agency responsible for carrying out JWOD. DeWitt said JWOD is the "best kept secret in America." With 70 percent unemployment among disabled per-



Jodel Petroni, representing BSW, and her employees who helped earn the JWOD award.

sons, JWOD helps give many the pride and economic benefit of work. The Department of Agriculture's Richard Holcombe traveled from Washington to honor BSW at the ceremony.

DeWitt presented certificates of appreciation to **Fawn McKenzie**, Beaverhead-Deerlodge purchasing agent, who helped make the workshop's contribution possible, and to Jodel Petroni, BSW's education director.

Migration Mania

By Julie Schreck, Bitterroot National Forest



Program participant petting the puppets during Migration Mania.



The Bitterroot National Forest has been a strong partner with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge in creating the annual Migration Mania, a community festival celebrating the return of the migrating birds to the Bitterroot Valley.

Over 300 people attended the annual celebration. Other partners include the Montana Audubon, Bitterroot Valley Chapter of the Audubon, Stevensville Main Street Association and the Trapper Creek Job Corps.

This summer Migration Moon, a Forest Service interpretive series program, kicked off the event at the refuge. Presentations by historian and Stoneydale Press owner Dale Burke, Raptors of the Rockies director Kate Davis and University of Montana assistant biology professor Chris Guglielmo made the event a huge success!

The next day, we brought all the festivities to Stevensville's town center. In conjunction with local merchants and the farmers market, the event provided an exhibition of local art work, children's activities, educational booths and a puppet show by the Trapper Creek Job Corps students. Throughout the event, merchants displayed artwork by local students in storefront windows and bird mobiles hung from city street lampposts giving the streets of Stevensville a festive look. The Chantilly Theatre showed free films on birds and the North Valley Library personnel read bird stories to enthusiastic bystanders.

The event also included tours of the wildlife refuge. Additional tours led by naturalists provided opportunities to look at insects, birds and plants on the national forest.

Learning about Nature is Where It's At

By Debbie Anderson, Helena National Forest

Funding natural resource education is often an issue on national forests. Providing assistance to the Helena forest is the Helena Forest Foundation (HFF).

HFF's outreach includes partnering with the forest, Mikal Kellner Foundation, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks in the Adopt-a-Species Program, a habitat education program reaching Helena-area elementary students. The 2003 program challenged students to read and research about wildlife and then write their own stories. HFF helped bring the Banana Slug String Band, a group of talented "eco-tainers," to Helena last spring. In the fall, the partners brought award-winning children's author Roland Smith to town.

Last summer, the HFF partnered with the forest and Helena College of Technology on the Youth Forest Monitoring Program, which teaches high school students about natural resource management and career opportunities. HFF assisted with financing, marketing and recruitment, with some hands-on involvement, including planning, chaperoning and providing meals.

In the forefront of conservation educa-

tion for HFF is the volunteer-based Community Naturalist Program. In the past year, we have reached over 2,000 children and adults with a variety of natural resource subjects. With hands-on activities and an emphasis on outdoor education we work to increase the knowledge and awareness for improving wildlife habitat, watershed health, responsible recreation ethics, and other outdoor subjects. Students might learn about tracking wildlife in winter, or perhaps count macroinvertebrates and test pH to find the water quality in a stream, or apply their creative side to a variety of nature crafts.

The program is also involved in an ongoing vegetation monitoring project on Mt. Helena City Park in cooperation with the Helena School District, the American Society of Foresters, the Kelsey Chapter of the Montana Native Plant Society and the Helena National Forest.



2003 Youth Forest Monitoring Program crew.

HFF is committed to achieving healthy landscapes and believes that communities should play a strong role in determining the future of their forests. To that end we will continue to develop and build on the education programs that are in place. Forming partnerships and involving community members in preserving and caring for the historical, cultural and aesthetic integrity of the Helena National Forest is what the HFF is all about.

If you would like more information, please call 406-449-5201 ext. 267 or check out our website at www.helenaforestfoundation.org

Celebrating the Prairie

By Kathy Bushnell, Dakota Prairie Grasslands

“The prairie, in all its expressions, is a massive, subtle place, with a long history of contradiction and misunderstanding. But it is worth the effort at comprehension. It is, after all, at the center of our national identity.” Wayne Fields, *Lost Horizon*, 1988

North Dakota Prairie Day—co-sponsored by the Dakota Prairie Grasslands—celebrates the strength, fortitude and uniqueness of the prairie. It is a day where families can return to the simplicity of life where no telephones, televisions, video games or malls can interrupt their time together, and offers them a chance to learn more about *their* national grasslands.

“People think that North Dakota has little to offer, but there’s a lot out our back door,” said Darla Lenz, Dakota Prairie Grasslands botanist and Prairie Day co-founder. “The prairie is a beautiful place, and Prairie Day is a great way to showcase that.”

This year’s Prairie Day occurred at the

Cross Ranch State Park and Nature Preserve northwest of Bismarck. More than 100 people participated in various activities, including presentations on horse-drawn wagons and bison, and guided hikes about birding, butterflies and insects, and wildflowers and grasses led by prairie experts.

Visitors enjoyed a free barbecue lunch, which included a presentation on Lewis and Clark.

Prairie Day is headquartered in a different area of North Dakota every year so people can learn more about the special, and very diverse, places on the prairie.

“The prairie is very subtle,” said Kristine Askerooth, Tewaukon National Wildlife Refuge biologist and Prairie Day co-founder. “It hooks you when you’re out there. It’s fragile and strong. It can handle



Prairie Day participants learn about wildflowers and grasses found on the prairie from land management experts.

drought, flood, bison and fire. It’s exciting to share that with people.”

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Dakota Prairie Grasslands, Ducks Unlimited, Lewis & Clark Wildlife Club, Minot State University, North Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society, North Dakota Game & Fish Department, North Dakota Natural Science Society, North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department, The Nature Conservancy, U.S. Geological Survey-Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center sponsored this year’s event.

Studying Dakota Prairie Grasslands Earns College Credit

By Kathy Bushnell, Dakota Prairie Grasslands

The Dakota Prairie Grasslands manages public land for multiple uses. This is only one of the lessons Williston High School students learned this summer during the Rough Creek Institute project. This conservation education project – a partnership between the Dakota Prairie Grasslands, Williston High School and Williston Tech Prep – allows high school students to earn college credit from summer courses. The students also learn more about resource management, future career opportunities and leadership skills.

The Rough Creek Institute project is a combination of classroom and field instruction. The students receive classroom instruction on natural resources and Dakota Prairie Grasslands resource management, fol-

lowed by one week on the Little Missouri National Grassland, McKenzie Ranger District. The students learn about multiple topics including recreation, minerals, range, wildlife, archeology, paleontology, botany, wildland fire and GPS.

The Rough Creek Institute program began as a fire restoration project after a major wildland fire – the Rough Creek Fire Complex – ravaged the Rough Creek prairie and badlands area in October 1999. The program grew from fire restoration into an overview of natural resource management on the Dakota Prairie Grasslands. This summer’s session was the second Rough Creek Institute project held on the grasslands.

“Out of a catastrophic event that burned



Williston High School students observe a drip-torch demonstration to learn more about prescribed burning.

prairie and home rose an opportunity to develop a partnership to teach our youth about the interrelationship between people, the land, and naturally occurring events,” said Judi Lang, grasslands partnership coordinator. “Students interested in natural resource careers are given the opportunity to experience hands-on application of land and resource management principles.”