

eral public. Structured interviews and workshop deliberations will lay the initial groundwork for criteria definition, implementation and reporting. Semi-annual meetings, workshops and periodic reporting will be used to share valuable lessons learned and determine the usefulness of those authorities the program was set out to test.

The contract was officially awarded in July 2000 and is expected to last a total of 5-years, dependent upon adequate federal appropriations. For more information, contact Andrea Bedell Loucks at 202-939-3455 or andreabedell@pinchot.org

Achieving a Common Voice on Watershed Restoration

Andrea Bedell Loucks

In the US, as in much of the world, obtaining adequate water supplies and maintaining water quality will become one of the defining natural resource issues of the 21st century. Though the level of consciousness is slowly rising among the general public, the importance of forest ecosystems in maintaining and protecting these valuable water resources is often overlooked or taken

for granted. In many parts of the US, forested watersheds have become degraded by excessive timber cutting, poor maintenance and erosion control procedures, and various kinds of development. As the demand for domestic, agricultural, and industrial water supplies grows, the prevention of further degradation and the restoration of well-functioning systems within forests

is set to become essential in the daily management of our land base. To bring attention to the importance of restoring these valuable forested watersheds and to address existing issues/obstacles associated with implementing large-scale restoration efforts, the Pinchot Institute recently convened and facilitated a unique event on the Clearwater National Forest.

From July 10-13, over 60 participants from across the United States gathered in the



Participants of the workshop at Clearwater National Forest last July, inspect a road obliteration.



Participants at overlook of a large-scale watershed project.

Clearwater National Forest for a series of open dialogues specifically designed to explore the options and strategies for effective implementation of watershed restoration activities. These participants represented the breadth of perspectives including those of scientists, forest industry, conservation groups, community groups, and federal, state, local and tribal government. Through the development of an engaged and honest dialogue, the process of fostering a common understanding and continuous learning could begin and eventually influence the effective/appropriate implementation and monitoring of restoration efforts.

The objectives of the workshop were three-fold: (1) to provide a broad-based understanding of various restoration mechanisms; (2) to explore models others have used; and (3) to examine inherent obstacles to restoration activities and ex-

plore opportunities to overcome them. Unlike traditional workshops or training sessions, the Watershed Restoration Workshop consisted almost entirely of field-tours and in-field discussions, providing participants with an instant connection to the issues and providing a visual backdrop from which all interests could relate. Though hosted by the Clearwater National Forest, the event was not limited to those issues faced in this particular region. Rather, the Clearwater National Forest provided situations that were analogous to those issues faced throughout the country (e.g., road obliteration, streambank stabilization, the role/impact of fire, and wildlife habitat protection/restoration). By its close, the 3-day meeting resulted in a series of interesting and valuable dialogues, addressing such tough issues as how to face complex and integrated resource issues, how to overcome regulatory and financial boundaries, and how to enhance public outreach/edu-

cation and coalition building. By bringing opinion leaders into the field, initially perceived divisions in interest were overcome and what might have otherwise evolved into heated debate, quickly developed into earnest discussions deeply grounded in reality and understanding.

With this newly established understanding, participants capped the event with the development of a series of “next steps.” These future steps identified during the closing session included:

- To continue networking among participants and forge new coalitions.
- To organize future “practical” workshops (similar to this effort) in other regions of the US.
- To seek increased funding opportunities (e.g., investigate the applicability of “escrow” accounts or provision of new money on a use-or-lose basis within the Forest Service).
- To begin a NEPA process dialogue among the range of interests (e.g., practitioners, EPA, Forest Service, OGC, CEQ, Fish and Wildlife).
- To begin formal exploration of solutions to administrative and policy bottlenecks.
- To pursue the development of economic incentives or a rewards program for successful efforts.
- To develop demonstration pilots for innovative watershed approaches (e.g., streamlined NEPA processes, new contracting procedures, programmatic approaches, multi-year funding, etc.).

Proceedings from the event are currently being formulated. If you would like more information on this event or would like to reserve a copy of the workshop’s proceedings, please contact Mary Mitsos at 202-797-6582 and mmitsos@pinchot.org—or—Andrea Bedell Loucks at 202-939-3455 and andreabedell@pinchot.org

Forest Certification Pilot Projects Expanded on State and Tribal Lands

Will Price

As part of its nationwide study of the applicability of certification on public forest lands, the Pinchot Institute is expanding its certification pilot program to include extensive state and tribal forest systems in the western and southern United States, to augment those already completed or currently underway in the Northeast and Lake States. Independent, third-party certification is one of several tools that shows significant promise for advancing sustainable forest management in the United States. Thus far, certification has been applied primarily on private forest lands, but significant opportunities exist for extending certification to the more than 250 million acres of federal, state, county, and municipal forest lands in the nation. A limited series of pilot demonstration projects has been initiated, involving state and county forest land in several locations in the northeastern United States.

There are substantial variations in public forest land systems in different parts of the country, in terms of social, political, economic, and institutional considerations as well as in biological and physical terms. A strategic approach is needed to guide the expansion of pilot demonstration

¹ Based on average sawtimber harvest 1985-1998. Source: Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry, *A Calendar Report for Executed Contracts* ©1999.

² Mater, C., Sample, V.A., Grace, J. and Rose, G., *A Third-Party Performance-Based Certification: What Public Forestland Managers Should Know*, © *Journal of Forestry*, February 1999, pp. 6-12 (also available as a Pinchot Institute Policy Report by the same title, issued November 1998).