Air quality workshop links scientists and funders in a push for new research

President Richard Nixon signed the Clean Air Act in 1971, but attention has only recently focused on one component of air quality that concerned scientists back then—secondary organic aerosols.

These miniscule particles of carbon-based compounds, many of which form on emission particles, such as those from gas- and diesel-powered vehicles, are important for their roles in reducing visibility, and affecting climate and human health.

Thirty years ago, research on SOAs was overshadowed by demands to cut emissions from vehicles and power plants. Now emphasis is turning to improving research methods and communication between scientists and policy developers, such as those in the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Park Service.

Last February in Reno, Nevada, the first-ever meeting of its kind in the US took place to discuss issues related to secondary organic aerosols research. An international community of 54 scientists and federal specialists met to hear seven lead presenters address key research questions and lead discussion among other university researchers, graduate students, federal and state agency representatives, and corporate representatives.

The workshop was made possible through the efforts of a small group of organizers and a grant provided by the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Park Service. Tim Richard with the Office of Community Services coordinated the workshop’s development and co-facilitated meetings with John Watson, Research Professor, Division of Atmospheric Sciences, Desert Research Institute who also hosted the event.

After describing current projects to monitor air quality, participants brainstormed how to improve the collection and measurement of sample air particulates. They also discussed technology used to collect samples in urban and remote locations.

The subject of how to interpret data stimulated lively debates. Little is clear about SOAs. They are difficult to measure because they are “volatile,” forming under specific atmospheric conditions, often living only a few hours, but able to reform unpredictably. They are extremely small, easily entering and lodging in the human lung, threatening respiratory disease.

Data brought out during the workshop show SOAs may affect global warning. Other data suggest some SOAs may be carcinogenic.

One workshop goal was to present highly-technical data in language understandable by lay people, especially potential funders and policy makers across the United States who are increasingly interested in the issues.

Novices on the subject could still become...
San Juan Skyway receives planning grant

The San Juan Skyway Heritage Initiative recently was awarded a $95,000 Colorado Heritage Planning grant by the State of Colorado Office of Smart Growth. It was one of 14 grants, totaling $650,000, going to growth-impacted communities statewide.

The Initiative is a joint project of Ouray, San Juan, San Miguel, and Montezuma counties, and the Town of Rico. The multiple public and private partners will conduct mapping and develop an action plan to identify and protect locally identified agricultural, natural and historic landscapes along the San Juan Skyway, one of only 14 All-American Roads in the nation.

The Office of Community Services helped prepare the application for the grant.

For more information, contact Ken Francis at (970) 247-7310.

Red Mt. Project reports positive progress

On October 29, 2001, The Trust for Public Land secured the acquisition of 3,056 acres of endangered San Juan Mountain high country. Formerly owned by Idarado Mining Co., the 402 mining claims will be conveyed to the Uncompahgre and San Juan National Forests.

The purchase represents the first step in efforts to preserve and protect more than 10,000 acres with outstanding natural and historic values in the Red Mountain Mining District. For fiscal year 2002, Congress has appropriated an additional $4.6 million for Red Mountain, and the project remains at the top of the US Forest Service’s priority list for Land and Water Conservation Funds.

The Red Mountain Task Force is optimistic that a third appropriation will be approved for FY 2003, bringing to fruition the once seemingly impossible task of protecting the heart of the San Juan Mountains. Fort Lewis College’s Office of Community Services has been a key partner in the effort to save Red Mountain since its inception.

For more information, contact Bob Risch with the Red Mountain Task Force in Ouray at (970) 325-4205, or go online at www.redmountainproject.com/.

New Four Corners forestry newsletter

The Four Corners Sustainable Forests Partnership announces the availability of its Utilization and Marketing Program Newsletter. The newsletter updates forest product utilization and marketing efforts throughout the Four Corners region including: findings from over 70 site visits; new marketing initiatives; update on dip-diffusion wood preservative treating process; one sawmill’s efforts to improve its mill recovery.

The newsletter also includes notes on useful wood related websites, publications, upcoming conferences and workshops, and training opportunities.

For a copy, call Tim Reader at (970)247-5250 or email him at treader@lamar.colostate.edu.
Editor’s Note

The topical focus of this newsletter—community and ecosystem stewardship—is often defined by both dialogue and action. In fact, preserved in our actions on the ground and how we talk about what stewardship is and could be in our collective vision of the future is the legacy of stewardship imprinted in communities and forests.

In this newsletter, you read stories about people seeking solutions in their communities and regions as they try to determine the best way for a community and its institutions to interact with the natural world. Through their words and their actions, you see them try out methods, learn from them, adapt them, then try again.

In community-based forestry for example, interest in portable sawmills is prominent in the wake of the demise of many large mills that once turned out millions of board feet of lumber a year. Saws that are smaller, more mobile, and more affordable may be more appropriate for harvesting small-diameter timber these days.

Through Stewardship Initiatives we want to give voice to the increasing diversity of communities and the decreasing diversity of landscapes. We want to chronicle efforts to preserve what works about our communities, their histories, and their economies in the interest of preserving them as stewards. In many cases, there is a history of “know-how” that can inform on-the-ground practices. These stories need to be told. Increasingly, new settlers bring refreshing new knowledge to communities about the possible ways of accomplishing mutual goals. These stories need to be told.

Many people are moving to southwest Colorado seeking community. Six years ago, we here at the Office of Community Services conducted a survey of a broad cross section of residents in southwest Colorado. After asking about 100 people what it was they liked most about the place in which they lived, they almost unanimously said the beauty of the landscape and the “sense of community.”

These same people often take different stands on the issues and even judge others harshly for their backgrounds and lifestyles. But whether they recognize it or not, each and every one of them shares a common value for the places in which we live.

Many of them are involved in activities with others to discern what their interaction should be with the landscapes of their shared lives. They are learning together about how the forests outside their windows or under their feet work so that they can better understand what the forest needs from them; so that it can better provide what they need from it.

Increasingly, we look to the land to show us how we should treat it. In the spirit of this, we publish Stewardship Initiatives. Please support us with your ideas, news, and resources to help us tell the stories that need telling.

New Website offers information on current stewardship contracting pilots

The Pinchot Institute for Conservation has launched a website containing information on current Forest Service Stewardship Contracting Pilots and the multi-party monitoring and evaluation process.

The Internet address is www.pinchot.org/pic/cbf/pilots.html.

Resources for Community Collaboration grant news

It’s too late to apply for funding from the current cycle of the Resources for Community Collaboration, administered by The Tides Foundation, but it is a good resource to know about for collaborative organizations.

RCC manages a competitive grantmaking program to support local, community-based collaborations working to resolve conflicts over the use of natural resources in the rural West.

Two types of grants are available this year: Opportunity Grants up to $5,000 for seed money to organizations involved in community based collaborations, or those planning to start one; Sustaining Grants provide up to $10,000 for organizations that have previously received funding from RCC. For more information: www.rccproject.org


Headwaters News invites you to its newly expanded Website (www.headwatersnews.org) and to participate in its online forum. It boasts of a new weekly news analysis, a guest column by a regional writer on a timely issue. Headwaters News serves the Rocky Mountain West, including the Canadian Rockies.

The Fire Chronicle email newsletter is a new source of information about how the National Fire Plan is translating into action on-the-ground. Written for practitioners who want to know how others are addressing similar issues, it also is a forum for sharing stories about how the fire plan is affecting public forest land and the ecological and human communities they support. Subscribe at: www.topica.com/lists/firechronicles/ or email laura@theforesttrust.org
New Mountain Studies Institute to celebrate the International Year of the Mountain next autumn

A conference will be held September 26-29 at Durango Mountain Resort and in the community of Silverton celebrating the International Year of the Mountain and the inaugural year of the new Mountain Studies Institute.

For several months a steering committee of diverse members has brainstormed and conducted strategic planning meetings to create the MSI. While there are several similar institutes located in mountain countries across the world, MSI is the only one of its kind in North America. Its mission is to build a coalition among Fort Lewis College, the Silverton community, and government agencies, to provide opportunities for multi-disciplinary studies and experiential learning, data collection, and research.

The conference, entitled “A Mountain Summit: Communities, Culture, Conservation,” will feature two days of plenary and concurrent sessions with a third day of field trips in the San Juans.

Sessions will explore seven cultural, community and conservation issue areas: 1) Lack of a computer clearinghouse database for mountain research; 2) Economic instability of mountain communities; 3) Changing western values and an uninformed public; 4) Research and educational needs of public agency staff; 5) Changing public agency staff; 6) Loss of cultural and historic sites and artifacts; and 7) Importance of community involvement.

Charter organizers include: Fort Lewis College—Dr. Rob Blair, Retired Geology Professor; Ken Francis, Director, Office of Community Services; Dr. Andrew Gulliford, Director, Center of Southwest Studies; Chris Nute, Director, Outdoor Pursuits, Silverton—Jen Ader, Silverton Outdoor Learning Center; Kelly Mitchell, Administration; Chris Smith, San Juan County Commissioner; Chris George, St. Paul Ski Lodge; Jonathan Thompson, Silverton Mt. Journal.

THE MOUNTAIN STUDIES INSTITUTE, an emerging coalition among Ft. Lewis College, the Town of Silverton, and several government agencies, will create a clearinghouse for research and education related to the San Juan Mountains. It is the latest addition to similar organizations found in the world’s major mountain systems.

Chris Nute, Director, Outdoor Pursuits, Silverton—Jen Ader, Silverton Outdoor Learning Center; Kelly Mitchell, Administration; Chris Smith, San Juan County Commissioner; Chris George, St. Paul Ski Lodge; Jonathan Thompson, Silverton Mt. Journal.

San Juan Public Lands—Thurman Wilson, Planner.

For more information about MSI and the conference, contact Coordinator B.J. Boucher at 970-259-2949, or e-mail at bjboucher@outerbounds.net.

—Info. provided by B.J. Boucher

Four Corners Sustainable Forest Partnership announces new revolving load fund recipients

Nine Colorado forest-products businesses have been awarded capital improvement loans under the Four Corners Sustainable Forests Partnership Colorado Revolving Loan Fund Program.

The loans were awarded to a variety of businesses, from individual firewood contractors to conventional sawmill facilities looking to improve their capacity to utilize small-diameter material coming from forest fuel-reduction and restoration treatments on public and private lands.

A total of $125,000 dollars was awarded. Individual loan awards ranged from $10,000 to $20,000 dollars.

Loan applications were solicited from public informational meetings in Cortez, Durango, Montrose, and Del Norte, Colorado. Over 40 businesses attended and 17 applications, totaling $750,000 were received in response.

Because of limited funds available during this initial year of the RLF offering, each applicant was encouraged to secure additional lending so that the RLF program could assist as many interested businesses as possible.

—Continued on next page
Rustic Style Furniture: Dolores, CO

It’s hard to believe that two young business entrepreneurs who make furniture out of dead-standing aspen could help stimulate the economy in Dolores, Colorado. Might as well be seeing stars, you may say. But Collette Lauzon and Dan Heeley believe they could do just that. Maybe they can, especially if their optimism spreads to other residents in the small southwest Colorado town.

Lauzon and Heeley own and operate Rustic Style Furniture where they manufacture furniture out of . . . yes, you heard . . . dead aspen, harvested locally from the San Juan National Forest. Last year, they harvested about 25 cords.

“We really are helping the community,” Lauzon said. “No one ever stops in Dolores. But in the summer it’s high times for us. Foot traffic is our friend and out-of-state people stop in and fill up their pick-up trucks with furniture.”

If you looked at their effort in isolation as one business in one town you might agree that Lauzon and Heeley have a lot to learn about business and what it takes to stimulate a rural community’s economy.

But the ground floor is often the only place for young entrepreneurs to begin in a cottage industry venture.

Lauzon and Heeley represent one of many small community-based forestry businesses sprouting up in the Four Corners, seeking low-scale, low-impact opportunities to do environmentally rewarding work while contributing to the local economy.

Larger-scale operations that utilize volumes of raw material are in the picture, as well, but they have their own set of obstacles; namely, building a large-scale operation takes more capital and depends upon more raw timber over the long term to succeed.

In additional, questions of what is possible, appropriate, and acceptable continually circle around the issue of harvesting timber on public lands, especially when large operations are involved.

Lauzon and Heeley are already operating, because it’s easier to start up a cottage business than, say, a huge pellet manufacturing plant that employs 50 people and depends on daily truckloads of small-diameter timber from the local national forest.

Lauzon and Heeley are happy with what they are doing. As relative newcomers to town, they hope to develop a good reputation in Dolores as an appropriate business that fits in with the local culture and is beneficial to the town’s economy.

They just moved to a new building near the main drag and put up a new sign easily visible as you drive by.

With a grant from the Four Corners Sustainable Forests Partnership they were able to hire an employee who can do in-woods harvesting or mind the store while Lauzon and Heeley hunt up raw materials.

“The extra person has enabled the shop to remain open during summer months,” Lauzon said.

Marketing is on the near horizon for Rustic Style, as they were able to hire FCSFP-associated consultant Carolyn Dunmire to assist them in developing a brochure, ads in local papers, and a Website at www.rusticstylefurniture.com/.

REVOLVING LOAN — Continued from page 4

Stu Cohen of Region 9 Economic Development District and Tim Reader, the FCSFP’s Utilization and Marketing forester, developed the applicant screening process.

Contrary to expectations, the Colorado RLF applicants had generally maintained strong financial health, despite significant downturn in local and national forest product markets, and continued reductions in raw material supply.

The applicants all have histories in the communities in which they reside, were debt averse, and had good operational and business reputations with both federal and state forest service agencies.

Loans will be distributed this spring. Region 9 will administer each under the general program supervision of the FCSFP.

For further information on the Colorado’s RLF program contact Reader at (970) 247-5250, treader@lamar.colostate.edu, or visit the Partnership website at www.fourcornersforests.brainstorm-hosting.com/.

—Article provided by Tim Reader
Citizens of Colorado hamlet propose to buy mining claims from resort developers

A citizen’s petition recently circulated in Rico, Colorado is encouraging the town board to explore ways to purchase property owned by Rico Renaissance, a development company at odds with the town for nearly eight years.

One of the last of the old West mining towns largely overlooked by modernization and high-dollar development, Rico’s property ownership is a fragmented, checkerboard of mining claims separating town property and private property.

Rico Renaissance owns several claims in and around town which it has been trying to develop into residential resort properties. The corporation’s goals conflict with the town’s master plan. The plan allows clustered development, but protects encroachment on the area’s scenery and the unique laid-back quality of life of this hamlet nestled in the Dolores River Valley among ponderosa pine, spruce-fir and aspen forests.

The people of Rico—most of 200 of them—are not buying Rico Renaissance’s effort to bend the plan’s rules. While the town wants and needs economic development, its leaders and residents staunchly intend to control development so that the scenic beauty of the surrounding landscape is not compromised by development.

The townspeople recognize the need for the economic boost that new homebuilding and associated businesses would bring. But they say they don’t want it at the cost of the seclusion they enjoy. They envision appropriate development guided by a natural setting in which residents and visitors can access and experience the surrounding San Juan National Forest in low-impact ways.

Town attorney, Eric Heil, who recently stepped down as town manager, has been involved in a quiet effort to determine the feasibility of buying and consolidating ownership of property.

Heil’s and other citizens’ aim is to consolidate ownership into manageable blocks.

Despite the development issue, not everything is conflict in Rico. The town passed a resolution last fall supporting a cooperative approach by the oil corporation Atlantic Richfield to prepare a plan for reactivating treatment of discharge from the St. Louis Tunnel, a remnant of the old mining days that ARCO currently owns and where it has conducted major remediation during recent years.

—Article compiled from e-mail note from Eric Heil

AEROSOLS—Continued from page 1

deterred by the language of the science. However, they could easily see the passion with which participants engaged each other and the issues. Why? As one presenter said, “We’re at the cutting edge of chemistry!”

Another said, “I admit that it was one of the most thought provoking meetings that I have attended in a long time.”

One lead presenter said it was refreshing to feel free to talk about “what we don’t know,” rather than show off how much we do know.

“The workshop was one of the most impressive gatherings of scientists that I have had the honor to work with and to learn from, in my 27 years at EPA Region 8,” wrote Douglas Johnson in a note to participants. Johnson led the initial effort to put on the workshop, which took nearly four years to accomplish.

He continues, “Prior to the workshop, I was probably representative of the masses, who do not appreciate the significance of the role of organic aerosols as they relate to public health issues, climate change and visibility.”

An inclusive and interactive effort is underway now to ensure all ideas and current best practices are documented and utilized in a Research Strategy manuscript that outlines what kind of research should be done, where it could occur, who is capable of doing it, how to pay for it, and when to get it done.

Richard is compiling write ups and workshop presentations into the document that will be reviewed by co-organizers, scientists and others, then made available to the general public.

For more information, or to get on a mailing list for news about future developments, contact Richard at (970) 247-7066, richard_t@fortlewis.edu, or http://ocs.fortlewis.edu/Aerosols.htm. Workshop facilitator John Watson is available at (775) 674-7046, or at johnw@dri.edu.

—Written by Tim Richard, Editor
Shelter in nature helps alternative school teach land stewardship

They say it’s the simple things that count. In stewardship education, people working in common cause to build an infrastructure for learning counts, too.

Educating children to understand their role in an ecosystem is big in southwest Colorado. Since 1994, Durango Nature Studies, a non-profit alternative school, has provided thousands of kids and adults hands-on experiences in nature education. The school’s goals are strongly supported by the overall community, even helping to purchase 140 acres of valuable property along the Florida River, 15 miles southwest of Durango, where it now conducts field classes year-round.

Last year, DNS and the Durango and Pagosa Springs Lions Clubs teamed up to build a pavilion made of recycled materials at the Durango Nature Center. Now it provides a badly needed dry, day shelter for classes.

The pavilion incorporates many “earth friendly” materials. The roof is 90 percent recycled steel. The posts and beams are telephone poles no longer usable as such. Purlins and beams are local sustainably harvested wood. And the retractable fabric walls are recycled vinyl.

Before they built the pavilion, school groups and workshop participants had to huddle under a tent during bad weather.

“The pavilion is already helping DNS to increase awareness, knowledge and respect for the natural environment,” writes DNS Executive Director Cheryl Wiescamp.

“Classes and workshops covering topics from ant lions to xeriscaping are bringing nature into the lives of the community and its schools. They allow people to develop their own sense of the value for their natural surroundings and their own reasons for appreciating and protecting nature.”

—Info. provided by Cheryl Wiescamp

Book suggests solutions to clash between humans, policy, and science

In the new book, Restoring Nature: Perspectives from the Social Sciences and Humanities, edited by Paul H. Gobster and R. Bruce Hull, authors explore interaction between humans, nature, and differing values and understandings about science. They also discuss how what they have learned can help to guide science and policy, using examples from across the US to suggest ways restoration conflicts might be resolved.

The authors also provide examples of how community-based stewardship can help build and maintain restored environments. Restoring Nature is available from Island Press in either cloth or paperback and can be ordered by phone at 1-800-828-1302 or by visiting at www.islandpress.org/books/.

For Your Information

Government

Internet sites on wildfire in the WUI

Wildfire in the wildland/urban interface is a big topic these days. Here is a list of Internet Websites of federal, state and local government agencies involved in the National Fire Plan and Large-Scale Watershed Restoration Projects.

Brief descriptions are included of each website.

Please note that many of the Department of Interior’s Websites have not been operating since the beginning of December and may still be off-line.

National Fire Plan: www.fireplan.gov

Learn how the federal government and state partners are managing impacts of wildland fire. It includes information on efforts to address the five key points of the National Fire Plan (firefighting, rehabilitation/restoration, hazardous fuel reduction, community assistance, and accountability).

FIREFISE: www.firewise.org

FIREFISE is a fire education initiative aimed at educating those who design, build, live in, and work to protect homes in the wildland/urban interface. The “FIREFISE Communities” program conducts nationwide, hands-on workshops regarding interface fire concerns and effective ways to address them.

Tools for Forest Vegetation Management: www.fs.fed.us/vegtools/

This website is a clearinghouse for both familiar and innovative vegetation management tools. It provides a grassroots approach to sharing information and projects used in the field to restore and maintain forest health.

Protecting People and Sustaining Resources in Fire-adapted Ecosystems: A Cohesive Strategy

www.fireplan.gov/cohesive.htm
CALENDAR

Smallwood 2002
April 11-13, 2002
Albuquerque Convention Center
Albuquerque, NM
Community and economic development opportunities in small tree utilization.
Register: www.forestprod.org

Fire, Fuel Treatments and Ecological Restoration
April 16-18, 2002
Marriott Hotel, Fort Collins, CO
Contact: Dr. Philip Omi, 970-491-2626
westfire@lamar.colostate.edu www.cnr.colostate.edu/~fuel/
Special attention will be given to the fire ecology and management of central Rocky Mountain ecosystems.

Restoring Public Lands: Reclaiming the Concept of Forest Restoration
April 18-20, 2002
University of Colorado, Boulder, CO
Leading conservationists, scientists and practitioners will help redefine the core concepts underlying restoration, current restoration needs and priorities, innovative solutions and current policies that are helping or hindering efforts to protect and restore America’s public lands.

Contacts: www.forestadvocate.org
-Stephanie Tidwell, CU Rainforest Action Group at 303-492-5776, Stephanie.Tidwell@Colorado.EDU
-Jeanette Russell, National Forest Protection Alliance at 406-542-7565, nfpa@forestadvocate.org

Environmental Conflict Resolution:
The State of the Field and Its Contribution to Environmental Decision-Making
May 14-16, 2002
Tucson, Arizona
Advance program and registration materials at: http://conference.ecr.gov/

A Mountain Summit: Communities, Culture, Conservation
Durango Mountain Resort/Silverton, Colorado
San Juan Mountains, Colorado
September 26 – 29, 2002
Presented by The Mountain Studies Institute In Celebration of the U.N. Proclaimed International Year of the Mountain
Two days of plenary and concurrent sessions and a third of field trips exploring issues related to cultural, community and conservation in the San Juan Mountains.
Contact: B.J. Boucher, 970-259-2949, bjboucher@outerbounds.net

COMMUNITY-PUBLIC LAND STEWARDSHIP INITIATIVES

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