

Sangre de Cristo



Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.

Newsletter

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2007

ANNUAL REPORT



Sangre de Cristo and Colorado Councils Host Western Regional RC&D Conference

The Sangre de Cristo RC&D Council partnered with Colorado's other seven RC&D Councils, under the auspices of the Colorado League of RC&D Councils, to host the 2007 Western RC&D Association Conference in January in Colorado Springs. The 2007 theme, *Revitalizing the Old West*, consisted of an informative 3-day conference that provided tools and strategies to create workable solutions to local issues. The conference provided a mix of expertise that addressed energy issues, community and economic development, land management, non-profit management and water issues. The Western RC&D Association consists of over 80 RC&D Councils in the western United States.

Biofuel Briquette Feasibility Study Results Are In



The RC&D Council concluded its feasibility study to evaluate the technical and financial feasibility of producing an engineered fuel briquette out of waste products generated by coal burning furnaces and forest management. The results are favorable! Partners in the project were USDA Rural Development, Aquila, and Fremont Economic Development Corporation. The International

Center for Appropriate and Sustainable Technology completed the study. Additional funding has been applied for to complete an analysis of a manufacturing facility to create the briquettes. The engineered fuel briquette, using the two waste streams (fly ash and woody biomass waste), will reduce the problems associated with burning raw wood waste, improve energy efficiency, reduce waste to the landfill and create a business opportunity for an enterprising entrepreneur.

Geographic Information System (GIS) Initiative



Recognizing the benefits of expanding the use of GIS technology, the Council is supporting an initiative to enhance the use of GIS technology within the RC&D Area. Survey responses from 67 local government officials and staff members from the eight-county service area indicate widespread interest in GIS development at the local level and widespread support for some type of a regional GIS function. While interest is high and demand for data is strong from state, federal and private entities, there is a lack of dedicated GIS funding and qualified practitioners at the local level. With the survey results as a guide, a steering committee is developing a feasible, cost-effective course of action to bring the benefits of GIS to all counties within the RC&D service area. In addition, the Sangre de Cristo GIS User's Group meets quarterly to network on the local uses of GIS. The project is a partnership with the Upper Arkansas Area Council of Governments.

A Decade of Cooperative Weed Management in the Upper Arkansas River Basin



In the West, the patchwork of land ownership between federal, state, municipal and private land requires cooperation if weed management is to be carried out on a watershed basis. In 1998, the Sangre de Cristo Resource Conservation and Development Council sponsored a planning meeting to initiate coordinated weed management in the upper Arkansas River basin. From this meeting developed the Upper Arkansas Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA), a group of federal, state, and local partners who have worked together across jurisdictional boundaries for almost a decade to manage invasive weeds on a watershed basis.

Each of the partners contributes funding, technical assistance, and equipment per their particular budget to help implement a comprehensive weed management program. Partners also collaborate on training and workshops, share and coordinate resources, and work toward common goals. Through building local, state and federal partnerships, the Upper Arkansas CWMA is able to leverage resources and be more effective in their weed management efforts. A coordinated approach has helped this group of like-minded individuals to set common goals, acquire funding and carry out tested and proven weed management on a watershed basis.

Second River and Riparian Study Center Constructed



The Council completed the construction of a second river and riparian study center (river trailer) with technical assistance from Natural Resources Conservation Service and funding from the Bureau of Reclamation. For better coverage in the basin, the river trailers are housed at the Natural Resources Conservation Service offices in Canon City and La Junta. These popular educational tools for teaching river dynamics to children and adults are in continuous use at county fairs, teacher workshops, schools, and water festivals in every county of the RC&D area and beyond.

Upper Arkansas Watershed Council

The RC&D Council provides support and is the fiscal manager for the Upper Arkansas Watershed Council. The Watershed Council's goals are expressed in its mission statement: "The Upper Arkansas Watershed, as representatives of interested parties, will foster improved communication, collaboration, education and scientific understanding, and will develop strategies and make recommendations to conserve, protect and enhance watershed natural resources for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations."



At quarterly meetings, members and guests share their knowledge and expertise on a variety of water and natural resource issues affecting the basin. The Watershed Council contracts with the Greater Arkansas River Nature Association headquartered in Salida to provide administrative services. The Council's Leadership Committee meets on a regular basis to help plan and coordinate Council projects and activities. The Council will play a lead role in planning and implementing the Arkansas River Basin Water Forum to be held in Custer County in the spring of 2008. The watershed council's mission statement, charter, meeting memories, and newsletter can be found on its web site at www.uawc.info.



2007 Arkansas River Basin Water Forum

Water- the Life of the Arkansas River Valley

RC&D Council Secretary Kathy Trujillo provided administrative support to the 13th Annual Arkansas River Basin Water Forum held April 12-13, 2007 in Rocky Ford. The Forum provides information about water issues and promotes an open dialogue to create a greater understanding of water use and conservation. The Forum featured keynote speaker Colorado Supreme Court Justice Gregory J. Hobbs and the unusual pairing of the State Engineers from both Colorado and Kansas. The Arkansas River Basin Water Forum will be held in Custer County for the first time in the spring of 2008. Additional information can be found on the Forum's website at <http://www.arbwf.org>

OUR MISSION

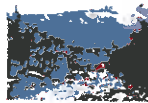
The Sangre de Cristo RC&D Council, through strong partnerships, will carry out a results oriented, locally directed program to encourage and improve the economic and social well-being of individuals and communities, and will promote responsible use and enhancement of our natural resources in south central Colorado

OUR VISION

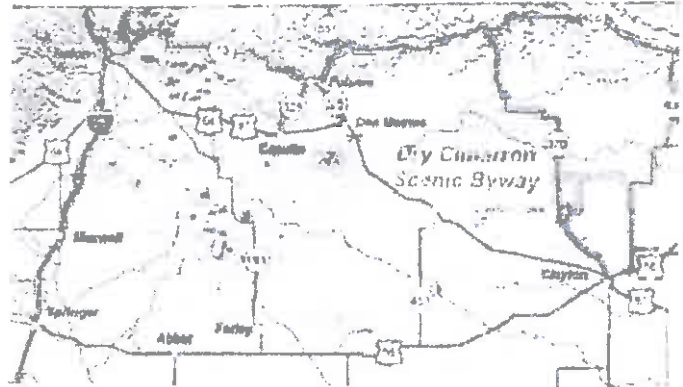
Harmony and prosperity, and a fulfilling life for our citizens, with the environment and natural resources conserved for future generations

QUOTE

What makes a river so restful to people is that it doesn't have any doubt - it is sure to get where it is going, and it doesn't want to go anywhere else.



From the Archives



“The traveler who loves big skies, lonely roads, and infinite spaces will find all this and more on the Dry Cimarron Scenic Byway. Early travelers on the Cimarron Cutoff of the Santa Fe Trail must have felt a sense of awe at these limitless prairies. The byway spreads across northeastern new Mexico like a web, starting east of Raton on NM 72 and crossing into Colorado and Oklahoma.” From the New Mexico Tourism Department website, www.newmexico.org/

In 1994 *Beverly Sheldon*, the Colorado, Representative for a proposed tri-state scenic byway, contacted the Sangre de Cristo RC&D Council for planning assistance. The Council approved the assistance at their meeting in March of 1994. **Council Chairman Sam Carlsson** signed the project proposal for the Council. The project was developed to enhance the economy of the area, develop pride of place, and preserve, protect and interpret the scenic and historic points of interest in Baca and Las Animas Counties in Colorado, Cimarron County in western Oklahoma and Union and Colfax Counties in northern New Mexico. The scenic byway proposal was drafted by a committee from the three states and officially accepted into the New Mexico scenic byway program in June of 1997. Beverly Sheldon chaired the proposal committee and presented the successful project at the first nationwide conference of the National RC&D Association held in St. Paul, Minnesota in June 1997.



Sangre de Cristo Resource Conservation and Development Council Gains Two Counties

On September 19, 2007, Under Secretary of Agriculture Mark Rey approved the request of Sangre de Cristo RC&D Council to expand its boundaries to include Park and Teller Counties and associated sponsors in its designated RC&D Area.

The realignment comes about due to the counties having very similar needs related to natural resources, economics and agriculture. The realignment will allow for a regional approach to problem solving and new opportunities to address conservation of natural resources and enhance economic development.

RC&D Web Resources

Sangre de Cristo RC&D
www.sangredecristorcd.org



Colorado League of RC&D's
www.coloradoleaguercd.org

Western RC&D Association
www.westernrcd.org

National Association of RC&D Councils
www.rcdnet.org

All programs and services of the Sangre de Cristo RC&D Council are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital or family status, disability, sexual orientation, or political beliefs.

Sponsors of the Sangre de Cristo Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc.

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Chaffee County | Upper Arkansas CD | Spanish Peaks-Purgatoire | City of Walsenburg |
| Custer County | Lake County CD | River CD | Town of Aguilar |
| Fremont County | Upper Huerfano CD | Town of Westcliffe | City of Trinidad |
| Huerfano County | Custer County-Divide CD | Town of Silver Cliff | City of Leadville |
| Lake County | Fremont CD | City of Canon City | City of Buena Vista |
| Las Animas County | South Pueblo County CD | City of Florence | City of Salida |
| Pueblo County | Turkey Creek CD | City of Pueblo | Town of Poncha Springs |
| Fremont Economic Development | | Teller County | Town of Branson |

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Winter