

HISTORY OF THE
North Fork
Community Development Council

SCRAP BOOK #1
1992 thru 1994
by
Jean Coffey-Cole

This scrap book contains digitized copies of newspaper articles, photographs and other materials, and represent the highlights of the history of the North Fork CDC in its early years.

1941



1948





STREET LIGHT DONATION: Harry Baker, District 5 supervisor, (L) donated one month of his salary as supervisor, \$1,338.14, towards the purchase of two street lights for North Fork. Accepting the donation are Cal Barnett and Chris Nota, coordinators of the "North Fork Summer of 1994 Project." A total of 12 street lights will

be installed through the downtown area from Connie's Kitchen to the North Fork Super Market. The project is still short of funding needed for all 12 lights. Any individual, business or organization interested in purchasing a light for the community should contact Barnett at 877-4477.

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North Fork Autumn Festival will be held Oct. 8 and 9

The North Fork Autumn Festival, featuring a Grizzly Century Bike Rally, Scenic Byway Art Show and Sale, crafts fair, Lions Club breakfast, Chamber of Commerce spaghetti feed and North Fork community dinner will be Friday and Saturday, Oct. 8 and 9.

The event kicks-off with a spaghetti feed hosted by the North Fork Chamber of Commerce on Friday, Oct. 8, from 6-8 p.m. at Town Hall. Tickets are \$4 in advance and \$5 at the door. Tickets may be purchased at W&G Market, North Fork Market, Bass Fork Mini Mart and Sierra Vista Gifts.

The bike rally starts Saturday at 6:30 a.m. at North Fork School. There are two routes, the Metric Century, a 100k (62 mile) route and the Grizzly Century, a 100 mile loop following the Sierra Vista Scenic Byway. Proceeds from the race benefit restoration projects for the North Fork community.

In addition, the Central California Off-road Cyclists will be sponsoring the Shuteye Challenge Mountain Bike Race from Brown's Ditch all the way to the top of Shuteye Peak. For more information contact the US Forest Service at 877-2218.

In support of the bike rally the North Fork Lions Club is putting on a pancake breakfast at Town Hall Saturday, from 5:30 to 9:30 a.m. Tickets are \$3.50 a plate and \$2.50 for children. The craft fair will run Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the parking lot of the Willow Creek Center in front of the post office. It will feature crafters from the mountain area.

The second annual Scenic Byway Art Show will start at noon on Saturday, an artists' reception

will be held at 4 p.m. and winners of the art show will be announced during the North Fork community dinner, 6 p.m. at Town Hall.

The US Forest Service will be cooking the dinner which will conclude the festival.

The festival is a community wide effort involving many groups and is spearheaded by the Community Development Council (CDC), which is promoting economic development in North Fork.

"We want to bring additional events into town to help develop the economic base and pull the community together," explained Christine Nota, a spokesman for the CDC. "We hope to have this year after year and for it to become larger and larger."

NORTH FORK'S OLDEST NEWSPAPER

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1993

North Fork resident speaks out at National Rural Development Forum

A panel of rural leaders from across the country gathered in Washington, D.C. earlier this month to explore how to improve the national vitality of America's rural economy. The panel discussion was part of a public forum, Rural America: Changes, Challenges and Opportunities, held by Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy.

The 26 panel members included Christine Nota, US Forest Service district ranger from North Fork. Nota played a key role in helping to halt the economic slide in a sawmill-dependent community of 3,000 people.

Espy told the forum that he is looking to rural Americans such as Nota for ideas that will help jumpstart the rural economy. "We want to draw on local expertise to identify rural assets -- including human, cultural and institutional resources," Espy said. "We will then employ them in innovative ways that will enable people to forge initiatives leading to a higher quality of life for rural Americans."

The forum represents a first step by USDA towards establishing an ongoing dialogue between all rural interests and to focus attention on developing resources found in rural communities. The forum focused on the need for job creation and improved educational opportunities, medical services, housing and water and sewer systems.



Christine Nota is shown participating in the national rural development forum in Washington, D.C. recently.

USDA photo by Ken Hammond

North Fork







4 Crazy
3 "before"
Photos



Changes and Choices theme of North Fork's restructuring meeting

Kimberly Hughes Hanley

Changes and Choices was the theme of North Fork's community meeting, held at Town Hall on Thursday, July 9. Because members of the community realize change is inevitable, the meeting reflected the beginning process to direct the town's growth and attract business and industry.

As Chris Nota, district ranger of the Forest Service and a North Fork resident, said, since change is inevitable let's change in the direction that the community wants.

Questions on rural diversification were addressed to decide what types of industry North Fork would like to keep its economic base alive.

Rural Diversification is the process of expanding from a single-industry driven community (as most rural communities are) to a multi-industry community. In other words, North Fork is attempting not to put all of its eggs in one basket, as it has done in the past.

As the first meeting of seven in a series, its primary purpose was to introduce Galen Schuler of Bootstrap Solutions and assess the community's response to rural diversification and its future. Close to 100 people were in attendance.

Schuler holds a masters degree in public affairs with a concentration in economic development. He is experienced in helping small towns plan their future and design their growth.

Since change is inevitable, let's change
in the direction that the community wants.

Plans to rebuild North Fork and not allow it to lay waste, or become just a bedroom community, or grow without direction began last year, early in November. Then a team of graduate architectural students from Cal Poly and a team of professional architects were invited to town by the North Fork Chamber of Commerce Restoration Committee to assess the town's potential.

The Mini Regional Urban Design Assistants Team (R-UDAT) suggested ways to improve North Fork's image but not change its face and lose its quaint, small town feeling. Before and possible after sketches were left with town folks to look over and decide upon.

This year, with the help of Schuler, the community of North Fork will attempt to sketch a final draft for the future.

At the meeting, Ron Goode, chairman of the Mono Tribe; Jim Willis, owner of the North Fork Market and stand-in speaker for Cal Barnett, chamber of commerce member; and Nota spoke of their hopes for North Fork.

Goode opened the meeting, saying in 20 years North Fork's population will have doubled or tripled. He mentioned three things the town must do to survive: 1. Expand the Sierra Mono Museum, which he says is the number one tourist attraction in the county; 2. build a hotel to vie for Oakhurst's tourist dollars; 3. build a health facility to accommodate the growing number of people who current-

ly have to commute a half hour into Oakhurst for medical attention.

Willis commented that jobs were needed and the community has to provide those jobs. By supporting new businesses, he says, it helps North Fork's economy. "The more businesses we have of course the more people that are employed. It doesn't start with the adult force either. It starts with the young children and moves on up from there."

With cutbacks at the lumber mill, Willis noted unemployment in North Fork is on the rise: two out of every four people, which he says is higher than the national figure of one out of four.

Despite the trend, he is positive about the future. "I can't say enough about this community and the direction that it's headed because I like what I see. I like the cooperation level in which all the businesses are cooperating at this point. I like the person like Cal Barnett who takes the bull by the horn and tries to tackle these issues and fights for water and fights for sewer."

The objective, he notes, is to move forward with rural diversification and attract more businesses to town, like doctors and banking services. "There are so

many things that we do need and so many things that we can do, and with rural diversification I think we can do it."

One man in the audience said he'd like to see small environmentally benign manufacturing companies. Tourism was suggested but not everyone wants it, an audience member noted. One woman expressed concern of uncontrolled growth:

"My biggest concern is that we don't become just a big conglomerated mess, architecturally. I think what we've got now is kind of cute compared to what could happen. I don't want to name names, but when you get McDonalds and Burger King -- I don't want us to look like that. I want us to always be special."

Cindy Martin, a landscape architect, mentioned that if North Fork established a design code, unruly growth and a clash of the town's theme could be avoided, as long as it stuck to its guns. She added that the town did not have to be incorporated to have its architectural standards recognized.

As a forest ranger, Nota has seen a lot of small towns, as small as 57 and as large and 3,000. "When I got here, I could tell that I hit a place that was really special and

See Page 3

Survey of opinion on change in greater North Fork area

Directions: Circle the most appropriate response, and write comments where appropriate. Submit to: Minarets Ranger District, U.S. Forest Service, P.O. Box 10, North Fork, CA 93643.

- North Fork is great the way it is and everything possible should be done to keep it exactly as it is.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- North Fork is great the way it is, but it probably will change.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- North Fork is okay, but a few changes are needed.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- North Fork has serious flaws, and many changes are needed.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- Most of the decisions affecting North Fork's future are made somewhere else.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- North Fork makes its own choices.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------
- North Fork should make its own choices and handle its own affairs.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- North Fork needs more outside help because it is not capable of making all the choices that will affect its future.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- North Fork should diversify its economy.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- If you agree with No. 9, what kind of diversification should North Fork seek to have?

Value-Added Forest Products	New Industry like Manufacturing	Tourism and Retail	Residential Construction & Real Estate	_____ (Other)
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- If you do not agree with No. 9, what kind of economy should North Fork continue to rely upon?

Lumber Mill	Ranching	Residential	Tourism	_____
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- The most important decisions affecting North Fork are made by:

North Fork (Local)	Madera (County)	Sacramento (State)	Washington, D.C. (Federal)	_____ (Other)
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- If North Fork cannot or does not make its own decisions, it will be a kind of town in 20 years.

Milltown	Bedroom Community	Retirement Center	Tourist Resort	_____ (Other)
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- What are the big decisions that need to be made in North Fork?

- Who currently makes the important decisions within North Fork?

Boosters	Sequoia Forestland	Town Restoration	Real Estate	_____ (Other)
Mono Tribe	Chamber of Com.	School District	Forest Service	
- How should we make community decisions in North Fork?

City Council	Town Meetings	Community Development Corporation	w/Representatives from Existing Organizations	_____ (Other)
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- What are your personal priority issues or comments for North Fork's future?

Questionnaire is to be returned by July 31

North Fork restructuring meeting held

Continued from page one

really different, having the perspective of a lot of small communities behind me.

"Right away I could tell this place had community organization; it had people that were involved and it cared; it had a real downtown area where businesses were all kind of consolidated, friendly business people, beautiful environment, natural resources. It just had all kinds of things: a sense of history and a sense of identity. And so many communities I've lived in, none of those ingredients were there."

"The other thing I could tell right away was it was a community that was getting slammed, hit from both sides, with some huge national issues that were going on. Except in North Fork it was like real and personal because it was affecting peoples jobs and their life styles and everything," Nota continued. She noted the big issues which directly affect North Fork are "the use of natural resources in our nation versus population pressure" and growth in the foothill community.

"Those things are just hitting really hard here, and no matter how much we don't want to see change, in a lot of ways because it's such a beautiful place, it's going to change. There's no holding it back, especially the urban population pressure and the changes that that brings. And we can look to our neighbor on the north - I won't mention what town - but it had a dramatic impact on that town. It's now spread along the highway and no longer has a heart of the community," she said.

Realizing that North Fork is taking action before it's too late, she responded, "It excites me to think that a community can take control of its destiny that way and end up the way that it wants to end up, instead of ending up like some communities, saying, 'My gosh, how did we get like this' - spread a long the highway or existing as a bedroom community where people merely commute to Fresno for jobs.

My biggest concern is that we don't become just a big conglomerated mess, architecturally

Rural Gentrification is another problem Schuler says must be recognized: that is having land value so high that people who have lived here for years can no longer buy homes, because the land value is forced up by people who settle here with lots of money and don't need to rely on a job to survive.

They have a trust fund of some sort or are retired.

Nota mentioned North Fork's unique situation. As the site of the Forest Service, which is a government agency, many of its workers live right in North Fork. With community members who are employed by the Forest Service, they could ultimately be a resource in helping North Fork attain government grants, like the one that pays Schuler's two month salary.

Although timber is an important part of the community and the cutbacks have drastically affected the economy, she adds, "We hope that timber will always be a part of the economic base but no community should be dependent on one economic base. Any community needs a whole variety of different things to keep it healthy. When different things fluctuate then it can go through those different fluctuations" and survive.

Rural Diversification will improve North Fork's housing, water quality and sewage system, says Willis. He adds, with rural diversification, North Fork has a better chance of attracting businesses, such as banks and doctors, back into the area. It should combat the cutbacks at the mill and provide North Fork a healthier economy.

Value-Added is an additional plan to gear the mill to produce not only raw goods but finished products. This too should make jobs and create a healthier economy.

Nota recalled a trip that she and Goode took to Mexico for a conference, sponsored by the Forest Service. With representatives from other small towns from across the nation present, she says, "It really helped us kind of step back and see what's going on here."

Lucky for North Fork, it was picked for a role-playing simulation and all of North Fork's strengths and weaknesses were listed. "And the people in the group were going, 'My gosh, what are you guys doing here; you've got it made.' And especially when they heard about all the things that are always going on: the community organizations and the Scenic By-Ways Associations, and the town restorations and the different

clubs that we serve, and the grandmothers club" and so forth. "In fact people from Mammoth Lake were going, 'What are you doing here. We wish we had the problems that you have.' They could see we've got potential and opportunities. And if anybody can survive the impact of change, this community can" because it does have the support of its people, she added.

However, with supporters working 14 hour days, then going to community meetings at night to plan North Fork's future, she responded, "We've got lots of energy but it's probably better to get it focused soon because if we don't, people are just going to flat burn out. Unless we get it focused and make sure that where we are putting our energy is where we can get the most amount of benefits," then North Fork could lose everything it's gained. "And that's when we started saying we really need some outside help" to figure out "what is our vision for the future for North Fork," which is what Schuler does best.

During his stay, he will help plan how to get North Fork to where the community wants it to go, look at North Fork's diversification options, crunch a few numbers and write a community action plan. As Nota says, with Schuler's help, all of the energy the town has already expended will become focused and won't go to waste in the wrong direction.

As Schuler mentioned, his function is not to decide what he wants for the community but to discover what the community wants for itself and then help it to achieve its goal.

In a press release, he noted: "At the meeting, a survey of opinions on change in the Greater North Fork Community was taken. The responses of those citizens in attendance reflected the following points of importance to North Fork:

1) Of the respondents, 84 percent agree that North Fork is likely to change, and that some changes are necessary. 2) A majority of respondents believe that North Fork's destiny is controlled by forces outside the community (especially Madera County government), and 98 percent believe that the community of North Fork should exercise more of that control. Most thought that if North Fork does not control its destiny, it is likely to become a bedroom community.

3) More persons believe that within North Fork, the chamber of commerce and the Forest Service have more control over important decisions than any other group. Sequoia Forest Industries, the school district, and real estate are also considered to be important decision makers in North Fork. 4) To make important community decisions, 54 percent approved of a community development corporation with representation from the community's existing organizations, 42 percent thought there should be regular town meetings, and 21 percent wanted a city council. (Results are greater than 100 percent because some respondents selected a combination of choices, he noted.); 5) Most citizens (98 percent) agreed that North Fork should diversify its economy in many ways (value-added to forest products, residential construction and small business), but tourism was the leading preferred sector for economic diversification. 6) In their open-ended responses, citizens were most concerned with economic issues like jobs and business. Timber production and tourism were the key sectors of concern for the economy. Planning and growth management were also very important, as were community aesthetics, cultural heritage, and "small town" values. Finally, community organization and participation ranked high as priority issues for North Fork's future."

At the meeting, Schuler mentioned three things the community should know about him: 1) He is a bureaucrat and has worked with state agencies -- "A bureaucrat is what you need sometimes because there's a lot of bureaucracy above communities that you need to work with. Hopefully because of that experience, I'll be able to find

some of their resources and call the right people for you," he commented; 2) Schuler says he is an advocate and feels small towns should always be an option of where to live; 3) As a business, Bootstrap Solutions is a self help business for communities who want to pull themselves up and out of their situations, whatever they may be.

As Schuler commented, when speaking of tourism, North Fork must decide what kind of tourist town it wants to be: "Do you want to be Disneyland, Hawaii? Do you want to be Bass Lake where people spend a week? Do you want to be an overnight stop? Is that feasible? Are you a day trip place? Are you a stopping place along the way to something else?" he asked. "That has to be decided. That's strategy for tourism. My guess is you're looking at RV people on their way, stopping through, until you get critical mass. That's my guess. I'd like to hear what you folks say," he stated.

As Schuler maintained throughout the evening, "I'm your servant. I'm not the leader. You're the leader. I'm here to work for you. Please take advantage of me."

Schuler will be in North Fork, observing and learning what the people want, until Aug. 31. During that time, weekly community meetings on Thursdays will be held between 7 and 9 p.m. The following is a list of topics to be discussed at each meeting: July 16, Organization and Representation meeting; July 23, Swot Analysis and Prioritize Issues; July 30, Infrastructure Projects; Aug. 6, Business Retention and Expansion; Aug. 13, Economic Diversification; Aug. 27, Final Presentation of Plan.

With the exception of the Aug. 27 meeting, all meetings will be at the North Fork Scout Building. On Aug. 27 it will be at Town Hall.

Schuler will write the final plan and give it to the community for its approval. He says it will help communication in the community as to what direction it is heading and will help communication to outsiders by saying, "you have your act together. So when you go to the state government or federal government for a grant, they can see all the plans in place, or when you do look for that small manufacturing business that you're interested in, they can see the direction," he says.

In addition to an action plan, Schuler says he will use his expertise to get through the bureaucratic red tape and help North Fork's plan get on its feet.

NORTH FORK'S OLDEST NEWSPAPER

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1992

Jean Coffey is elected president of the NF Community Development Council

The final public meeting of the North Fork Economic Diversification Project was held Aug. 27. The meeting's theme, Choices and Action, was intended to reflect the transition from planning to implementation of community projects.

Project consultant Galen Schuler reviewed the contents of the Community Action Plan and other speakers emphasized the need for community organization and involvement.

Jean Coffey, newly elected president of the North Fork Community Development Council, described the purpose and vision of the council as a balance between preserving the qualities of North Fork that originally attracted residents, while building prosperity and opportunity for generations to come.

Coffey is a retired Fresno police officer who has lived in North Fork for 15 years while working in Fresno. She welcomes the opportunity to use her retirement to become more involved in the community, she said.

Ken Cereghino, executive director of the Madera County Economic Development Commission, spoke on the benefits of having an organization like the North Fork Community Development Council. Cereghino explained that the council will allow North Fork to speak with one

voice, and to "have some weight" in decisions affecting North Fork.

Cereghino also urged the community to make the transition from a volunteer organization to a professional organization with an executive director as soon as possible. This is to allow the community to pursue the day-to-day work of grant writing, working with the county and helping individuals and businesses. Without local government, professional representation is a necessity, he said.

Chris Nota, Minarets district ranger for the US Forest Service, described one of the first implementation actions of the new North Fork Community Development Council. A US Forest Service grant will be used by the council to enact a Value-Added and Special Forest Products project for North Fork.

The project will work with entrepreneurs interested, or active, in producing and marketing forest products like windows, select cuts of timber, furniture and craft items.

The project will also perform preliminary engineering for providing utilities to industrial sites in North Fork. Nota explained that implementation of the Value-Added Project would begin

immediately.

The evening concluded with the advice; "Don't Stop Now!" but to follow the activity of the R/UDAT (Regional/Urban Design Assistants Team) design for downtown (1991) and the just completed Community Action Plan. The community was urged to continue building momentum and involvement.

Persons interested in joining the North Fork Community Development Council, Inc. should contact the treasurer, Joan Collins (877-2835). Membership is \$10 per year and entitles an individual to vote on, or be elected to, the council. An executive summary of the Community Action Plan is also available to community members through the North Fork Community Development Council. Persons wishing a copy, call Schuler (877-3119) before Sept. 10.

Somerville replaces Sikora on the EDC

It was recently announced that Marilyn Sikora has resigned from the Madera County Economic Development Commission as the North Fork representative.

Her replacement from the North Fork Chamber of Commerce will be John Somerville.

Economic diversification of North Fork discussed at restructuring meeting

On Thursday evening, Aug. 13, at least 25 persons met to discuss the potential for economic diversification in North Fork. Discussion centered on new industry, value-added forest products, and tourism. All of these were seen as necessary to provide jobs and incomes to North Fork residents and their families.

While the variety of new industry desired for North Fork is not exactly known, residents were convinced that the community must be prepared to identify the best sites for industrial development. Because the South Fork area is already zoned for industrial use, it is a primary target for industrial development. Yet South Fork is in need of better infrastructure, and the North Fork Community Development Council (NFCDC) will sponsor a preliminary engineering study of costs for improving water and sewer systems in South Fork. Other local businessmen like Mike McClure (McClure Windows) and Kelly Green (Green Industries) have also proposed light industrial parks for the North Fork area, and the NFCDC will work with them on planning infrastructure, and tenant issues.

A \$30,000 grant from the US Forest Service for value-added forest products will enable the NFCDC to assist small businesses that manufacture, process, and/or sell any products found in the Sierra National Forest. This project, occurring in 1992 and 1993, will study the resources available in the forest, their potential products, and possible markets. Local

entrepreneurs who are interested in special and value-added forest products will also have the opportunity to give advice and receive training on value-added and special forest products from a skilled professional hired for the project. Local resident W.C. Tuttle has agreed to serve as a community encourager or liaison between the value-added consultant hired for North Fork, and local entrepreneurs.

Tourism strategies suggested by the citizens addressed both tourism services and North Fork area attractions and events. Important services sought by the community include a visitor center and campground information kiosk located near the junction of County Road 200 and State Highway 41 on the US Forest Service's San Joaquin Experimental Range.

A visitor center in the town of North Fork is also needed, according to residents, and the preferred location selected by these residents is the Minarets Ranger District compound. The advantages cited were good parking and staffing provided by Forest Service personnel. The primary disadvantage discussed was the "inaccessibility and hiddenness" of the Minarets station. This could be corrected by the reconstruction of the "crazy Y" intersection, and the new Forest Service signage. In the interim, residents suggested that a temporary visitor center be established at the turn-out on the south end of North Fork where the Lions Club "Center of California" sign now

stands.

Tourism accommodations were discussed with the Putney Ranch and Recreation Center expressing interest in creating a Recreational Vehicle campground. A hotel for North Fork was also seen as needed, and representatives of the Mono tribe expressed interest in developing such a project.

For tourist attractions, residents propose to build on existing assets. The Sierra Mono Museum plans an expansion of facilities and exhibits, and a transition to full-time staffing. Residents would like to re-open Old Town as a "living museum" with logging and wood-working exhibits, mock gun fights, and other skits from old west folklore. The community will urge the current owner to re-open Old Town, or will help to find a buyer who will do the same.

Building on their success in establishing a scenic route, the Sierra Vista Scenic By-Way Association plans to add a fall event to the successful Loggers' Jamboree and Indian Fair Days. In an effort to bring more visitors to North Fork, the By-Way Association will hold the first fall event this October with a bike race and art show.

The final public meeting of the North Fork Economic Diversification Project will be from 7 to 9 p.m. on Aug. 27, at the North Fork Town Hall. An executive summary of the North Fork Community Action Plan will be presented, and future actions of the NFCDC will be explained. Everyone is welcome to attend.

1993

THURSDAY, MARCH 4, 1993

Study and start-up training contract approved for Value Added Forest Products

The North Fork Community Development Council, Inc. has just approved a contract with Mater Engineering Corp to provide a study and start-up training for Value Added Forest Products small business assistance to the community of North Fork.

In the months coming up there will be community input meetings to see where the interest lies in North Fork and who wishes to turn talent using wood and other materials available in the forests into a business. Mater will be providing information as to availability of these materials, the demand for them internationally and marketing information.

"If you have ever wanted to go into business for yourself in an area that is compatible with our area and environment, be sure to watch for the announcements in the paper and posters around town... they should be starting late this spring," comments a spokesman.

Those who are interested in finding out what the North Fork Community Development Council is doing to try to bring more jobs into the area are welcome to the meetings. They are held the second Monday of each month at the Ranger Station (or the Town Hall) and the next one will be March 8 at 6:30 p.m.

Proposed North Fork Willow Creek Parkway visited by Assemblywoman Margaret Snyder

Taking a peak at the proposed Willow Creek Parkway in North Fork last Saturday were 25th District Assemblywoman Margaret Snyder, local dignitaries and interested residents.

The parkway is to be located near the US Forest Service compound in North Fork on USFS land and incorporate the nature trail already established there.

The parkway will include a walkway, nature trail, rest areas, Native American information along the trail and a picnic area at the end of the trail. The picnic area will be located near the bridge on the USFS compound and near the proposed Madera County Volunteer Fire Station.

The trail will be wheelchair accessible.

The US Forest Service has \$20,000 available for the project. According to a US Forest Service spokesman, plans have already been discussed as to the location of the new segment of the walkway and the type of building materials to be used. The Forest Service is planning to build a raised walkway, which will be constructed of cedar boards.

Save Our Streams president Jerry Bishop, who is spearheading the project, has applied for a \$50,000 grant for the project.

Additional support has come from the North Fork Chamber of Commerce, North Fork Boosters, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Sierra Mono Museum, North Fork School, and the US Forest Service.

US Congressman Richard Lehman (D-North Fork) has written a letter in support of the project and those seeking the grant.

On March 2 the Madera County Supervisors passed a resolution in support of the project.

"This is not like the San Joaquin Parkway. We have little or no op-

position," noted Bishop. "There has been the occasional individual who has said this will be a gathering for undesirables. We will worry about people who misuse the walk-way after we get it going.

There are county ordinances and the USFS will control the area."

The parkway will be a day use facility only. There will be no camping and there will be no lights.



NFWALKWAY: Margaret Snyder (L), 25th District Assemblywoman and Jean Coffey, president of the North Fork Community Development Council, walk along the already existing path portion of the newly proposed Willow Creek walkway.

North Fork economic development options

Residents of the community of North Fork will have an opportunity to help decide their city's future direction for economic development in the forest products industry on Saturday, July 10.

A citizen's workshop detailing the results of a Phase I investigation to help identify economic development options using wood and non-wood products from surrounding forests will be conducted for North Fork residents by Mater Engineering, Ltd., an international forest products engineering and marketing firm. The North Fork Chamber of Commerce was able to retain the firm through receipt of grant funds from the USDA Forest Service issued through the Minarets Ranger District.

"The focus of Phase I investigation was intended to evaluate practical options to North Fork area residents in producing products made from our available forest resources," stated Cal Barnett, North Fork Chamber president. "With much of our traditional commercial timber harvest being placed on hold for habitat preservation, we need to evaluate some other economic development options using both wood and non-wood resources from the forest which are available to us, provide for a sustainable forest ecosystem, and still offer stable family-wage employment."

According to Jean Coffey, President of the North Fork Community Development Council that is administering the project, the key for success lies in two areas.

"First, we need a better understanding of what under-utilized and unutilized non-commercial timber is out in our forests which can be harvested for value-added product development," said Coffey.

"Second, we need a better

understanding of the other special products in the forest such as florals, decorative woods, foods and botanicals which have market demand and can be harvested from the forest in an environmentally-sound fashion."

The workshop on Saturday, July 10, will be held at the North Fork Community Hall at 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Mater Engineering will be presenting a menu of researched economic development options in the wood and special forest products categories.

Presentation highlights will include overviews on the availability and access of North Fork wood and non-wood forest resources, product development opportunities using those targeted resources, analysis of national and international market demand

for products produced from the targeted resources and action plan options residents of the community of North Fork could use to set up actual manufacturing operations.

The workshop format will allow residents direct opportunity to evaluate the work done to date, provide suggestions on areas where further investigation might be undertaken and help determine the scope of work to be undertaken during Phase II of this project.

According to Coffey, the North Fork Community Development Council originally envisioned Phase II of the project to encompass development of an actual business plan to help expand existing or establish new value-added and special forest products operations in the area.

THURSDAY, JUNE 24, 1993

Residents want to form co-op to market value-added and special forest products

Residents of North Fork who attended a community economic development meeting last Saturday morning said they would like to own their own businesses but form a co-op for marketing and business aspects.

They were discussing new industry for the community through value-added forest products and special forest products.

The show-of-hands vote came after they heard Catherine Mater of Mater Engineering, Ltd., from Corvallis, Oregon give the results of a market research project she has done for North Fork on value-added and special forest products.

A sign-up sheet was passed around for people who would like to be on a steering committee to look into forming a co-op.

A US Forest Service grant and matching funds from the county were used to hire Mater Engineering to do the study. Phase I is complete except for the final report which will be concluded by the end of July.

Phase I was to determine what products hold market potential as economically and environmentally sound products.

Phase II, if the community wants to continue that far, would produce a business plan that would be ready for financing. In Phase II, the consulting firm will need to know what products the community would like to focus on and how they want to work on the products.

It was at this point that they voted to own their own businesses and form a co-op for marketing. Other options were for everyone to own their own business and do everything individually or to bring in an outside person or investors to build a company and then hire local people to do the work.

USFS Minarets District Ranger Chris Nota, who is also vice president of the North Fork Community Development Council, said North Fork has a single economic base (timber) and needs a diverse economic base that will be related to timber. She mentioned tourism and cottage industry as other possible economic bases for the community.

Value-added means more products come from a tree, or maximizing what is available; special

forest products are such things as pinecones, mushrooms, plants for the floral industry and edible plants.

Mater said after completing the study, she sees "real opportunity" for North Fork. She said she was not here to sell any particular plan, just to present the information.

Through value-added, Mater said she sees a great market potential for lodgepole pine, manzanita, chinquapin and oaks. She said lodgepole could be a "major player" and could be used to build yard and garden furniture.

Nota said the spotted owl does not live in lodgepole pine so it would be available for use. The USFS is doing an Environmental Assessment for lodgepole for about two million board feet a year.

Mater said a lodgepole ready-to-assemble lawn and garden furniture plant could hire 15 to 20 people. She said it would need to be furniture that could be packaged in a small box or be folded for tourists to buy and take home with them.

Other value-added products could be such things as animal feeders, wood blocks for garden edging, custom-made mailboxes and stands, roll-wood carpeting, planters, benches and boxes.

Mater said anything that could be made with ponderosa pine could be made with lodgepole pine.

Manzanita was discussed as having possibilities for its decorative value. It is also available all year around (lodgepole has a short-gathering season because of the altitude) and manzanita is plentiful in the area. Nota said some landowners just bulldoze it and burn it.

Some of the possibilities for special forest products are dried and preserved florals and evergreens, herbs, decoratives (cones and nuts), decorative woods, flavor woods and toys.

In both the value-added and special products, the resources must be unused or under-utilized species and they must be native or indigenous to the Sierra Nevada soils within a 150 mile radius of North Fork.

Mater said there is a national and international market for many of the special forest

products. Some are in such great demand that the demand is not now being met. Included in this is the artificial tree demand (real tree branches are used and silk leaves and flowers are attached).

She said California State University at Fresno has developed a flash-dried microwave process for foods, flowers and other products and has offered to do free product testing for the North Fork group.

There was some discussion about the definition of "native" plants. Mater said there are no guidelines at this time, but that may change as this type of industry increases.

Nota pointed out that a number of factors could change what had been discussed, but, she said, change is the name of the game.

It was also noted that marketing of the products is crucial and must be very strong. There will also need to be some training available for the new jobs.

Nota asked those in attendance to jot down their ideas and impressions about the meeting and send them to the North Fork Community Development Council, c/o Chris Nota, USFS, P.O. Box 10, North Fork, CA 93643.

The council's meetings are open to the public and are held the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the USFS in North Fork.



NORTH FORK RECREATION CENTER: Swimmers enjoyed the water during 90-plus degree temperatures last week at the North Fork Recreation Center. Swimming lessons are being given on a first come, first serve basis Tuesday and Thursday from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. through August. Members of the Private Industry Council crew who work at the center will start picking up trash in North Fork during the mornings. "We just want people to know they aren't doing community service," noted Recreation Center Director Robin Ryan. "They are doing it because they want to do something

for the community." PIC crew members are Rachel Carver, Gabe Carver, Jesse Bollo, Nick Bello, Mikey Estep, Lyle Plantz, Alvin McDonald and Shannon Ellis. Ryan is also planning a talent show for August and is looking for talent, anyone interested should contact her at the recreation center. The free lunch program at the center, which relies totally on donations, has already fed 500 lunches. "This is a huge increase over last year when we fed 800 lunches for the entire summer," noted Ryan. "We need donations of food and/or money."

Second meeting on value-added products will be held Aug. 9

The North Fork Community Development Council, (CDC), will be holding its second community meeting to discuss value-added wood manufacturing and special forest products Monday, Aug. 9, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the North Fork Town Hall. Council President Jean Coffey encourages anyone with an interest in expanding or starting a wood product or special forest product related business to attend. She feels the meeting will also be of interest to anyone who is generally interested in the economic future of North Fork in these changing times.

The meeting will include a second presentation by Mater Engineering, a firm hired by the CDC to explore what potential wood and plant materials grow locally that could be gathered and processed to create or expand local business. A critical part of Mater's study has been to not only analyze what resources exist locally but also what products are in demand both nationally and globally, have a high profit ratio, and there is local interest in producing the product, Coffey said.

Mater Engineering presented the findings of its initial analysis to the community on July 10. The presentation showed that there

were good possibilities for both wood based businesses and for special forest product businesses such as manzanita products, lodgepole furniture, floral products and pinecones.

In this next presentation, Mater will focus on additional analysis it has done on the resources and products that hold the most promise for North Fork. Coffey said the committee also hopes to use the meeting to receive more input from the community on where they think the study should focus during the more indepth, Phase II.

Before Phase II begins, a decision needs to be made on what specific resources and products hold the most potential and interest for the community and on who will be involved in the harvesting, processing and marketing. Options include such things as small independent businesses, a cooperative, a large business for processing and marketing only and many other ways to get the product from the woods to the consumer.

Coffey hopes that anyone with an interest will attend and share their ideas. She added that if anyone has questions they can call the US Forest Service at 877-2218 or Joan Collins at 877-2835.

Action plan for new NF businesses discussed at meeting

Kathy Kelley

Some 45 people met to discuss and listen to ideas for an action plan in developing new businesses in North Fork recently. The basic criteria for consideration is that they be tied to the timber industry, either working in the woods or working with wood.

The meeting was sponsored by the North Fork Chamber of Commerce Community Development Council, which has representatives from each community or organization in town.

A grant from the US Forest Service, along with matching funds from the county, were used to hire Mater Engineering out of Corvallis, Oregon. The engineering firm is exploring areas for jobs working with wood and working in the woods, according to Chris Nota District Ranger for the USFS Minarets Ranger District, who spoke at the meeting.

Nota introduced Catherine Mater, vice president of Mater Engineering, LTD. who has been working with North Fork people for four months. She is taking a broad look at forest based products found within a 50-mile radius of North Fork.

Mater reported detailed findings for what she referred to as phase I. These were reports on potential products, and market trends for these products.

Markets covered included: florals, ornamentals, evergreens, dried florals, landscape ornamentals, twig and branch products, forest foods and medicinals, mushrooms, flavorwoods (which she did not recommend), and nuts.

A complete list of these materials (available from the CDC) includes approximately 46 plant and tree species which can be used in the previously mentioned markets.

The Mater report emphasizes that resources need to be managed on a sustained yield basis.

"Items from a sustained yield area can be sold at a higher basis than items from a non-sustained area," Mater said. "There are concerns with over-harvesting of wild plants. We need to identify the market and demand and not over-harvest. We need to be able to develop species in plots in the forest."

Mater said they were interested in finding wood species that could be used commercially, which had not been utilized previously.

It was mentioned that any plant or tree species found on USFS land would have to be signed off by the USFS before it could be used.

Regarding tree and wood species, the Mater researchers

were interested in the mechanical characteristics of the wood.

"How does it nail, screw and glue? How does it compare to commercial species?" asked Mater.

According to the Mater report, lodgepole pine products have steadily increased over the last 20 years. Traditionally, lodgepole is not considered a commercial tree. It is now being used for log home construction, country / rustic furniture and outdoor furniture manufacturing. There are currently 30 value-added wood product manufacturing companies in Oregon and California that utilize lodgepole pine in product manufacturing.

Oak, which includes live oak and black oak species, is often overlooked as a valuable value added wood product species, noted the report. Black oak has good working characteristics, it machines and holds fasteners well. Because of its hardness, it is used for flooring, furniture and pallets. A new black oak wood product manufacturing operation is currently considering locating in

Marysville. They estimate an operation of 40,000 board feet per day, with 60 percent going into graded lumber for furniture and flooring.

Live oak offers more of a problem for product manufacturing due to warping of the wood which occurs during traditional drying processes. This species is being considered for MVAC drying testing offered by California State University at Fresno. It is thought this species, when sliced into small veneer pieces and specially dried, has potential for flooring and specialty panel products.

Manzanita has demand in the craft and floral industries as well as the furniture industry. Its branches and twigs are being used for rustic style furniture, which is finding markets in the "high ends" of Europe and the Pacific Rim, according to Mater's report.

"People laugh when you say manzanita is a big one," said Mater. "I can sell manzanita as an exotic species."

Mater displayed photos of exotic furniture made of manzanita twigs and branches.

Also, woods that normally are flawed with knots or blue stain are in demand as wood products in the Pacific Rim, according to Mater.

Chinquapin is another wood that is being used increasingly for furniture, according to Mater. Characteristics of the wood, its hardness, and weight make it applicable for flooring, paneling and specialty handcrafted items. Like some of the oaks, there are chal-

lenges with drying. Researchers are looking to the new MIVAC process as opening up new opportunities with this species.

In the special forest production of florals, ornamentals and evergreens there are 10 indigenous species that are known to have domestic, world-wide and unmet market values.

Floral species for the dried market include: yarrow, larkspur, pennyroyal, pearly everlasting, wild buckwheat, phlox, blue flax, black eyed Susan, dogwood and leopard lily.

Regarding landscape ornamentals, nurseries within a 100-mile radius of North Fork were interviewed to determine which landscape ornamentals were sought after by their customers. Researchers were particularly interested in identifying those species which the nurseries indicated the demand continually exceeded their annual supplies.

Those species included: sage, manzanita, western redbud, calycanthus, thimble berry, mountain penstemon, California lilac and three types of ceanothis.

Twig and branch products cover a large range from fresh to preserved items. The strongest market potential for North Fork included fresh flowering branches of western redbud, dogwood and buckeye.

Twig and branch craft products also included redbud, manzanita, buckeye and spice bush. Mater noted that even though many of these species are considered weed or nuisance plants by residents in the North Fork area, they are considered quite exotic elsewhere in the US. Manzanita is considered a classic by those in the floral and craft industries.

According to Mater's report, Fresno area wholesalers indicated they had a good demand for manzanita, but had to purchase out-of-state because they did not know of local suppliers who could service their volume requirements.

Mater told those present that one of the biggest problems in the industry is to have rural areas meet the demand for supplies.

The report on forest foods and medicinals listed 15 forest edibles and botanicals that appear to have the best market potential for the North Fork area. The report lists sheep sorrel, skullcap, California bay, chickweed, cheeseflower, dogwood, yerba santa, stinging nettle,

pennyroyal, chia, milkweed, mugwort, pipsissewa, bracken fern and yarrow.

The Sierra National Forest botanists are suggesting more in-

See Page 3

Continued from page one

formation is needed on mushroom growth, regeneration and appropriate wildcraft harvesting techniques that will ensure sustainable populations in the forest.

Cones and seeds are already finding markets with tourists in the local mountain area. Sugar and digger pine cones are the top money makers.

With the research from phase I, Mater must now develop options for phase II, using market research findings, resource availability in or near North Fork, and the amount of community interest. All these findings will be used to put together options for several business plans.

Possible plans are for establishing a dried floral co-operative; a business plan for a North Fork special forest products manufacturing center; a value-added lodgepole wood product development in North Fork; a business and direct marketing plan for an artificial tree top resource exchange.

Following Mater's presentation, CDC representatives spoke on cooperatives, forest stewardships, floral / evergreen preserving, lodgepole value-added manufacturing, and MIVAC drying experiments.

Coburn Tuttle, a CDC member, spoke on forming a co-op. He has recently talked to several co-ops by telephone. One thing he learned was that co-ops need to produce large volumes to keep buyers.

"One co-op in northern California had started with 50 members and shrunk to 10," described Tuttle. "Then they narrowed the variety they offered to three different species. When the wholesalers wanted 100,000 and they had only 10,000 items, they narrowed the items. They now have three-quarters of a million plants."

The co-op handled the selling and the education program to produce the product.

According to Tuttle, most co-ops were geared in the area of sales, with advantages in setting prices, and not violating the Sherman Anti-Trust Act.

"Co-ops need leadership," Tuttle said, "they need leaders who are familiar with co-op businesses."

He had contacted a man in Davis who specialized in co-ops. The advice he received was to have an attorney draw up original papers and get financial counseling regarding anticipated capital needs, where to get money, and how to get an auditor for the end of the year. Also they would need technical advice as well as a nucleus of people committed to the project.

Cindy Martin, a CDC member, talked about the preserved evergreen and floral industry. She had spoken to a broker who sold these types of items.

"He had been in business for 24 years and had done a lot of research," Martin said. "He was knowledgeable of black oak, white oak and live oak branches, also, sword and bracken fern."

Depending on the direction the community will take, the preserved evergreen broker would be willing to do a workshop and train community members who are interested.

"He has a much larger demand than is being met right now through the Asian and European markets," noted Martin.

Martin went on to explain that the investment would start with an environmentally approved preserving "sauce" that is used in the field at the time the product is cut, either from national forest land or private land. The sauce replaces the natural juices and makes the product flexible and keeps the leaves attached.

Also Martin described how black oak branches are dyed and used as floral decorations for the fall.

According to the wholesalers in Fresno and Grants Pass, it was crucial to think in large quantities such as truckloads.

A storage facility would be another primary need, according to Martin. She described how one northern California business got a grant to establish a storage facility.

"There are lots of options for us, I feel we should go this way, but make it clear we're not looking at any of this as a replacement for the timber industry. Our main focus is to enhance the economy," expressed Martin.

Gary Rogers talked about involvement and commitment to the economic projects. He used an example of ham and eggs to illustrate his point.

"The chicken is involved, the pig is committed," Rogers joked.

Rogers went on to discuss lodgepole pine products as a value added forest product.

"There is a lot of things to be done with lodgepole pine; so many different things to do with value-added or special forest products that fit in with sawmills," he said.

Gail Armstrong explained how the MIVAC drying process at Fresno State was unique in drying plants and wood products. The MIVAC is a vacuum with below atmospheric conditions and reaches the boiling temperature below 90 degrees.

"It helps preserve colors and foods, an advantage to normal drying techniques," Armstrong said. "If we could dry a product such as manzanita, we would have the edge on the market."

USFS personnel described how there were only five national forests with stewardship projects.

"It needs community support, because it usually takes an act of Congress to get one approved," noted one USFS employee.

In California, a stewardship in the Tahoe National Forest has recently been formed. North Fork USFS personnel are planning to contact these other programs and interview people involved with them.

An example of a stewardship program was described by one USFS employee as possibly setting aside 500 acres of lodgepole on a long term (10 year) contract. There would be an agreement of products which could be produced, such as lodgepole for furniture and bracken fern for floral arrangements. In return the person or persons entering into the contract would guarantee a product flow and would take care of the land.

"They might have to plant 10 acres of aspen on another portion of the land or agree to grow native plants or build a gully plug to protect a meadow or land," explained Nota.

A concern expressed at the time was that congress changes its view every two to four years.

"The bottom line is I don't trust the government," expressed one logger.

In response, Nota said she felt that once the contract is signed that will not be a concern.



PLANTING FALL COLOR: Members of the Preceptor Lambda Gamma sorority were planting dianthus, petunias, asters and marigolds and trimming shrubs in

the sororities' flower box in downtown North Fork last week. Here (L to R) Mary Myers and Grace Langlands work to add color to the flower box.

MAY 1993

LARRY BALLEW, 683-8733



NORTH FORK-SCENIC BYWAY ART SHOW AND SALE: Artists are invited to enter this year's North Fork-Scenic Byway Art Show and Sale set for Oct. 9 at Town Hall in North Fork. Here David Matthews (Above) of the US Forest Service displays last year's winner, a color photograph of Jackass Lakes by Gregory Mayrer. It was one of the special awards given out for the popular choice of a subject found along the Sierra Vista Scenic Byway, and will be used by the Byway Association for promotion of the Byway. Best of Show, or best of all categories, will be selected by the judges. Popular Choice, or best of all categories, will be selected by a vote of the art show attendees. The show is open to any subject. A first, second, third and honorable mention will be awarded in each of the categories. Categories include: drawings; paintings of oils, acrylic, or alkyd; paintings of watercolor or aqua media; sculpture of wood, stone, metal or compound; photography, black and white or color. Entry fees are \$4 per entry. The show is free admission for those viewing. On Oct. 9, the paintings will be on display from noon to 7 p.m. An artists' reception will be from 4 to 6 p.m. and a community dinner is planned from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Tickets for the dinner are \$6 per person. Guest chefs are US Forest Service personnel. Proceeds from the dinner benefit the North Fork Boosters. Entries for the art show will be received on Sunday, Oct. 3, at Heidi's Photo between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. or at North Fork Town Hall on Friday, Oct. 8, between 5 and 7 p.m. For more information contact US Forest Service at 877-2218 or Larry Ballew at 683-8733.

NF Autumn Festival

The North Fork Autumn Festival will be held Saturday, Oct. 9. The event features the Grizzly Century Bike Rally, Scenic Byway Art Show and Sale, crafts fair and Shuteye Peak Mountain Bike Race. The Grizzly Century starts at 6:30 a.m. and has a 100k (62 mile) route and a 100 mile loop following the Sierra Vista Scenic Byway. The North Fork Lions will be putting on a pancake breakfast in the Town Hall from 5:30 to 10 a.m. the craft fair will run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the parking lot of the Willow Creek Center in front of the post office. It will feature crafters from the mountain area. The second annual Scenic Byway Art Show will start at noon with an artists' reception at 4 p.m. and dinner at 6 p.m. Last year there were over 125 works entered in the show. In addition, the Central California Off-road Cyclists will be sponsoring the Shuteye Challenge Mountain Bike Race which will start at Bass Lake and run all the way to the top of Shuteye Peak. For more information, contact the US Forest Service, 877-2218.

North Fork receives USDA Community Spirit Award at town dinner

Kathy Kelley

Approximately 200 people attended a dinner at Town Hall last Saturday night during which the North Fork community was honored with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Community Spirit Award. North Fork was one of only five communities in the nation, and the only community in California, to receive the award.

"The purpose of the spirit award is to nationally recognize some of the best rural communities in the nation. The award highlights special communities who are dealing with changing times in a proactive and positive way. Communities who have pulled together

*North Fork was one
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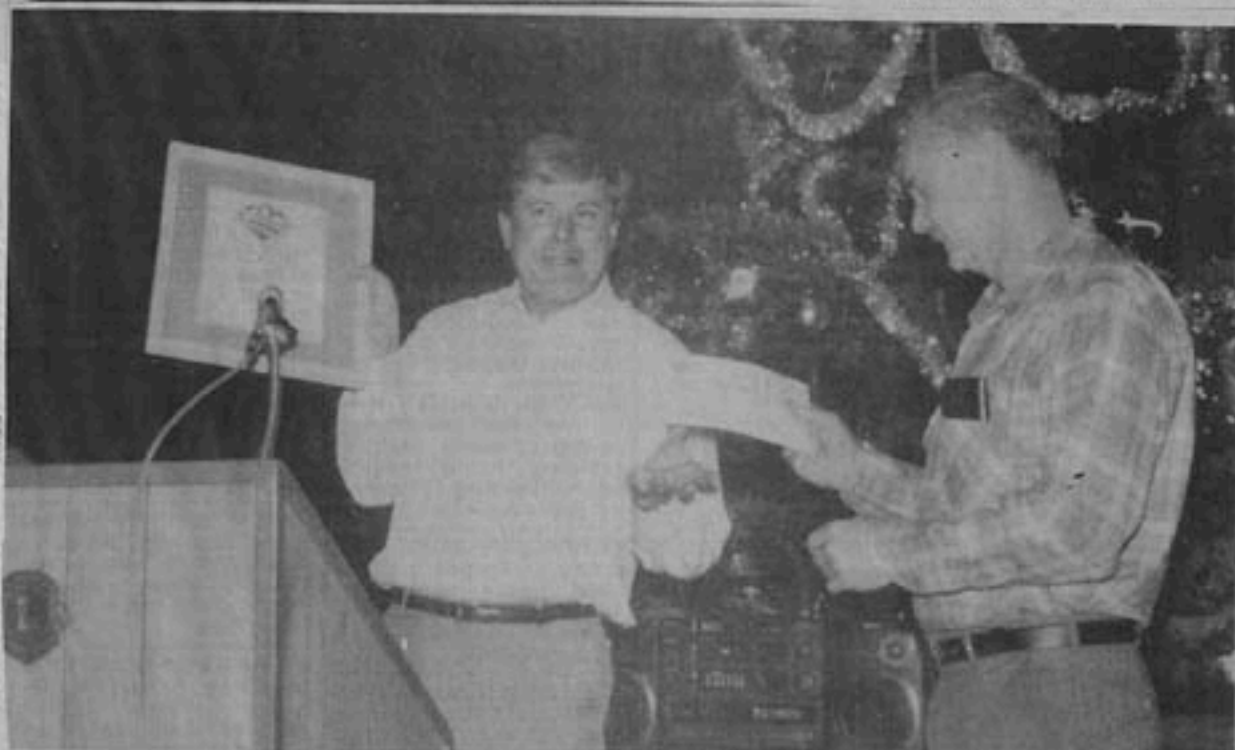
and worked toward a common vision despite current forces that are pulling rural America apart," stated a spokesman.

North Fork was chosen for the award because of its "spirit of working together." Community members have written a Community Action Plan, formed a

Community Development Council, and are currently administering a study that will help develop and expand businesses associated with forest products and value-added manufacturing.

With the award, North Fork received a \$5,000 check, presented by US Representative Richard Lehman. The money will be used to match a Small Business Administration grant (\$7,000) that the community received earlier. The combined dollars will be used to plant trees and beautify the downtown area.

To help celebrate the occasion, 25 organizations and individuals were presented plaques of appreciation to recognize those who made the grant possible.



COMMUNITY SPIRIT AWARD: US Congressman Richard Lehman presented the US Forest Service Community Spirit Award and \$5,000 grant to North Fork Chamber of Commerce representative Cal Barnett, Dec. 11 at a special dinner in North Fork. The money is a national

award given by the USFS "to communities who have made outstanding progress inspite of hardship." North Fork was one of only five communities in the nation and the only community in California to receive the honor.

THURSDAY, DEC. 30, 1993



HONORED CITIZENS AND ORGANIZATIONS: Those who contributed to North Fork's success in receiving the Community Spirit Award were recognized with certificates of appreciation from the North Fork Chamber of Commerce. Those presented with certificates included (not necessarily in order) North Fork Boosters, North Fork Fire Department, North Fork History Group, North Fork Lions Club, North Fork Friends of the Library, Central Sierra Alliance, Sierra Mono Museum, Town

Restoration Committee, USFS-Minarets, Scenic By-Ways Association, North Fork Community Development Council, Grizzly Century Bike Rally, Autumn Fall Craft Show, Squirrel Cage Theatre Group, Coarsegold Resource Conservation District, North Fork Eighth Grade class, Paul Barnes, Neal and Connie Bladen, Cal Barnett, Barbara Dierberger, Cindy and David Martin, Paul and Renata Rich, Jim Willis, Gary Rogers, and Chris Nota.

1993 was a busy year for NF and the local people

January

Bev Cole was named North Fork's Citizen of the Year. The announcement was made by the 1992 Citizen of the Year, Elaine Fink, at the North Fork Booster's Family Night Dinner.

The Coarsegold Resource Conservation District signed a new Forest Stewardship planning contract which is designed to help North Fork / O'Neals area residents. In 1992 they helped 45 landowners, covering 5,000 acres, with cost share programs in conservation practices to manage and protect the soil, water and other resources.

Extensive damage was done in various parts of Eastern Madera County last week by heavy rains. The storm, accompanied by heavy winds at times, brought flooding, down trees, power outages, mud and rock slides, road damage, road closures, school closures and some business closures for the day. Rain totals for the week of Jan. 12-19 were: North Fork, 7.09 inches; Oakhurst, 8.06; Bass Lake dam, 8.76; Yosemite National Park 7 inches of rain in the Valley and 64 inches of snow at Badger Pass.

Maureen Shollenbarger, retired clerk of Sierra Justice Court, was honored Jan. 16, at a testimonial dinner sponsored by the Eastern Madera County Bar Association. She retired Dec. 30 after holding that position for 26 years.

The US Forest Service adopted findings of a technical team of wildlife biologists for a two-year interim management of California's spotted owl habitat in the Sierra National Forest. The USFS will protect large, older trees in areas that provide suitable owl habitat and are known to contain owl nests.

New officers for the North Fork Boosters were introduced at the Family Night Dinner. They are Tammy Armstrong, president; Elaine Fink, vice president; Marilyn Coelho, secretary; Gwen Williams, treasurer and directors Paul Barnes, Robin Ryan, Dot Morris, Ila Barnes and Tom Digilio. According to Armstrong, the Boosters, who are also the North Fork Development Council, have hired a consultant to study economic diversity in North Fork and the possibilities of new wood-related jobs for the community.

February

Two area students, Silas Lyons of North Fork and Darry Manning of Prather, are speaking throughout the mountain area in an effort to raise funds to help the people in the area that used to be Yugoslavia. The two young men spent 2½-weeks in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia over the Christmas vacation. After returning they formed an organization call Relief Now to send funds directly to an agency in Croatia that distributes food, medical supplies and other needs the people have.

Fifty-three third graders in Sharly Finch's and Nancy McPherson's classes at North Fork School participated in the DARE, or Drug Abuse Resistance Education graduation, on Feb. 5. This was the first strictly third grade graduation conducted by Madera County Sheriff's Deputy Darrell Hibbins. According to Hibbins, the program at North Fork will eventually involve all students, kindergarten through eighth grade. In April, fifth through eighth grades will participate in a DARE graduation,

complete with student speakers. Madera County cutbacks, however, could drastically affect the DARE program which is sponsored by Madera County's Sheriff's Department.

After trying to maintain services for several years, in light of state budget problems for about four years, counties' wells have now gone dry. That was the message from Madera County Administrative Office Stell Manfredi. According to Manfredi the state has to balance its budget, so it will shift responsibility to counties, while at the same time taking more money from counties.

Last week President Clinton ordered disaster aid for 19 California counties including Madera County as a result of the flooding damages in January. The preliminary estimate of flood damage in Madera County is \$2.25 million. Fresno County has a preliminary estimate of \$1.4 million.

The Madera County Board of Supervisors approved a grant application from the North Fork Chamber of Commerce through the Small Business Administration for \$10,000. The money will be used for planting trees on state or local government-owned land along Road 200. The project is expected to generate some jobs. The chamber will actually receive \$6,300 or 63 percent of the \$10,000. The remaining 37 percent must be raised through the community.

March

North Fork native Annie Lewis was honored as the "oldest living native of Madera County," before an estimated 150 people March 20 at North Fork Town Hall. The event was attended by such dignitaries as Congressman Richard Lehman, Assemblywoman Margaret Snyder and Madera County Supervisor Harry Baker. Each presented the 100 year plus Lewis with a letter or plaque of congratulations and good wishes honoring the occasion.

NORTH FORK'S OLDEST NEWSPAPER

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1993

The Madera County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously March 23 to impose a utility tax in the unincorporated area of Madera County effective May 1. The action came after weeks of public testimony and changes in proposals for the tax.

Jeff King, a former resident of North Fork, is this year's Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race winner. King now lives in Denali National Park, Alaska.

April

Eleven local area authors and songwriters shared their experiences and talents with students at North Fork Elementary School during the annual Young People's Reading and Writing Festival. Several participants were from the immediate North Fork area, they were Doris Scovel, writer of regional stories; Frank Seely, a retired high school principal who authored a book on retirement life; forester Gary Reed, poet and environmental writer; Chuck Thrapp and Dave Novell, a team of composers and poets; Cathie Campbell, newspaper columnist and magazine writer on horsemanship; and Joy Heisig, writer of children's books.

Spring Valley School cheerleaders won honors at the Clovis West Showcase pep competition. They took a second place trophy home from the competition. Earlier the team had won a third place trophy at the Sierra High School pep competition. Squad members are Jodi Lara, Elisa Gonzales, Valerie Fajardo, Jill Wyman, Krystal Olsen, Talia Smith, Amanda Manuszak, Sarah Rogers, Sarah Christopherson, Karrie Hofman and Jennifer Banks.

Congressman Richard Lehman was in North Fork over the weekend for a Town Hall meeting and to see the North Fork Parkway. He met with Jerry Bishop, chairman of Save Our Streams; Cal Barnett president of the North Fork Chamber of Commerce and others to discuss the Parkway, which is still in the planning stages. The Parkway is to be located on the US Forest Service compound, and will include a walkway, nature trail, rest areas, Native American information

stops and a picnic area. The US Forest Service has made \$20,000 available for the project and California SOS Council has applied for a \$50,000 grant to help fund the project. Lehman has written a letter to the Planning and Conservation League in support of the grant and the parkway.

Treasurers of the Sand - What Archaeology Tells Us About the Bible is the title of a book released and authored by Orley Berg, of North Fork. The book is the result of 30 years of archaeological exploration, research and travel in Bible lands.

The North Fork Community Development Council, in conjunction with the North Fork Chamber of Commerce, has recently signed a contract with Mator Engineering, a forest products engineering and market research company, to determine the market opportunities for value-added wood products and special forest products in the North Fork area. The firm will also train local forest product operators in how to create businesses out of the new forest concept.

May

Spring Valley School's seventh and eighth grade Super Quiz teams were first at the Madera County Academic Pentathlon Super Quiz held at Yosemite High School. The eighth grade team tied for first with Mountain Home School. This year's Super Quiz consisted of a two hour quiz on astronomy.

Clara Radman, a resident of North Fork since 1927, was honored by North Fork Boosters May 8. She first arrived in North Fork with her husband, John, and 10-month old baby, Bob. She spoke of those early days and how she learned to live without running water or glass for windows.

About 50 residents of Eastern Madera County joined approximately 1,000 people from throughout the state in the Citizen's Siege on Sacramento May 19. The protest rally was held on the steps of the state capital to tell Governor Pete Wilson and lawmakers that the citizens wanted the state's tax grab stopped. They were in Sacramento to fight Wil-

son's plan to take \$2.6 billion in local property taxes away from local governments and give it to schools.

Eastern Madera County was the showcase this month for federal and state agriculture programs that are working to reduce wildfire fuels and improve rangeland and wildlife habitats. The tour, sponsored by the Madera County Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) and coordinated by forester Larry Ballew and retired California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection employee Jim Wagner, was to see the work that has been done and has been proposed in establishing a major firebreak and wildlife browse-way around the communities of North Fork and Oakhurst.

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sored by the Madera County Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) and coordinated by forester Larry Ballew and retired California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection employee Jim Wagner, was to see the work that has been done and has been proposed in establishing a major firebreak and wildlife browse-way around the communities of North Fork and Oakhurst.

A crowd estimated at 500 came to view the first North Fork Museum Day May 22 at North Fork School. The event was part of Madera County's Centennial Celebration. Various displays of antique machinery, tools, clothing, photographs and other artifacts used in the North Fork area over the past 100-plus years were exhibited. The event was sponsored by the North Fork History Group which is working to build a permanent facility in which to display North Fork historical items.

June

North Fork Elementary School is one of only six schools in California to receive a grant for the American Indian Early Childhood Education Program. The North Fork grant was selected for its unique focus on having retired teachers as tutors, Native American elders in the classroom and teaching of the Mono language. The grant was written by retired Chawanakee School District Superintendent Grant Sturm.

Frank Clark, interim principal for North Fork Elementary, returned home to Rocklin at the end of June. Clark said he enjoyed his nine months at North Fork and the support of the teachers and community. "This is an exceptional district for both students and administrators," he noted.

Congressman Richard Lehman, from North Fork, is working on a bill that would propose federal recognition of the Mono Indian Tribe of North Fork and five other unrecognized tribes in his district. He hopes to introduce the bill as soon as possible.

Jim Green, the new North Fork Elementary School principal, is busy wrapping up business as principal of Sierra Vista Elementary in the Clovis Unified School District and getting acquainted at North Fork School.

Warren and Laura Morgan have been selected as this year's North Fork Loggers' Jamboree Grand Marshals. The Morgans have been involved in the logging industry in North Fork since 1961.

Frank Bigelow of the Spring Valley 4-H Club is the 1993-1994 Madera County Teen Leader Award Winner. This is the second highest rank a member can earn at the county level. It is a working rank awarded to outstanding Junior / Teen Leaders.

July

The California state budget has shifted \$4.3 million of Madera County's property tax money to schools. Madera County receives about \$11 million a year in property tax which is a "major discretionary revenue source for local government," according to Madera County Administrative Officer Stell Manfredi. In the 1992-93 fiscal year, the state transferred a little over \$1 million from the county's property taxes to the schools.

Christina McDonald was this year's Loggers' Jamboree Queen and Jim Taylor, a professional logger from Redding, was the overall champion logger.

US Forest Service personnel on the Sierra National Forest Minarets District are planting 260,000 trees on approximately 725 acres this year. Normally the district plants 200,000 on 525 acres, but because of the losses of trees due to the previous year's drought, increased planting will be done this year.

Residents of North Fork who attended a community economic development meeting July 10 said they would like to own their own businesses and form a co-op for marketing and business aspects. They discussed a new industry for the community based on value-added forest products and special forest products.

Ron Cohn, the new unit chief of the Madera - Mariposa - Merced Ranger Unit of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, says the public needs to be prepared and have a plan in mind should a fire occur in this area.

August

The North Fork Community Development Council (CDC) will be holding its second community meeting to discuss value-added wood manufacturing and special forest products Aug. 9 at Town Hall. Council President Jean Coffey encourages anyone with an interest in expanding or starting a wood product or special forest product related business to attend. She feels the meeting will be of interest to anyone who is generally interested in the economic future of North Fork in these changing times.

A film crew from the Continuing Education Department of Georgia at Athens was in North Fork recently to film parts of a book co-authored by North Fork resident Frank Seeley. The book, *The Second 50 Years*, was written by Seeley and two other co-authors and released in June 1992. Seeley's contribution to the book was on grandparenting, travel and finances.

Two Eastern Madera County Scouts, Mike O'Connor from North Fork and Zack Oughton from Coarsegold, and leaders from Madera and Fresno counties attended the National Scout Jamboree on the east coast.

Margaret Snyder, District 25 Assemblywoman, spent two-and-half hours touring the Eastern Madera County Forest Stewardship Program and Fresno River Watershed Restoration. She told reporters that half of her district is in the mountains and she needs to learn about agriculture and forestry.

Two North Fork Elementary students, Joseph Fierros, the son of Birdie and Rudy Sanchez, and Marsha Kipp, the daughter of Nancy and Maurice Kipp, reigned as brave and princess for the 23rd annual Indian Fair Days which attracted dancers and spectators from throughout California.

Some 45 people met to discuss and listen to ideas for an action plan presented by Mater Engineering for developing new businesses in North Fork. The basic criteria for consideration is that they be tied to the timber industry either working in the woods or working with wood. Reports were heard on potential products and market trends for florals, ornamentals, evergreens, dried florals, landscape ornamentals, twig and branch products, forest foods and medicinals, mushrooms, flavorwoods (not recommended) and nuts.

Hiawatha, a movie filmed at Bass Lake in 1952, was shown at the Ponderosa Pines Theatre at Bass Lake Aug. 28 and 29. The showing was arranged by the Madera County Film Commission. Several members of the Mono Indian Tribe were used as extras in the film.

September

New teachers at North Fork School this year include Stewart Pinkus, Roz Thrapp, Cheryl Jones and Daryl Warkentin.

The North Fork Rural Health Clinic opened on Main Street in North Fork. The staff includes registered nurse Olivia Shiner, a nurse practitioner Jeff Sabino, medical assistant and receptionist

Sue Turner and chiropractor Steve Pellerin.

Support is mounting for the North Fork Hazard Reduction Committee's proposed wildland fuelbreak and habitat improvement plan. Recently state legislators Margaret Snyder, 25th District Assemblywoman, and Dan McCorquodale, 12th District Senator, wrote letters supporting the proposed improvement project. Joining in that support are members of the North Fork Community Development Council, the North Fork Chamber of Commerce, North Fork Boosters, the Eastern Madera County Chamber of Commerce and approximately 50 individuals from the North Fork area.

Silas Lyons, a North Fork resident and Yosemite High School alumni, has just returned from his second trip to former Yugoslavia. This time he visited Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia. He will give two slide presentations of this trip before he returns to Cal Poly at San Luis Obispo.

Adriana Hastings of North Fork was crowned Mini Mountain Belle for Sierra Mountaineer Days in Oakhurst Sept. 11. The annual celebration will be held this weekend in Oakhurst and Adriana will reign over the special events.

In an effort to provide better browsing for deer and clear fuels for wildfire prevention, the US Forest Service and the California Department of Fish and Game held a prescribed burn last week. The Clearwater Prescribed Burn, as it was called, was located on approximately 810 acres in the Minarets District of the Sierra National Forest. The burn area was located east of the Minarets Highway, west of the San Joaquin River, north of Kinsman Flat and southeast of the Hogue Ranch.

North Fork Elementary School was represented in the Education Fashion Show in Oakhurst by student models Shandon York, D.J. Alkire, Julie Lepley, Mandy Mohulski, Corey Quigely, Scott Whitely and North Fork School staff Elaine Fink and NF Principal Jim Green.

Rosalie Bethel, an elder in the North Fork Mono Indian Tribe, was honored Sept. 25 during the California State Indian Days celebration at the Sierra Mono Museum. Bethel, a native of North Fork, was presented with a plaque and abalone necklace for her work and contributions to the North Fork Mono Tribe. She has been working with linguists at the University of California at Los Angeles. Together they have developed a dictionary for the Mono or Nium language which is expected to be released in December.

October

The Sugar Pine Trio performed on the acoustic stage at the Oakhurst Fall Festival. Chuck Thrapp, Robyn Flory and Dave Novell make up the trio which performs folk, country rock, pop and jazz, including several original tunes.

Ducey's on the Lake was the only central California restaurant selected to be part of the Macy's Chefs Tour this year. Ten other restaurants in the Bay Area participated. On Saturday, Oct 2, 130 people participated in the cooking class and luncheon with Ducey's on the Lake Executive Chef Bill Parker.

The North Fork Autumn Festival, featuring a Grizzly Century Bike Rally, Scenic Byway Art Show and Sale, crafts fair, Lions Club breakfast, Chamber of Commerce spaghetti feed and North Fork community dinner, was held Friday and Saturday, Oct. 8 and 9.

As part of a 26-member panel, Chris Nota, US Forest Service district ranger from North Fork, spoke to leaders across the country gathered in Washington, D.C. on how to improve the national vitality of America's rural economy. The panel discussion was part of a public forum, Rural America: Changes, Challenges and Opportunities, held by Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy.

After 13 years of fighting hydro electric developments on streams in California, Jerry Bishop has announced his retirement from Save Our Streams. Bishop has been president of the organization since 1980. He has decided on Lloyd Carter to replace him as head of the SOS. Carter is a former reporter for United Press International and the Fresno Bee. He is currently studying to be an environmental lawyer.

Tina Flanagan, a dancer with the Fresno Ballet, is a new resident of North Fork. She recently moved from Fresno where she has lived most of her life. She is the daughter of James and Charlotte Flanagan of North Fork.

Local Heroes were honored last week by Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8743, Ahwahnee. This is the third year that the post recognized local firemen and police officers for their work in the community. This year's recipients were California Highway Patrol Officer Dennis Smallen; Ben Nunley a captain with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and a sheriff's reserve deputy; Beryl Ravisconi, Victim Witness Services; Vern Lidfors from the Madera County Sheriff's Department, and Jane Williams, a paramedic with Sierra Ambulance Service.

November

The final election results from Nov. 2 for area school boards were as follows: Chawanakee School District: Spring Valley area - Barbara Bigelow and Dale Overbay. North Fork area - Chuck Thrapp. Sierra Joint Union High School District: Margaret Curtiss and Cal Barnett.

Elders of the Mono Tribe are working with North Fork School officials in a new program designed to teach students the Mono language. Elders participating in the program include Maggie Chepo, Rosalie Bethel, Connie DeSilva, Margaret Hill and Myrtle Hudson.

The Sugar Pine Trio was just one of many acts of the Squirrel Cage Theatre's fall production of A Trip Down Memory Lane. Performances were held Nov. 12 and 13. A North Fork Boosters' community

dinner was held in conjunction with the performances on Saturday night. Performers for the evening included Fred Gott, Elaine Fink and Jerry Roope, Adriana Hastings, Mark Swartz, Brook Cook, Marlene Yokum, Gina DeMasters and Dave Novell, Kendra Mackey, Amanda Johnson, Charlie Coelho, Marilyn Coelho, Paul Barnes, Bill Wagner, and Matthew Bradley and Justin Jones.

Spring Valley School's eighth grade math team and seventh grade duet team placed first overall in the Madera County Academic Pentathlon Math competition. The Spring Valley students took home 11 other medals as part of that competition.

As an outgrowth of ideas presented by the North Fork Economic Development Council, brother and sister Gale and Marvin Armstrong are experimenting with sculptures in manzanita. The two artists and their manzanita sculptures are featured in the Timberline Gallery in Oakhurst.

December

The North Fork branch of the Madera County Library went on line with computers last week. Computers are now used to automate traditional library services such as check out, check in, over due tracking, patron registration and cataloging.

Activities for North Fork youth was the focus at a meeting attended by 10 concerned community members at Town Hall. The community members feel there are problems for the youth in North Fork in that they don't have enough to do. Activities for elementary through high school age children were discussed.

Six Eastern Madera County school districts have begun a cooperative planning effort to work toward the development of secondary school facilities. The Bass Lake, Chawanakee, Coar-

segold and Raymond-Knowles Elementary districts, along with the Sierra Joint and Yosemite High School districts, have assigned representatives to a site selection committee, chaired by Barbara Bigelow of Chawanakee, and a program committee, chaired by Susan Macy of Yosemite. These committees have been meeting regularly with a goal of developing specific recommendations by January.

The North Fork community was honored with the United States Department of Agriculture Community Spirit Award Dec. 11. North Fork was one of only five communities in the nation, and the only community in California to receive the award, which goes with a \$5,000 check. North Fork was chosen because of its "spirit of working together." Community members have written a Community Action Plan, formed a Community Development Council and are currently administering a study that will help develop and expand businesses associated with forest products and value added manufacturing.

Wayne L. Todd of North Fork was named to the Madera County Planning Commission, representing District 5, at the Dec. 14, board of supervisors meeting. He is replacing Don Boltinhouse who retired earlier this year.

The Coarsegold Resource Conservation District (CRCD), a local volunteer organization, will receive the 1993 Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award on Jan. 7 in Los Angeles. CRCD Chairman Ed Klippert from O'Neals received a letter from Governor Pete Wilson the week of Dec. 6, announcing that the CRCD had been selected over 70 applicants for the honor.

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Fresno Bee

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January 2, 1994

A bleak future for Valley's loggers

■ What's happening is a change in Forest Service management.

By Russell Clemings
The Fresno Bee

NORTH FORK

For two decades, logger Russell Walsh has felled the tall sugar pines and firs that carpet the steep hills and ridges of the Sierra National Forest around this eastern Madera County mill town.

But now Walsh is worried. This year, because of recently beefed-up regulations to protect the California spotted owl and other sensitive wildlife, Walsh and other loggers cut less than half as much timber as four years ago.

And the future doesn't look brighter.

"The last two years, it's dropped off a whole lot," Walsh said. "The way it sounds, there just isn't going to be enough raw material to keep everybody going."

In North Fork — as in other timber-dependent towns throughout the western United States — people like Walsh have reason to be worried. After a decade in which the nation's 122 national forests produced timber at a breakneck rate to fuel a housing boom, the pendulum has suddenly swung back.

It's not just the owl. What's happening, in fact, is nothing short of a fundamental change in the whole direction of national forest management.

The Forest Service's new chief, a career wildlife biologist named Jack Ward Thomas, was previously known as the service's leading expert on the California spotted owl's famous cousin, the northern spotted owl of the Pacific Northwest.

Previous chiefs, including Thomas' predecessor, F. Dale Robertson, were career foresters. By replacing Robertson with Thomas, the Clinton administration has ratified — and amplified — a gradual shift in the service's mission.

In place of its historic focus on produc-

ing commodities — from timber to grazing rights to recreation — the service's new goal of "ecosystem management" places greater emphasis on protecting the health of the forests and the wildlife.

For Sierra National Forest supervisor James Boynton, this shift has already produced one clear result. Traditionally, his superiors have judged him by whether his forest meets its timber harvest targets — the mandate to "get the cut out."

Now, however, Boynton says there is less emphasis on meeting timber targets. Soon there may be none at all.

"I haven't seen the elimination of targets yet," Boynton said. "I still have a volume to meet. But my sense is that over the next two years, by 1995-96, I won't have targets."

That this shift in emphasis has already begun is reflected in the forest's harvest records.

Please see Forest, Page A14

"More and more people are viewing the forest as something that shouldn't be harvested."

Gary Rogers, Sequoia Forest Industries



In waiting. Logs rafted at the North Fork sawmill wait to be processed. Environmental concerns and a depressed housing market have lowered timber production and left loggers worried about the future.

Richard Darby
The Fresno Bee



John Walker — The Fresno Bee

Detail work. Phil Ellis inspects a Douglas fir log he will saw into lumber at his North Fork Whiskey Falls Lumber Co.

Forest: Future looks bleak for Valley's loggers;

Continued from Page A1

From 1985 to 1990, peak years of the timber harvest, loggers in the 1.2-million-acre Sierra forest felled an average of 143 million board feet a year — enough to build about 12,000 single-family homes. That's the exact amount of timber called for in the 1982 first draft of the forest's new land management plan.

Subsequently, however, both the plan's target and the harvest fell sharply. When it became final in 1991, the plan called for an average harvest of 88 million board feet a year.

Even that target has not been met. In 1992, the forest yielded 83.7 million board feet. This year, it gave up only 63.6 million board feet. And Boynton predicts that harvests of 45 million to 50 million board feet — one-third of the late-1980s peaks — may be typical in the future.

"More and more people are viewing the forest as something that shouldn't be harvested," said Gary Rogers, public affairs director for the forest's largest timber buyer, Dinuba-based Sequoia Forest Industries.

Underlying the reduced harvest is a marked change in the way the Forest Service manages its domain.

Selective harvesting

The 1982 draft plan called for intensive cycles of clear-cutting and reforestation — "tree-farming," critics called it — on virtually every acre of the forest's harvestable land.

Now, in contrast, the Forest Service is trying to do more selective harvesting, with more reliance on natural regrowth — partly to protect wildlife and partly because of the sheer ugliness of fresh clear-cuts. Instead of a big tree farm, the future national forest may look more like a big park.

Even loggers say the change is overdue: "I really lean more toward the idea that we're out there to take a tree and do a clean job, not leave a mess or do a clear-cut," Walsh said.

But the effects are far-reaching:

■ With its revenue stream shrinking as timber receipts plummet, the Forest Service is growing steadily smaller; layoffs are possible, maybe even likely. Meanwhile, those employees who keep their jobs are being forced into unaccustomed duties — wildlife biologists may start doing fisheries work, for example.

■ Sawmills are cutting back, and some may shut down. At North Fork, Sequoia laid off its second shift in December 1991, slashing its work force from 174 to 67. Four other mills — in Auberry, Dinuba, Madera and Terra Bella — also get timber from the Sierra forest; Boynton predicts at least one will close in coming years.

■ Timber-dependent communities are looking nervously toward the future, wondering how

they will survive if their mills close. Some, such as North Fork, whose mill may be first to close because of its remote location and small size, are trying to map out their futures.

In what even Forest Service critics say is an encouraging sign, the agency is trying to help North Fork make this difficult transition — from timber mill town to something different and still largely undefined.

'Innovative leadership'

Service officials have kicked in not just money — a \$30,000 grant for planning; \$5,000 for rebuilding downtown streets and sidewalks — but also time. Christine Nota, the forest's North Fork-based Minarets district ranger, is an active participant in the town's planning efforts.

"It demonstrates innovative leadership on the part of the Forest Service to show some concern for these local communities," says Louis Blumberg, assistant regional director for the Wilderness Society, an environmental group.

To Cal Barnett, former president of the town's chamber of commerce, the assistance is nothing short of a lifesaver for the town of 2,215 people, where the only big employer is the Sequoia Forest Industries mill.

"We know the timber industry is going to cut back," Barnett said. "The mill has already laid off 50 percent of its work force. In our little community, that's quite an impact."

So far, the town has focused on diversifying its economic base. It wants to develop tourism, for example, by sprucing up the tattered downtown and promoting the forest's 100-mile "scenic byway," which sweeps north and east out of North Fork toward the Ansel Adams Wilderness and the grandeur of the Minarets.

The town has also formed a community development council, which used a \$30,000 Forest Service grant to commission a study of new ways to make money from the forest.

'Alternative' products

The study identified two types of businesses that held promise — producing "value-added" timber products, such as particle board or furniture, and the collection and sale of "alternative" forest products, such as pine cones and dried flowers.

Nota said those two activities have the added appeal of keeping North Fork's economic future tied to its traditional roots in the forest.

"The timber industry is part of the community," she said. "It's how it identifies itself, and we don't want to lose that."

But whether those jobs can attract displaced mill workers and loggers is open to question. The average Sequoia mill worker is paid \$10.47 an hour, plus medi-

cal and dental coverage. The new industries are likely to pay much less.

"There is a hell of a market for pine cones," Barnett said. "But the most a person can make from pine cones is not anywhere close to what a logger can make."

As a result, the community development council has been criticized by some in North Fork, especially timber workers.

"Some of the loggers think we should direct our efforts toward getting the Forest Service to put more timber out," Barnett said. "But the logging is getting cut back, and there's nothing we can do about it."

What may take root in North Fork instead are cottage industries that tread lightly on the forest. One pioneer may be Phil Ellis, who was a sheriff's deputy at Bass Lake until he took early retirement for medical reasons.

Ellis bought his own sawmill in 1983. Powered by an old Volkswagen engine, it sits on rails in his yard, straddling a felled Douglas fir several feet in diameter.

Every year, Ellis bids on about a dozen prime firs or sugar pines, which he saws up and sells to five California window and door manufacturers.

He also cuts lodgepole pine into wafer-thin planks, which he sells to a Madera box maker for assembly into fancy crate-like gift boxes. And his wife, Kathy, makes picture frames.

Between their income off the forest and his pension, the Ellises live well. But Phil Ellis says

not everybody could do what they have done.

"You're not going to find 15 or 20 different guys up here doing this," he said. "The market just isn't there. It's hard to develop customers."

If loggers have any future at all in North Fork, it may be only as part of a new program that the Forest Service is proposing, something called "stewardship."

Under that plan, which would require approval from Congress, the Forest Service would lease small plots of land to logging contractors for 10-year periods.

Fire hazard

The loggers would care for the land, harvesting and selling weedy lodgepole pine that grows in profusion in parts of the forest, where it is considered a fire hazard and an ecological menace.

The loggers could sell the lodgepole for boxes or rustic furniture. Either way, they would produce income from a resource that poses only headaches at present — turning a sow's ear into a silk purse to the benefit of both parties.

"In the past," Nota said, "nobody would buy this stuff. It was ignored."

Walsh says he's interested.

"It's a new concept and I think it's got a lot of potential," he said. By harvesting lodgepole, Walsh said, he could keep his six crew members working most of the year.

But some environmentalists are uneasy. Terry Thompson, northern California and Nevada

Please see Forest, Page A15

Continued from Page A14

national forests chairman for the Sierra Club, said that lodgepole often grows on the fringes of environmentally sensitive alpine meadows.

"If they go in and cut that," Thompson said, "they could really mess up the meadows."

And even if North Fork overcomes these obstacles and turns its plans into reality, it is still unclear how well the Forest Service will manage its own wrenching change from a timber producer to an ecosystem manager.

Environmentalists tend to describe the service's evolution in Herculean terms.

"Change is hard to institute in a large federal bureaucracy. [The Forest Service] is a battleship, and we're the tugboats trying to turn it around," said Blumberg, of the Wilderness Society.

From the inside, though, things look different.

"We're turning around the battleship pretty well," said Nota, the Minarets district ranger. "We're turning so fast that people are falling off the sides."

Incentives for managers

Still, the Forest Service's tradition of managing the national forests for the production of timber and other commodities is deeply ingrained. In part, critics say, that is because laws governing the forests contain incentives that reward forest managers for producing commodities.

For example, a depression-era law called the Knutson-Vanderberg Act permits forest managers to keep part of their timber receipts to spend on reforestation and related activities. Instead of having to rely on a fickle Congress for appropriations, forest managers can, to some extent, pay for their operations with "K-V" funds.

Because of laws such as these, some critics say, the service will

have to learn to swim upstream against its own budget before it can transcend its timber-cutting habits.

"Nothing much is going to change," says Thompson, of the Sierra Club. "It's the budget process. They don't want to lose their employees, and if that means keeping the timber production up ... then that's what they're going to do."

But service officials say it's untrue that forest managers try to generate bigger budgets by cutting more timber. Instead, the officials place most of the blame for their tree-cutting history directly on Congress, which they call the source of the traditional mandate to "get the cut out."

"If the question is do we sell more timber in order to have a bigger reforestation and thinning program and a bigger brush disposal program, ... the answer is no," said Mark Smith, the Sierra National Forest's silviculturist.

"There's just no question."

Boynton said, "that in the past ... Congress collectively made it very clear the amount of timber they were expecting to get off the national forests throughout the United States."

Still, the Forest Service's annual balance sheets make it clear that declining timber harvests are cutting into revenues. In 1989, when the Sierra forest cut 161.3 million board feet, it collected \$20.1 million. Two years later, when 89.4 million board feet were cut, revenues fell to \$10.6 million — a drop of 47 percent.

That means the Forest Service's transition is likely to be a rocky one for Boynton and other agency officials with responsibility for the budget.

"We've been told that we will be receiving a 5 [percent] to 10 percent reduction over time on an annual basis, and that's been going on for about three years now," Boynton said.

Until now, Boynton has been

Forest: Reduced harvest reflects changes in Forest Service management goals



Richard Darby

Ready to go. Logger Russell Walsh checks lumber cut from salvaged logs before it is shipped out.

able to reduce his budget by trimming his staff through attrition and voluntary transfers. But this year may be different. At present, with his 1994 budget still not quite final, Boynton said he still has no assurance of funding for nine of his 325 full-time employees.

Beyond budgetary concerns, Forest Service officials also admit to some confusion over exactly what their new mission is and how to carry it out.

"There's been a tremendous tossing around of the term ecosystem management, and to be very honest, we haven't always understood what everyone else means by that," Boynton said.

"But generally, the concept is that we're going to look at large land areas — possibly watershed

boundaries — and not district units or forest units."

Within those natural boundaries, Boynton said, the service will try to use its old commodity-producing tools — including timber harvests, where appropriate — in a way that protects natural systems instead of destroying them.

"The spotted owl drives us, and it's probably the thing that the public most understands, but there are a number of things out there that we need to be designing the system for," Boynton said.

Some lower-level Forest Service officials say they don't much care what their mission is — as long as it's not ambiguous.

"You can't practice forestry if you're changing direction every

two or three years," said Smith, the forest silviculturist. "I've said throughout my entire career that I can manage the forest anyway you want me to. Just give me some clear direction."

That may not be possible, given the rapid changes overtaking the Forest Service and the uncertainty over details of its new ecosystem management mandate.

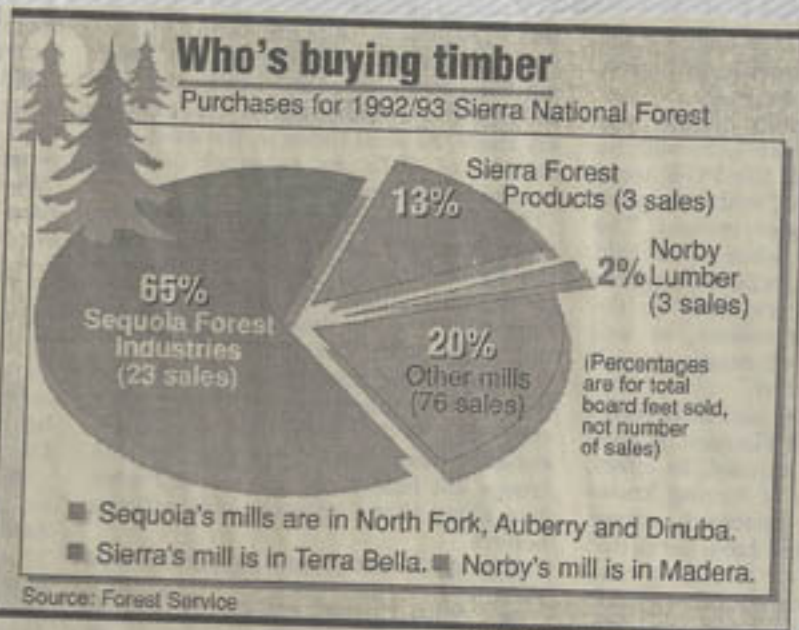
But one thing is no longer being questioned, says Blumberg, of the Wilderness Society:

"The timber cut's come down," he said, "and there's begun to be a realization by everyone that it's going to stay down. We're not going back to the way it used to be."



At work. Kathy Ellis cuts wood in her workshop at her North Fork home to make picture frames. She also makes wood mouldings. Her husband, Phil Ellis, operates the one-man sawmill operation Whiskey Falls Lumber Co. at their home.

John Walker
The Fresno Bee

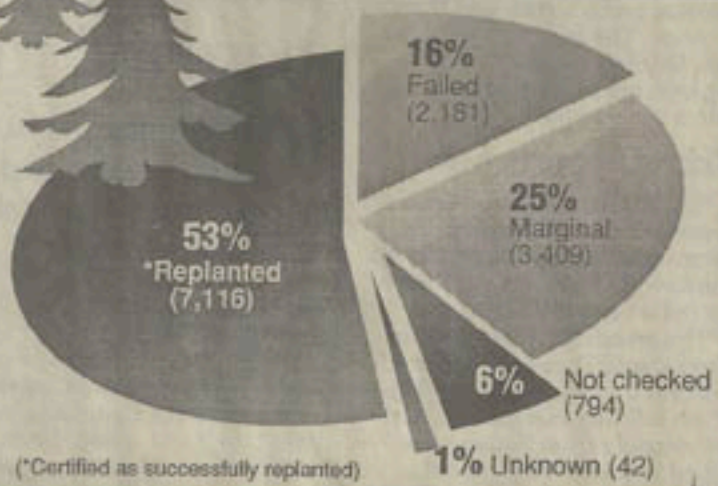


Perry Huffman — The Fresno Bee



Replanting forests

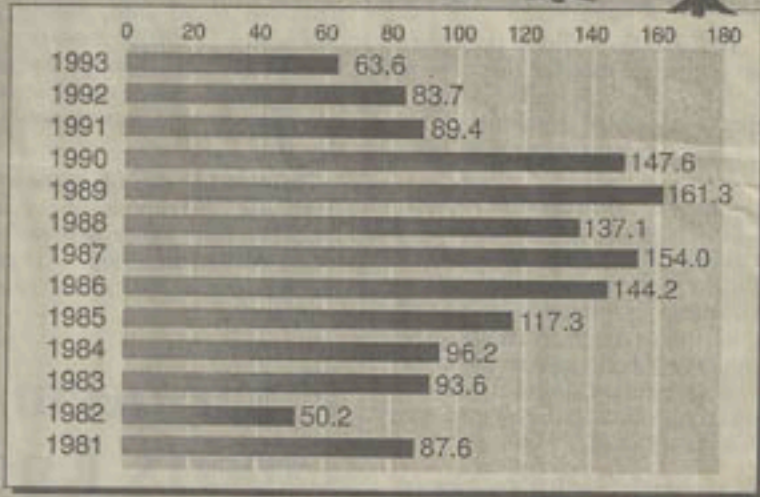
Results of 1982-90 reforestation of 13,542 acres in Sierra National Forest.



(*Certified as successfully replanted)

Timber harvests

Millions of board feet cut in Sierra National Forest by year.



Source: Forest Service

Perry Huffman — The Fresno Bee

A look at NF in '94

Kathy Kelley

What does 1994 look like for the North Fork community? Recent interviews with residents and officials in North Fork produced the following projections:

US Forest Service

Experts in the US Forest Service are predicting major changes including downsizing within the agency this year.

Sierra National Forest Ranger on the Minarets District, Chris Nota, believes that the coming year will create more change than at any time in the USFS's history.

"We have a new chief of the forest, who will accelerate change this year. President Clinton is reinventing government and the USFS will be one of the models. We won't know what that will mean until we see the final budget," Nota explained recently.

Nota feels that once the reorganization and downsizing is complete, the outlook will be positive.

"We will be more responsive to the public, we will be a better agency," she said. "In the future we will not be driven by one project but by the biology of land and public input. Land is the big picture. There will be more emphasis on fish and wildlife, recreation, community development and environmental education.

"We will still be doing timber harvesting, but it won't be a driving force. It will be one tool to improve wildlife habitat," Nota said.

She talked about the negative aspects of the downsizing as having less people and more work.

"Doing business will be very difficult," Nota added.

Even with all the internal changes, the USFS is predicting a larger timber sale than in 1993 off the Sierra National Forest.

Allen Quan, a USFS Sierra National Forest timber management officer, has said the preliminary target figure is 48 million board feet for the 1994 timber harvest off the SNF.

Last year's harvest from the SNF was 30 MBF.

Quan believes figures for this year will actually be higher, closer to 50 or 60 MBF by the end of the calendar year. The end figure will depend on market conditions and an overlapping calendar year. The USFS works on a fiscal year from Oct. 1 to Sept. 30.

School district

The Chawanakee School District has a number of goals and projects set to accomplish for the upcoming year.

Those projects include reaching agreements with land developers on new school sites, implementing new technology programs, reviewing and updating math and science programs and improving facilities at all school sites.

Chawanakee Superintendent Phil Pendley is currently working with developers on several projects including the Rio Mesa project, which consists of five planned developments.

The district is looking at the 1994-95 school year as a year in which "cooperative mitigation agreements with land developers" in the southern part of the district will be finalized.

"We've already been working two years on these agreements and we are ready to put the finishing touches on for when development occurs," announced Pendley.

Rio Mesa won't be completed anytime soon. Final construction is expected to take place for another 15 to 20 years. When completed population estimates are 30,000.

Rio Mesa is a triangular shaped piece of land located in the southern part of the Chawanakee School District. The boundaries are Highway 145 on the north, Highway 41 on the west and the San Joaquin River on the east and south.

Pendley recently talked about the High Lead Ranch development on Road 200 near North Fork. This development, when completed, will be a subdivision with 250 homes on 640 acres.

"There will be other activity with individuals subdividing land too," Pendley added. "We want to get the mitigation agreements in place and identify school sites to fit in with the development and to maintain neighborhood schools. We feel 1996 will be a real boom, or before if the economy is better."

The development of new technology programs for students district wide is something the CUSD is looking at developing this year. The district plans to establish additional computer labs, increase the number of computer classes for students, and develop computer training programs for the staff.

"We want eighth grade students to leave school with the ability to use a word processor and to be able to organize information from a data base for research and writing papers," Pendley stated.

The district is looking toward the future and the use of other new technologies such as electronic mail and tapping into a new fiber optics cable provided by Ponderosa Telephone.

Some of the new technology which will be used for improving communications between students and teachers and bringing information and programs into the schools.

This year the board of trustees implemented a new type of physical education program for students. It is the first of its type for the district.

Since it is the "base year" for the program instructors are working to develop age-appropriate programs for students.

"The program was implemented because research shows physical, emotional and intellectual development are all connected," Pendley explained.

This is the year for the state review of science and math programs. These programs are expected to match state guidelines for each grade level. The district will be reviewing programs in order to update.

A new program for eighth grade

See Page 3

A look at North Fork in 1994—

Continued from page one

students is planned to help students be better prepared for high school. The students are assigned to a counselor. They will visit the high school that the students plan to attend the following year. The program is expected to help students find out about courses and activities they are interested in at that high school.

Sixth through eighth grade students will participate in a Pen Pal program with high school students. The two groups are expected to exchange correspondence and help those entering high school to improve study habits and organizational skills.

Pendley said the district was working to enhance site councils and make them stronger.

Also, they want to improve communications between the community. A district wide newsletter is planned. It will be sent to each parcel patron in the district with summaries of school board meetings and highlights of school programs.

School facilities are targeted for improvement as well. In the Sierra View and Spring Valley school areas, parent clubs have agreed to match board expenditures on expanding playground facilities.

The board recently approved expenditures for new backstops at each school site so students will not have to go outside the area to play games.

Pendley talked of possibly forming a community service district in the Ranchos and O'Neals areas in order to fund a multi-purpose room (combined cafeteria, gym and auditorium) at Sierra View and Spring Valley school sites.

According to Pendley, growth is an important issue in regards to state funding. If the district stops gaining new students, the district will lose three to five percent in revenues.

"In previous years, such as 1992-93, it made a difference, but we've been preparing for five years of difficult times and unless something catastrophic happens there will be no significant impact. We must keep expenditures within reason," Pendley added.

NF Chamber of Commerce

North Fork Chamber of Commerce former president Cal Barnett feels the new year will be one of small, but steady growth for the community.

Barnett, who recently stepped down as president of the North Fork chamber, feels that economically 1994 will not be much different than the previous year.

"We're not really affected by the national economy as badly as a large city because the school is our largest employer. Only the downsizing in the timber will affect the area.

"As long as Fresno and Los Angeles areas continue to have problems, rural areas will be attractive to people from those areas. With the exception of the timber industry our economy will be equivalent to 1993," Barnett said.

Barnett points to building permits taken out with the county over the past four years: In 1993, North Fork had 29 building permits for new home construction; in 1992 there were 37 permits; in 1991, 47; and in 1990, 37. These totals equal 150 homes over the last four years.

"Slow steady program is my estimation of how things will go," Barnett said. "If we continue to get housing stats similar to 1993, we will actually have more people moving in than out."

In response to more reduced timber sales off the Sierra National Forest, the chamber is studying the possibility of a lodgepole stewardship program with the US Forest Service.

"It is a plan that may open up more logging on the Sierra National Forest," explained Barnett. "It won't happen in 1994, but it may be a reality in 1995. It could become a small logging business that could expand."

NF Mill

Since 1991, Sequoia Forest Industries has eliminated one shift at each of its three saw mill sites, North Fork, Auberry and Dinuba.

The same year they processed 150 million board feet of timber a year. Today, because of reduced timber harvests on the Sierra and Sequoia national forests, the company is begging for 75 MBF to keep one shift at all three mill sites going.

Last month the company closed the cogeneration plants at both North Fork and Auberry. Last week the SFI mill in Auberry closed.

SFI public affairs spokesman Gary Rogers points out that the company is almost completely dependent on timber sales from the Sierra and Sequoia national forests.

"SFI is not like logging companies in the Pacific Northwest who own at least 20 percent of the land they log," Rogers said.

Besides the three SFI mills, there are two other mills that depend on timber from the Sierra and Sequoia national forests.

"If just one of our shifts needs 25 MBF and they (USFS) are only putting up 48 MBF, there will be a problem," Rogers stated.

In previous years SFI could stockpile up to two years worth of timber at each mill. Today the North Fork mill has eight to nine months of timber bought, according to Rogers.

The USFS Minarets District out of North Fork is working on a yearly sale of two MBF of lodge pole.

"This would help," Rogers acknowledged, "but what is hurting the industry now is the Spotted Owl survey, which is expected to be completed next year."

Rogers and other timber harvesters are hoping owl researchers will find what they believe: There isn't a need for so much territory for the owl; there are more owls than was previously thought; and that the owl lives everywhere, not just in old growth.

Rogers and others believes that old growth left unmanaged will eventually die and become fuel for a wildfire.

"Some of these dead trees are large and have a four-foot

diameter," he described. "The USFS has always done a good job on timber harvesting by providing for a sustained yield, but what happens to old growth when it dies?"

"You can't take the mill out of the equation," Rogers stated. "We're trying to stay in business. We are watching and waiting to see what the USFS will do."

In the past SFI has diversified to make value added products such as pallets, bark and electricity.

"We do all of the things with the value added products. The co-gen was a \$10 million investment at North Fork and at Auberry," Rogers noted.

If logging is stopped in this area as it has been in the Pacific Northwest, Rogers predicts the cost of lumber will go up and more than just those in the timber harvesting business will be affected.

"We may be forced out of North Fork, but we will go kicking and screaming. We have stayed a lot longer in North Fork and Auberry because of the owner, Ron Yanke. There are no stockholders. When I worked for another company there were stockholders who demanded we shut the mill every time there was a bad market," Rogers stated.

SFI will be waiting for what it considers "hard figures." Because of the spotted owl and its nesting, logging is mostly done between May and September. The most important thing for the mills is having enough timber on hand for a full year.

"To run three shifts we need 75 MBF, and it needs to be spread evenly over the year," explained Rogers. "In 1985, we had four years of timber bought ahead, now we are down to 16 months worth of timber."

Community Development Committee

The Community Development Committee is made up of volunteers from North Fork organizations and government agencies such as the Chamber of Commerce, North Fork Boosters, Scenic Byways Association as well as local government agencies as the US Forest Service and the Chawanakee School District.

The CDC works on a general theme of cooperation between the 29 individual members and six organizational members. Altogether the committee represents approximately 200 people, according to CDC President Jean Coffey.

A major part of the organization's work is to network all the community agencies and organizations and utilize the community's volunteer resources.

As part of its agenda for the new year, the committee will be making decisions as to what the CDC's overall direction will be.

"Which way do we steer the community? Are we a bedroom community or do we encourage clean industry in order to give our young people jobs," Coffey suggested.

So far the CDC has set seven goals for the new year. They include: supporting and forming business co-ops; overseeing the installation of underground utilities, rebuilding the "crazy Y" intersection; planting trees and repaving downtown.

Mater Engineering from Oregon has been hired by CDC as a consultant to teach individual businesses how to use wood and other forest related products.

In phase I, Mater reported on the availability of forest products: florals; wood; mushrooms, and other forest products and their uses.

In the second phase of the Mater program, which is due to start this year, the Oregon based firm will work as consultants for any new businesses being formed.

Currently a co-op of North Fork cottage industries is packaging under the name North Fork Naturals.

CDC is also working with California State University at Fresno and its MIVAC program. MIVAC is a new experimental drying process. CDC members have been providing CSUF with different types of forest products to dry. Together they have tried everything from florals used for floral decorations to hardwoods for furniture.

"It's been promising, we've found it dries things very quickly without cracking. We've had interest generated, but no one can afford the process at this point. It's like buying the first microwave. It's too expensive for a small group or business until it gets past this experimental stage," Coffey explained.

In other plans for the new year, CDC wants to hire and train an executive director. Also, they want to complete the incorporation process as a non-profit organization.

The committee's overall goal, according to Coffey, is to keep the cooperation going amongst the North Fork representatives from each organization.

"We have opposing views within our membership. There are environmentalists and members of the Central Sierra Alliance," noted Coffey, "but there is a real spirit of cooperation to keep North Fork as it is and still have jobs for people."

Meeting held in North Fork on economic alternatives and options

Kathy Kolley

In the wake of the North Fork Mill closure, a meeting of community members was held last week to discuss other economic alternatives and options available.

The meeting was called by Willard Nelson, a North Fork logger, and other community members who are concerned with the affects of the closure.

Talk centered around alternative industries, including tourism.

To bring more tourists to the area, it was agreed that signs to North Fork should be posted on Highway 41, for both south bound and north bound traffic, before Road 200.

"Tourism is the third largest industry in California," stated Noreen McDonald, executive director of the Eastern Madera County Chamber of Commerce.

McDonald went on to discuss SierraLand, a proposed entertainment development in Oakhurst. She told those present that Oakhurst has many tourists in town with nothing to do once they get there. SierraLand would offer a solution with entertainment proposed from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

She urged local artists to participate in SierraLand by joining together and renting booths in which to display their work.

McDonald reported that the state of California is advertising to encourage tourism within the state. Eighty-five percent of the tourism is generated from within the state, with the remaining coming from the US and other countries.

According to McDonald, 14,000 buses go through Yosemite National Park every year. Communities around the park, such as Mammoth and Mariposa, spend millions in advertising to attract these tourists. She noted the local tourism council is working on its own campaign.



BEAR SCULPTURE: This bear sculpture is one of three purchased by Jim Willis, owner of the North Fork Super Market, in an effort to make the store more attractive to visitors. The bear is the work of Fresno artist Ken Mize.



NORTH FORK MILL CLOSED: Some 50 to 60 trucks, cars and a wagon with mules filed down Main Street last Friday in recognition of the closure of the North Fork

skelton crew of eight or nine men is expected to working in the North Fork yard drying and sorting lumber. After that a maintenance crew, plus two log loaders

Clean-up day in North Fork

There will be a North Fork town clean-up Saturday, March 5, starting at 10 a.m. at North Fork Market.

The clean-up day is being organized by a number of community groups in order to make preparations for film crews.

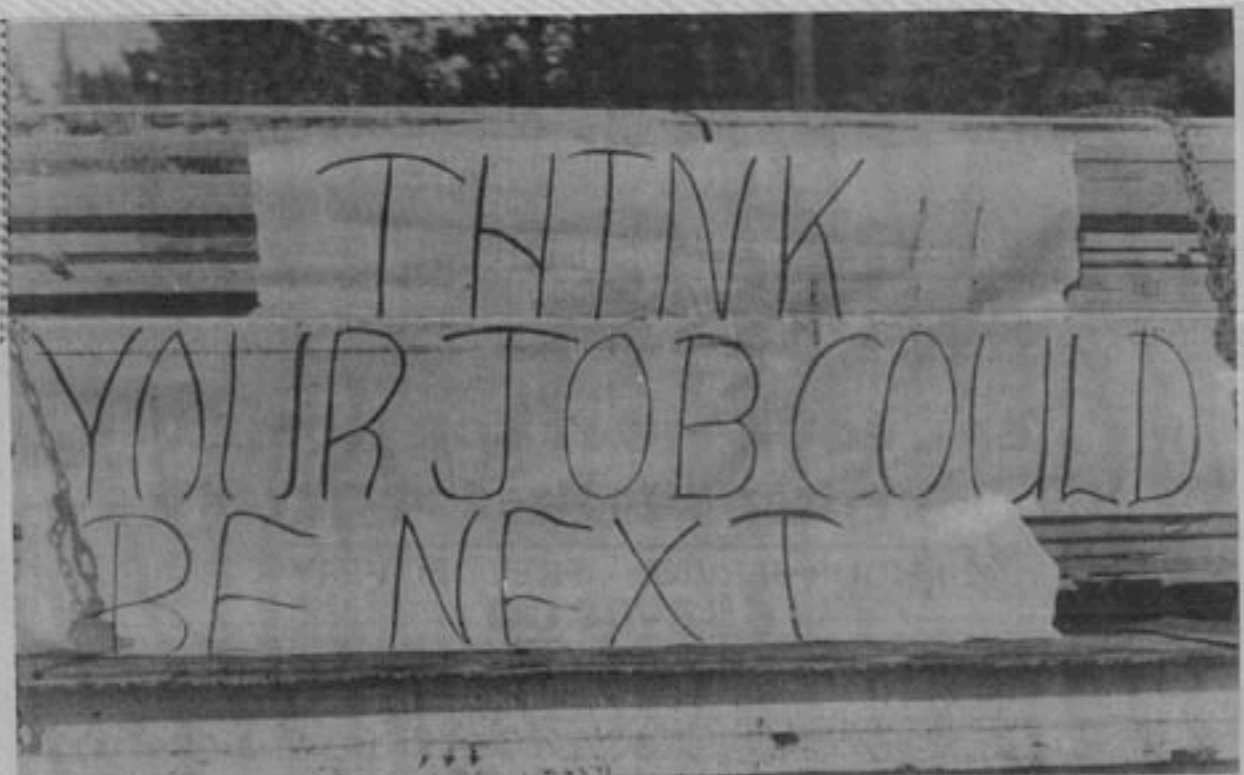
According to a community spokesman, filming will take place in the North Fork area to produce a special on the exact center of California.

Additional volunteers are needed for the clean-up. Organizers are asking those who have rakes, shovels, weed eaters, trash bags and pick-ups to take them. For more information contact the North Fork Chamber of Commerce at 877-2410.



PRELIMINARY WORK ON INTERSECTION: Madera County Road Department is working on drainage at the "Crazy Y" intersection in North Fork. According to a

spokesman, this is work that must be done before underground utilities, a new water system, new pavement and trees are installed later this year.



A comment about the possible affects of the mill closing on the local economy covered this load of lumber leaving the mill.

The end of an era!



These boards were some of the last cut on the final day.



Charlie Rank and his mules trotted through town with a banner that read "the end of an era."

\$1.5 million in grants for North Fork project

Kathy Kelley

A partnership between 13 different agencies has resulted in contributions of \$1.5 million through grants and donations for what is being called the North Fork Summer of 94 Project.

A spirit of partnership has prevailed in spite of problems, the agencies involved have worked together in order to meet some of the grant deadlines, a spokesman noted.

A problem identified in July could have set back or jeopardized part of the project. It was found that some 50-year or older storm drains under the "Y" intersection needed to be replaced. Additional work would push timelines back and miss the \$20,000 tree planting grant deadlines.

Since then, Madera County facilitated work on that problem so that delays were at a minimum. District 5 Supervisor Harry Baker was at the July co-ordination meeting. After listening to the problem he went back to the other supervisors and they were able to put a bid out for paving and reconstruction on the "Y" intersection without further delay.

At the same time the agencies awarding the tree grants pushed those deadlines back. The trees,

which must be purchased from local nurseries, and planted by local landscaping contractors, still have to be in the ground by the end of October, according to David Martin of Waterwise Landscape Architects.

"The coordination and cooperation is historic, the project has been done in record time," commented Chris Nota, a coordinator for the North Fork Summer of 94 Project and the US Forest Service Minarets district ranger. "What I like about this project is that it started as a grass roots effort and in time other agencies came in with a spirit of partnership that made it a reality."

The entire project involves three different areas: The construction of a new and improved public water system; buried utility lines and installation of new street lights and the repaving of North Fork's Main Street.

Work is expected to start on repaving the road after the Labor Day weekend, beginning with the "Y" intersection.

By Oct. 1, the curbs for the new street lights are expected to be finished. The curbs will protect the 12 new street lights after they are installed. The lights, which are

from 16 to 20 feet tall, will light up the downtown area between Connie's Kitchen and the North Fork Super Market.

According to a Madera County spokesman, a new pump is in place and most of the water lines and tanks were expected to be sterilized by Labor Day.

There are still residents who are not hooked up to the new water system. Connecting to the system for homeowners can take between 30 and 60 days. The water service has already been installed along property lines. It is up to the property owner to hire their own plumber and to contact the health department for an inspection once the connection is made.

Those working as partners on the project include PG&E, State of California, Madera County, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Farmers Home Administration, Small Business Administration, US Forest Service, Ponderosa Telephone, Sierra Telephone, North Fork Chamber of Commerce, North Fork Community Development Council, North Fork community members and Waterwise Landscape Architects.



THE NEW VIEW OF THE BASS LAKE, SCENIC HIGHWAY, MAIN STREET INTERSECTION NEAR THE POST OFFICE



AN EXISTING VIEW OF THE BASS LAKE INTERSECTION BY THE POST OFFICE



NEW STREET LIGHTS: Neal Bladen inspects a prototype of the new light pole for North Fork's downtown area. The design of the pole was taken from the R-UDAT (Rural-Urban Design Assistance Team) study done for North Fork. The design will allow for an extension of another arm from which banners of com-

munity events can be hung. PG&E is supply the wire and the light for the pole. They will hook the light up once it is installed. Goodwin Lumber company is providing the lumber at cost. "It's a community effort," stated Bladen.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1994

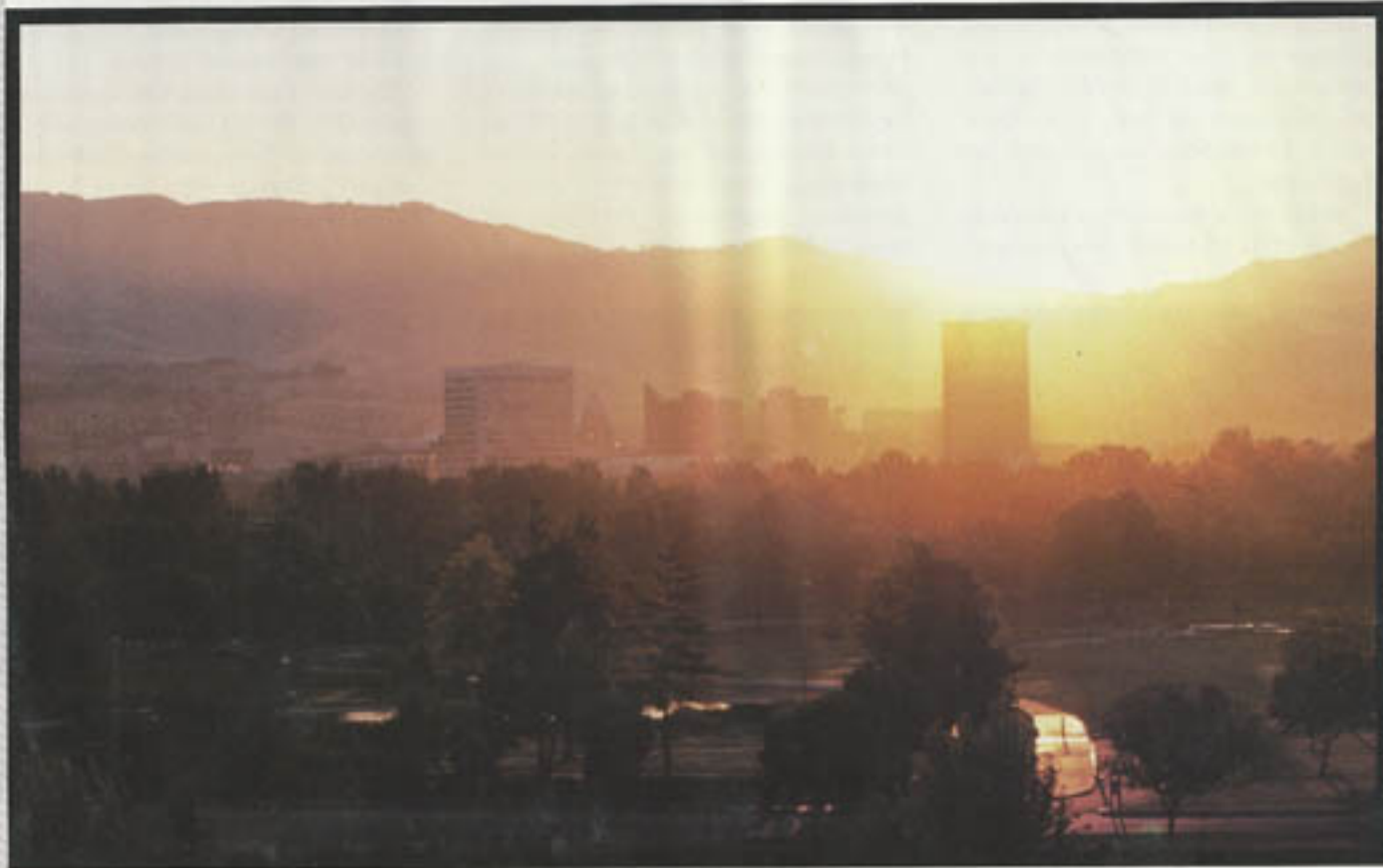


ATM IN NORTH FORK: Helping to announce the location of the new Yosemite Bank ATM (automatic teller machine) and night deposit services in North Fork are community members and bank officials. Pictured last week near the proposed ATM island location are (L to R) Jim Flanagan, president of the North Fork Chamber of Commerce; Doug Dearing, manager of the Yosemite Bank in Oakhurst; Jean Coffey, president of the North Fork Economic Development Council;

Lorelei Begley, Yosemite Bank senior vice-president; Tom Dowlan, president of Yosemite Bank; Tom Wheeler, representative of Frank Wyle, the land owner; Jim Willis, owner of North Fork Super Market; Steve Cowdrey, US Forest Service civil engineer; Patrice Jensen, architect for the new ATM; Steve Welch, executive vice-president of the Pines Resorts; and Cal Barnett, North Fork Chamber of Commerce.



(Above) One of Boise's resort-like recreational opportunities (Below) The City of Trees at sunset



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Nez Perce
National
Forest

Rt. 2, Box 475
Grangeville, ID 83530
(208) 983-1950

Reply To: 3610

Date: May 24, 1994

Jean Coffey, President
Community Development Council
P.O. Box 1435
North Fork, CA 93643

We would like to express our appreciation to you for your participation as a member of the Chief's National Rural Community Award review team, during the week of April 25 - 28. You played a vital role on the team. Your sincere attitude, interest, and knowledge of rural community partnerships were instrumental to the success of selecting well qualified recipients for this year's awards.

We would also like to take this time to thank you for your support of the National Rural Community Assistance Program.

Sincerely,

Maryalice Stoner

MARYALICE STONER
Process Manager
Chief's RCA Award
Nez Perce National Forest

cc: S.Odell





Tuesday, May 31, 1994

ATTENDED BY - JEAN COFFEY, PRES. & CHRISTINE NOTA-VICE PRES.

National Rural Community Assistance Partnership Meeting
"Rural Communities in Transition: Changes and Choices"

7:30 - 8:30 a.m.	Registration for Training Sessions	2nd Floor Lobby
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Training	
	Rocky Mountain Institute (all day) Rural Development 101 (morning)	Library Lansing Room
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Registration	2nd Floor Lobby
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	Lunch on your own	
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.	RO/Area RCA Coordinators Meeting	Corning Room
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Training	
	Rocky Mountain Institute (cont.) Rural Development 201 Alternate Dispute/Conflict Resolution	Library Lansing Room Ithaca Room
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Focused Networking Opportunities	
	GIS Technology/Applications Ecosystem Management/Communities Tourism Technology Transfer to Benefit Rural Communities	Newfield Room Danby Room Dryden Room Enfield Room
3:00 - 10:00 p.m.	Registration	Cortland Room
5:30 - 7:30 p.m.	No-Host Social	Cortland Room



Coffey, Jean

Tuesday May 31
morning

- Rocky Mountain Institute (all day)
- Rural Development 101

afternoon

- Rural Development 201
- Alternate Dispute/Conflict Resolution

Wednesday, June 1
afternoon

- Agritourism
- Community-based GIS
- Benefits of Accessible Communities
- New Age City-States & Their "Real Economies"
- Special Products, Markets, and Sustainability
- Social Infrastructure: Why is it Essential?
- Leadership Development
- What We're Learning: North, South, East, & West
- Issues & Opportunities for Tribal Governments

Thursday, June 2
morning

- Planning for Tourism
- Ecotourism
- Collaborative Planning
- Changing Land Issues
- Sustainable Communities and Ecosystems
- Exploring the Rural-Urban Connections
- Special Forest Products: Agencies' Strategies
- Working with Multi-Community Collaboration
- Performance-based Measures
- What We're Learning: North, South, East, & West

afternoon

- Finger Lakes Land Trust
- Cayuga County
- Agritourism
- Ecotourism/Watchable Wildlife
- Diversifying Agriculture-Beyond Wineries
- Multi-Community Collaboration

Friday, June 3
morning

- Planning for Tourism
- Watersheds and Local Economies
- New York State: A Rural Focus
- Agroforestry: Ideas and Opportunities
- Special Products, Markets, and Sustainability
- Dynamics of Poverty
- NGO's - What They Can Do for You!
- How to Manage Revolving Loan Funds
- Co-ops - Another Choice for Communities

Saturday, June 4
all day

- Penn Yan Windmill and Wine Trails
- Watkins Glenn Racetracks and Wineries
- Catskills Watershed
- Corning: Choosing to Stay Competitive









Road
Reconstruction
3 pictures



"MOUNTAIN APPLEFEST"
Sat. & Sun. Oct. 8 & 9
Pines Village - Bass Lake
9 a.m.-4 p.m.

- Arts & Crafts Fair
- Mountain Grown Apples
- Home Baked Pies & Cobblers
- Baking Contest • Fresh Cider
- Tri-Tip, Hot Dogs & Ice Cream
- Apple Pancake Breakfast
Sunday 6-11 a.m.



- Starlight Square Dancers
(Both days 1 p.m.)
- Sponsored by Bass Lake
Chamber, Yosemite
Apple Growers Assoc.
& Froggy 101.1

642-3676

**"NORTH FORK
FALL FESTIVAL"**
Saturday, Oct. 8

- Bicycle Rally 7 a.m.
- Pancake Breakfast 6-10 a.m.
- Art Show noon-7 p.m.
- Craft Fair 10-5 p.m.
- History Display noon-6 p.m.
- BBQ Tri-Tip & Chicken Dinner
2-7 p.m.
- Sierra Mono Indian Museum
9-5 p.m.

Sponsored by North Fork
Community Development
Council

877-2218



North Fork Fall Festival to be held Saturday, Oct. 8

The North Fork Fall Festival will be held Saturday, Oct. 8. One of the main features of this year's event is the Grizzly Century Bicycle 100-mile rally which starts at 7 a.m. and loops through the Scenic Byway.

The North Fork Lions Club will serve a pancake breakfast at North Fork School's Kennedy Hall Oct. 8 from 6-10 a.m. The menu includes sausage, eggs cooked to order, orange juice and coffee.

Other events include the North

Fork Craft Fair which will be held in the post office parking lot from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Lunch, prepared by the North Fork eighth grade, will be available.

For more information about the craft fair, contact the US Forest Service, 877-2218.

The Sierra Mono Museum will be open especially for the event between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

In addition, a sidewalk sale and the Shut-Eye Peak Mountain Bike Challenge is planned for Oct. 8.

Construction work on NF's 'Y' intersection going ahead

Kathy Kelley

In spite of problems, construction work on North Fork's "Y" intersection is moving ahead.

Work on reconstruction of the "Y" intersection and its connecting roads, Road 225 and Road 222, has been contracted to Agee Construction of Clovis. The work schedule was to start Sept. 26 and continue through November.

Traffic stops during the first week are expected to be intermittent and have minor impact to traffic, according to Harry Harrison of the Madera County Road Department.

A schedule of the first week's activities was posted by the Madera County Road Department for Agee.

According to Jim Mincy, general superintendent and vice president of the company, the grading the company will be doing is expected to provide the biggest inconvenience to local traffic. Before this happens, the contractor has agreed to notify the public of traffic delays.

Mincy noted there could be additional delays with traffic if they have to blast rock.

This week the company was to move equipment to the site, grind asphalt, remove guard rails, existing curbs and gutters at designated spots, remove existing storm drains in the intersection, and one or two trees and brush near the bridge on Road 225.

Cooperative meetings between all agencies involved are continuing in order to deal with issues that arise. A meeting was held Sept. 23 and an Oct. 21 meeting has been scheduled.

"It's a complex project with many parts, but we are continuing to work together," noted Chris Nota, district ranger with the US Forest Service Minarets District and one of the project's coordinators. "You can't do a project like this without some inconvenience."

Last week, at the Sept. 23 meeting, it was reported there had been confusion over billing costs for connecting to the new water system. Some landowners had reported they were being charged additional fees for their water connection.

In August Madera County Supervisors voted to charge a \$500 connection fee if done before Oct. 31, and \$1,000 after that date. The board approved the date of Nov. 15 as the date the Weatherly / Deer Park water system will be abandoned.

Responding to that particular situation, District 5 Supervisor Harry Baker asked those who feel they have been over-charged to detail the problem in writing and mail it to him at either: Government Center, 209 West Yosemite Avenue, Madera, CA 93637; or P.O. Box 219, Oakhurst, CA 93644.

Suggestions were made by homeowner representatives to have the Madera County Engineering Department send a letter to property owners listing dates when the department needs to hear from homeowners.

In October PG&E is expected to complete its substructure work, pulling cable and putting in underground transmitters, according to Rich Paulsen, a spokesman.

The utility company will then work on the new street lights and with Madera County Road Department in removing utility poles.

Paulsen told coordinating agencies the electrical system will be complete, including street lights, by November. He noted that PG&E wouldn't be able to remove all the overhead wiring until all the homeowners converted. They have until April, he said.

Cal Barnett, a North Fork Chamber of Commerce representative, reported that all the street

lights had been sold or sponsored. He noted that PG&E, Jim Willis and John Olson's company (Giersch & Olson) had purchased some of the remaining lights.

Barnett also spoke about the unpaved area in front of the chamber's office.

"The bump in the road there is because of work being done by the State Environmental Agency. We don't know who did the pollution. Bob Quick, (a former gas station owner) got a clean bill when he closed the station. We don't know anyone from Madera County who hasn't cooperated," Barnett explained.

Baker acknowledged the town's achievement in bringing about so many changes at one time.

"This is historic to bring so many improvements," noted Baker. "I doubt within the history of Madera County, a community got its roads cleaned-up, a new water system, and new lights all at one time. It's something for North Fork folks to realize and come together."

New hours for the NF Post Office

Starting Monday, Oct. 3, the North Fork Post Office will be reducing its window hour service, according to North Fork Postmaster Ed Lamb.

The post office will be closing Monday through Friday at 4 p.m. It will be open Saturdays from noon to 2:30 p.m.

Lamb notes that North Fork is one of the few post offices that is still open Saturdays and stresses they will maintain it as long as possible.

He also would like to assure the public that delivery will not be affected in any way.

"Basically, the Postal Service, like everyone else, must carve up the budget and cuts have to be made," said Lamb.



CEDARS INTERPRETIVE TRAIL: Seventh grade students (above) from North Fork School with their teacher Bill Dodge (center) are doing volunteer work on the US Forest Service handicap trail in North Fork. The trail was originally built 15 years ago and is currently being extended and upgraded with new handicap standards. The standards address the trail's grade, resting areas and railings. "Fifteen years ago there weren't standards for handicap accessibility," noted USFS spokesman Steve Cowager. Most of the work on the trail has been done by volunteers. Two of Bill Dodge's seventh grade classes are working with other volunteers, painting, hauling lumber and hauling dirt. One of the other volunteers is Neal Bladen, from North Fork, who has worked on the trail every day since July. Carpenter Wally Hieronimus, who Bladen assists, is on special detail from the Tahoe National Forest. Earlier work was done by Youth Conservation Corp crews from Los Angeles and Minarets resource personnel. According to

Dodge, the North Fork seventh graders will combine their work activities with environmental studies. "Once they get used to what we are doing, they will observe the seasonal changes and keep a journal about what they have accomplished," Dodge said. In addition Alan Root, a wheelchair user, has been to see each of the classes and has spoken about making the trail wheelchair accessible. Also, the students were given a wheelchair in which they can do their own testing. "It's a beautiful trail," stated Dodge, "an interpretive trail that will benefit future students. This area has been used in the past by schools from all over for environmental education." When finished, the trail will extend a total of 3,300-feet from the US Forest Service Minarets Station to Road 225 approximately 150 feet north of the county bridge. The original trail was 900-feet in length. Plans proposed for the future include making the trail cross Road 225 and extend up to the North Fork campus and to a proposed park in the area.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1994

NF Town Hall Autumn Festival Community Dinner is Oct. 8

An Oct. 8 Town Hall Autumn Festival Community Dinner will be served from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. The Bike Rally riders will start coming in about 2 p.m. and will want to eat early, according to an event spokesman.

The US Forest Service is preparing a choice of tri-tip or chicken entree served with potatoes, corn, salad and rolls.

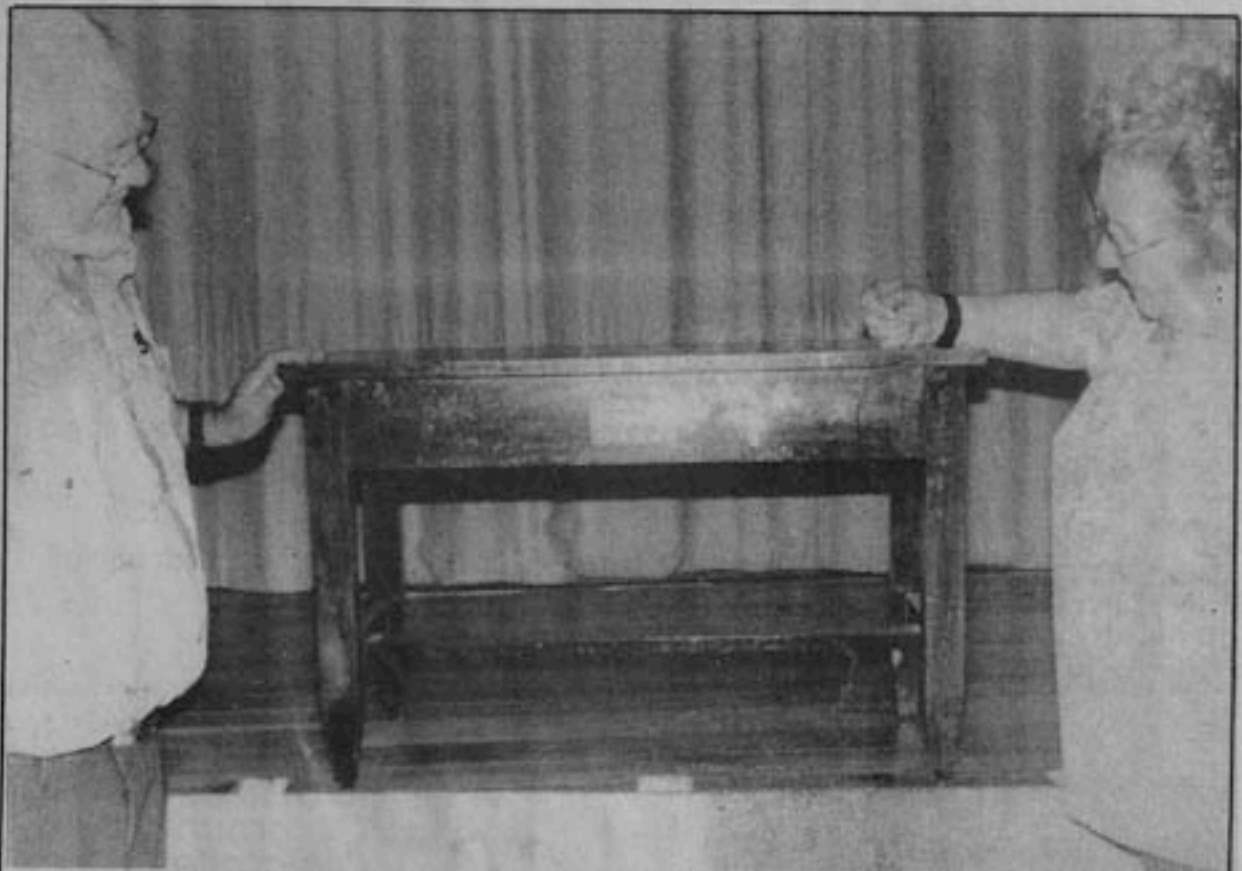
Tickets for the dinner are available at Sierra Vista Clothing and Gifts in North Fork. Pre-sale

tickets are \$6 and at the door \$7.

The Red Buds are preparing desserts available for sale from 5-7 p.m. for \$1 per serving.

Also, there will be a no-host Booster bar, live music and the Scenic By-Way art show. Nearby at the Scout Building will be the North Fork history display. The art show will be open from noon-7 p.m. The history display will be open from noon-6 p.m.

For more information call the US Forest Service at 877-2218.



PIANO BENCH DONATED TO BOOSTERS: Paul Barnes and Betty Lyons, members of the North Fork Boosters, read the inscription on a piano bench recently donated

to the boosters by Clara Radman, an active community member who has lived in North Fork since 1927.

North Fork Fall Festival

The North Fork Fall Festival will be held Saturday, Oct. 8. One of the main features of this year's event is the Grizzly Century Bicycle 100 mile rally which starts at 7 a.m. and loops through the Scenic Byway.

The North Fork Lions Club will serve a pancake breakfast at North Fork School's Kennedy Hall Oct. 8 from 6-10 a.m. Along with the pancakes, sausage, eggs cooked to order, orange juice and coffee will be served.

The North Fork Craft Fair will be held in the post office parking lot from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Lunch, prepared by the North Fork eighth grade, will be available.

The Sierra Mono Museum will be open especially for the event between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

A sidewalk sale and the Shut-Eye Peak Mountain Bike Challenge are also planned for Oct. 8.

An Oct 8 Town Hall Fall Festival Community Dinner will be served from 2-7 p.m. The Bike Rally riders will start coming in about 2 p.m. and will want to eat early, according to an event spokesman.

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For more information call the US Forest Service at 877-2218.

PAGE FOUR



CHEERLEADERS RAISE \$228 FOR THANKSGIVING: North Fork School cheerleaders are shown at one of two charity car washes held during September. The cheerleaders have raised \$228 so far, which will be used for complete Thanksgiving dinners for at least 10 families. The dinners will be given to families in the North Fork community who otherwise may not have had a Thanksgiving. In addition, the cheerleaders have placed a canned food donation box at the North Fork Super Market and W&G Market. They are working for more donations in order to feed even more families. The cheerleaders expressed their thanks to all those who had their cars washed and who made cash donations. They gave a special thanks to Craig Fawcett of W&G Market, Jim Willis at North Fork Super Market and Tom Wheeler for supporting them and allowing the use of their facilities. Pictured above are: (L to R) D.J. Alkire (volunteer), Bryanna Gaede, Dawn Riley, Amanda Johnson, Dee Dee Alkire and Katie Thrapp (behind the car).







GRIZZLEY CENTURY BICYCLE RALLY: 120 riders took part in the Grizzley Century 100 Mile Bicycle Rally held Oct. 8 in North Fork. Riders from all over the state

took part in the rally which was part of the North Fork Fall Festival.



NORTH FORK FALL FESTIVAL: The North Fork Fall Festival was held Oct. 8. The festival included a crafts fair, art show and both the Grizzley Bike Rally and the

Shuteye Off Road race. Pictured above are pictures of Saturday's Crafts Fair held in the North Fork Center. Booths with various items were showcased.

Yosemite Bank to install ATM and night depository in North Fork

10-27-1994

Yosemite Bank will be installing a drive-up automated teller machine (ATM) and night depository in the North Fork Shopping Center where the post office is located. Installation is expected to be completed in March, 1995.

North Fork responded overwhelmingly in the recent Yosemite Bank survey on providing banking services in North Fork.

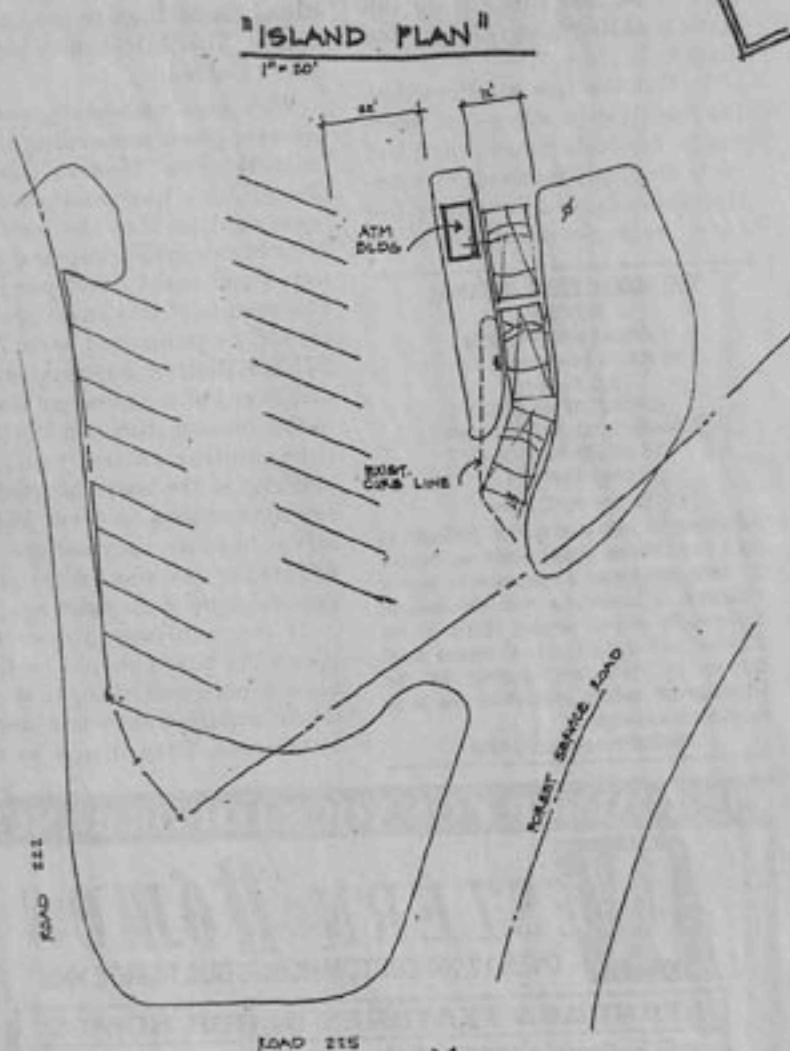
"The survey results indicated an overwhelming need for a remote service facility in North Fork and to a lesser degree in Bass Lake," stated a spokesman. "Consequently, Yosemite has decided to place the ATM in North Fork in an effort to service the needs of both communities."

The ATM will be full service, accepting ATM cards issued by most major banks and savings and loans throughout the US. It will dispense cash and accept deposits to personal checking and savings accounts.

A night depository will also be installed for the bank's customers. This will allow the business community to make deposits to business accounts without leaving North Fork.

Each banking day, the deposits for personal and business accounts will be retrieved and processed at the Oakhurst office of Yosemite Bank.

According to a spokesman, "Yosemite Bank wishes to thank local area merchants, Cal Barnett and Jim Flanagan of the North Fork Chamber of Commerce, Jean Coffey, president of the Economic Development Council, Chris Nota of the US Forest Service and the Sierra Star for their help and support."



ATM LOCATION: This is a preliminary drawing for the Yosemite Bank automatic teller machine which will be located on "an island" in the North Fork Post Office parking lot.

Serving the Sierra since 1977,
Yosemite Bank is a member of the

FDIC, with branches in Mariposa,
Groveland and Oakhurst.

Dear Jan,

Thank you so very much for
taking the time to share the
North Fork story with the
Football Chamber group in
Ankeny.

Lots of activity is resulting
from your efforts.

Thanks again!

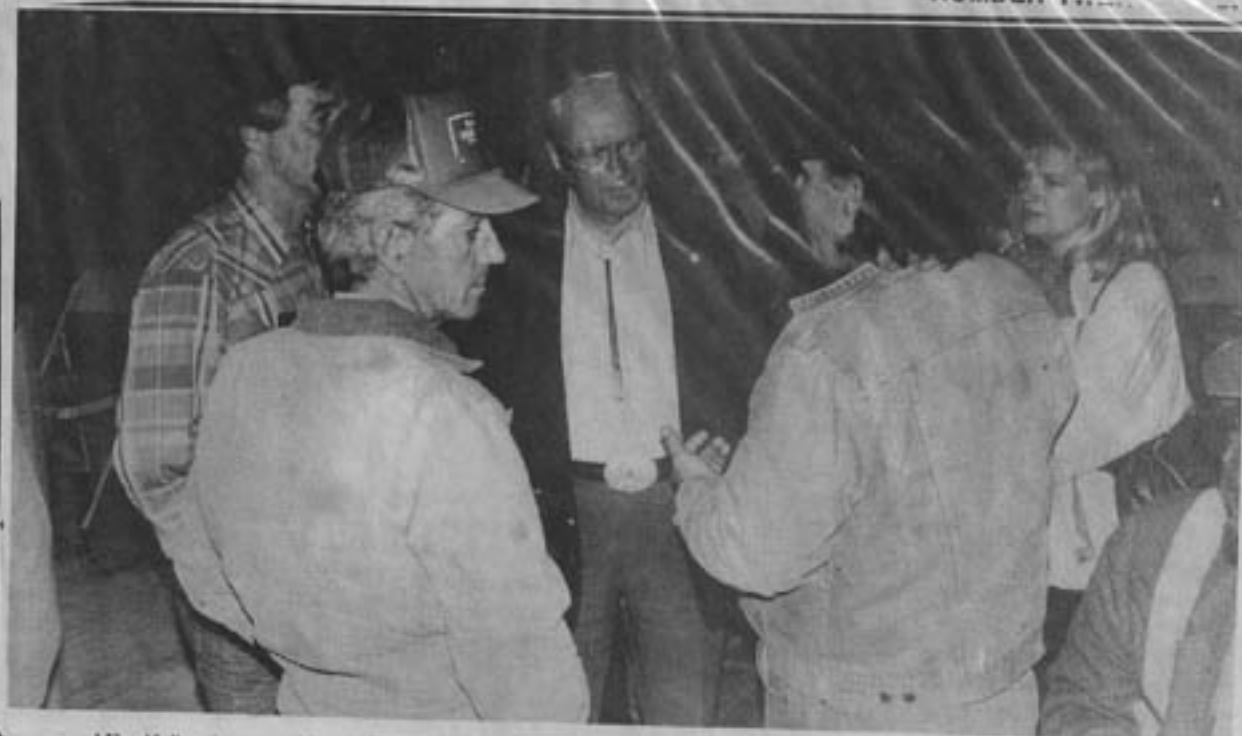
Jan Siffel

P.S. Your efforts may result in the
"Saving" of our community as well as N.F.

4 Crazy
Dinos
picture







Mike Kelley (center with dark coat) listens to local loggers and ranchers after the Dec. 7 meeting in North Fork.

Residents hear about Home Rule movement

Kathy Kelley

The California representative of the National Federal Land Conference was in North Fork last week to talk about the "Home Rule movement." The NFLC is one of the original county movements in the western states.

Mike Kelley, also founder of the Butte County Citizen for Fair Government and president of the Butte County Taxpayers Association, spoke to over 200 ranchers, loggers, farmers and residents of Eastern Madera County at a meeting in North Fork's Town Hall.

Kelley told those present that home rule was not about making new laws but making the state adhere to its own laws.

"The signers of the constitution did not come from the state level or the city level. They all came from the county level," Kelley said. "Now we have elected officials who have removed the seat of authority

to participate in NEPA, federal agencies are under no obligation to consider the county's economic stability.

"It's not too late to reorganize and put your input where it will do some good, not down at the barber-shop," Kelley said.

He encouraged those present to make their board of supervisors understand what their needs are.

"You are going to have to stand up and fight for your rights," he said.

The first step of acquiring home rule will be to get enough signatures on a petition of redress grievance and present the petition to the board of supervisors.

If enough signatures are collected to persuade supervisors to pass a "Home Rule" resolution, then the supervisors will form a committee to identify the county's customs, culture and economic stability. Once these issues are

The major obstacle Kelley foresees is apathy. "You have to make up your mind, this is your county," Kelley said.

According to Kelley, the Home Rule concept has been approved by the California Association of County Attorneys and the Attorney General.

"If you want to get behind Willard Nelson and Tom Wheeler, who are working to get Home Rule for the entire county, you need to write your congressman," Kelley advised.

"How many congressmen come to North Fork?" Kelley asked.

In response to articles that have said a Home Rule ordinance is illegal, Kelley responded that they would not be asking for an ordinance, but a resolution instead.

"It is constitutional to do it as a resolution to put in place a county movement," he said. "To pass a resolution supporting Home Rule,

A look back at 1994 North Fork highlights

The year of 1994 was the end of an era with the closure of the North Fork Mill in February. The closure of both the North Fork and Auberry mills put hundreds of families out of work in the area. The rest of the year was filled with political campaigning and upsets from the local to the national level. Local school districts increasingly vocalized the desire for a new high school site in Eastern Madera County.

January

Paul Vining, a logger in the area, was selected as the 1993 Citizen of the year. Vining was selected because he donates his time and equipment to improve and maintain ball fields at the North Fork Recreation Center and helps ready the center for the Loggers' Jamboree. He also volunteers with the Little League program.

Paul Lemmon of North Fork returned from a week at Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama. While there, Lemmon experienced some of the training astronauts go through for space exploration.

Madera County Supervisors strengthened their commitment to a project extending Highway 41 north into Madera County. The board voted to appoint Robert Stone, executive director of the Madera County Transportation Commission, as a county coordinator for the Highway 41 project and authorized sending a letter to Congressman Richard Lehman acknowledging the board's support of the extension.

Assemblyman Bill Jones, a rancher and businessman from Fresno County, declared his candidacy for 1994 Republican nomination for Secretary of State.

Harry Baker, Madera County Fifth District Supervisor and chairman pro-tem of the board, has announced that he will be a candidate for re-election to the Board of Supervisors.

Madera County District Attorney Ernest J. LiCalsi was in Eastern Madera County to introduce a new "had" check, or insufficient funds policy for Madera

counties in creating and improving fuel breaks, timber reforestation, wildlife habitat and water sheds in Eastern Madera County.

February

Growth, new facilities and transportation were the key issues at a joint meeting of the boards of trustees from the Chawanakee Joint School District and Sierra Joint Union High School District.

George Radanovich, 38, of Mariposa has announced that he is a candidate for the Republican nomination for Congress in the 19th District.

US Congressman Richard Lehman will be giving a talk to the North Fork 4-H Citizenship Group about how the national government works. This will be the first of three presentations set up by North Fork 4-H Junior Leader Forest Grow as part of a special citizenship project to educate the public about the government.

Claudia Box is a candidate for the Chawanakee School Board.

The total number of major crime cases in Eastern Madera County dropped in 1993 from the 1992 total, according to statistics from the Madera County Sheriff's Department. In 1993 there were a total of 861 cases compared to 943 in 1992.

Arne Nixon, a professor from California State University at Fresno and story teller, participated in the annual Young People's Reading and Writing Festival at North Fork School.

Experts in the US Forest Service were predicting major changes and downsizing within the agency. Sierra National Forest Minarets District Ranger Chris Nota believed the coming year would create more change than at any time in the history of the USFS.

Madera County and PG&E will be combining efforts on three projects for downtown North Fork. This summer Madera County is planning to renovate the Maintenance District 8A water system and re-construct a portion of Road 222 in the same area. At the same time PG&E will be coordinating plans for installing an under-

ground district.

Sequoia Forest Industries, a California based wood products manufacturing company, announced Feb. 22 it would shut down its North Fork sawmill beginning Feb. 25. According to Gary Rogers, a spokesman for the operation, Feb. 25 would be the last day for many of the crew. Seven or eight people would stay on to sort and dry the remaining timber for an indefinite time. Executive Vice President and General Manager of SFI, James Anthony, cited the reduced log supply from the Sierra National Forest as the sole cause for the closure. Last month SFI closed its Auberry mill. Since December 1991, SFI has laid off over 250 employees and reduced its operations by two-thirds.

Congressman Richard Lehman (D-North Fork) addressed his hometown 4-H club last week and then fielded questions about national issues from the audience. Questions and comments ranged from financing of political campaigns to bootcamps for juvenile offenders to Social Security and many things in between.

March

In the wake of the North Fork Mill closure, a community meeting was held to discuss other economic alternatives. The meeting was called by US Forest Service and loggers who are concerned with the effects of the mill closing. The group invited area leaders to speak on tourism, business opportunities with wood related products, job re-training for displaced workers, small business loans and small business marketing techniques.

Saying it's time for voters to send "independent-minded citizen-legislators" to the State Capitol, agribusinessman Dick Monteith has formally announced his candidacy for the recently reapportioned 12th State Senate District.

Governor Wilson signed into law "the toughest and most sweeping crime bill in California history" March 7. The bill will put three

Continued from page one

time felons behind bars for life.

For the first time in 10 years, the North Fork Indian Health Center has announced it has a full time doctor, Dr. James Lahanas, and full time nurse, Judy Conlon. Both are on duty the four days the clinic is open.

The board of trustees of the Chawanakee Joint School District and the Sierra Joint Union High School District met to discuss school funding and growth within those districts. The trustees listened to a David Taussig & Associates representative who provided extensive information on how to finance new school facilities.

Madera County Sheriff-Coroner Glenn Seymour announced he is seeking re-election.

US Forest Service personnel from the Minarets Ranger District of the Sierra National Forest have completed the second of four scheduled snow surveys for the year. Measurements were taken at 10 locations in the Sierra above North Fork between Feb. 28 and March 1 and indicate that current water content of the local area snow pack is approximately 80 percent of normal for this time of year.

Approximately 80 parents and teachers attended a special presentation and meeting on gangs, drugs and graffiti at North Fork School. The meeting was called in response to graffiti on school property and businesses in North Fork. "Let's be proactive and get it stopped," North Fork Principal Jim Green stated. "Let's send a loud message we won't tolerate this."

Volunteers raised \$18,000 in the March 10 Cardiac Arrest for the American Heart Association. Participating in the effort were CHawanakee School District Superintendent Phil Pendley, North Fork School Principal Jim Green, and Chawanakee District Physical Education Director John Somerville. In keeping with the theme of the fundraiser, the three were given a ride to the fundraising activities by Madera County Reserve

The Community College Committee for Eastern Madera / Mariposa counties is organizing a drive to form a community college in Eastern Madera County. The group is currently involved with gathering signatures on a petition supporting Senate Bill 1607 which would form a community college in this area.

The Loggers' Jamboree Queen contestants were announced last weekend at the Loggers' Jamboree kick-off dinner and dance. The contestants, Kim Ettner, Teresa Flory, Jennifer Casner, Gretchen Davis and Marlene Yeakum, were introduced by 1993 Loggers' Jamboree Queen Christina McDonald.

Kimberly Bradford Keller, 38, was found dead and her baby, Katherine Elizabeth Keller, 22 months, was later pronounced dead at Valley Medical Center. According to the Madera County Sheriff's Department, Ken Keller found his wife and daughter at 6 p.m. Monday, April 11, in their North Fork home. They had both been shot.

Approximately 60 community members raised \$1,300 for Bosnia relief. "Amazing," was the comment heard from many participants. Auctioneers included Lee Crow and Harry Baker.

Approximately \$13,000 has been made available as a reward fund for the Keller murder case. April 19 the Madera County Supervisors voted to extend an existing \$5,000 county reward fund which was to be used for the Velma Avdeef and Stella Rea murder case. A spokesman for The Ponderosa Telephone Co. confirmed that the company has made an additional \$5,000 available for the reward fund for the Keller murder case.

Under protest from the audience and two board members, the Sierra Joint High School District Trustees voted 3-2 to continue giving Sierra High School \$300,000 for the second consecutive year. The funding is to be given pending a board-approved expenditure plan. Critics of the expenditure believe the money is helping to fund the new middle school in the Sierra

of timber resources.

Competition, an annual public tion spotlighting the winners of national bird carving competition recently featured the art work Dennis Schroeder of North Fork. Schroeder's carving of a heron won third best in the show. open decorative lifesize floatir wildfowl, at the 1993 Pacific Flyway Decoy Association Wildfowl Festival, earning him spot in this national special interest magazine.

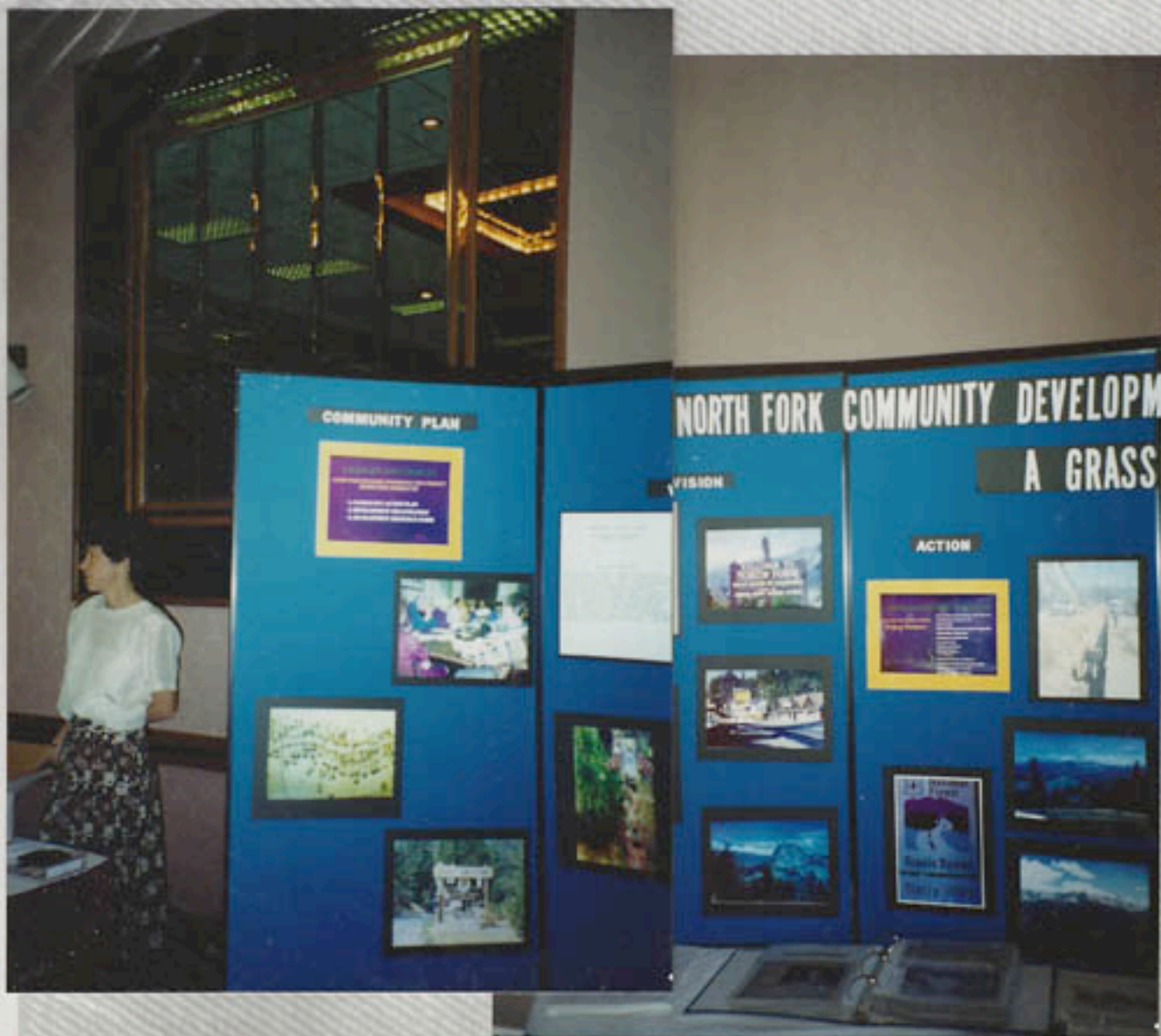
Following a two-hour, standing room-only meeting in Oakhurst Senator Dan McCorquodale has been able to schedule a hearing on his community college bill May 1. The hearing will be before the Senate Education Committee in Sacramento.

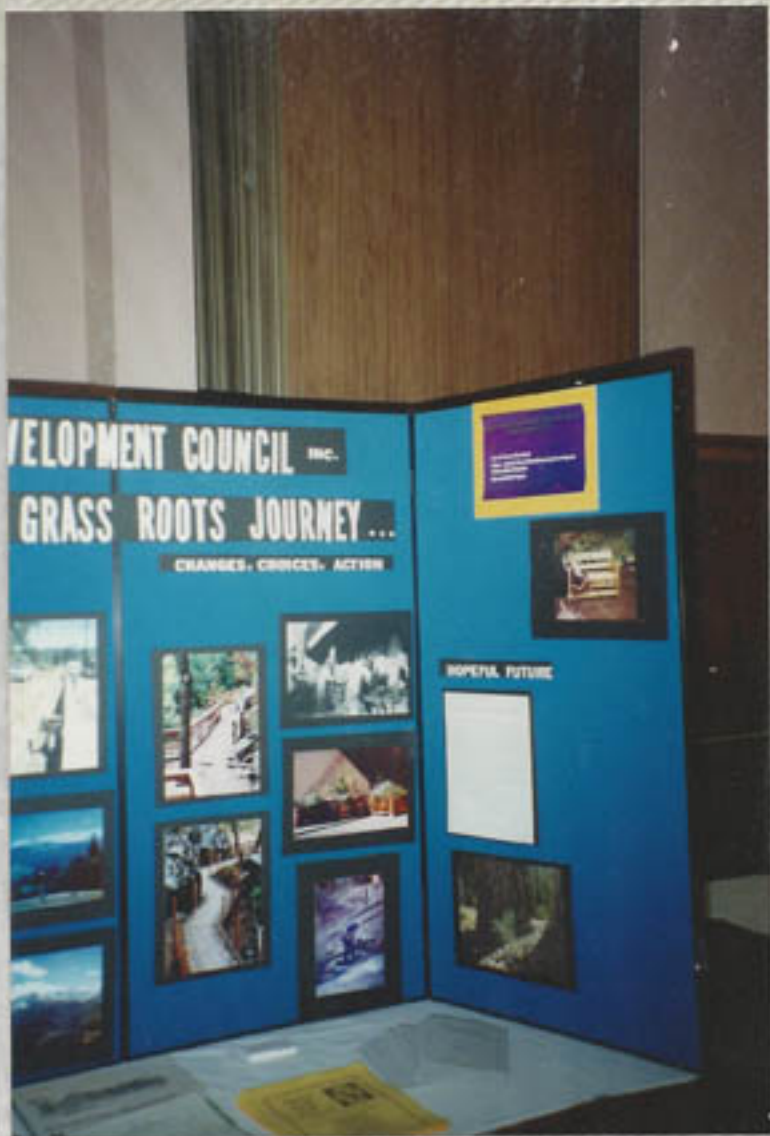
Bill Jones, Republican candidate for California Secretary of State and his wife, Maureen, were in O'Neals last week for a potluck picnic, arranged by Evelyn Ducaf at Spring Valley School. Jones represented Eastern Madera County in the state assembly until redistricting two years ago. He said he is spending much of his time campaigning in southern California but it is always a pleasure to return to Eastern Madera County.

Thirty-nine year school teacher Shirley Schlichting and Sharley Meredith are both retiring from Bass Lake School this year.

Local educators and community members were elated with the passing of Senate Bill 1607 by the State Senate Committee on Education May 11 in Sacramento. This represents the first hurdle in a series of legislative hurdles faced by the bill's supporters.

Some of the first steps in building a fuel break around North Fork were taken this month. Representatives from the Agriculture Stabilization Conservation Service and Coarsegold Resource Conservation District toured North Fork ranches owned by Grace Tex and Walt Ellis to see some of the mechanical brushing being done. A prescribed burn is planned for the neighboring Wyle Ranch as part of the fuel break

















United States Forest Service
Minarets District

Is A

Board Member
In Good Standing

With The

North Fork Community
Development Council, Inc.

As Of This 10th Day Of March 18, 1994

Jean H. Coffey

*Jean H. Coffey, President
North Fork Community Development Council, Inc.*