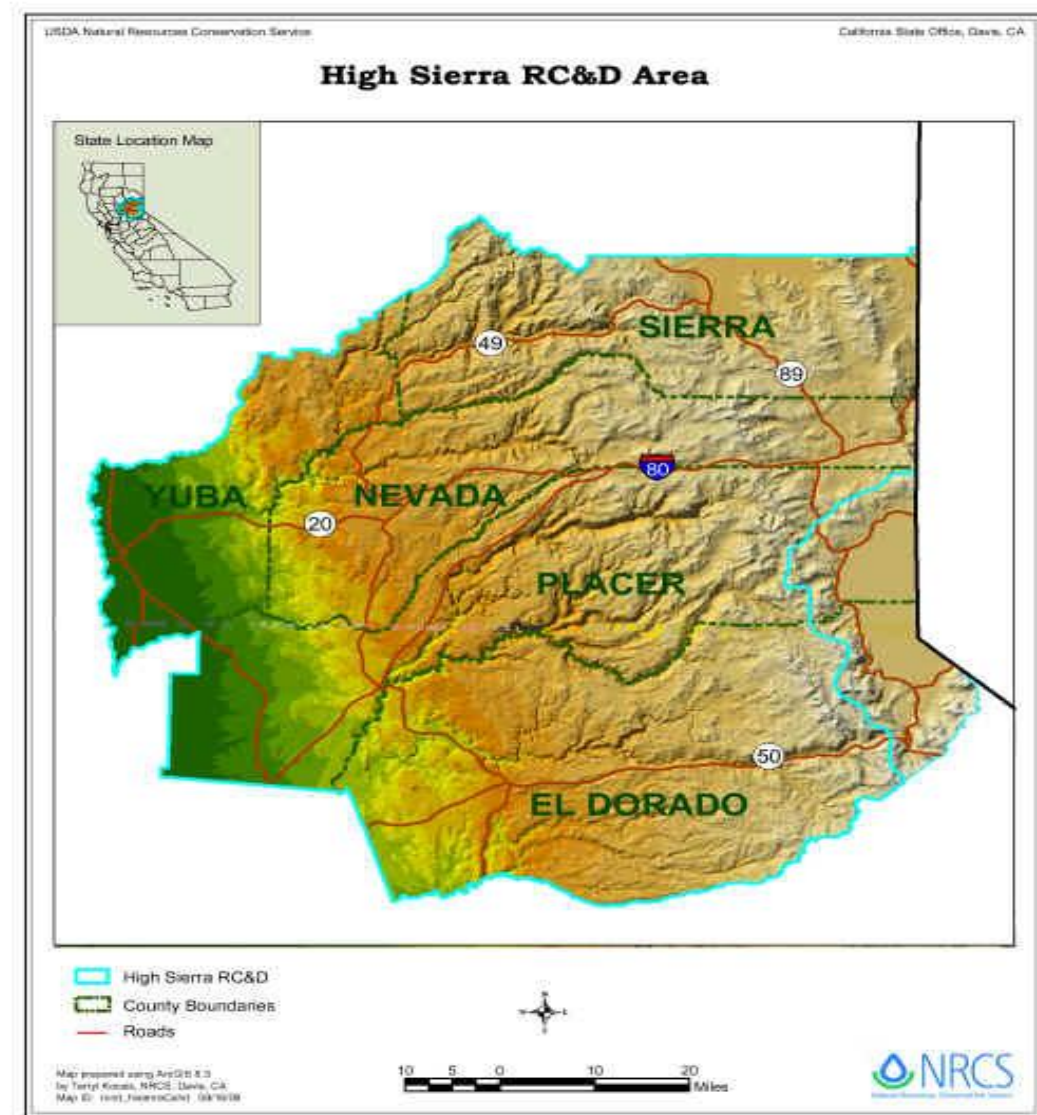


High Sierra RC&D Council



2007-2008 Annual Report

Council Members

Robert Wiswell Jr., President
Placer County RCD

Bill Bennett, Vice President
Georgetown Divide RCD

John Waskiewicz, Secretary/CFO
Yuba County RCD

John Taylor, Past President
Nevada County Land Trust

Ron Briggs
El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

Dale Pierce
El Dorado RCD

Hank Weston
Nevada County Board of Supervisors

David Vertin/ Eric Carr
Nevada County RCD

Brett Storey
Placer County Board of Supervisors

Tim Beals
Sierra County

Gabe Miller
Sierra Valley RCD

Hal Stocker
Yuba County Board of Supervisors

Brent Smith
Sierra Planning Organization

President's Message...

The High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council had a successful year of helping people implement several projects throughout our area. I invite you to read the following annual report to learn more about our activities.

First we would like to thank all our sponsors for making High Sierra RC&D possible. We would also like to thank our funders, the California Fire Safe Council, United Auburn Indian Community, Cal Fire, Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Forest Service, Placer County Visitor's Center, WSARE, and California Association of RC&D Councils. Without this tremendous support none of our projects would have become a reality.

High Sierra RC&D continued to support local agricultural with several value-added projects to help improve the economic viability and sustainability of agriculture in our counties. We hosted a workshop for farmers and ranchers on how to apply for a Value-Added Producer grants. We also assisted several farmers and ranchers with completing their value-added grant applications. We completed the Mandarin synephrine study which brought nation-wide publicity to the health benefits of Placer County Mandarins.

We supported several educational activities within our area, Placer Farm & Barn Tour, PlacerGROWN Farm Conference, Christmas in the Foothills and the Sierra Nevada Small Farm Progress Days.

Partnering with Placer County, we completed the Biomass Conversion Technology Assessment for the Tahoe Biomass Facility. We are also working on two other Biomass Assessment projects.

We are completing a project in Yuba County to identify and GIS all water sources that are available for fire fighting. The maps that are being developed will be shared with Federal, State and local fire fighting officials to better prepare them for fighting fires in Yuba County. We think this project should be completed state-wide.

We completed an Audit from the California Department of Finance on three of our Proposition 40 grants from Cal Fire. We passed the audit and learned valuable information from the auditors that we have shared with others to help them be prepared for future audits.

We are looking forward to assisting more groups and farmers and ranchers in our 5 counties with developing and implementing their projects this coming year.

Robert W. Wiswell, Jr.
President

For additional information, please contact the High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council

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2007-2008 Projects and Accomplishments

Adding Value to Local Agriculture

MANDARIN SYNEPHRINE STUDY



High Sierra contracted with researchers at the USDA Agricultural Research Service to conduct a synephrine study for mandarins grown in Placer County. Synephrine is a natural decongestant. The tests showed the synephrine concentrations from Placer County mandarins was up to six times higher than values previously determined for orange juice. The study was published in the *Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry*. The press release from the study was picked up by the AP and went nationwide. The Mandarin Growers received calls from all over the country requesting mandarins and more information on the study. The next step will be a bioavailability study that will measure the rate at which synephrine enters the blood stream and how long that synephrine remains in the blood stream.

PLACER FARM AND BARN TOUR



High Sierra RC&D was a sponsor of the 5th Annual Placer Farm & Barn Tour. This event featured tours of ten Placer County farms, ranches and nurseries. The Tour provides an important outreach and educational opportunity for local agriculture. Over 2,000 visitors from all over northern California, with a significant number from the Bay Area, participated in the Tour.

SIERRA NEVADA SMALL FARM PROGRESS DAYS



The third annual Sierra Nevada Small Farm Progress Days was split into 4 topical 1-day hands-on workshops and a farmer's fair. The 4 areas covered were vegetables and row crops; orchards; livestock; and forestry. Each workshop had growing information for the crop along with showcasing various types of equipment. The farmer's fair included field demonstrations of different farm implements, both horse drawn and tractor, portable mills, livestock equipment, and irrigation systems. It also contained an agricultural resource fair on where to go for help and a trade show. It concluded with the 1st Annual Farmer Olympics where contestants participated in events representing the four workshop areas.

MOBILE POULTRY PROCESSOR



High Sierra RC&D is continuing to work with Sierra College and UC Cooperative Extension to complete the Mobile Poultry Processing Unit. The trailer and processing equipment has been purchased. The floor and walls have been installed. Currently the rest of the trailer is being finished. The trailer should be operational by poultry season this spring.

PLACER COUNTY AG FUTURES



In the fall of 2007 a group of farmers and ranchers met to discuss their vision for Placer County agriculture in the next 30 years. At this meeting the Placer County Ag Futures Project was born. High Sierra and 3 farmers received a WSARE grant that will conduct outreach to local colleges and high schools to raise awareness of opportunities in agriculture; provide the framework for 10 paid apprenticeships on 5 farms and ranches to train the next generations of farmers and ranchers on sustainable practices; and develop an interactive website to connect people with the land and other resources.

Protecting the Environment

GIS INVENTORY OF FIREFIGHTING WATER RESOURCES



High Sierra received a grant from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to conduct a GIS inventory of all available water for fire fighting in Yuba County. High Sierra has contracted with the 5 fire districts to complete the gathering of this water data. Yuba County is compiling the data and hopes to have maps available prior to fire season in 2009. The fire districts will be placing blue markers to identify these water sites for fire fighters.

PLACER COUNTY BIOMASS

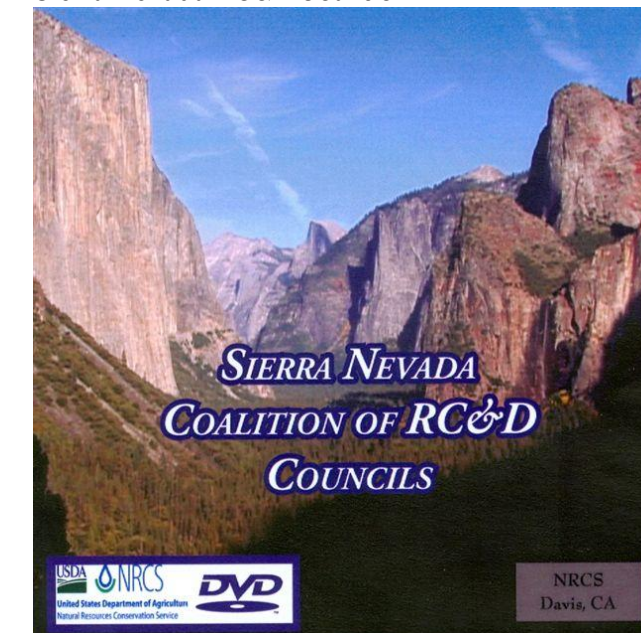
Placer County and High Sierra received a grant and conducted the Biomass Conversion Technology Assessment for the Tahoe Biomass Facility Project. The study evaluated existing technologies that produce electrical energy and heat from biomass materials with air emissions low enough to be able to be permitted and other attributes that will allow the technology to be utilized in the Lake Tahoe Basin. The study assessed combined heat and electrical power generating technology, utilizing locally available fuels (i.e. woody biomass fuels easily accessible and obtainable with no new access road construction in the forest) that would otherwise be wasted resources. Biomass technologies, both direct combustion and gasification systems were evaluated, with the goal of being environmentally compatible and permissible in the Basin.

OREGON RIDGE FUEL BREAK

High Sierra is working with the Yuba Watershed Protection and Fire Safe Council to complete the Oregon Ridge Fuel Break. The 47 acre mastication project will provide protection to almost 2,700 people, an estimated 990 homes and protect property valued at over \$200,000,000.

Improving Our Quality of Life

Sierra Nevada RC&D Coalition



The eight RC&D Councils that cover the Sierra Nevada formed the Sierra Nevada RC&D Coalition to market the types of projects RC&Ds are involved with. The Coalition completed a DVD and a coordinating publication that showcases watershed health, market bases approach and tourism and recreation projects that these eight Councils have completed.