

**Annual Southwestern Partnership Event**

Employees and partners attended the April 4-7, 2005, first annual Partnership Event in Albuquerque, NM. **A special thanks** goes out to REI and the Public Lands Interpretive Association for participating and donating prizes.

Friends groups, Tribal partnerships, landscape fire planning, the Greater Flagstaff Forest Partnership, conservation partners, Collaborative Forest Restoration Program, and State Forestry programs were discussed. This is an annual event to bring employees and partners together. Next year the Partnership Event will be held in Arizona. Information will be found at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/partnerships/>

Partnership = Relationship

**Partnership Desk Guide**

The new Partnership Guide is available online. If you have questions about partnering with the Forest Service, this document has the answers. The Partnership Guide is found at: <http://www.partnershipresourcecenter.org>

**National Forest Foundation (NFF) Grants**

Newly forming or existing organizations can apply for **Community Assistance Program** (CAP) grants of \$5,000 to \$15,000. Funds may be used by communities for start-up and operating costs, materials and equipment, training, and obtaining 501(c)(3) status.

The **2005 Centennial Year Challenge (CYC) Program** provides matching funds to non-profit, non-federal, and Native American Tribes partners for on-the-ground projects addressing the Chief's four main threats: fire & fuels, invasive species, unmanaged recreation and habitat fragmentation. **Applications are due by May 27th**, with decisions in June.

**Wilderness Stewardship Challenge** provides matching grants of up to \$50,000 to nonprofit partners to implement projects that directly benefit Wilderness Areas within our National Forests System. For NFF grant information see: [http://www.natforests.org/consp\\_01\\_grant.html](http://www.natforests.org/consp_01_grant.html)

**Centennial Cost-Share Funds**

In 2005, Congress set aside \$9,861,000 for the national forest system partnerships. The Southwest Region received \$1,133,350 for 21 projects that enhance forest conditions, watersheds, habitat, and recreational services. Partner estimated contributions are \$1,672, 847. A list of these Centennial projects and a brief description of each are found on the Southwest partnership website at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/partnerships/>

**Environmental. Conflict Resolution**

The US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution is hosting a Conference on in Tucson, AZ, May 25th & 26th. Topics include *How to Facilitate a Public Process* and *Getting the most out of Collaboration and Making Collaboration Routine*. Review the agenda and register at: <http://www.mediusevents.com/ECR2005/>

**Also Inside:**

- Non-native Plants Threaten AZ Wildlands
- Streamlining Southwest Strategy
- Mountainair District recognized for partnerships
- Free EPA Smart Growth Community Assistance
- SWS Members

## National Endowment (NEA) Grants

The National Endowment for the Arts FY 2006 application deadline for *Challenge America: Reaching Every Community Fast-Track Review Grants* is June 1, 2005. Nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3), U.S. organizations; units of state or local government; or federally-recognized tribal communities or tribes may apply for projects that address cultural tourism. For guidelines and application forms visit:

<http://www.arts.gov/grants/apply/GAP06/ChallengeAmerica.html>

For a listing of all NEA grants: [www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov)

## Non-native Plants Threaten AZ Wildlands

The Nature Conservancy is leading a collaborative effort to identify, prioritize, and address non-native plants that threaten Arizona's Wildlands. Public land managers will be able to use this list in their planning and to obtain resources for eradication. Currently 63 species have been evaluated.

For more information contact John Hall with The Nature Conservancy at 520/ 547-3439. You may also visit the AZ Wildlands Invasive Plants website at: <http://www.usgs.nau.edu/swepic/>

## Streamlining Southwest Strategy (SWS)

SWS is a forum to facilitate a collaborative approach to our business. This year SWS member agencies' funding had decreased to the point where previous funding commitments couldn't be maintained. As a result, a new structure was developed to achieve the following purposes:

- Maintain executive level relationships
- Address specific and emerging issues
- Offer value-added collaboration
- Leverage our resources, and
- Be affordable for all participants

In the process of streamlining, SWS will:

- Close the 3-person coordination office by October 1, 2005,
- Phase out most Task Teams and Support Teams after they finish tasks,

- Continue the 3 focus areas: water, ecosystem health/fire and border,
- Form temporary action teams in the future as needed, and
- Meet 3 times per year.

The SWS website is: <http://www.swstrategy.org/>

## Mountainair Ranger District recognized

Forest Guild wrote a Mountainair District Ranger Vicky Estrada expressing their appreciation for making local partnerships a priority. The letter says, "*Our experience in community forestry has shown us that a District Ranger with a heart for local communities can make a huge difference in supporting or disabling local efforts. We offer our support and encouragement for your hard work and the time you allocate to establishing and nurturing relationships with communities in the Mountainair area.*"

## EPA Smart Growth Community Assistance

Know a community interested in fostering economic development, protecting environmental resources, enhancing public health and planning for growth? EPA is soliciting applications from communities that want help with a public participatory processes (e.g., visioning, alternatives analysis, build-out analysis, etc.). Applications are due May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2005 and are available at:

[http://www.epa.gov/dced/sq\\_implementation.htm](http://www.epa.gov/dced/sq_implementation.htm)

## Southwest Strategy Members

- Arizona County Supervisors
- Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Border Patrol
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Mnaagemtn
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Department of Defense
- Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife servie
- National Park Service
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- New Mexico Association of Counties
- State of Arizona
- State of New Mexico
- Tribal Representatives

Contact: Denise McCaig, R-3 Southwest Strategy and Partnership Coordinator

505/ 842-3406