

Growing Jobs

Volume I, Issue I

Summer 2006

Welcome:

Growing Jobs offers us a chance to share the recent accomplishments of the College of Natural Resources' three outreach associates. Initial support for these folks was provided through a special grant sponsored by U.S. Senator Dole and U.S. House of Representative Taylor.

In the short time that these gentlemen have been with us, they have accomplished a great deal and have set up the framework for additional impacts. It is our hope that, with your help, we can secure additional support to keep them in place helping North Carolinians.

Dr. J. B. Jett, Interim Dean, College of Natural Resources

Our Outreach Directive:

Grow Jobs and Communities through Enhanced Management and Utilization of NC Natural Resources

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Growing Jobs provides quarterly updates on program impacts to grant supporters and cooperators.

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Wood Industry Assistance Update

Harry Watt serves the secondary wood products industry in the 40 western counties of North Carolina. Harry works with company owners and managers to grow profitability and employment in this important sector of the North Carolina economy. Recent highlights:



- Upholstery furniture industry outreach to teach profitability, growth-lumber cost savings, plywood cost savings, and supply management concepts. A Catawba Valley Community College seminar in March attracted 40 industry managers, designers, computer operators and industry suppliers. Harry and other specialists discussed profit improvement ideas that would support the state's 250 upholstery furniture manufacturers.
- Cost savings identified at **Fairfield Chair Company in Lenoir**, Caldwell County. Over \$250,000 of inventory savings have been realized through lumber quality and reducing lumber inventory investments. Wood Plant Manager, Matt Rose, is employing Harry's suggested work methods and material flows to employ additional cost savings efforts.
- Cost savings identified at **Southwood Furniture in Hickory**, Catawba County. Dan Coulter, Director of Manufacturing, is using faster part inventory factors to reduce stocking costs of furniture frame parts by over \$200,000. Those savings will be redirected for company competitiveness.
- **Wood Chip Marketing**-most secondary wood manufacturers in North Carolina have poor markets for their waste wood. Harry is working with **Taylor Manufacturing of Bladen County**, a manufacturer of water stoves for residential and business hot water production. Dr. Michael Boyette, of the NCSU Agricultural Engineering Department, and Dr. Phil Mitchell of NCSU's Wood Products Extension are teaming up to develop an affordable automatic chipfeeding system for the Taylor stoves. The hope is to add value to the \$15 a ton industrial wood chips by penetrating the retail wood fuel market.

Bright Wood Minor Species Project

North Carolina's case goods furniture industry is looking for a competitive edge to combat lower-cost imported furniture. This project focuses on using low cost wood species like sweet gum and red maple that are widely available across the state. This is one of the many new business strategies that Harry is deploying to create competitive case goods furniture.

“We really have an opportunity to lower the costs of raw materials and begin to utilize many low-value species to add value and jobs”

Dr. Steve Kelley,
Department Head, CNR
Wood and Paper Science

Minority Landowner Summer Outreach Workshops

Two limited resource forest landowners workshop are being held in eastern North Carolina this summer.. Mark Megalos, Outreach Associate, is assisting a multi-agency team conduct forestry workshops in southeastern North Carolina. Team members include Dr. Rory Fraser of Alabama A&M University, Archie Hart and Phillip Farland of the N. C. Department of Agriculture and Mikki Sager, Conservation Fund and new outreach coordinator Alton Perry of the NC Division of Forest Resources. and local members of the, USDA– Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agencies and the NC Wildlife Resources Commission.

- Landowners will learn basic forest management, Best Management Practices, estate planning, cost share programs, agroforestry, and receive technical assistance from resource professionals and organizations.
- Landowners interact with resource professionals and each other during discussion and field visits.
- The first landowner workshop was held June 26 and 27 at the Duplin County Agriculture Building. Family members of the Twin Rivers Cooperatives in Duplin County hosted the event which drew more than 45 individuals.
- The next workshop will be held in Maple Hill, on July 21-22.

Low-Cost Signs for Tourism and Wine

Bill Ryerson, Tourism Associate participated in the NC Department of Transportation (DOT) Signage Workshop in Morganton in May. The Department presented their tourism and hospitality business oriented signage programs.

Ryerson is working cooperatively with DOT to assist tourism businesses and organizations to reduce costs for promotional and directional signage. Through this growing program a typical business or winery can save as much as \$20,000 for signage over conventional sources. Ryerson is already at work planning additional workshops and presentations with Susan Kunz, NCDOT Signage Program Engineer.

New Tourism Enterprise Aids Yadkin River Clean-Up

May, 2006 marked a milestone for Bill Ryerson when he assisted in the planning and start-up of a new canoe rental business. Bill used the opportunity to advance the role that the Yadkin River could play in local tourism and recreation.

The **Yadkin Pee-Dee River Trail Association** coordinated Yadkin River clean-up on a stretch from Roaring River to Elkin and Bill was in the thick of it. Capitalizing on the buzz from National River Clean Up Week, Bill found a great opportunity to promote the new enterprise that he helped establish.

Roaring River Canoe Rentals sponsored the event by providing logistical support to include canoes and shuttle support. Publicity followed when the *Wilkes Journal-Patriot* provided newspaper coverage including highlighting Roaring River Canoe Rentals and its owner, Johnny Alexander. The next day, *Elkin Tribune* featured Johnny Alexander and his newly opened **Roaring River Canoe Rentals** business.

Markets for Local Grown Produce

Chef Ryan of the Elkin Creek Vineyard in Elkin, NC, has been working with Bill Ryerson to connect with providers of high quality locally grown and raised food. Local providers of high - quality specialty produce can find markets for local and regional restaurateurs. Bill has matched Bill Hanlin and Terry Garwood, Cooperative Extension Service Agricultural Agents with Elkin Creek Vineyard to facilitate dialogues with the farmers in Wilkes and Surry County, respectively. This effort could help other quality restaurants readily reach local produce providers.



Forestry/Conservation Education Outreach

project website: www.ces.ncsu.edu/nreos/forest/sp.htm

From late winter to spring a series of 30 meetings took place where Mark was a principle speaker or presenter. During the past six months, Mark has reached more than 1,500 landowners, professionals with information and on forest management, alternative enterprises, and these conservation-related topics:

- Landowner estate and intergenerational transfer planning
- Website and newsletter editing
- Conflict Resolution Training
- Wildland Urban Interface Training
- Forest Biomass– Policy and Feasibility Discussions
- Exploring Carbon Sequestration Markets and Trading possibilities
- Alternative Energy Opportunities in Caldwell County
- Environmental Science Lecture—N.C. Central University
- NC Urban Forestry Council Training
- Environmental Field Camp presentations
- Town of Sparta Strategic Planning for Growth and Development
- Initial planning for the Natural Capital Investment Fund for North Carolina
- NC Sustainable Forestry Teacher’s Tour
- Cradle of Forestry—Wooland Owner Short Course—Brevard
- Developing Paddle Trails - Teleconference Series
- Agritourism Networking – NC Rural Center
- Pisgah Forest Institute—future educational programming planning

Mark’s summer schedule includes publications, field days and planning activities in support of North Carolina’s landowners, public officials and resource professionals.

“He’s done all that we could expect of an old hand. From planning sessions to workshops and other professional duties he hasn’t missed a beat”, comments Rick Hamilton, Department of Forestry and Environmental Resources’ Departmental Extension Leader.

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Growing Jobs
Sustaining Communities
for North Carolina

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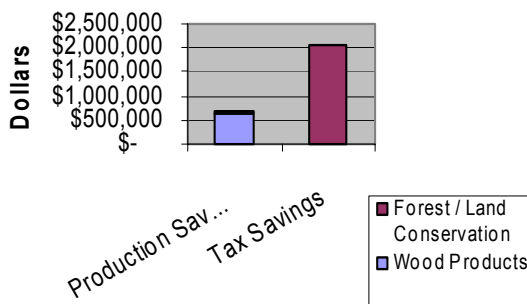
Duplin County landowners pose for a group photo with natural resource agency personnel at the first of two Summer Outreach Meetings.

Western North Carolina's Natural Resources Conference

Be sure to attend this fall's WNC Natural Resources Conference to be held on **October 3rd** at the NC Arboretum in Asheville. Details (919) 515-9563 and in the next issue of *Growing Jobs*.

EAP GRANT Scorecard SUMMARY

Economic Impacts

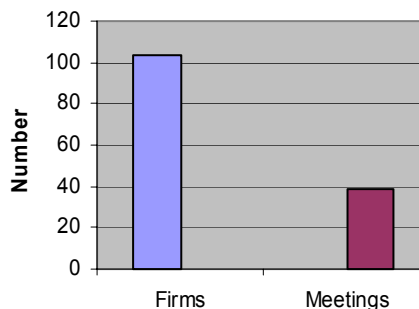


More than 100 Western NC Wood Products manufacturers and their nearly 9,000 employees have been reached through outreach efforts in the first 10 months of this grant.

Clientele



Education / Assistance Summary



Economic savings of more than \$2.5 Million have resulted from assistance to the wood products firms, landowners and others reached by the three outreach associates employed by this USDA—Economic Action grant.

More than 2,350 landowners, policy makers and professionals have learned about forest management, alternative enterprises and land conservation strategies in the past 8 months.