

NON-TIMBER FOREST WORKERS & HARVESTERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE AT NNFP NATIONAL MEETING

Snow-covered Timberline Lodge on Mt. Hood was the site of the 1998 National Network of Forest Practitioners [NNFP] meeting. Fifteen of the over one hundred community activists involved in experimenting with small scale sustainable forestry were from the Jefferson Center-supported non-timber forest worker/harvester network.

Although many good workshops were offered, the real strength of the meeting was discussion, controversy, and connections among the participants during breaks, meals, and field trips. The presence of a large and culturally diverse set of forest workers and harvesters caught the attention of people who had only before heard or read about the large non-timber workforce in the Pacific West. Many—from people high in the Forest Service, to on-the-ground groups in Appalachia—took the opportunity to speak at length with Alliance of Forest Worker and Harvester members and other worker/harvester network participants. We were told over and over again that the presence of the workers and harvesters made a difference in people's thinking.

Latino worker/harvester network participants from White Salmon, Washington, coordinated the most popular field trip of the conference. Over forty NNFP people rode a bus into the huckleberry and beargrass picking areas in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. Using simultaneous translation in Spanish and English (we found out the radios don't work the best outside in rain and snow!), Latino and Native American NTFP harvesters explained the harsh realities of the hard work and low prices paid to the mostly immigrant and other low-income workers. If done correctly, harvesting is environmentally sustainable and provides much-desired products for the market.

Latino harvesters, who alternate forest work with orchard and can-

Workers from three states shared their experiences in the woods.

FOREST CONTRACT WORKER MEETING CLARIFIES ISSUES, EXPANDS NETWORK

Latino and European-American contract forest workers from Northern California, Oregon and Washington gathered in West Salem on December 12 and 13 to talk about the difficulties they face in their jobs and to discuss potential strategies to improve working conditions. They were also joined by a Bengali-Canadian treeplanter who represented the Silvicultural Workers Association, a workers organization in British Columbia (see article on page 5). The meeting was facilitated primarily in Spanish with simultaneous translation into English.

The gathering was a response to the changes in the timber industry. Forest contracts, especially in federal lands, are tending more toward restoration work as part of "ecosystem management." Workers must be aware of the changes and be prepared to operate competitively within the contract system.

Participants were treeplanters and thinners, contract firewood cutters, fire workers, restoration workers, community organizers, brush pickers, moss gatherers, etc. Impromptu skits brought their experiences to light. The group classified their problems in six categories: lack of organization, fear to speak up, low salaries, lack of job security, problems with legislation, and discrimination and lack of communication with other communities.

Lack of organization is a barrier to unifying people's voices and making change. As one participant stated, "Alone we are not powerful, as a group we can help each other." Suggested solutions included social/cultural gathering at the local level, networking with the existing Alliance of Forest Workers and Harvester and local Watershed Councils and attending regional meetings of forest workers and forest worker allies.

Another important obstacle participants discussed is the fear to speak up, to report abuses and the lack of confidence to participate in meetings. Possible solutions included informing forest workers, both documented and undocumented. Many undocumented workers do not know that they have many legal rights as workers in the United States. Identifying good allies and the right organizations to spread this information is the first step toward overcoming this lack of knowledge.

In center, Michael Conroy (Ford Foundation), Renéé Stauffer (Hoopa Tribal Forestry), Ann Hawkins (Ford CFRF Program) look on as Bill Knight and Christina Johnson (NTFP harvesters) hold beargrass on NNFP field trip.

nery employment, work as "independent business people" to collect thousands of pounds of huckleberries each year, receiving fairly low prices from commercial buyers. But the local Huckleberry Festival is an entirely European-American event, with very high berry prices, and no recognition given to who has brought the berries to the table. Huckleberries, beargrass, and other NTFP products mostly

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H2 GUESTWORKER CHANGES DEFEATED

The H2 “guestworker” program changes threatened by, among others, Oregon’s Senator Ron Wyden, were defeated when the proposed legislation was rejected from the giant last-minute, all-purpose spending bill passed by the US Congress this fall. These revisions would have worsened working conditions for US residents and non-US resident “guestworkers.”

But the problem has not gone away, as the original H2 legislation still stands as law—bad law. We hope that people from the forestry as well as the agricultural community will continue to educate themselves on how the H2 law gives unfair power to employers over hard working people in the United States, regardless of nationality. Community forestry programs are especially vulnerable to the adverse effects of these laws, as they provide structural loopholes to undermine community-led efforts to improve wages and working conditions in the woods.

SUIT FILED AGAINST GUESTWORKER CONTRACTORS

The Oregon Law Center, in cooperation with *Pineros y Campesinos Unidos Noroeste* [PCUN], has filed a class action suit against Progressive Forestry. The law suit also includes a “mirror” corporation owned by the same people which was organized to recruit H2B guestworkers in Mexico. Fifty-five workers were recruited to work in the forests in Oregon, but the class action suit may include 500 workers brought into the United States under the H2B contract. The workers recruited for Oregon were subsequently abandoned at a motel in Mississippi.

Michael Dale of the Oregon Law Center says they would be very interested in talking to workers who worked with Progressive Forestry in Oregon over the last few years. You may contact the Oregon Law Center in Spanish or English: 503-295-2760 (Portland).

SOUN DOUNG JOINS JEFFERSON CENTER STAFF

The Jefferson Center is pleased to announce that Soun Doung will be working part-time for the Jefferson Center Non-Timber Forest Worker/Harvester program. He will be based in Stockton, California. Soun speaks Cambodian, English, and Lao (including Lao that is understandable to Mien and Hmong-speaking people).

Soun will be working a few hours a week—in addition to his regular job—to aid networking and foster communications among non-timber forest product harvesters in the Southeast Asian community and other cultural communities in Washington, Oregon, and California. He can be reached by phone in Stockton at 209-957-8470, by email (address to be announced), or by directing letters to POB 279, Wolf Creek OR 97497 (Stockton address to be announced).

CONTRACT WORKER MEETING *(continued from page 1)*

The most lengthy topic of discussion was the issue of salaries. Participants pointed out that they often are not paid the federal minimum wage for forest work on federal lands (\$10.72 per hour), wages have not increased in thirty years, and wages on private industrial land are often as low as \$7-\$8 per hour for extremely difficult work by highly experienced workers. Besides, as one worker mentioned that “the long and extended periods of time away from home make the real hourly salaries decrease even more.”

The main cause of the low salaries that workers identified is the way contracting works: on federal forests, the job is given to the lowest bid. In this system, contractors try to get the contracts by reducing the expenses, which means finding ways to cut labor costs (but still *look* legal, as if they were paying the minimum). Forest workers agreed the system needs to change to award the contractor not for the cheapest price the market will bear—which encourages exploitation—but for the most fair value. One worker expressed that to push salary increases forward, “We need to value ourselves because we have many good skills. What we do is professional work.” Parallel actions can be taken, mostly focusing on legal information campaigns so workers can report the salary abuses.

Most of the contract workers have also worked in non-timber forest product harvesting, where higher cost permits and regulations are changing the industry. The increase of middle-man “licensees” who sometimes seem like contractors, often control access to industrial lands. Some of these licensees require the harvesters to pay a stiff permit fee to enter the land to pick brush, and then require that the harvesters sell all the product they have gathered back to the licensee at far below market value. This double-payment system is considered highly questionable — are the harvesters really more like employees than “independent” business people when they pay coming and going?

Workers are also concerned about their job security. How can they guarantee their jobs for a long time when the industry is changing and there is so much competition? In order to be competitive, workers need access to technical, organizational, and administrative skills as well as an understanding of national trends in appropriations for forest management.

Worker’s rights abuses, such as not paying sick days or medical bills as agreed, was a major complaint. One reason for the abuses is that forest workers do not know the law. Among the solutions participants mentioned was a legal information campaign to both workers and employers in order to know what their rights are and how and where to report abuses. There was enthusiasm to create video documentaries and oral histories to aid in this education campaign.

Embedded in all these difficulties are the lack of recognition and the discrimination to which workers are subject. The mass media portrays a “Latino face” that perpetuates the myth that Latinos come here to steal jobs. This myth creates clashes with Anglo communities. Participants said they need to address this issue by educating the whole community about the truth: forest workers from all backgrounds work hard at skilled jobs and are doing the work many other people do not want to do. Participants said they need to do education at local levels, inviting other communities to their gatherings to dispel stereotypes, gain allies and move the issues forward.

At the end of the meeting, participants went over the solutions and identified immediate actions that they could take. Local meetings in three areas were agreed upon, and there was commitment among participants to talk to their co-workers and friends so they could also be involved in these dialogues. Participants felt they could express their opinions and there was a general sense of confidence to move forward. One of the them said, “I appreciate the unity that has formed here and I am inspired to continue with the organizing in my area.” They all committed themselves to bring someone new to the next gathering, so little by little the word is spread around and a unified voice of forest workers can make a difference to improve their working conditions.

ALLIANCE OF FOREST WORKERS & HARVESTERS BEGINS TALKS WITH WESTERN STATES CENTER

On December 10, Alliance Steering Committee members Juan Mendoza, Bill Knight, and Cece Headley met with representatives of the Portland-based Western States Center. Western States is interested in cooperating with the Alliance to provide organizational and leadership development, with cross-training between the organizations to broaden skills, knowledge, and contacts.

Juan, Bill, and Cece answered many questions about the role of contract forest workers and non-timber woods workers in the forests of the Pacific West, followed by questions about the structure and tax-status of the Alliance. Western States people commented that they very much liked the Alliance's ambitious social agenda. They agreed to hold more discussions soon to make specific agreements. A conference call is likely in early 1999.

Western States Center works in eight western states, including Alaska. Their mission is "to build and invigorate democracy" in their region. Two of their best known projects are the Community Leadership Training Program, and the Western Progressive Leadership Network.

WORKERS/HARVESTERS AT NNF (cont. from page 1)

go to an expanding national and international market (see article on Beargrass, page 4).

The commercial and environmental importance of the ecosystem "under the canopy" is something that has been devalued in many parts of the United States. Network members have been invited to a cross-visit in western Alabama, where foresters spray herbicides under the pine trees to prevent any undergrowth. Gus Townes, of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives — a primarily African-American network of cooperatives among small farmers and woodlot owners — will help coordinate this trip. At the Timberline Lodge meeting, the Alliance and worker/harvester network participants also started plans for cross visits with groups in Appalachia and Arkansas, and for a SE Asian/Native American meeting in far northwest California.

A people of color and working people caucus formed during the meeting to bring forth issues of concern to that constituency. Hopi-descent film maker Victor Masawesva along with Francis Sakaguchi filmed interviews with forest worker/harvester participants, in plans to create a documentary about the participation of diverse cultures in natural resource affairs.

**Latino and Native American NTFP harvesters
(with translators) answer questions
during NNF field trip.**

Yan Saetern at Crescent Lake in 1997—a much better year!

1998 MATSUTAKE SEASON A BUST, BUT COMMUNICATIONS AMONG HARVESTERS, USFS, IMPROVE

The matsutake season this year was a disaster. Many harvesters paid up to \$200 for seasonal permits, plus seasonal camping permits in Central Oregon, only to find there were almost no mushrooms this year. This experience was repeated in other areas throughout the Pacific Northwest. Cambodian and Laotian worker/harvester network members say that the failure of the mushroom harvest will result in smaller family budgets across the region.

Jerry Smith from the Chemult Ranger District on the Winema National Forest noted that the lack of mushrooms did not seem to be from any damage to the environment. The Forest Service found lots of matsutake "buds" in September — but they were still the same size in November, because they never "bloomed" into mature mushrooms. No one yet knows the exact biological cycles of the matsutake.

Meanwhile, Mao Oum from Stockton reports that mushroom harvesters returning from the Crescent Lake Junction area announced that "they really made a difference" after participating in Jefferson Center-sponsored information-sharing meetings with the Forest Service this summer. The Forest Service hired more interpreters, camp conditions had improved somewhat, and communication was beginning to be better. Jerry Smith told Susan Chapp and Beverly Brown in November that the Forest Service is hoping to have two harvester/Forest Service meetings in California next year, in two central locations.

In Southwest Oregon, Susan reports that—as a result of the harvester/Forest Service meeting in Stockton last August—she was able to interest the Illinois Valley Ranger District in hosting conversations among Forest Service personnel, Southeast Asian and European-American harvesters. One of the Cambodian participants in the Stockton meeting and an Anglo mushroom buyer/harvester who had attended another Jefferson Center event teamed up with Susan to arrange a Cave Junction meeting. Unfortunately the failure of the mushroom season led to the postponement of the formal meeting until later in the year. Still, the people who harvest mushrooms near Cave Junction have met with one another and will work to move forward together. Soun Doung, a new part-time Jefferson Center employee who is fluent in Lao and Cambodian will assist in communications as people desire.

BEARGRASS, INTERNATIONAL MARKETS, AND THE NON-TIMBER FOREST PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

How will small NTFP businesses compete in a global market, provide protection for traditional cultural uses, and bring a fair return to environmentally-conscious commercial harvesters?

Beargrass is a tough grass that grows in bunches in the mountains. It is important in the culture of many Native American people. In areas where there are very large amounts of beargrass outside the traditional gathering areas of Native American people, the beargrass is harvested commercially. Southeast Asian people are the primary commercial harvesters of beargrass, although many Latino people also harvest this non-timber forest product.

Many beargrass harvesters are not happy with the buyers who purchase this crop. Buyers can be very rude and disrespectful, especially to people who do not speak English well. Sometimes they buy what people harvest, and sometimes not — sometimes within the same few days. This is difficult for harvesters, because fresh beargrass cannot be stored very long without losing all its commercial value.

A network participant — someone who helps non-English-speaking family members when they go to sell to beargrass buyers — asked about what kind of markets are available for beargrass? Would it be possible to start a beargrass harvester cooperative? At what point in the market would a cooperative be effective?

We looked up “bear grass” on the Internet, and found that there seemed to be two sizes of markets: international giants—like Straelener Blumenhandel (who list Hiawatha Corporation as part of their network) ship beargrass and other floral greens overseas by large shiploads—and small regional niche markets. Most beargrass seems to be used in the floral greens trade, although we have heard that it is also used in making specialty papers (anyone have more information on this?).

Small niche markets can be filled fairly fast, and many new small companies are quickly filling the niches. This leaves the question many other groups are facing: How can community-based businesses make a dent in a market dominated by giants?

Cooperatives of harvesters can bring more respect and better money to the people involved. Can many different cooperatives form a large cooperative to fill large orders, the same as the existing beargrass companies? Or does it make more sense to start a cooperative of harvesters who can negotiate better deals with existing company buyers?

If people in the forest worker/harvester community are interested, the Jefferson Center will create opportunities to discuss these and related topics in small gatherings of non-timber forest products harvesters in 1999.

AFWH STEERING COMMITTEE MEETS, DEVELOPMENT OF THE ALLIANCE MOVES FORWARD

The Steering Committee of the Alliance of Forest Worker and Harvester was hosted by Noemi and Victor Benavides at their home in White Salmon, Washington, in early November. Twelve people from the Steering Committee and other forest worker representatives discussed an agenda focused on the organizational and legal status of the group.

The Steering Committee also reviewed recent activities in the worker/harvester network. Bill Knight was part of the Ford Foundation Community Research Fellowship Workshop held in New York; Christina Johnson participated in a Agroforestry Conference in Minnesota; Cece Headley was a part of a gathering in Portland to discuss labor and environmental linkages. Soun Doung, Mao Oum, and Susan Chapp reported on developments among mushroom harvesters. Sherlette Colegrove reported that members of the Hoopa Tribe would like to invite Alliance members to the Hoopa reservation in 1999.

Juan Mendoza reported that the incorporation of the Alliance in the State of Oregon is complete. This will allow the Alliance to seek funds with the assistance of a “fiscal sponsor” — a larger, more-established organization that will “loan” its tax-exempt status to the Alliance (see article on page 3). The next step is to apply for federal 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status that will give the Alliance independence in fundraising and management.

The group feels that it is very important at this point to have a coordi-

Maria Antonia and Susan on their way to the Steering Committee meeting

nator. Names were discussed of people who have expressed interest. Alliance members will contact them to see who could be available and willing to volunteer. Another important need is for a grant writer, a task that could be simultaneously done by the coordinator. Members will circulate the list of possible candidates and ask for their resumes. Before the end of December, a subcommittee will decide to ask some of these candidates for assistance with fundraising.

Among other immediate needs expressed by Alliance’s members are: leadership development, technical assistance, grassroots recruitment, regional meetings, cooperative education-exchanges, and a long range “action plan.” The action plan will be the focus for the next Steering Committee meeting. The Steering Committee decided to allocate two full days for that purpose. Tentative dates were offered: February 20-22 or 27-29. Since flying to Portland will be cheaper, members said that holding the meeting somewhere in the Portland vicinity will be best. The Jefferson Center offered to provide logistic coordination for this meeting, but asked that the Alliance fundraise for the travel and on-site costs of the meeting.

We want to thank the Benavides family for warm hospitality, for excellent meals and for great guitars and voices.

CANADIAN CONTRACT FOREST WORKERS TAKE THEIR STORY TO THE PUBLIC

Communications opened between Alliance, network of forest workers/harvesters,
and the Silvicultural Workers Association of British Columbia

A book about forest workers—the first of its kind since the Hoedads book from Oregon many years ago—has been created by H el ene Cyr, a former treeplanter. *Handmade Forests: The Treeplanter's Experience* tells the stories of Canadian treeplanters in impressive photographs and quotes from the workers. The book is now available from New Society Publishers. Cyr's book, our recent treeplanter visitor from British Columbia—Ananda Lee Tan—and articles from the Canadian treeplanters magazine "Screef" provide the following information sketch of the situation up north.

Most of the treeplanters in Canada are from European-Canadian background, with a substantial number of Punjabi (from northern India) and some immigrant Russian workers. Thirty percent of treeplanters are women. Thousands of treeplanters have been in the woods many years, and consider themselves professionals. University students also plant trees. Many of the professional treeplanters have become involved in part of the decision-making process, helping, for instance, to decide how ground will be prepared prior to planting, the overall prescriptions for reforestation, and what mix of more than a dozen tree species will be planted on a site.

Experienced European-Canadians, along with a few people from other ethnic groups, make between \$150 and \$200 Canadian (approximately \$100 to \$140 US) per day, getting paid on piece-rate—that is, they are paid a certain amount for every tree they put in the ground. Camp rates are between \$15 and \$20 per day, and camp regulations for kitchens, excellent food, showers, and other amenities are set by the provincial government. Many Punjabi and Russian workers begin work for low-bid, low-pay contractors, who pay a low hourly wage. Workers from all backgrounds consider this unfair, but many immigrant treeplanters are willing to work for low wages because it is better than what they can otherwise earn. Treeplanters work about four months of the year, enjoy excellent, free health care through Canada's universal health care system, and can collect up to \$1500 Canadian per month unemployment insurance off-season. *Screef* magazine estimates there have been up to 18,000 treeplanters, brushers, thinners, etc. in the Canadian woods each year.

The long-time treeplanters prefer the pay-per-tree system to hourly wages, because it allows them to control the pace of the work. The system also give the contractor less power over the worker. The Canadian treeplanters have also gained power by organizing worker associations — first the Pacific Reforestation Workers Association [PRWA], and now the Silvicultural Workers Association of British Columbia. These associations have been able to lobby their governments for great improvements in working conditions and other issues.

In Canada, much of the public forest land is licensed to large timber corporations. Contractors who get their contracts from these

Canadian treeplanter Ananda Lee Tan listens to simultaneous Spanish-English translation at December contract worker meeting in Salem, Oregon

private corporations often get good terms, and usually pay piece-rate to workers, which can result in very high pay among skilled planters. However, just like in the U.S., contractors who bid on contracts directly from the Forest Service compete with one another in a low-bid system based only on what the market will bear. These low-bid contracts tend to pay a low hourly wage, although the workers work just as hard as high-paid workers.

The politics of treeplanting and related forest work is changing fast. The Canadian timber industry is only now experiencing a decline in the harvest of timber, which means that many loggers and mill workers are being laid off. The unions which represent these loggers and mill workers have lobbied to get retraining money to move these workers into non-timber work such as treeplanting, restoration, etc., and have received a promise that they will receive seventy-five percent of the jobs in that sector. This threatens to displace many of the professional treeplanters.

It is not clear what will happen at this point. The politics of the situation are difficult. Meanwhile, the statistics quoted in *Handmade Forests* may indicate who might last the longest in treeplanting and newly developing restoration work. A treeplanter's "Average daily production: • 1,301 trees per day; 7.2 hours per day • 182 trees per hour; 3 trees per minute; 1 tree every 20 seconds (not including walking) • 442 trees per load; 31.9 lbs. per load • heart rate of 132 beats per minute." "The physical exertion level and work efficiency of treeplanters is among the highest every recorded in human occupational performance studies. In fact, they measured treeplanters with relative exertion levels that were 75 percent of an Olympic marathoner."

The Jefferson Center provides a multicultural forum for the discussion and analysis of issues among people seeking a just and democratic future. We focus on topics in the Pacific West that are 1) structural to the economy and culture of the region, 2) multicultural, 3) gender-inclusive, 4) environmentally sound, and 5) emerging issues of importance to low-income and other marginalized people.

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON ECOSYSTEM & COMMUNITY-BASED FORESTRY BUILDS INTERNATIONAL BRIDGES

Jefferson Center staff member Agueda Marín, and board member Ronnie Yimsut joined 80 other participants from the Americas and the Asia-Pacific region in an international conference on Community Forestry held in Victoria, British Columbia, October 19-24.

Experiences from 20 different countries made it difficult to agree on some issues, although there was agreement on most. Instead of writing a declaration, the conference shifted to drafting a statement of principles and guidelines. Working in small groups, participants discussed community- and eco-system based principles, systems of forest knowledge, economic principles and the roles of government.

What is local?

In Agueda's committee --community-based principles -- the discussion focused on what is "community" and "local." For example, a representative from Sri Lanka said that Sri Lanka has nomad and migrant communities that "local" villagers accept as community members for two reasons: 1) these migrant communities are part of the economic system while they are present in the village and 2) these migrant communities take responsibility for the forest management just like any other local member.

Some Latin-Americans on the other hand, argued strongly that non-local people, who in their region are mostly wealthy urban investors, cannot be accepted as community members because they do not respect the local community or forest resources. In the final document this difference was stated as: community is usually, but not exclusively, defined as people who share a geographic area. However, Agueda perceived the general conclusion among participants to be that communities are self-defined — each according to its own experience. The acceptance of "non-locals" by "locals" as community members is an important variable with large implications for how community forestry takes place.

Access and Participation

Participants argued that without secure access to land, communities cannot afford to have sustainable management of their resources. Governments should not say, "Here, you take this forest until we give it to the mining companies." The importance of respect for traditional knowledge, decentralization of forest management, and participation of communities in decision making was also discussed. Communities are pressured by global market systems which often do not allow environmentally sound forest management. Consumers that buy or benefit from the forest products share a responsibility.

What makes participation possible and successful?

The small number of participants from Latin American countries felt they could not fully express themselves in English, especially at the small group level. (The Jefferson Center loaned simultaneous translation-transmission equipment to the conference, but it was only efficiently used in large-group discussions.) At the end of the second day, Latin Americans formed a caucus among themselves. The Spanish-language discussion helped to integrate their concerns into the conference draft statement.

However, Ronnie Yimsut noted that, from a different cultural group perspective, "The Latin American group was gone, meeting somewhere, while the general session was still going on." (From the Jefferson Center perspective, the promise of what might have been a truly multi-lingual meeting seems to have been a missed opportunity.) Meanwhile, Ronnie noted that as the meeting came to its final days some people "were very vocal about their individual or collective interest. After that, the Asian delegations (nice to see that there were quite a few) were very quiet, which is a very bad sign."

Still, both Ronnie and Agueda expressed that this was a unique and highly valuable conference. Much information was exchanged and progress was made on common principles of community based forestry, even though the complex politics of international relations and diplomacy were difficult.

Networking Across International Borders

Jefferson Center representatives brought the issues of non-timber forest workers in the Pacific Northwest to the attention of not only participants from United States, but also to those from developing countries. There is still a myth that "developed" countries do not have marginalized people. Participants from developing countries were surprised that these issues exist in the U.S. and realized that there are groups in developed countries who suffer similar injustices.

Some participants from Mexico related their experiences with the mushroom industry. Mexico also harvests matsutake, with Japan as their primary buyer. They were surprised by the incredibly low prices that harvesters are receiving in Mexico, compared to the U.S. and Canada. Clearly the "middle-men" are reaping tremendous profits from the matsutake industry in Mexico. U.S. and Mexican participants realized they need to come together to find common ground instead of competing with each other.

The international declaration, the "Saanich Statement of Principles and Guidelines," is available as a draft document. Please contact the Jefferson Center if you would like a copy.

From Saanich Statement of Principles on Forests and Communities (Draft):

"WE UNDERSTAND THAT, GIVEN THE INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ECOSYSTEM AND COMMUNITY HEALTH, A PREREQUISITE TO INCREASED COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY FOR FOREST MANAGEMENT IS THAT COMMUNITY'S COMMITMENT BOTH TO MAINTAIN OR ENHANCE LOCAL ECOSYSTEM HEALTH AND INTEGRITY, AND TO FOSTER CONDITIONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE."

THE FORD FOUNDATION COMMUNITY FORESTRY RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

A Potential Ally in Your Community

In September, Bill Knight traveled to the Finger Lake region of upstate New York to attend the annual gathering of the Ford Foundations's Community Forestry Research Fellowship [CFRF] program. The CFRF program provides funds for graduate student researchers to cooperate with community groups involved in forestry issues. A student *must* be working with a community group which actively supports and to some extent helps design her/his research in order to be eligible for the fellowship.

Bill attended the meeting as part of the community support group for graduate student Kurt Spreyer. Bill gave a well-received speech to the assembled group of professors, community activists, and students. In it he said, "[Current] policies pit brush pickers against mushroom pickers, against other user groups over access to resources. Forest lands should not be managed for a single industry or product; rather we must carefully manage the ecosystem in which the products we work with and harvest grow... Sustainable harvesters are stewards of the forest; they are skilled at reading natural signs in the forest... Land managers and researchers can benefit greatly from soliciting the cooperation of harvesters in conducting and monitoring training design."

Applications for the Ford Community Forestry Research Fellowship program are available to Masters and Doctoral candidates who are at the research stage of their program. Masters candidates are eligible for up to \$5,000; Doctoral candidates are eligible for \$10,000. Ann Hawkins, coordinator of the CFRF program, stresses that they are always interested in hearing from low-income communities of all ethnic backgrounds who are involved in forestry issues. If you know of a student from your community who would be interested in doing forest-based research with you, please urge that student to contact the CFRF program.

"APPROPRIATIONS" — WHY DO THEY AFFECT FOREST WORKER/HARVESTER COMMUNITIES?

How much money the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have to spend during a year is decided directly by the US Congress in an "appropriations" process. Money for many forest-related and community economic development programs is also decided in the appropriations process.

What are appropriations? Every year, the US Congress is required to pass spending bills to distribute the total federal budget. That means all the money that has been brought in with taxes is distributed to many different projects across the country. The process of how members of Congress decide to fund these many different projects is called "appropriations."

Information from the public can strongly influence some parts of the appropriation process, for instance, three categories of the Forest Service's "Economic Action Programs." These are: *Economic Recovery* for rural communities near national forest land; *Rural Development* to develop diversified uses of forest resources, including small businesses; and *Forest Products Conservation and Recycling* to provide technical assistance working with forest products. This third category serves as link between *Economic Recovery* and *Rural Development*. Together these are known as Rural Community Assistance (RCA). This money often comes directly to community groups.

Although many people do not think they can have any effect on decisions in Washington DC, this is *not true!* Especially in smaller programs like RCA, information from people who work in the woods can be very important in helping to decide how projects will be designed. If your forest worker/harvester network and home community has ideas for projects to improve both the forest and the community, the Jefferson Center will work with you to learn more about how to work to influence and potentially benefit from the appropriations process. We are learning, too, so we can learn together. Our best allies are people from community-forestry groups in Washington DC who think that the efforts of the forest worker/harvester networks is very important to the future of the country.

JEFFERSON CENTER NEWS AND NOTES

In the fall of 1998, the Jefferson Center is grateful to the following funders and allies for supporting the work of the Non-Timber Forest Worker/Harvester program:

A Territory Resource	\$12,000 for work in Washington and Oregon
McKenzie River Gathering	\$ 5,000 for work in Oregon
Resources for Community Collaboration (a project of the Tides Foundation)	\$ 4,000 for work in far northwest California

All of these organizations fund small start-up groups. New groups can make an agreement with an existing tax-exempt non-profit group to act as a "fiscal sponsor" for a project. Please contact the Jefferson Center for more information on these and other funders.

The National Network of Forest Practitioners gave substantial support to make possible the attendance of non-timber forest worker/harvester representatives at the NNFP annual meeting. We thank all for helping to make the Jefferson Center programs useful to a diverse constituency of working women and men.

This newsletter and the other work of the Jefferson Center were made possible in our 1998-99 fiscal year by: A Territory Resource, Ford Foundation, James Irvine Foundation via Forest Community Research and the Lead Partnership Group, McKenzie River Gathering, Resources for Community Collaboration (a project of the Tides Foundation), conference support from the National Network of Forest Practitioners, and private donations of funds and equipment. We thank you all.

Integration of Asian forest worker communities into the agency research efforts is also extremely important. The worker/harvester network people at the meeting argued that without a clear understanding of the situation that Asian people face in the non-timber forest products industry, any “solutions” that are put into place would be incomplete and not sustainable.

Both Forest Service officials said they were glad this network existed and offered support. They will focus on ways to bring up the importance of the specific needs of this workforce and promote

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Wolf Creek OR 97497

Arrival of the police

While we were talking with them, the Oregon State Police came in at about 10 PM, saying there would be an informal meeting with all the pickers right away. People were sent to gather the harvesters from their campsites, asking them to come to one of the common areas, which is a large private tent that acts as a “public”space for pickers to gather during the evenings. The police informed the harvesters that they had been told there was a threat against some people who decided to go picking. Harvesters looked puzzled because that was not the plan. The police said that probably individuals did this alleged thing. They also said that harvesters not picking was having an effect on the buyers. But the police told them that , if something bad happens, “We will do everthing in our power to shut the whole thing down; no more mushrooms.” Harvesters looked intimidated, said they did not want any problem with police. They went picking the next day.

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