



# Redwood Forest Foundation

Fall 2011

## Welcome

by **Kathy Moxon**, *President*

I want to start by thanking all our loyal supporters for helping to make the funding for our conservation easement a reality. This was a critical benchmark in the long journey to create the community based forest we envision and RFFI is now busy addressing the many details still to be completed before the transaction is finalized. The anticipated closing date for the easement is September 30, 2011. The Conservation Fund will hold the easement and monitor our activities annually.



In addition to completing the easement, we are in the process of selling Shady Dell to Save the Redwoods League. This 955 acre parcel along Usal beach also contains the Enchanted Forest, and we anticipate that it will eventually move into public ownership.

So what is next? In the coming months we will be working on our Stewardship Plan, moving forward on our Forest Stewardship Certification (FSC), submitting our first timber harvest plans, and continuing to work through the hurdles for creating community access. There will be plenty of opportunities to engage, so watch for those.

This is the UN's International Year of the Forest, and our contribution to this global effort was our hugely successful "Paint the Forest" contest. That exhibit is now traveling to galleries around the nation. RFFI will be sending you invitations to local exhibits and if you have ideas for other showings, please let us know. In addition, if you haven't seen President Obama's Great Outdoors Initiative, check it out at [www.americasgreatoutdoors.gov](http://www.americasgreatoutdoors.gov).

If you share the dream of seeing 50,000 acres of productive timberland and healthy watersheds contribute to local well being, then join us in the work being done to make it a reality. It will be

## RFFI and the Three E's

As RFFI seeks to promote self-sustaining communities that manage community-held assets with a focus on the benefit to future generations, we rely on three over-arching principles to shape our decision-making. We call these the Three E's:

- **Ecology:** Promote and restore the ecologic integrity of large working landscapes, which are so critical to addressing climate change and providing for an abundance of wild species.
- **Economy:** Advance free-market solutions to timberland ownership and management that support local employment and local businesses while insuring that the resource remains economically productive in perpetuity.
- **Equity:** Promote social equity through sustainable management solutions that are shaped by collaboration with local stakeholders. Future excess revenues will be reinvested in the community for its continued benefit.

RFFI's hope is that with the Three E's as its guide, the forest and the community will prosper together for generations to come.

years before the forest recovers enough to be profitable from timber production, until then, think of your contributions as a legacy for your children and theirs.

Invest in Redwood Forest Foundation today. October is membership month, our annual campaign to expand RFFI's community. Please join, renew or give a gift membership now. All your contributions—whether of time or money— increase our capacity to engage you personally and the broader public in the collaborative efforts needed to create and implement an enduring future for the Usal Redwood Forest.

## Usal Redwood Forest Conservation Easement Approved

Closing Expected September 30th.

by **Tom Tuchmann**

*President, US Forest Capital*

The Redwood Forest Foundation is delighted to announce that on July 26, California's Wildlife Conservation Board approved a \$19,500,000 grant to The Conservation Fund that will help to permanently conserve the Usal Redwood Forest. This grant, plus an additional \$500,000 raised by the Fund itself, will allow the Fund to purchase a \$20 million conservation easement from the Redwood Forest Foundation.

Although RFFI fully intends to continue to own and manage the Usal Forest, this easement sets standards in place that will protect the forest in perpetuity, no matter who owns it. The easement establishes a fundamental conservation scenario that includes a prohibition against development and subdivision, a 2.9% inventory harvest limitation, Forest Stewardship Certification, and transitioning to uneven-aged management over a 50-year period. These permanent standards will be monitored by The Conservation Fund as the easement holder.

RFFI hopes to grow both the conservation practices and economic benefits of the forest over time, as it makes good on its financial obligations.

Together with the previously approved \$5.5 million parcel sale to Save the Redwoods League to protect the 955 acre Shady Dell property (which includes the Enchanted Forest and the coastal portion of Usal), the easement comprises a regional transaction valued at \$25.5 million. It will create the largest working forest easement in California and assures that the 50,000 acre Usal forest will remain, in perpetuity, a working forest for the economic and environmental benefit of our communities.

While funding for the conservation easement and the fee sale have both been approved, RFFI still has much work to do to close these two transactions, which is expected to occur on September 30, 2011. RFFI would like to thank all of you, our supporters, who worked so hard and tirelessly in support of the easement. Your help made a difference!

## North Coast Loses Three Forest Champions

This past August saw the tragic murders of two well known and highly respected individuals, both of whom were killed while on the job in the woods.

**Matt Coleman** (45) worked for the Mendocino Land Trust organizing volunteers to remove invasive plants and educating them on forest ecology.

**Jere Melo** (68) was a longtime city councilman and former mayor of Fort Bragg who also worked on the security staff of Campbell Timberland Management Company.

A third forest champion, **Bud Harwood** passed away at his home in Branscomb on September 1, just one week shy of his 85th birthday. Bud had been a giant in the Mendocino timber industry since the 1940s and at its peak his family business, Harwood Products, was one of the largest private employers in Mendocino County. Bud believed in community service and is well known for his extensive civic involvement and generous financial support of many community causes. He was an advocate of sustainable forestry and a critical early supporter of RFFI.

We sorely miss these three friends and honor their legacies of dedicated community involvement.

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## RFFI Connects!

RFFI has been active in many partnerships that advance our mission and support the regional economy and the environment. Here is a summary of what we have been doing in 2011.

- **Taste of Mendocino**, San Francisco, June 13, 2011. Over 2,000 visitors attended, and 300 stopped by RFFI's booth to learn more. The event was a great success!
- RFFI's contribution to the UN's International Year of the Forest, our "**Paint the Forest**" exhibit, will be traveling the country. It will be at the Gualala Arts Center until October 2, 2011. If you have ideas for other showings, please let us know!
- RFFI welcomes it's new tree planting partners: **Parducci, LeVin** and **Milano Wineries**. Thank you all for investing in the future of our forests!

# The Biochar Demonstration Project: A Manifestation of Community Forestry

By Judy Harwood, *Project Coordinator, Mendocino County Woody Biomass Working Group*

A walk through Usal Redwood Forest reveals the stark impacts of the “cut and run” legacy left by the past 50 years of timberland management. Vast clear cuts have created large stands of small diameter brush and trees that impede the growth of conifer and redwood trees, increase vulnerability to catastrophic forest fires and negatively impact the entire forest ecosystem.

As RFFI begins to deal with young, crowded, tan oak-dominated stands within the Usal Redwood Forest, we are working with the community to create environmentally, economically and socially beneficial alternatives to traditional herbicide applications that addressed these problems in the past. This has led to the creation of the Biochar Demonstration Project.

Biochar is created through a process called pyrolysis, where wood is heated in the absence of oxygen. The end product is a charcoal-like substance consisting mostly of the carbon that was originally stored in the wood. Once buried, this carbon can remain trapped for hundreds to thousands of years creating an effective carbon sink.

Biochar is also a useful amendment that can increase the nutrient exchange capacity of degraded soils, as well as reduce leaching, increase microbial activity, improve water drainage and infiltration, and adjust soil PH. Biochar can be used to address numerous soil problems, although, as with all amendments, it is important to understand the initial condition of your soil before adding conditioners.

In late 2010 a grassroots organization called the Mendocino County Woody Biomass Working Group (WBWG) approached RFFI to discuss launching a community-created demonstration project that would locate a small (3 bone-dry tons/day) biomass-to-biochar conversion unit within the Usal Redwood Forest. Excess woody biomass would be removed from 37 acres of overcrowded stands, converted into biochar and sold locally as a soil amendment and carbon sequestration tool.

The strength of the Biochar Demonstration Project comes from its collaborative approach, which integrates several important objectives. The project intends to demonstrate a cost-effective

method for dealing with forest overcrowding and the associated negative impacts to forest health.

In addition, the U.C. Cooperative Extension will perform a plant and animal diversity study in forest areas where biomass has been removed; a Native American acorn harvesting orchard will be created in collaboration with local tribes; and biochar will be produced to provide a local input to agriculture, simultaneously capturing and storing carbon and improving local soil fertility. In essence, this project impacts everything from local native culture to global climate change.

Partnerships with the North Coast Resource Conservation and Development Council (NCRC&DC) and the North Coast Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (NCIRWMP) have created an avenue for this relatively small project to be plugged into regional efforts that will allow for information sharing and project replication throughout the North Coast. Thus far, the project has been partially financed by matching funds from all project partners as well as a grant through the Dept. of Water Resources which recognizes the critical role forest soils have on water quality. Private / public partnerships are currently being pursued to cover remaining costs.

The Biochar Demonstration Project is truly a model of RFFI’s Three-E approach (see sidebar on page 1): It is a beneficial project created by the local community and enhanced through regional partnerships. It is one small piece of our emerging restoration-based economy in which removal of small-diameter brush and trees helps create healthier forest ecosystems, local jobs and movement towards a sustainable and equitable resource-based economy.

For more information visit:  
<http://MendoFutures.org>

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**Thank you to the  
Alex C. Walker Foundation!**

After an in-depth site visit and kayaking on the South Fork of the Eel River, the Foundation granted \$20,000 to support RFFI’s innovative model of Community Forestry.



## Check it Out

The RFFI Newsletter is going Electronic  
You Can Help the Redwood Forest Foundation save trees  
by going to [www.RFFI.org](http://www.RFFI.org) and signing up for our e-Newsletter.  
This is a great way to conserve and stay informed!

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## October is Membership Month!

Please Join, Renew or Give a gift membership today. Enclosed you will find an envelope for your convenience or go online to [www.RFFI.org](http://www.RFFI.org) and select the "Join RFFI" button.

Become part of the RFFI Family, keep up with what is going on in the forest and hear about opportunities to be part of the action on Usal Redwood Forest by becoming a member today.



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