



# The Centennial Forest Update

April 2003

*A Quarterly Update of Activities on NAU's Outdoor Research and Education Lab*

## From the Director

We have made steady progress toward our goals of providing quality education and research opportunities in an economically and ecologically sustainable Centennial Forest since its creation in April of 2000. We now have 15 major research projects funded at well over \$1 million, and 6,500 student-hours annually, and we have raised over \$400,000 to conduct fire risk reduction and restoration treatments on the Forest. The downside is that we haven't had much time to keep everyone who is interested up to date. So starting with this April issue we will be sending out a quarterly newsletter to keep you all apprised of the developments on the Centennial Forest every few months. Background information, as well as activity applications can be found on the website ([www.for.nau.edu/centennialforest](http://www.for.nau.edu/centennialforest)) and you can always contact anyone on the Centennial Forest staff if you have questions. – John Bailey, Acting Director (while Dr. Mike Wagner is away)

## Centennial Forest Field Campus Master Plan Funded

The far-reaching vision of CF field facilities will soon become a reality. Last month the NAU School of Forestry and the Merriam-Powell Center for Environmental Research each contributed \$20,000 to develop a master plan for our Centennial Forest Field Campus. This funding comes on the heels of a National Science Foundation grant for the research station component of the Field Campus.

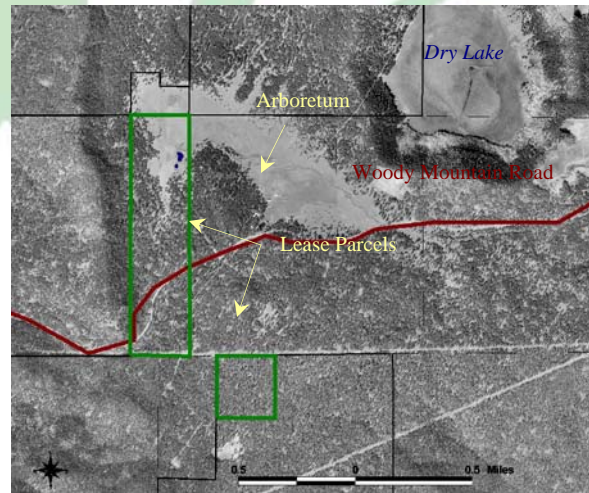
The \$250,000 grant from the NSF, matched with \$250,000 from NAU, will be used to construct phase I of the research station and develop infrastructure (e.g., water and power).

The research facility, to be named the Merriam-Powell Research Station, will be an integral part of the Centennial Forest Field Campus that will eventually include an environmental camp, a retreat center, housing for visiting scholars, and the Forest Resource Enterprise Center.

NAU Capital Assets and Services is sending letters to architectural and engineering firms this month and arranging for companies interested in developing the master plan to give us their 'pitch'. For more information on the planning effort, please contact [JJ.Smith@nau.edu](mailto:JJ.Smith@nau.edu).

## Field Campus Lease Application to go before Arizona Board of Regents

Since the Centennial Forest Intergovernmental Agreement contains no provision for building structures, we are pursuing an institutional lease for the 200 acres of State Trust Lands that will become the Centennial Forest Field Campus.



The Field Campus site is adjacent to the Arboretum at Flagstaff on the southern edge of the 4,000-acre Historic School Forest

The lease plan received enthusiastic support last month in our presentation to NAU President Haeger and his Cabinet. The next step is a presentation at the April 24 Arizona Board of Regents meeting by Dr. Carl Fox, our NAU Research V.P. Upon approval from ABOR, the lease application will be submitted to the Arizona State Land Department, where we expect a few months of approval and processing time.

### **Fisher-Rock Restoration Project to Begin when Road Conditions Improve**

Four hundred acres of forest restoration research treatments are slated to begin as soon as road conditions improve this month or in May. The contractor, Southwest Forest Products, Inc. from Phoenix will begin by upgrading the haul road between Bud Tank and the Fisher Springs area. Operations are expected to last three to four weeks at each of the two locations. The treatments are part of the School of Forestry's Stand Treatment Impacts on Forest Health study and the Ecological Restoration Institute's Mogollon Rim study. For more information on the Fisher-Rock Project contact Cheryl.Miller@nau.edu.

### **Fire Risk Reduction Planning for Historic School Forest Underway**

Planning efforts are underway for restoration and fire risk reduction treatments in the Historic School Forest, a critical component of the Flagstaff wildland-urban interface. NAU Forestry and the Arizona State Land Department are pooling resources in a combined effort to complete archaeological surveys, collect inventory data, design transportation routes, and other planning activities. The main focus of the effort is to reduce the threat of catastrophic fire to Flagstaff, which, during fire season, is downwind of the HSF. Additional objectives include the maintenance of wildlife corridors, pronghorn habitat enhancement, and meadow restoration.

The 4,000 acre HSF lies adjacent to Forest Service lands within the Greater Flagstaff Forest

Partnership's Woody Ridge Project. Keith Pajkos with the Arizona State Land Department and the CF's JJ Smith meet weekly with the Partnership and the Coconino National Forest in order to coordinate our land management activities with the Woody Ridge Project.

### **Forestry Club Builds Log Cabin**

As part of an education and team-building exercise, the Centennial Forest helped the Northern Arizona Conservation Corps start construction of a log cabin last year. Time ran out before they could complete the cabin, and this year's gung-ho Forestry club saw completing it as an opportunity to practice for building a larger Forestry Club cabin. The enthusiastic Forestry Club president, Jane Dobie, enlisted the help of Craig Bowman, a new forestry student and former home-builder from Phoenix. When Craig showed up on cabin-building day he brought with him a truck full of tools, two friends from his former framing crew, and his dad, also a builder, who was armed with a digital camera.

With the help of a dozen other Forestry Club members, trees were felled and peeled, a door was made, the walls were chinked with a mud-pine needle mix, and the roof was completed except for the metal sheeting which will be added later. The club now has its sights set on a larger 10'x12' cabin with a loft that can be used for club activities such as logger's sports.



NAU Forestry junior Jane Dobie 'Chinking' the cabin walls with a mud and pine needle mortar.

