Bridgeville, Humboldt County, California

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NEAI Projects*

Year	Applicant	Project	Funding Source	Amount
1994	High Mountain Herb Cooperative	Herb Cooperative Expansion	Forest Service	$64,684
1996	High Mountain Herb Cooperative	Apprentice Program/Workshops for Prospective/Producing Herb Growers	Forest Service	$30,000
1996	High Mountain Herb Cooperative	Forest Products/Herb Coop Processing Incubator	Forest Service	$344,245
1997	High Mountain Herb Cooperative	Herbs Processing Facility Expansion Study	Forest Service	$60,000
1997	High Mountain Herb Cooperative	Value Added Manufacturing Equipment	Forest Service	$60,000
1995	North Coast Services in association with Pacific Bell	Telephone Extension For State Route 36 from Van Duzen Bridge to Dinsmore Bridge	Forest Service	$81,572
Regional Projects				
1996-1997	Arcata Economic Development Corporation (with Center for Environmental Economic Development	Strategic Community Economic Development	USDA Rural Development and Forest Service	$92,604
1995	North Coast Aquaculture Cooperative	Cooperative Production and Marketing of Rainbow Trout	USDA Rural Development: Forest Service	$19,500
1995-1996	Redwood Community Action Agency	Ecosystem Management Technician Training Program	Department of Labor, Job Training Partnership Act	

* Project funding reflects initial loan and grant totals. Final funding amounts may be different.

Background Context

Bridgeville is situated in the extreme southeast corner of Humboldt County, California, next to the Van Duzen River and alongside State Route 36, approximately 28 miles east of U.S. Highway 101. State Route 36, the primary transport route linking southern Humboldt and Trinity Counties, traverses the coast range and provides a winding travel corridor between U.S. Highway 101 and Interstate Highway 5. There are no stores or any other commercial establishments in Bridgeville proper. There is no town center, as defined by a concentration of dwellings with associated services. To the extent that a nucleus does exist, it is comprised of a post office, elementary school and community center, and approximately six houses—all located on a spur road on the other side of the Van Duzen River from State Route 36. Of the approximately six dwellings, two lie vacant, while the others are leased out by the Lapples, the family that owns all six dwellings, the building that houses the post office, and approximately 80 acres of the flat created by a meandering bend of the Van Duzen in what is otherwise steep mountainous terrain.

The rest of the Bridgeville community consists of approximately 700 people in small, dispersed settlement clusters and on homesteads along State Route 36, or along short spur roads cut across the steep canyons and valleys that feed the Van Duzen River. Defined in this manner, the greater Bridgeville community spans a distance of approximately 12 miles along SR 36, extending from Swain's Flat just to the west of Bridgeville, through Bridgeville, up past McClellan Mountain and beyond Larabee Valley, and ending a short distance before Dinsmore and the Trinity County line. Residents of Swain's Flat will be more oriented towards Carlotta and Fortuna to the west, while residents in and near Larabee Valley are more oriented towards Dinsmore, Mad River, and Ruth to the east, in southern Trinity County. However, parents from throughout this region send their children to Bridgeville Elementary School. Many have also participated in Bridgeville community events such as the community action plan development process, the construction, staffing and support of the Healthy Start-initiated Bridgeville School Community Center, and the annual Bridgefest celebration.

Bridgeville's remoteness from the Humboldt County population, political, and economic centers of Fortuna, Eureka, and Arcata is a function of distance and time. It takes about an hour and a half to drive the 60 miles from Bridgeville to Eureka. Bridgeville is also isolated from similar centers to the northeast in neighboring Trinity county by long windy roads, compounded by the geographical barrier that McClellan Mountain represents, located just to the east of Bridgeville.

Bridgeville's isolation circumscribes the range of feasible options for community and economic development. When the last of the half dozen local mills closed more than 20 years ago, many millworkers had no choice but to leave the area if they wanted to keep working—there were simply no other labor-absorbing employment opportunities in the region. In many respects, this situation remains true today. Perhaps the one exception is the slow emergence of household-based cottage industries such as candle making, weaving, glass blowing, and soap making. When these operations grow large enough to support employees, a common pattern is for individuals to do piece work in their homes on a consignment basis. This has occurred within local glass blowing and weaving operations. This pattern of labor organization works well. Given people's desires for flexible work schedules, the difficulties associated with traveling the rough roads, and the fact that many people carve out a living through a variety of activities.

Bridgeville's isolation (and natural beauty) accounts for its attractiveness to some, while for others (especially at-risk individuals and households), it constitutes yet one more barrier to accessing needed government services, job opportunities, and quality higher education opportunities. Furthermore, unlike many other rural communities in formerly timber-dependent regions, Bridgeville is too isolated to be attractive to most retirees (who need reasonably good access to health care and other services) and to people willing to live in a bedroom community and commute to work.

Brief History

Bridgeville has not always been an isolated community. Before the construction of Hwy 101 along the coast, Bridgeville occupied a busy crossroads location. The bridge over the Van Duzen River, important for all-season transport of goods, livestock, people, and mail in and out of Humboldt County, gave the community its name and had much to do with its history. In the 1860s and 1870s, Anglo settlers established extensive cattle and sheep ranches in the Bridgeville area. As was true elsewhere in California during this period, settlement was associated with extensive ambushes, fighting, and massacres of local Native American groups. Surviving Native Americans either left the region or stayed on as hired ranch laborers. One of the original settlers and founders of the Bridgeville area was Slaughter Robinson. His property included the easiest crossing point on the Van Duzen River, which was known as Robinson's Crossing. This crossing was on the only overland trail that led southwards from Humboldt County; the only other transport routes in and out of the county were by boat or east over the Trinity Mountains to Weaverville. It was at Robinson's Crossing that the first of Bridgeville's four bridges was built in 1875 to accommodate the increasing traffic of people, wagons, horses, and livestock. To mark the bridge's completion, the town's name was changed to Bridgeport. Later, in 1877, when the first post office was established, the name was changed to Bridgeville. Wagon roads, constructed primarily by Chinese laborers, also extended east and west from Bridgeville to adjacent towns and communities. Bridgeville thus occupied an important crossroads location, reflected in the large 24-room hotel, shops, and general store that were located there in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Although Bridgeville's population always remained low, the town nevertheless was an important focal point for the widely dispersed settlements throughout southeastern Humboldt County. Bridgeville functioned as an important social node for the smaller neighboring areas and people of Swain Flat, Little Golden Gate, McClellan Mountain, Larabee Valley, and Blocksburg. Events such as local rodeos were held in Bridgeville, and clubs and civic organizations such as the Bridgeville Dance Club drew people from these areas on a regular basis. As a result, the "community" of Bridgeville was always much larger than the number of actual residents of Bridgeville proper, which was really more of a small collection of homes, a store, and a post office than a full fledged settlement. As described by a member of the Cox family, which owned the general store and the few other buildings and homes from 1912 to 1973, "people (from these surrounding settlements) were made to feel they had an investment in it."

There is very little public land or industrial forest ownerships in the immediate Bridgeville area. Trinity County to the east of Humboldt County does have extensive national forest lands, and to the west of Bridgeville, near U.S. Highway 101, the Pacific Lumber Company holds extensive industrial forest landholdings. Old ranching families have the largest ownerships in the immediate Bridgeville area. Despite the lack of large scale industrial forest landowners in Bridgeville proper, timber harvesting has played an important role in Bridgeville's economy. Many loggers used to travel to job sites throughout southern Humboldt and Trinity Counties and northern Mendocino County; the few remaining loggers still do. Small scale family-owned "tie mills" were common throughout the region (at one point there were more then 50 small mills in the Bridgeville area). Larger mills were located in Bridgeville, Dinsmore, Swains Flat, Alderpoint, and Carlotta. With the exception of the Carlotta mill which Pacific Lumber Co. still operates, all of these mills had closed by the early 1970s, primarily due to a lack of easily accessible timber and competition from the larger, more efficient mills. Most of the laid-off mill workers and loggers, recognizing the limited potential for employment in the Bridgeville area, moved elsewhere in search of employment. Many went to Fortuna, Eureka, or Samoa. Some loggers from families that had been in the area for more than one generation (and hence had a strong place-based commitment) turned to gyppo logging in an attempt to continue woods work in southern Humboldt County.

Unlike many other rural communities in the region, there were no federal public lands offices located in Bridgeville, but there were state and county road maintenance stations. Employees for both the

county and State Division of Highways road maintenance yards lived in Bridgeville. Their patronage helped support a store and restaurant. Additional local employment and revenue came from long-term contracts with PG&E, the regional utility company, that the corporation negotiated with the Cox family (who used to own Bridgeville) to construct and use buildings on their property for several years while high voltage power transmission lines were erected across southeast Humboldt County. The people who worked on this project also lived in or near Bridgeville. However, the state yards closed sometime during the 1960s, followed by the closure of the county yard in the early 70s. Once PG&E's transmission line installation work was completed, those workers also left the Bridgeville area, although the buildings they left behind were used for a variety of community events.

Declining employment in the timber industry and government service provision ushered in a period of significant social and economic change beginning in the 1970s. Unemployment soared. Demographic shifts in the region's population linked with this decline and broader cultural changes also occurred. Many woods and mill workers unable to find work in the Bridgeville area left, retired, or turned to marijuana cultivation—a lucrative and distinctly southern Humboldt economic activity. Meanwhile, others moved into the area. These people depended on various combinations of transfer payments (welfare, pension payments, etc.), marijuana cultivation, subsistence agriculture, cottage industry development, and fine art production. The decline in resource extraction-related employment, combined with Bridgeville's isolation, seriously constrained the array of options for earning a legal livelihood in this region.[1] However, for many the incentive to create a sustainable livelihood in the area was high, for as one elderly community member put it, "most people would rather starve to death than go to town (Fortuna/Eureka)."

These changes were compounded when Laura June Pawlus, a member of the Cox family, which had owned the center of Bridgeville since 1912, sold it in 1973 for $150,000 to Elizabeth Lapple of Los Angeles. At this point it consisted of 85 acres that included a general store, a café, a dance hall, an elementary school, a post office, a church, and about two dozen homes (Worthen 1996:107). This change in ownership, combined with the broader social and economic changes in the region, made for turbulent times for Bridgeville. No longer did the café, dance hall, and general store constitute a magnet for neighboring satellite settlement clusters. Long term Bridgeville area residents remember the four-year period following the sale of Bridgeville as a time of rampant drug use, especially by the "hippies" who "invaded" Bridgeville during this period, and of general civic decline; many of the area's long term residents no longer visited Bridgeville's center and the civic functions that had made it a central regional social node declined or stopped all together. However, this period was relatively short lived. In 1977, Ms. Lapple sold Bridgeville to a Pentecostal Reverend who, with fellow Bay Area parishioners, unsuccessfully tried to establish a Christian community there. However, a series of financial and other difficulties eventually resulted in the property reverting back to the Lapple family in 1982. Elizabeth Lapple, daughter of the Elizabeth Lapple who made the purchase in 1973, is the current owner and the property is for sale again. While many Bridgeville area residents have a vision of Bridgeville as a community-owned town, for now, purchasing it remains outside the realm of possibility.

Key Issues

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, social and economic changes in the broader Bridgeville area continued. These changes helped produce a relatively diverse and segmented community profile. A brief overview of this profile is appropriate as it sets the stage for understanding what the NEAI did and did not accomplish in this area. The Bridgeville community profile is composed of approximately five, somewhat overlapping, groups. One group is comprised of the long standing ranching families who have been in the area for several generations. Many

1. As one medium sized forestland owner and active community member described it, "my hobby is making money legally out here."

of these families simply retreated from public life while tumultuous changes engulfed Bridgeville. As one community organizer put it, "the old time ranchers went into their homes; they kept to themselves." Many of these families are economically self-sufficient and have the means to weather economic downturns—although they too, struggle to maintain economic solvency given the timber and livestock industry decline.

A second group consists of those people who used to work in the timber industry and who, when the timber jobs dried up, either were unable to leave the area in search of employment or chose not to. Survival strategies for these individuals and their families consist of part-time or seasonal timber-related employment when such work is available, other low-paying jobs (though they are few and far between) and state assistance. Many families of this group live in the two trailer courts located along the Van Duzen River just west of Bridgeville. These trailer courts, once the contemporary equivalent of logging camps, have become the permanent homes of families with limited opportunities for social and economic advancement.

A third group consists of the "back-to-the-landers," individuals and young families who self-consciously chose to create and lead an alternative lifestyle. Many of these people, who moved into the area during the 70s and 80s, brought with them skills and capacities that enabled them to survive despite the economic hard times. As time passed, their commitment to the area and the wider community increased. Many have subsequently devoted some of their considerable skills and talents to helping address the challenges that the Bridgeville community faces.

A fourth group consists of people who have chosen to retire in the Bridgeville area. This group consists of people who retired when the timber-related jobs declined instead of moving elsewhere in search of employment, as well as people who chose the Bridgeville area as a place to retire to. Like the "back-to-the-landers," this is a relatively high capacity group of people, although they do have health care and related service needs that can be difficult to meet in this remote area.

The fifth group of people, although small in number, has had a disproportionately large effect on the area. These are the individuals and families who moved to Bridgeville because of its remoteness from the law. A small number established methamphetamine labs on remote homesteads in the area. In addition to contributing to drug addiction in the area, drugs were also "run" along State Route 36 to the coast where they were sold in Eureka, on the South Spit of Humboldt Bay, and elsewhere. The lack of effective law enforcement in the area during the 80s contributed to a general climate of fear and insecurity among some sectors of the community, influenced the decisions of long time Bridgeville residents to stay at home or on their ranches and withdraw from civic activities, and contributed to the decline of civic community in the Bridgeville area.

The sixth and last group that comprises the Bridgeville community profile are the public service providers. Although this group of individuals is small indeed, through collaboration with key members of the other groups, they have played important roles in 1) trying to provide a safety net for the child and adult casualties of the dysfunctional social relations in the community and 2) facilitating positive social change in Bridgeville through dedicated community-based work, accessing outside funds and expertise, and helping to build community infrastructure and social capital.

As with any classification of people, this profile no doubt is not comprehensive and probably excludes people who don't fit easily into any of these categories, for example the few local merchants (there are stores at Swain's Flat and Dinsmore) and individuals who find living wage work in forest ecosystem restoration and related fields. However, the profile is nevertheless useful to the extent that it helps to characterize both the diversity within the broader Bridgeville community and some of the challenges the community faces.

In 1991-92, local service providers, residents, parents, and outside volunteers began meeting regularly over potluck dinners to address issues and problems of common concern. This group, known as the Bridgeville Planning Council, sought creative responses to the problems afflicting segments of their community. One primary issue concerned at-risk children in the Bridgeville Elementary School.

At-risk children were frequently absent from school, received failing grades, often lived in dangerous environments where they were vulnerable to emotional and physical abuse, and could not access adequate health and dental care. Some community members felt that law enforcement on behalf of children tended to be lax during this period. In 1992, due in large part to the grant writing efforts of Elementary School staff, the Planning Council received a Healthy Start Planning Grant. The Council then reconfigured itself into a Healthy Start Collaborative and set its sights on obtaining a larger Healthy Start Implementation Grant. The planning grant paid for a full-time community coordinator who worked to foster collaboration between community members, teachers, students, and outside service providers through 1998. Among other initiatives, the coordinator created Student Study Teams, enabling teachers to conference together regarding issues school children were facing, devise strategies for addressing those issues, and call for the Deputy Sheriff to intervene, if necessary. The community coordinator also organized a community meeting to discuss issues of shared concern. The main topic of discussion was the common resentment people felt against the CAMP (Campaign Against Marijuana Planting) raids. As one community member described, continuing fear and insecurity regarding CAMP meant that the other, more serious intra-community problems of hard drugs, violence, crime, and lawlessness and the effects on children, were left unmentioned.

After a series of community planning, visioning, and strengthening efforts, in 1994, Bridgeville received a three-year $400,000 Healthy Start Implementation Grant from the State of California.[2] The purpose of the grant was to develop a school-linked community health center at Bridgeville School. Built with hundreds of hours of donated labor, the community center is the centerpiece of Bridgeville's slow renaissance. The center provides a community gathering place where none previously existed. The community center hosts a rural health clinic supported by St. Joseph's Hospital in Eureka, weekly senior lunches that include brief medical check-ups, and numerous workshops related to social and economic development. Linked to the center is a van that provides transportation to Fortuna and Eureka on a regular basis.

Social change comes slowly and in fits-and-starts. Three years after the initial planning grant "the community began celebrating again," recounted one of the social services workers. A quilt show organized by the local ranchers was well attended. Rancher participation indicated a renewed willingness to work towards civic engagement. The Community Center began publishing a newsletter, which it still does on a regular basis (the newsletter currently has a circulation of approximately 450 people and families). "Bridgefest" was founded and has become an annual summer community celebration, replete with live music, booths, and an art raffle on Bridgeville's third historic bridge (which was recently superceded by a new multi-million dollar California Department of Transportation bridge).

The growing sense of community enabled community members to finally address some of their core concerns. In response to a petition that had been circulated calling for more effective law enforcement, another public meeting was called. This meeting was attended by the Sheriff and Deputy Sheriff. At the standing room only meeting, community residents felt emboldened to share their concerns about drug abuse, violence, and lawlessness within their community. Demanding that laws be enforced, community members named names. The meeting had dramatic effects. Soon the problem individuals were serving sentences in jail, and others had left. The Deputy, who now resides in Bridgeville, has had a positive impact, according to many Bridgeville residents. He continues to give regular talks at the Bridgeville School and is available to help with the family issues related to chronic absenteeism. As the former community coordinator described it, "he was the missing link," "all we could not do, he was able to do."

These then, are the events and processes that preceded and were concurrent with the NEAI pro-

[2] The grant was received through collaboration between the community of Bridgeville, the Redwood Community Action Agency Youth Services Bureau, Community Congress, Humboldt County Departments of Social Services and Mental Health, Humboldt Open Door Clinic, Humboldt County Office of Education, North Coast Children's Head Start, Whole Child Interagency Council and Redwood Memorial Hospital.

grams and projects. The following section of this case study discusses the individual NEAI projects that were funded in the Bridgeville area. However, before proceeding it is useful to distill from the prior discussion key points that bear upon the NEAI experience in Bridgeville. In no particular order they are:

1. most out-of-work timber industry workers and their families had left Bridgeville long before the NEAI was initiated, and those that remained juggled part-time work with state assistance,
2. high capacity individuals able to take advantage of NEAI's business and entrepreneurial-oriented grants and programs tended to be back-to-the-landers and, to a lesser extent, members of long standing ranching families, not displaced timber workers,
3. the Healthy Start Implementation Grant had already provided basic community infrastructure in the form of the community center,
4. the social change processes that had been initiated in the early 1990s provided a modicum of social capital that NEAI efforts could build upon, and
5. due to Bridgeville's remoteness, the "build it and let them come" form of economic development common throughout the Pacific Northwest during this period was simply not feasible.

NEAI Projects and Programs

Because Bridgeville is located in the southeast corner of Humboldt County, one could make the argument that applications for NEAI projects in Bridgeville should have been processed through the Humboldt County CERT organization, the Option 9 Review and Ranking Committee. However, Bridgeville's extreme isolation and distance from Eureka, the county seat, coupled with relatively low community capacity (especially in the early mid-1990s) mitigated against this means. Instead, the Southern Trinity CERT expanded its operating area to include a small portion of southeastern Humboldt County. Thus High Mountain Herb Cooperative CERT applications and proposals, whose area of influence straddled both counties, were routed through the Southern Trinity CERT. Other county-wide projects and programs, such as the Arcata Economic Development Corporation's community action plan development process and the Redwood Community Action Agency's Ecosystem Management Technician training program, which affected Bridgeville, did pass through the Humboldt County Option 9 Review and Ranking Committee process. Because NEAI projects in the Bridgeville area went through both Humboldt and Trinity County CERT processes, this section will describe both CERT processes.

The Humboldt Community Economic Revitalization Team Process

During the initial years of the NEAI, the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors played a key role in facilitating community outreach about the CERT process and soliciting and ranking proposal summaries. Soon after Option 9 and the NEAI were announced in Spring of 1993, the Board of Supervisors designated one supervisor to interpret and implement the provisions of Option 9 [3] (this person also served on the State CERT). The Board of Supervisors also held a series of community meetings during the summer of 1993 to publicize the CERT process. During these early meetings some grassroots-oriented community economic development non-profit organizations in the county questioned the program's direction. These groups were con-

3. Strictly speaking, Option 9 refers only to the Northwest Forest Plan and not to the Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative, which accompanied the plan. However, as used by Humboldt County, the term "Option 9" refers to both the Northwest Forest Plan and the Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative. Thus the Humboldt County "Option 9 Working Group" was actually more like a CERT working group because they were addressing issues related to the Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative, not the Northwest Forest Plan.

cerned that the time and labor-intensive community capacity building efforts that they felt were essential components of grassroots, community-based economic development, would be swept aside in the rush to fund infrastructure and other capital-absorbing projects. As one participant recalled, after these meetings members of these nonprofits shared concerns that “they’re just gonna fund public infrastructure” and questioned whether “it was worth their time” to participate in the CERT process. These early differences of opinion regarding the most effective ways to utilize federal and state support for regional economic development continue to this day.

At a subsequent meeting with community leaders in 1993, the Humboldt County Option 9 Working Group was established. This 17-member committee was charged with making recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding the CERT process and with developing and implementing the process through which proposals would be solicited and evaluated. The Option 9 Working Group conducted a “massive media and community outreach program” to publicize the Option 9 program (Humboldt County, 1993). Community meetings were held in seven rural areas throughout the county (but not Bridgeville). The meetings were staffed by representatives from the County Board of Supervisors, the Private Industry Council, the State Employment Development Department, the County Forest Advisor, and the Forest Service, among others. Newspapers, flyers, and mailings were also used for outreach purposes. Three-page NEAI proposal summary forms, along with other information materials, were distributed at the community meetings. Additionally, about 150 proposal packets were sent to key organizations and individuals throughout the county that were involved in NEAI-related activities. The Option 9 Working Group also developed 12 criteria that would be used to evaluate and prioritize project proposals (see Appendix 1 for these criteria).

In order to evaluate the initial round of proposals, the Board of Supervisors established a 21-member Option 9 Review and Ranking Committee in December 1993. Each supervisor appointed four individuals to the committee, and the 21st person was an additional “at-large” committee member. Each committee member had expertise in one or more of the following categories: business development, community development, workers and families, and ecosystems. Copies of the 193 project summaries that had been received by the December 15, 1993 deadline were distributed for ranking to each committee member. Each proposal was assigned a numerical score that reflected its ranking by the individual committee members, and then forwarded on to the State CERT for final ranking and distribution to the relevant lead agency. Successful applicants were then contacted by the lead agency.

This formal process of project solicitation and ranking was subject to some weaknesses. One weakness inherent in the structure of the process, as recounted by a committee member, was that Ranking Committee members invariably ranked projects in which they had a vested interest. This individual referred to the idea and purpose of the committee as a “valiant concept” but one that was inherently flawed because the process was “extremely politicized” and involved “many conflicts of interest as committee members ranked and fought for ‘their’ projects.” Also, the county-level rankings were only recommended rankings, and final prioritization was made by the State CERT. Opportunities also existed for well-positioned individuals to influence the process at the state level as well. For example, one interviewee and former Ranking Committee member recounted an incident in which a county supervisor in an adjacent county leaned on an agency official to support “his” project proposal during the State CERT project prioritization process. Apparently, when the time came to make the final decisions regarding which projects to fund and at what levels, Supervisors and others used their influence to lobby for the projects in which they were particularly interested. As one of the then-county supervisors remarked, “it was a political and very messy process,” “the actual disbursement of funds was very messy.” Despite attempts to make the ranking process as transparent as possible, this former supervisor remarked that “many people misunderstood what the process was; a lot of people felt they got screwed in the end.” This individual also noted that many of the applicants from the original round were “disturbed and offended when they were re-

jected (by the State CERT)." As was true in other Option 9 regions, when the expectations raised by publicity about the President's Plan regarding support for displaced workers and their families went unfulfilled, some people, including CERT applicants, became disillusioned with the process.

A second issue concerns inclusiveness. The county-level CERT process was not as inclusive as it ideally would have been because some small isolated communities, such as Bridgeville, had limited collective resources with which to engage the process. As indicated in the preceding section, in 1993 and 1994, Bridgeville was struggling with its own internal challenges. As one Ranking Committee member observed, some of the problems associated with inclusiveness could have been overcome by establishing a regional coordinator and assistance groups that could have helped communities "get into the process."

After a couple of annual funding cycles using the Ranking Committee project prioritization method described above, the process was considerably transformed. In an attempt at process simplification, a county community coordinator position was created and housed within the Employment Development Department of the county government, and the Ranking Committee was dissolved. Now the community coordinator worked individually with each applicant in an attempt to "massage the project" and teach the applicant how to seek funding directly from agencies, so that when the NEAI funds were gone people and organizations would have the ability to seek other funds from federal and state agencies. During this period (1995 and on), the number of applications dwindled relative to the first two funding rounds. And, as described by the then-community coordinator, the general focus of the projects shifted to "bricks and mortar" community infrastructure projects; they "got way out of workers and spotted owls." Gradually, as more and more applicants sought funding directly from CERT and the agencies themselves, the community coordinator position "evolved into other things." Eventually, the coordinator was cc'd project summaries simply "as a courtesy."

Debates about the relative merits of different approaches to economic development preceded, accompanied, and have survived the NEAI CERT process in Humboldt County. The terms of the central debate revolve around the trade-offs between supporting public infrastructure and business development models on the one hand, and the longer term, less immediately tangible social, human, and cultural capital building—"soft infrastructure"—approach on the other. Some community-based nonprofits in the county argued forcefully for the importance of this kind of community capacity building and the need to think carefully about the linkages between "strategic infrastructure" development and overall capacity building efforts. Despite this effort, the majority of county NEAI projects, and certainly NEAI funds, were oriented towards hard infrastructure development. For example, rather than scheduling community meetings during slack periods in the work cycles when attendance would be greatest (generally the winter time for timber harvesting, agriculture, and some types of fishing), meetings would be scheduled to coincide with the administrative and grant cycle requirements of nonprofits and government agencies. In this and other ways, community participation and capacity building played second fiddle to the exigencies of grant administration and the belief in the paramount importance of infrastructure and business development (highly visible, quickly, and easily monitored funding outcomes). The contrast with other regions that did pursue a development strategy that linked capacity building and infrastructure was brought home to one Humboldt County nonprofit leader when she and other colleagues from the county attended one of the Forest Service's annual Rural Community Assistance conferences. While attending the awards ceremony and learning about the innovative grassroots community soft infrastructure capacity building initiatives and government-community collaborative relationships that were recognized there, she realized that back in Humboldt County, "we were just missing the mark." Close relationships between key applicant organizations and lead agencies in the county, she believed, were enabling them to pursue an agenda of infrastructure development and business development to the exclusion of capacity building initiatives. Nonprofits dependent for financial support on these organizations "had to sweep aside community capac-

ity building" and concentrate on those activities that were fundable.

The NEAI track record in Bridgeville illustrates these trends. As discussed below, many community members stated that the lack of attention to capacity building was one of the main causes of the failure of the largest NEAI project in the area. However, prior to discussing the actual NEAI projects in Bridgeville, a brief overview of the Southern Trinity CERT is necessary. Because of Bridgeville's proximity to Trinity County, some NEAI projects in the Bridgeville area, including the High Mountain Herb Cooperative, came through the Southern Trinity CERT.

The Southern Trinity Community Economic Revitalization Team (ST-CERT)

This section provides a brief overview of the Southern Trinity Community Economic Revitalization Team process. A constellation of factors converged in southern Trinity County to enable the creation of the ST-CERT. Several key individuals (an enthusiastic and committed Forest Service District Ranger, a supportive county supervisor, a local businessman with banking skills, the school superintendent, and the local health clinic administrator) began meeting in anticipation of NEAI funding opportunities. They sought to create an institutional vehicle for disseminating information about funding opportunities, to facilitate the proposal writing process, and generally to support the disbursement of NEAI funds, primarily in southern Trinity County. Southern Trinity, like the rest of Trinity County, has a relatively low population density and a high proportion of land under public ownership. However, southern Trinity County is separated from the northern part of the county and the county seat, Weaverville, by South Fork Mountain. The individuals who organized the ST-CERT hoped to be able to compensate for the area's extreme remoteness and isolation by increasing its organizational capacity.

During the first two years of Option 9, the ST-CERT conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis of community resources, facilitated the development of a Southern Trinity County Area Plan and community action plans for the communities of Mad River and Ruth. The ST-CERT staff also forwarded board-approved proposals to Weaverville, where they were ranked and sent on to the State CERT. As with other areas, there was limited involvement of workers and displaced families. As one reviewer noted, "timber workers did not participate, since they did not see how [Forest Service–Rural Community Assistance] RCA funds could make up for an anticipated loss of livelihood. When jobs were available, loggers worked rather than participate in CERT activities." Additionally, as in Humboldt, early confusion regarding the sorts of projects that could be funded by Option 9 led to false expectations (less than seven out of 70 proposals were funded in the initial CERT cycle) and eventual disillusionment with the CERT process on the part of some community members. Also, one former ST-CERT board member stated that it may have been possible to fund more smaller projects if resources had been less concentrated on a few projects, including the High Mountain Herb Cooperative. This individual felt that some displaced workers had forwarded valid proposals concerning small business development, but that these had been turned down by the ST-CERT. Eventually, the ST-CERT reorganized itself into the Mad River Economic Development Corporation. It is now recognized as a 501(c)6 organization. It operates, with support from the Rural Development Administration and Forest Service, as a community support center for small businesses.

Projects

High Mountain Herb Cooperative

The purpose of the High Mountain Herb Cooperative (HMHC) was to develop the human capacity, production and processing infrastructure, and marketing ability necessary for the cultivation, processing, and sale of medicinal and other herbs. The HMHC sought to promote regional economic revitalization through the development of agricultural and special forest products niche markets—a common response to the job loss and economic declines associated with the declining timber and wood products industries.

Some of the key individuals involved with the cooperative had previously grown or wildcrafted and marketed medicinal herbs. Some of this work

had occurred in association with other growers and wildcrafters in the Hayfork area, including the Hayfork-based Trinity Alps Botanicals. During the early 1990s, further collaboration had been anticipated. This planned regional-scale cooperation would have increased economies of scale for herb processing and marketing. Additionally, significantly increasing the ecological size and diversity of the growing and harvesting "unit" would have improved the likelihood that a steady stream of plants could have been harvested and processed—an important consideration given the spatial and temporal diversity of many of the harvested plants.[4] However, differences between Hayfork area growers and wildcrafters, and those in southern Trinity and southeast Humboldt Counties, prevented this collaboration from developing. In 1994, with the help of the first of several Forest Service grants, the independent High Mountain Herb Cooperative was established. Between 1994 and 1997, the HMHC received five Forest Service Rural Community Assistance grants totaling approximately $560,000. These grants were processed through the ST-CERT office.[5] After approval by the ST-CERT board, the applications were forwarded on to Weaverville and the State CERT. The area encompassed by the High Mountain Herb Cooperative straddled southern Trinity County and southeast Humboldt County. It included the greater Bridgeville area and extended east to Dinsmore and beyond. The initial and ongoing high level of interest taken by the Forest Service CERT representatives in the HMHC facilitated the acquisition of this and subsequent grants by the cooperative.

The first grant ($64,684) facilitated the establishment of three demonstration herb growing operations, two on valley farms and one on a hillside farm. Local youths were hired to erect fenced enclosures (including demonstration of an inexpensive form of fencing), install irrigation systems, and plant and care for medicinal herbs. Approximately 20 growers and 20-30 wildcrafters were involved in the cooperative at this time, according to one estimate. By the end of the summer of 1995, a "fair crop" had been harvested, marketed, and sold. Throughout the growing season co-op members met monthly. At the end of the season, they collectively conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis. It was determined that the lack of facilities for drying and storing the harvested medicinal herbs was a major limitation that resulted in product loss from mold or insect damage and that also constrained the total quantity of herbs that could be cultivated, processed, and marketed.

After discussing the advantages and disadvantages of different types of facilities, ranging from relatively simple drying sheds to much larger permanent buildings, it was decided to pursue a rapid growth strategy and seek a relatively large Forest Service grant to construct a permanent processing and storage facility. The grant, in the amount of $344,245, was awarded to the cooperative in 1996, along with a second small grant to support workshops and an apprenticeship program for herb growers. One of the herb growers donated the land on which the facility would be constructed. At the same time the HMHC became incorporated, co-op members established a governing board, and hired a facility manager and an operations and maintenance staff person. These efforts, including getting the various permits required for operating the facility, involved hundreds of volunteer hours. Delays in constructing the building meant that it was not available as planned for the 1996 growing season. Income streams were consequently less and later than anticipated, thus making it difficult to meet the relatively high operating and maintenance costs of the cooperative and the new facility. Two more Forest Service grants, each in the amount of $60,000, were awarded to the HMHC in 1997 to help cover these costs until the income generated from the sale of the 1997 crop would be realized.

Unfortunately, the market price for feverfew (Chrysanthemum parthenium), one of the primary herbs cultivated by co-op members, plummeted from

4. For example, one commonly wildcrafted plant is Mullein (Verbascum thapsus L.). Mullein is an early successional species associated with major disturbances, such as fire. Its dynamic spatial distribution is closely correlated with an area's fire history. Maintaining a continuous supply of Mullein requires an understanding of that history and an ability to search representative habitats for wildcrafting across a fairly large area (Everett 1997:16).

5. While it was not possible to verify this, one former ST-CERT board member mentioned that the very first HMHC grant preceded and was processed independently of the ST-CERT process, and that it was to some extent a product of close relations between one of the HMHC founders and the Forest Service CERT representative.

between $7 and $9 per pound to $1 per pound in 1997. Apparently, the HMHC's primary bulk buyer, Nature's Ray, located in Utah, was able to buy Rumanian feverfew by the container load for approximately $1 per pound as a result of the WTO mandated elimination of import tariffs. Suddenly, it was no longer economical to grow, process, and market feverfew. As one former co-op member recounted, "that's what did us in." Co-op members sought other smaller markets for their products, but these inevitably brought less economic return. By the Spring of 1998, after only five months of operation, the facility closed down when the Forest Service, along with the Superior California Economic Development District and the Rural Development Administration, announced that it would no longer financially support the cooperative.

Trinity County now owns the processing facility. It is leased to a Sacramento-based firm that encapsulates and bottles herbs for marketing to chain stores such as Ray's supermarkets.

Telephone Extension along State Route 36 from Van Duzen Bridge to Dinsmore Bridge

Prior to the 1995 $81,572 grant that enabled the extension of Pacific Bell's trunk phone line along SR36 from the Van Duzen Bridge to the Dinsmore Bridge, the approximately four dozen families that live in this mountainous country had no reliable means of communication. This severely constrained the growth of the cottage industries that many households were developing, not to mention the public safety concerns arising from the difficulty of contacting emergency medical and other assistance. As discussed below, reliable phone service has been an integral component in the successful establishment of many home-based economic endeavors in this area, and it has reduced or eliminated the public safety concerns that existed prior to the trunk line extension. As such, the telephone extension project exemplifies how strategic investments in infrastructure that increase one type of capital (physical) can strengthen other components of community well being, in this case financial and human capital.

The telephone extension project has a long history, which in many respects, illustrates the collective capacity of residents in this area to pursue shared interests. As many as 10-12 years prior to the 1995 phone extension, area residents had petitioned both the Public Utilities Commission and Pacific Bell to install telephone service in this area. However, these efforts were to no avail, because, as one local resident described it, a common issue associated with service provision in rural areas is the high provision costs and low financial returns. After making little or no progress with either the Public Utilities Commission or Pacific Bell, and in a manner consistent with the self-reliance and ingenuity associated with intentional back-to-the-land lifestyles, approximately 20 families organized themselves into a nonprofit club and commissioned local HAM radio operators to set up a radio telephone patch system, complete with a transmitter. The shared 20-person party line was "patched" into the adjacent phone systems and enabled telephone communication with the rest of the world. The families levied dues to maintain the radio telephone system; extra income was used to sponsor summer picnics and painting parties at the repeater station on a nearby mountain top. The enhanced communication possibilities the radio telephone enabled also strengthened community identity. As one community member acknowledged, the HAM radio system "really pulled the community together." As a result of the radio telephone system, "neighbors talked to neighbors" and "if you needed help it was a quick call away."

The radio system also enabled community members to organize themselves into citizens advisory groups affiliated with the Garberville-based civil liberties monitoring project during the late 1980s. Citizens' groups organized during the height of the Campaign Against Marijuana Planting (CAMP) raids involving helicopter surveillance and raids by federal law enforcement officials. Citizens' advisory group members, communicating through the radio telephone system, sought to protect individuals' civil rights and liberties by on-site observation and recording of CAMP raids. The improved communication with lead deputies and the recording of the raids themselves helped constrain some of the excessive aspects of the CAMP program.

The radio telephone system enabled basic communication. However, the system had its drawbacks: it was one large party connection, none of the home-based businesses could have a yellow page advertisement (or for that matter, any telecommuni-

cations-related advertising), and having to say "over" or otherwise mark the end of one's statement before the individual on the other end of the line could respond lent the system a certain archaic awkwardness. These constraints, in addition to periodic equipment malfunctions (often during snowstorms and other inclement weather) and impaired transmission due to weather and topographical features, meant that the radio telephone system could not be a long-term solution.

The NEAI offered another opportunity to push the telephone line extension project. A Project Proposal Summary was completed for this project and submitted to the ST-CERT. Unfortunately, the project floundered on somewhat unclear grounds. A former ST-CERT staff member recollects that the project, based primarily in Humboldt County, did not meet with favor from Trinity County-oriented funding agencies despite receiving the support of the ST-CERT. In part, this disapproval was apparently due to a reluctance to fund a Humboldt County-based project. On the other hand, a former ST-CERT board member stated that the ST-CERT board failed to approve the project, in part due to the concentration of NEAI funds on the High Mountain Herb Cooperative, which made it more difficult to fund other projects (the zero sum game phenomena). One local resident, sensing the lack of progress on the project, eventually took a different route. This individual contacted the state assemblyman who represented the Bridgeville District, U.S. Senators Boxer and Feinstein, and the Humboldt County Administrative Officer, Chris Anderson. To each of these individuals the resident explained the history and status of the project and requested their support in getting the project approved. These efforts bore fruit. In 1995, a Forest Service Rural Community Assistance grant in the amount of $81,572 was approved and processed. This enabled the laying of the trunk line and subsidized the installation of the service lines that now link residences to the main trunk line.

Bridgeville Area Community Action Plan

In 1997, the Arcata Economic Development Corporation (AEDC), in conjunction with the Center for Environmental Economic Development (CEED) and Forest Service Rural Community Assistance Program (FS-RCAP) , facilitated the development of community action plans in four Humboldt County communities, including Bridgeville. The FS-RCAP provided $92,604 to fund the plan development process. The Institute of the North Coast also supported the community action plan efforts. CEED staff facilitated the Bridgeville planning conference sessions. The Bridgeville Community School District and Community Center sponsored the event, which was held at the community center. The two-day Bridgeville Community Visioning and Planning Conference, held in late January, 1997, was preceded by written survey questionnaires distributed in December to the two local schools. Questionnaire responses informed the development of the planning conference agenda as well as the focus of the presentations made by four outside speakers. The physical, human, and social capital engendered by the Healthy Start grant and program laid the necessary groundwork for developing the community action plan.

The strategic planning process entailed three phases: a) a visioning process to identify desired changes, current positive community attributes, and ideas for community economic development, b) prioritization of community development ideas based on importance, feasibility, and the match between available and required resources and c) creation of action plans that specify the steps necessary for achieving community development goals and community committees responsible for their implementation.

Through this process, the 23 community members from the greater Bridgeville area that participated in the conference developed four projects and action plans: Bridgefest, Bridgeville Heat (mechanized firewood cutting and marketing), Bridgeville Timber and Forest Products Project, and Bridgeville Business and Job Support Center. Two of these four projects, Bridgefest and the Business and Job Support Center have become institutionalized within the Bridgeville community. Bridgefest has become an annual summer event that draws non-local people to Bridgeville, and has become an occasion for Bridgeville residents to enjoy and celebrate their community. The Business and Job Support Center has been incorporated within the Bridgeville Community Center. Workshops have been held regarding various aspects of small

home-based cottage industry development, and the Community Center continues to help with the job search process—primarily by helping to link people with jobs. Due to high start up costs and low market return, the firewood project "Bridgeville Heat" was not pursued. The Timber and Forest Products Project, which planned to organize seminars examining non-timber forest product cultivation and wildcrafting or sustainable wood production, never occurred, primarily due to the collapse of the High Mountain Herb Cooperative, the low market price for stumpage, and the lack of any added monetary value for certified wood.

Cooperative Production and Marketing of Rainbow Trout

In 1993, 18 individuals (including several former loggers and commercial fishers) incorporated the Northern California Aquaculture Cooperative under the 1953 Fish Marketing Act in the California Tax Code. The lengthy incorporation effort involved the assistance of the UC Davis Division of Cooperatives, the USDA Agriculture Cooperative Service, a lawyer experienced in cooperatives, and the Sea Grant Marine Advisor. Three of the cooperative members were already commercial growers licensed to produce and sell rainbow trout and eight members grew trout in their ponds for recreational use. The purpose of the cooperative was to develop the capacity to commercially grow, process, and market rainbow trout among the cooperative's members in Humboldt, Mendocino, and Siskiyou Counties. In the CERT proposal summary it was estimated that 12 seasonal, 20 full-time, and eight part-time jobs would be created. As part of the initial planning efforts, the cooperative members had worked with the Humboldt Bay Economic Development Forum (which helped the Cooperative acquire $2,000 in start-up funding from Pacific Telesis) and the Arcata Economic Development Corporation (which had offered the Cooperative space and facilities in its small business incubator). Fish Brothers Company, located in AEDC's business incubator, had offered to test value-added smoked and vacuum packed trout. Various other forms of institutional and technical support had been lined up with UC Davis, USDA Cooperative Extension, the Sea Grant Program, and fisheries specialists at Humboldt State University.

The $19,500 grant received from USDA-Rural Development was used to help in the initial stages of planning and organizing the cooperative. The amount was significantly less than the proposed budgets for phases 1 through 3 (the estimates for phase 1 (9-10 months), phase 2 (12 months), and phase 3 (12-14 months) were $70,000, $59,500, and $266,550, respectively). Due to a variety of factors, the cooperative was unable to become a successful business enterprise. A key stumbling block, as recounted by the NEAI grant proposal contact person, was that despite several meetings with the California Department of Fish and Game biologists and the State Aquaculture Coordinator, the Department of Fish and Game did not grant the Cooperative the permit it needed to commercially produce rainbow trout. According to the contact person, this was due to concerns that hatchery raised trout might escape from the ponds and, through interbreeding with native races of trout, negatively affect their genetic stock.

The Sea Grant Marine Advisor involved with the project remembered it slightly differently. She stated that the main stumbling block was a lack of ability on the part of the many small operators to mobilize the energy, resources, and commitment to make the cooperative a success. She felt that for the smaller operators, who constituted all but two of the cooperative members, the relatively small anticipated economic returns limited their level of interest and willingness to commit to the project. The two larger operators continued to pursue their aquaculture interests, but for the majority of smaller operators it was, as she put it, "more than they could manage at many levels." She acknowledged that the Department of Fish and Game was unfamiliar with cooperatives and the group permitting procedure they had requested, but she did not feel that actions on the part of that Department caused the cooperative to fail.

One of the cooperative members whose family has a trout pond on their property near Bridgeville discussed the difficulty of competing against farm-raised trout from Idaho. There, according to this individual, producers benefit from significant econo-

mies of scale and can thus undersell the trout grown on the comparatively small ponds scattered widely across the relatively inaccessible three-county region encompassed by the cooperative. Like the Sea Grant Marine Advisor, this small pond operator felt that the greatest potential for small pond owners lay in "pay lake fishing" rather than aquaculture for off-site trout processing and marketing purposes. "Pay lake fishing" requires being located in an accessible area and thus this individual, whose property is located in a remote location off of SR 36, was prevented from developing this option.

As the Sea Grant Marine Advisor stated, the project produced useful lessons regarding the conditions under which such a venture may actually develop into a successful business venture. That this North Coast Aquaculture Cooperative did not develop, suggests that the anticipated benefits of trout production, processing, and marketing did not warrant the time and resource commitments necessary to organize and fund the cooperative. While the cooperative disbanded as a result of these obstacles, some former members still grow trout for recreational and commercial purposes.

Jobs-in-the-Woods and Job Training Partnership Act Projects – The Redwood Community Action Agency Ecosystem Management Technician Training Program

The Eureka-based Redwood Community Action Agency (RCAA) has been at the forefront of efforts to develop restoration-oriented demonstration and training programs in Humboldt County. The director of the Redwood Community Action Agency's Natural Resources Services program, along with the director of the Hayfork Watershed and Research Center in Trinity County, are widely credited with developing the early ecosystem management training models that were used in the nine county northern California region during the NEAI period. To a great extent, they relied on support from Job Training Partnership Act and Jobs-in-the-Woods funds. Both RCAA and the Watershed Center continue to sponsor worker training and apprentice programs. In 1995, as part of the NEAI, three county-level pilot ecosystem management training programs were initiated. RCAA, the Hayfork Watershed Center, and the Rural Human Services Department directed the programs in Humboldt, Trinity, and Del Norte Counties, respectively. Because all three programs were supported with Job Training Partnership Act funds, participants had to meet Title III eligibility requirements concerning nature and duration of unemployment status.

The 1995-1996 Humboldt County Ecosystem Management Technician Training Program was sponsored by RCAA in association with the Humboldt County Private Industry Council and the College of the Redwoods Community College, with the support of several state and federal agencies and private landowners. The program targeted displaced timber workers and was designed to provide the necessary retraining for restoration-related employment. However, due to under-enrollment in the training program, the program was opened up to include Title III eligible unemployed workers from other sectors who were interested in becoming an ecosystem management technician. One Bridgeville resident, who had formerly worked at the Garberville recycling center and who had long been interested in ecosystem restoration, joined the program. He, along with approximately nine others (out of the 24 initial participants), successfully completed the program and in 1996 they were awarded certificates of completion.

The program involved a combination of approximately 20 percent unpaid classroom learning and 80 percent paid restoration project implementation. The classroom component consisted of 200 hours of community college course work on various aspects of forestry practices, fisheries enhancement, inventory and monitoring methods, erosion control, plant identification and revegetation, and roads and trails maintenance. Participants were awarded seven units of college credit for this work. The classroom material was complemented by four days of paid ($10.29/hour) work per week on projects that illustrated the principles discussed in the class. Many of these projects, which RCAA was primarily responsible for scheduling, involved Jobs-in-the-Woods grants from the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as funding from the California Wildlife Conservation Board, the California Division of Parks and

Recreation, the California State Coastal Conservancy, and Humboldt County. They were implemented on both public and private land.

As articulated by the Bridgeville graduate of the program, an important benefit of the training effort, in addition to the knowledge that he acquired, was the expanded network of people (including contractors, agency representatives, and other workers) that he came to know through the program. Since graduating from the program in 1996, he has been able to rely on restoration-related project work for approximately half of his income; he supplements this work with a poison oak removal and landscaping service. Much of the restoration-related work he is able to find is generated through the networks and contacts that developed over the course of the program. A challenging part of working in the restoration field is developing the ability to piece together sustainable work from a wide variety of funding arrangements and sources on public, as well as private, landholdings. This requires flexibility, planning, innovation, and entrepreneurship—skills that must be incorporated into retraining programs if displaced timber workers are to successfully enter this field.

One continuing challenge the Bridgeville training program graduate noted is the tendency for restoration projects to come on line simultaneously, rather than being more evenly spread throughout the year. Such project bottlenecks create short duration peak labor demands that are often difficult to satisfy and that conform poorly to the need for steady income flows and work rhythms. Strategies for evenly distributing projects over time are needed. Other challenges include developing a benefits package for restoration workers, developing the skills necessary for successfully bidding on contracts for restoration work, convincing the agencies to package work in smaller sizes to enable smaller, local restoration contractors to bid, developing financial mechanisms that allow restoration workers to be paid as the work progresses, rather than having to wait several weeks after completing the project before getting paid, and developing the trust of landowners so that they will allow restoration workers and agency inspectors to work on their land.

Current Socioeconomic Conditions and Effects of NEAI on Community Well-Being

Socioeconomic Condition

The long-term decline in jobs resulting from local mill closures and declining timber harvest rates on both private and public lands, coupled with the almost total absence of local jobs, has forced many working families to leave the Bridgeville area. Consequently, enrollment in Bridgeville Elementary Schools has been declining for several years. Between 1987 and 1999 the school's enrollment dropped from the 115-130 range to the 85-95 range. A lower enrollment has unfortunate ramifications for program funding, because of public school's attendance-based funding. Unlike some other NEAI study communities, neither retired people nor service or other types of employment-providing businesses have moved in to help fill the void left by families who have departed in search of employment. As one second generation timber faller ruefully stated, "There is just about no community out here anymore."

Census tract information drawn from the 1990 census of Block Group 7, which closely correlates with the boundaries of the Bridgeville School District, provides a snapshot view. The table clearly indicates the economic difficulties that beset Bridgeville. The combination of Bridgeville's extraordinarily high unemployment and low household and per capita income levels suggest that poverty rates are high because many are unemployed and those lucky enough to have jobs earn little. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that public assistance rates are twice that of the state level and one-third higher than the county level. Enrollment and free lunch data from the Bridgeville Elementary School match these trends and suggest that families with children are leaving the area, presumably due to the dearth of job opportunities. The percentage of students receiving free lunches during the years 1991-1999 has fluctuated between

70 and 80 percent, with no distinctive trend, other than high. Retirees, both in Humboldt County and Bridgeville, constitute a higher proportion of the population than the state average, but as mentioned above, Bridgeville's isolation will likely prevent it from becoming a "retirement community."

Table 1: Selected statistics for California, Humboldt County and Bridgeville (BG 7, Track 109), 1990 Decennial Census.

	Unemployment Rate (percent)	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income	Percent People Below Poverty (percent)	Households with Public Assistance (percent)	Households with Retirement Income (percent)
Bridgeville	43.3	$17,153	$5,777	34.0	18.4	24.9
Humboldt County	8.5	23,586	12,436	17.6	12.9	17.0
California	6.5	35,798	16,409	12.5	9.4	14.9

Community Capacity

Community capacity is the collective ability of residents in a community to respond to external and internal stresses, to create and take advantage of opportunities, and to meet local needs. There are five dimensions of community capacity: (1) physical capital, which includes a community physical infrastructure (e.g., sewer systems, business parks, capital assets such as equipment, housing stock, and schools); (2) financial capital, which includes money, credit, and other financial resources available for local use; (3) human capital, which includes the skills, education, experiences, and general abilities and capabilities of residents; (4) cultural capital, the myths, beliefs, norms, and lifeways that serve to organize groups and facilitate survival; and (5) social capital, which includes the willingness of residents to work together toward community goals (and not just self-interested goals).

While there are isolated exceptions, for the most part, NEAI projects and programs had relatively little effect on Bridgeville's community capacity. The failure of the High Mountain Herb Cooperative, the biggest NEAI project near Bridgeville, helps account for why NEAI had so little effect in this area. Supported with multiple grants totaling $560,000, it received almost seven times as much financial support as the next largest project—the telephone extension project along State Route 36. Given the highly concentrated NEAI investment in the High Mountain Herb project, which verged on a "all or nothing" Bridgeville investment strategy, its failure greatly reduced the potentially positive effects of NEAI in the area. Not only did its failure foreclose opportunities for area residents to augment their income through herb cultivation, processing, and marketing, but the large amount of investment in this project reduced available funding for other efforts and projects. It would appear that funding levels—especially in terms of rapidly increasing grant sizes—exerted growth imperatives that exceeded local capacities for rapidly expanding business management, development, and marketing.

However, while the largest NEAI project had negligible effects on the constituent capitals that together shape community well-being, other projects did, in their own relatively small ways, affect one or more of the various capitals. The following section discusses some of these effects.

Physical and Financial Capital

The telephone extension project along State Route 36 provided what most residents consider an essential piece of physical infrastructure—reliable phone service. This has important public safety implications, as children at the local church summer camp can more easily contact their parents, and area households now have a dependable way to contact the Southern Trinity Area Rescue (STAR) ambulance and rescue service.[6] In addition to improving public safety, the telephone line has proved essential to the continued growth and profitability of many household-based cottage industries, one of the few expanding sectors of the Bridgeville economy. Phone service has opened advertising opportunities (through the internet and otherwise) and allows residents to more easily order necessary goods and services.

While phone extension immediately increased the physical capital of many households, many of these households—especially those with home-based businesses—quickly parlayed that physical capital into increased financial and human capital, demonstrating the interlinked nature of the constituent capitals of community well-being. For example, some home business managers were able to hire consultants to provide guidance and training in business plan development, marketing strategies, and other aspects of business management. This project exemplifies the important role that strategic infrastructure projects can play in facilitating community economic development.

Phone service has also been necessary for the start up of the Mountain High Knits, a women's knitting cooperative. With the help of a small grant and training provided by UC Cooperative Extension and the Textile Guild of the Redwoods, several women in the community, many of whom are wives of unemployed timber workers, have organized to knit baby clothes on knitting looms in their homes. Targeted for a high-end niche market, the knitted baby clothes are marketed through regional retail stores. Because the women knitters work out of their homes, the phone service is essential for them to communicate with each other, coordinate production, and plan marketing and sales strategies. These women are a wonderful example of precisely the kind of people (unemployed timber workers and their families) that the NEAI was supposed to benefit. It is perhaps ironic that the application for this project—one of the few NEAI projects with lasting positive effects in the community—bypassed the formal CERT proposal process in both Trinity and Humboldt Counties.

A second NEAI effect on physical capital is the High Mountain Herb Cooperative's drying and processing building that Trinity County inherited as part of the fallout of the cooperative's failure. As it is the only remaining vestige of the more than $500,000 spent on the Cooperative, the building can be considered a "white elephant." However, it is now leased to an herb company that prepares herbal products, such as capsules, for other companies who then market them under their own name. A certified organic and kosher operation, the company, Naturely Products, employs six people. Naturely is currently negotiating to open a second, larger processing facility in Hayfork. If successful, the Hayfork entity could employ 12 to 20 people. In this respect, the physical infrastructure that was left after the collapse of the High Mountain Herb Cooperative was a key ingredient in enabling Naturely to locate to the area. The increase in financial capital that has resulted appears instrumental in facilitating the potential expansion in Hayfork. This effect is another example of how a piece of "strategic infrastructure" (albeit, associated with a project failure) enabled subsequent increases in other forms of capital.

Social Capital

The community action plan development process helped strengthen social capital, which may be

6. The phone line has also enabled at least one community member to serve as a volunteer dispatcher for the STAR system.

thought of as the community's ability and interest in working towards collective community goals. Again, it must be stated that the extent to which the community action plan process did increase social capital was in many ways a function of the prior Healthy Start grant that had already provided the physical capital (community center) for holding the action plan conference, and that also had been instrumental in developing the critical mass of social and cultural capital necessary for a community action planning process to be successful. Perhaps the most dramatic example of the social capital that the action plan process helped initiate is the on-going Bridgefest. Last August (2001) the fifth annual Bridgefest was held. More than a money-earner, Bridgefest is an opportunity for the Bridgeville community to gather together during the warm August weather, mark the important role Bridgeville has historically played as a crossroads location, and celebrate the community's collective identity. Even with the sponsorship of the Humboldt Community Network, organizing a successful event requires countless volunteer hours—people working together for common benefit. While funding for the 2002 Bridgefest appears tentative at best, revenue from the raffle held last year, in conjunction with volunteer efforts, will help ensure that Bridgefest 2002 takes place.

For the reasons discussed above, the action plan process did not increase the other constituent elements of community capacity (financial, human, cultural, and physical capital). Nor does it seem that the action plan itself has continued as a "living document." The iterative relationship that was initially intended to develop between the community and the action plan, in which the plan would be periodically revisited and revised, has not developed. This is in part due to lack of resources and staff—the financial and human capital necessary to keep a community action plan "alive" and "growing." The former executive director of CEED, who had facilitated the development of the initial action plan, would like to return to Bridgeville for follow-up meetings, plan revision and update, and help the action committees articulate their current objectives and work to achieve them.

Human Capital

Two projects had the potential to affect human capital, but only one did in any meaningful sense. The apprentice training and youth involvement component of the High Mountain Herb Cooperative did provide training and experience to young adults interested in herb cultivation and processing, and in that sense it contributed to the human capital of those individuals. However, given the failure of the cooperative and the lack of opportunities for utilizing the skills acquired through the workshops, it is hard to argue that this project substantively affected participants' human capital. On the other hand, the Ecosystem Technician Training Program did provide the one Bridgeville area resident who participated in the program with the skills and expertise that he needed to continue to work as an independent restoration contractor.

Cultural Capital

There have not been significant transformations in Bridgeville's cultural capital—"the myths, beliefs, norms, and lifeways that serve to organize groups and facilitate survival," over the course of the NEAI. While there seem to be signs that the area's cultural capital has shifted somewhat since the early 90s, those shifts have more to do with the community's efforts to obtain and implement the Healthy Start grant and the associated positive effects of that effort, as discussed in prior sections, than with specific NEAI projects.

Worker Effects

For many reasons NEAI projects in the Bridgeville area had almost negligible effects on workers. One primary reason is that most timber workers and their families had left the Bridgeville area in search of employment long before the NEAI was initiated. Mill closures preceded NEAI by many years. The last of the local mills that used to operate in Swains Flat, Bridgeville, Alderpoint, Dinsmore, and Carlotta closed more than 20 years ago. The last of the many small tie mills that used to dot the surrounding countryside closed before then. Out-of-work mill workers either retired or left the area with their families in search of employment, often in the coastal communities of For-

tuna, Samoa, or Eureka. Most woodsworkers, too, had left the area before NEAI was initiated.

Individuals, primarily men, who have remained in the area and desire to work in the timber industry, face a daunting situation. As one long-time faller described, "just the best are working right now." With over 40 years experience in the woods he considers himself fortunate to have a job at all; given the seasonality of logging work, he expects to work at most five months out of 12. This extreme seasonality and inherent job insecurity forces reliance on a second income; his wife is currently a student teacher and hopes to eventually work as a teacher in the local elementary school. Other timber workers with less experience have an even more tenuous hold on employment. With lower pay and shorter seasons, in general, than the faller described above, many depend on unemployment insurance, welfare payments, and other forms of state aid, and live in trailer courts—the contemporary equivalent of logging camps, yet different because the inhabitants are stuck there. It is a common pattern for the children of unemployed timber workers to become parents and, at least partially, depend upon state assistance at a relatively young age.

These are the individuals and families that the NEAI passed by. As one local cottage industry entrepreneur and community organizer put it, "the people with smarts got the [NEAI] money. They're not logging....Those [timber workers] who lost their jobs didn't get any money or support... .Option 9 didn't touch loggers' lives." This individual and others readily acknowledge that NEAI programs have had little, if any, effect on workers' lives. While some suggested that timber industry workers and their families would probably benefit through the provision of employment opportunities by expanding cottage industries, this does not seem to have happened nor is it easy to imagine a former mill or woods worker transitioning to soap or candle making or baby clothes weaving. The one individual who participated in the Ecosystem Management Technician Training Program is perhaps the only example of a Bridgeville area worker that the NEAI benefited. However, it is somewhat ironic that he was not a former timber worker.

Patterns and Themes

Obstacles/Barriers to Success

A variety of reasons account for the general inability of Bridgeville area residents to derive significant, lasting, and broad-based benefit from the NEAI. These reasons include the area's physical isolation, low organizational and community capacity, and absence of on-going efforts to build capacity.

Physical Isolation

Bridgeville's physical isolation is extreme and contributes to its political and economic isolation. Located relatively far from Eureka, the county seat, Bridgeville is poorly served by Eureka-based public, private, and non-profit service agencies and organizations. The physical and institutional distance between Bridgeville and Eureka hampered the community's ability to participate in the early county CERT meetings and restricted the ability of the county community coordinator to do outreach in Bridgeville. Similarly, its location in southeastern Humboldt county made it difficult to access NEAI funds through the Southern Trinity CERT, which focused most of its attention in Trinity County. Caught between the Southern Trinity CERT and distant Eureka, Bridgeville was inadequately served by both.

Due to its low, widely dispersed population, overall remoteness, and almost total lack of basic infrastructure, including water treatment facilities, there is little scope for small-scale industry or business development in Bridgeville, other than the household-scale, cottage industry ventures discussed above. In fact, the population is so low and dispersed that even the ubiquitous service-oriented establishments are absent in Bridgeville. There is not one store in Bridgeville proper; the nearest supermarket is in Fortuna—about 30 miles away.

Lack of Organizational and Community Capacity

Internal dynamics within the Bridgeville community also hindered the community's ability to take advantage of NEAI opportunities. Organizational capacity within Bridgeville remains low. Other than the community center, its staff members and programs, and the local school board, there are no community-based organizations in Bridgeville. This lack restricted Bridgeville's ability to go after NEAI funds, projects, and programs. The "start up" resources just weren't there. Furthermore, tensions between different community factions, the lack of support for community initiatives from the Lapple family, substance abuse issues, and a general "turning within" by some families had weakened civic institutions and community life—at least prior to the Healthy Start grant program and related processes described above.

In some cases, low levels of other capitals limited the effectiveness of NEAI infusions of financial capital. The prime example of this is the High Mountain Herb Cooperative. While the globalization of herb markets certainly undermined the cooperative's economic viability, limited human capital, in terms of financial and managerial expertise, also contributed to its demise. As observed by former cooperative members, the cooperative was hampered by a combination of factors that included "growing too large too fast," a phenomena which resulted in requirements for long-term financial planning, market analysis and reliable short-term income streams to meet on-going operation and maintenance costs. In effect, as one of the former ST-CERT staff members stated, the financial and other management tasks associated with running the cooperative outstripped the capabilities of both its board and its manager. This individual felt that training, to help improve both the board's and the manager's skills and performance, needed to have accompanied the grants. In other words, investment in human capital would have been necessary to ensure effective use of the financial capital infusion. Additionally, one former cooperative member expressed that closer oversight, supervision, and guidance from the granting agency may have enabled the cooperative to better plan and strategize for the future and to anticipate the financial and other implications of the choices and decisions they collectively made. Unfortunately, while the potential for this sort of endeavor still exists in the region, the cooperative's failure has soured future possibilities for similar efforts, regardless of their viability.

Need for on-going investments in community capacity building

On-going investments in the community's social, human, and cultural capital did not take place. This unmet need hindered the community's ability to take advantage of NEAI opportunities, and limited the effectiveness of NEAI projects that were implemented. An example of a needed on-going investment is the Community Action Plan process. While a Community Action Plan was developed with the help of the Arcata Economic Development Corporation and the Center for Environmental Economic Development, the plan has not been revised in light of subsequent changes in the community. As a living document, Bridgeville's Community Action Plan requires periodic revisiting in order to evaluate accomplishments, revisit the community vision, determine new priorities, and create new action plans. Thus, a successful community action plan is part of an iterative process that builds on itself. Bridgeville's community action plan has not yet been revisited or revised. This is partly a result of Bridgeville's isolation and lack of funding, but it also reflects a lack of prioritization on the part of the county, state, and federal agencies involved in the NEAI. The community center coordinator would like to see the community action plan updated. While recent conversations with the facilitator of the original 1997 conference indicated willingness to help facilitate a plan revision process, there remains the perennial challenge of finding the funding to do so.

Factors Contributing to Success

A Multi-Capital Investment Strategy – the Healthy Start Grants

Without a doubt the Healthy Start planning and implementation grants have brought significant and positive change to Bridgeville. They have facilitated positive change within the communi-

ty—change that has begun to turn around some of the previous challenging and negative issues. The Healthy Start grant was based on an implicit strategy that acknowledged the need for simultaneous investments in several different community capitals. Thus, the grant enabled the community to immediately increase its human capital through the hiring of a community coordinator. The coordinator, in turn, was able to facilitate other important community-based programs and processes that developed other forms of community capital. This resulted in the construction of the community center—a project which depended on lots of donated labor and served to simultaneously build social capital. The community center is the first and most important element of the community's current physical capital. It is a piece of "strategic infrastructure" or physical capital that, along with the efforts of the community coordinator, has helped attract investments in other forms of community capacity such as social, human, and financial capital. It has also strengthened community cohesiveness and identity. It, and the associated community development efforts it has enabled, facilitated, and supported, are the most positive development in Bridgeville's recent history. In general, these efforts are quite unrelated to NEAI.

When Basic Infrastructure Constitutes a Limiting Factor

In some instances a community or group of people may be short one particular kind of capital while possessing adequate levels of other forms. When this is the case, a targeted and strategic investment in the "limiting factor" capital can have a dramatic ripple affect across the community and can significantly effect well-being. The completed phone line extension project is an excellent example of this phenomena. Many of the beneficiary households of this project were already relatively high capacity. As soon as the phone extension project was complete, they were able to use that piece of "strategic infrastructure" to increase their overall well-being without the need to first invest in other of the community capitals. Several businesses, mostly home-based cottage industries, now rely heavily on the phone, fax, and internet capabilities that the line now provides them. Previously local businesses in this area couldn't even advertise their phone number in the phone book. They are now able to develop and maintain web sites, send and receive faxes, and accept phone orders. Some of these businesses include natural soap and herbal tincture production, fence construction, a yarn and knitting business, small engine repair and alternative energy systems, auto body repair and painting, glass blowing, and independent personnel consulting.

Conclusions

The NEAI had quite limited effects on community well-being in the Bridgeville area, despite significant financial investment. This result was due in part to contextual factors, such as the area's physical isolation, that severely constrained viable forms of economic development and made it difficult for area residents to access county and other programs. It was also due, in part, to issues of timing. Most of the local mills had shut down and timber harvest levels had dropped years before NEAI began. Therefore, few woodsworkers and their families were left in the area when NEAI programs and projects became available.

However, the failure of NEAI to significantly improve community well-being in the Bridgeville area is equally a function of the pattern of intervention that was chosen. NEAI interventions concentrated on building financial capital without concomitant attention to strengthening the other constituent capitals that together make up community capacity. While this strategy may work in communities that already have relatively high levels of organizational capacity and social, human, and physical capital, it will be relatively ineffective in communities without those resources. The Bridgeville community can be characterized as having relatively low community capacity and low to moderate human, social, and physical capital. Because most NEAI interventions did not focus on strengthening the requisite other forms of

capital, many projects failed or met with low levels of success. The one notable NEAI success story in the area, the phone line extension, is the exception that proves the point. In this case, the beneficiaries of the phone line extension did have relatively high levels of human, social, and cultural capital, but lacked the financial means to develop the physical infrastructure (the phone line) that they lacked. When an NEAI investment of financial capital provided this core piece of physical capital, the beneficiaries leveraged significant benefits by using their pre-existing human, social, and cultural capital. The take home lesson: without the requisite levels of human, social, and cultural capital, interventions that focus primarily on the provision of financial capital are like pouring water on sand. For financial investments to be productive, they require a fertile substrate comprised of the other capitals. Where those capitals are lacking, investments in them are required before or along with, financial investments.

Appendix 1
County of Humboldt
Option 9 Proposal Evaluation Criteria

These are the criteria, established in 1993 by the Humboldt County Option 9 Working Group, that were to be used in the evaluation of all NEAI proposals:

1. Readiness of the project.
2. Does the proposal contribute to the diversification of the local economy?
3. Does the proposal retain or create permanent family wage jobs in the local economy?
4. Does the proposal provide for the retaining, retraining, or creation of new jobs for dislocated workers?
5. Does the proposal reinforce and build on the long term economic development strategies which have been identified for Humboldt County?
6. Does the proposal provide training opportunities or other related services in ways to make them accessible to timber workers and families to assist them during transition?
7. Does the proposal have the potential to be expanded upon presently or in the future to create additional employment opportunities?
8. Does the proposal prepare the community, community members, timber workers, and families for long term realistic local employment (including entrepreneurship)?
9. Does the proposal promote ecosystem enhancement through the investment of resources for the long term health of the environment and communities?
10. Does the project represent a long term investment in job training, land use planning, technical assistance and capital facilities for the preparation of commercial and industrial sites?
11. Does the project serve to build leadership capacity, capital availability, capital facilities, and infrastructure necessary for resilient communities?
12. Does the proposal maximize resources through the formation of public/private partnerships and/or leveraging of funds?

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Bridgeville, Humboldt County, California

Interviewees

Nancy Cartwright	Former NEAI Community Coordinator, Humboldt County
Billie Lichti	Bridgeville community member
Sungnome Madrone	Redwood Community Action Agency, Natural Resources Services
Jack Rogers	Former Board Chair, High Mountain Herb Cooperative
David Vegliano	Bridgeville Community Center Coordinator, former ST-CERT staff
Jesse Wheeler	Long time Bridgeville resident
Ann Cardinal	Former coordinator, N. Coast Aquaculture Cooperative
Maggie Gainer	Former President, Center for Environmental Economic Development
Christy Keener	Former Bridgeville Healthy Start Services community coordinator
Dottie Simmons	Bridgeville resident, Simmons Natural Bodycare
Mike Guerrerio	Bridgeville School Board President
Dan Wojcik	Bridgeville NIPF landowner
Jennifer Hawley	Former Bridgeville Healthy Start Services family advocate, Guienevere's Candles
Blake and Ellen Stretton	Small business owner/Mountain High Knits
Jean-Louise Carmona	Ecosystem Management Technician Training Program graduate
Dick Church	Timber faller
Debbie Coggins	County of Humboldt Administration
Julie Folkerson	Humboldt Area Foundation, former Humboldt County Supervisor
John Thomas	North Coast Services
Susan McBride	Sea Grant Marine Advisor