



University of Nevada  
Cooperative Extension



# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

*Nevada Naturalist Community Volunteer Project*

**July 2010**



*Road before restoration.*

The Nevada Naturalist Program is an adult environmental education program sponsored by Cooperative Extension in partnership with various federal and state agencies. The focus of the program is to give a broad understanding of nature to participants interested in learning, volunteering and participating in conservation projects locally.

On April 17, Nevada Naturalists participated in a "Route Restoration" event sponsored by Friends of Nevada Wilderness. Nevada Naturalists helped restore a portion of a decommissioned road in Lovell Canyon.

Route restoration reclaims user-created routes and decommissioned roads. It restores and



*NV Naturalists loosen the soil.*

protects wilderness areas and allows them to begin healing from the effects of use. It is a multi-step process. First, a route or road is located and is decommissioned. Next, volunteers use pick axes and shovels to loosen and lift the soil. Then, vertical mulch consisting of twigs, branches and shrubs is planted to block the flow of any future traffic along the path and to provide a haven for new plants to grow. Finally, twigs and branches are



*Digging and turning the soil.*

laid horizontally between the vertical mulch which further aids in seed germination. While the effects of the restoration are evident immediately, it may take several years before this area is fully re-established.

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The University of Nevada Cooperative Extension's (UNCE) mission is to discover, develop, disseminate, preserve and use knowledge to strengthen the social, economic, and environmental well-being of people. UNCE is an outreach arm of the University that extends unbiased, research-based knowledge from the University of Nevada and other land grant universities to local communities.



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## Horticulture Specialist Volunteers in Tajikistan



*Meeting with truck driver to take shipment of apricots to Russia.*

which he has advised farmers on various horticulture issues. He became familiar with the Tajik culture and the climactic conditions that dictate the realities of its agriculture sector. His expertise and eagerness to help have gained him popularity among his host communities and he has made friends among them. "I get invited to their houses and they want to show me their projects," he says. For instance, during this trip, he conducted various informal trainings independently of his assignment's scope of work for farmers who wanted to benefit from his presence. They were particularly eager to learn about the novel technique known as "hoop-house production," passively heated below-ground sheltered production. Professor Morris was glad to provide the additional trainings, as he says he was "out there to help 24/7."

Professor Morris' task with Amir Farms was to develop a drip irrigation system that would reduce the farm's costs of watering. Amir Dehkan, Morris' host, had acquired dripper lines from a past project and did not want to invest in new lines for his orchards because he feared the system may fail. Professor Morris explained the limitations of using the existing lines and designed a system that would use these lines to convert 60 rows of apricots from channel to drip irrigation. Dehkan will need compatible irrigation parts to implement the design;

unfortunately, such irrigation equipment is not available in Tajikistan and suppliers are hesitant to move into the country. In fact, Professor Morris has been trying to convince various irrigation equipment suppliers to enter the Tajik market to no avail.

Professor Morris was impressed by his host whom he describes as one of the most progressive producers he has ever worked with. In fact, Amir has succeeded in finding routes and systems that allow him to ship his apricots all the way from Northern Tajikistan to Moscow. "He is determined in the way he wants to do things and he moves ahead like a bull. He has a clear concept of the free enterprise system and competition, and he is slowly acquiring the notion of entrepreneurship," Morris said of his host. Professor Morris is determined to help Amir by continuing to contact suppliers in hopes of convincing them of moving into the Tajik market.



*Rolling out drip irrigation tubing in the snow.*

Robert Morris, Horticulture Specialist and Associate Professor at University of Nevada Cooperative Extension in Las Vegas, Nevada, recently returned from a volunteer assignment to Tajikistan where he developed a drip irrigation system for his host, Amir Farm. Morris' trip was part of a project with CNFA, a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering people and enterprises in the developing world.

Professor Morris has formerly completed six assignments in the northern and southern parts of Tajikistan, during



Professor Morris is motivated to take on these volunteer assignments for various reasons. Primarily, he enjoys learning about agricultural practices in



*Apricots in storage for shipment to Russia and held in hands of producer.*

other countries, as he feels that he himself "always learns something on these trips." He also finds himself enjoying different cultures, and he admires the high value for respecting others that he has discovered in many foreign societies.

Finally, Professor Morris seeks the challenge of working in environments that are abundant with constraints and limitations. "I enjoy being thrown a curve ball and having to figure out the best way to approach a particular problem, it is a mind challenge and my

senses are always aware, you need to go someplace you are uncomfortable to feel change and feel alive."

Professor Morris traveled to Tajikistan under the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded Farmer-to-Farmer Program, which provides voluntary technical assistance to farmers, farm groups, and agribusinesses in developing and transitional countries to promote sustainable improvements in food processing, production, and marketing.



*Gathered around my laptop to look at some training aids on drip irrigation.*

Founded in 1985, CNFA is dedicated to strengthening agricultural markets and empowering entrepreneurs in the developing world. CNFA is now recruiting for many similar volunteer assignments. Please visit [www.cnfa.org/farmertofarmer](http://www.cnfa.org/farmertofarmer) for a list of available opportunities and to find out how you can become a Farmer-to-Farmer volunteer.

*Article courtesy of CNFA.*

University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Southern Area has offices and offers programming in Clark, Lincoln and Southern Nye counties. Office locations and phone number are:

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For additional information on the Nevada Naturalist program, contact Denise Parsons at 702-948-5906 or e-mail [parsonsd@unce.unr.edu](mailto:parsonsd@unce.unr.edu).



Each month, Cooperative Extension offers classes throughout the community. To view the listing of these classes, log on to: [www.unce.unr.edu/areas/southern](http://www.unce.unr.edu/areas/southern).

If you have a question regarding a class listing, please do not hesitate to call



*Adding the vertical mulch.*



*Same road after restoration.*



*Smiling for the camera.  
Satisfaction from a job well done!*

For more information on University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Southern Area programming, please call (702) 222-3130 or visit the website at [www.unce.unr.edu/areas/southern](http://www.unce.unr.edu/areas/southern).



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