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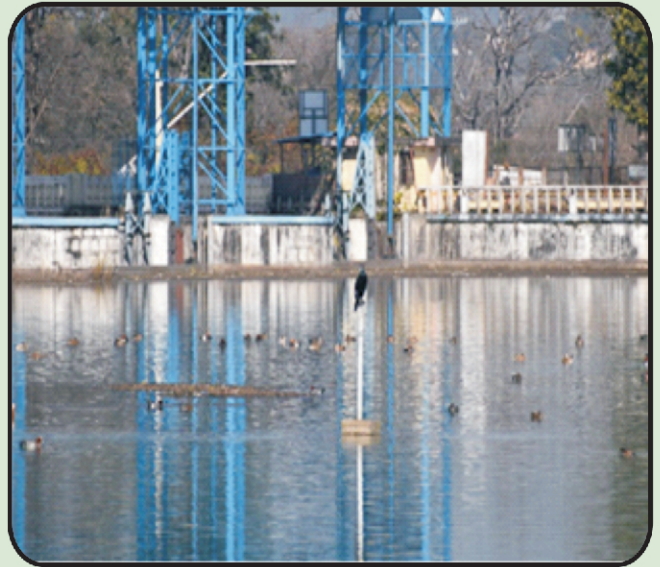
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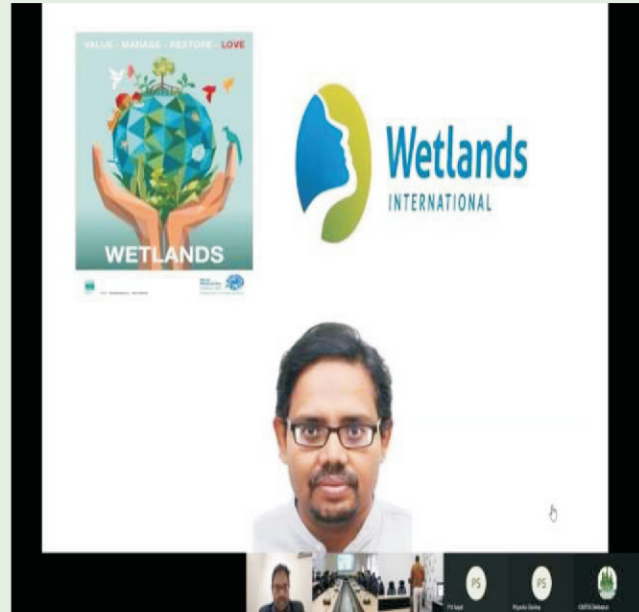
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World Wetland Day

A wetland is a distinct ecosystem that is flooded by water, either permanently or seasonally. Wetlands play a critical role in maintaining many natural cycles and supporting a wide range of biodiversity. They purify and replenish our water, and provide fish and rice that feed billions. They serve as a natural sponge against flooding and drought, protect our coastlines and help fight climate change. World Wetlands Day is celebrated every year on 2nd February to raise global awareness about the value of wetlands for humanity and the planet. World Wetlands Day was celebrated for the first time in 1997.



On 2nd February 2022, World Wetlands Day was celebrated by Officer's Club, CASFOS, Dehradun with the theme of "Wetland Action for People and Nature". An online lecture session was organised with Dr. Ritesh Kumar, Director, Wetlands International, South Asia. This interactive session was followed by documentary on wetlands with special

emphasis on Indian Wetlands and conservation of Sarus Cranes. At the end of the session, Shri Abhilash Damodaran concluded the event by his valuable insights. Faculty members, Shri Pradeep Wahule, Shri Amlendu Pathak, and all Officer Trainees attended the programme.

Nature Photography e-Exhibition

On 5th February 2022, Nature Photography e-Exhibition was organised by Officer's Club, CASFOS, Dehradun. The program was started with a display of wonderful photographs taken by Officer Trainees, CASFOS, Dehradun. It was followed by a presentation on

'Photography for Forest Officers' by Shri Pradeep Wahule, Vice President, Officer's Club with his special focus on 'Conservation Photography' that is very significant not only from the forester's point of view but also carries with it a great sense of responsibility and message of Nature Conservation to general citizen. This was followed by guest speaker, Mr. Trikash Sharma, a wildlife photographer,



who gave a talk on "Wildlife Photography". He explained different photography techniques like metering, focussing, rule of third etc. The main objective of this event was to introduce Officer Trainees with the basics of Photography so that



they can develop their passion further in the field. Later, Shri Pradeep Wahule announced the results of the competition and trophies were presented to winners by Smt. Nidhi Srivastava, Principal, CASFOS, Dehradun. She concluded the event with her concluding remarks.

A much-needed break at Asan and Kalsi

On 12th February, 2022, Officer Trainees of CASFOS, Dehradun visited Asan Conservation Reserve and Kalsi Forest Division accompanied by faculty members, Shri Abhilash Damodaran and Shri Amlendu Pathak.

The wetland at Asan Barrage is situated near the confluence of two perennial rivers Asan and Yamuna in Uttarakhand-Himachal Pradesh border region in Doon Valley, near Dehradun. Asan Barrage serves as a winter passage halt for trans-Himalayan migratory birds. After reaching the spot, Officer Trainees interacted with the resource person Mr. Vipin Rawat which was then followed by a bird watching session. Various migratory birds such as Red Crested Pochard, Ruddy Shelduck, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler etc. along with other birds such as Pond Heron, Indian Cormorant, Little Cormorant, Black Kite, Green Bee Eater etc. were spotted.



The Officer Trainees then proceeded for Kalsi and visited different compartments of Sal Forest under Kalsi Forest Division. There, the concept of Periodic Blocks and working principals of Sal Forest was explained by Shri Abhilash Damodaran. Officer Trainees got an opportunity to learn about various silvicultural practices of Sal Forest such as Regeneration Felling, Assisted Natural Regeneration etc.

This one-day visit to Asan Conservation Reserve and Kalsi Forest Division was a good learning experience in terms of Bird Watching and also the understanding of silvicultural practices in the Sal forest.

Field Visit: Sal Forest

Sal (*Shorea robusta*) is perhaps the second most important timber tree (after teak) in the Indian subcontinent. Sal is one of the most important tree species in our country as this tree provides valuable timber and other NTFPs, where the local people depend for their livelihood. We were taken for a field trip accompanied by our faculty member, Shri Abhilash Damodaran. On reaching the destination, Shri Abhilash Damodaran explained us the importance and management of Sal forest. Sal wood ranks with Teak and Deodar as one of the best sleeper woods in India. The tree yields an oleoresin called 'Sal Dammar' or 'Bengal Dammar' (*Laldhuna ral, dhup, guggal*) used as incense and employed in paints and varnishes and for caulking boats.



On reaching the site, Shri Abhilash Damodaran mentioned about the management and silvicultural practice of Sal forest in that area. Sal as a forest cannot be left unmanaged if our prime objective is to produce timber from it. For producing a high quality timber, human intervention is required not only in Sal tree but also for any economically important species. While managing the forest, it must be done in a scientific manner where forests are not damaged. He told us how the forest was divided into different compartments for the management of Sal. Every compartment has different age-class of trees; accordingly, the treatment is done and each compartment is assigned different periodic blocks according to the age-class of the tree. Silviculture system practiced in this forest is the Shelterwood System. This system involves gradual removal of entire stand in two or more successive fellings, which spreads over a part of the rotation.

Rope climbing

Fitness activity in the morning has been an essential part of daily schedule for Officer Trainees at CASFOS, Dehradun. On 16th February, 2022, one new component of rope climbing has been introduced in the training programme. Rope climbing is an exercise, in which a person tries to ascend a vertically suspended rope using their hands and legs simultaneously. After running, Officer Trainees were instructed to visit the open gymnasium located near the Academic Block. The Sports Officer, Shri P. N. Suyal and PTI, Shri Anupam Verma demonstrated the technique to climb up the Rope using hands and legs, subsequently the trainees were asked to try their hands on rope climbing. Every Officer Trainee took up the challenge and attempted this new exercise. Most of the trainees did well. In rope climbing, the person pulls up her/his own weight with the rope. The exercise helps to increase the strength of arms and also develop the grip. It also helps in increasing the coordination between the mind, arms and legs. Rope climbing is a very effective exercise as it helps develop endurance and mental strength. It was a very good learning experience for every Officer Trainee.



Digital Designing Workshop

Digital design is a general term that is more relevant now than ever before. It affects the way we work, learn, shop, and socialize. A digital designing workshop was held at the Academy on 22nd February, 2022 by Mrs Rashmi Rao Wahule, Self-Leadership and Image Coach. The workshop was about basics of digital designing where all the Officer Trainees participated.



It involves creating images, postcards, social media posts, animations, banners, and advertisements on computer or phone screen, which can



either be printed or kept in any other digital format. We were introduced to an online app called "Canva" (www.canva.com). It is a platform for designing/creating social media graphics, presentations, postcards, documents and other visual content. The app includes templates for users. The platform is free to use and offers paid subscription such as Canva Pro and Canva for Enterprise for additional functionality.

Land Use and Watershed Management Field Exercise

A three-day Land Use and Watershed Management Field Exercise were organised from 23rd February to 25th February, 2022 at Thano Range, where the Model Micro Watershed of the Raipur Unit is developed under Uttarakhand Decentralised Watershed Development Project II. The field exercise was organised under the guidance of our faculty members- Shri Pradeep Wahule and Shri Amlendu Pathak. Key resource persons were Shri S K Singh, Deputy Project

Director, PMU Dehradun; Shri Bipin Rawat, Unit Officer, Thanos; and Smt Geeta Rawat, Gender Expert.

The main objectives of this exercise were to learn different aspects of planning and management of a watershed and catchment area. For ease of operation, trainees were divided into two groups, and each group was assigned one village namely Dharkot and Kuthar. These are located under the catchment of the Bidalna river, a first-order stream of that watershed.

Officer Trainees were introduced to the concept of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), which is an essential tool for decentralised planning and participatory management of a watershed. It started with a transect walk taken around the village. Officer Trainees observed the topography, soil, vegetation and morphology and structure of the village. After transect walk exercise and discussion with villagers, Officer Trainees prepared the social and resource map of the village.



Subsequently, a baseline survey was conducted to collect data about the socio-economic status of the people. A village profile, such as its population structure, land use, social infrastructure and resource use, was prepared using this data.

After that, a gap analysis was employed, to find the difference between available resources and welfare measures adopted so far and the demands and aspirations of the people. Subsequently, these gaps were noted down in a list as problems. People ranked these problems in terms of the urgency of intervention required. Concomitantly, a list was also prepared for gender-related problems and people ranked them as per the urgency of interventions.

The matrix method was employed to select the most appropriate and effective ones among the range of solutions recommended by the experts and people for these problems like the case of shortage of fodder materials. Usually, village people collect fodder from several species

of trees based on their seasonal availability, their effect on lactation, nutrition and ease of digestion. By assigning weight to these parameters and rating of people, the most appropriate species for fodder cultivation was finalised based on the highest number secured by the species.

Similarly, daily-routine charts for men and women folks were also prepared, to find an appropriate time to reach them as a vast portion of their daily routine is devoted to works related to forests and fields. Therefore, their participation cannot be ensured in the development process if they are approached at an inappropriate time.

A wealth ranking of village people was prepared using the card-sorting method and stick method. In this process, cards and sticks were used as a symbol to create familiarity with the rural population. In reality, these rankings are based on the consensus and opinions of people regarding their peers. It seeks to differentiate people based on their wealth status and channelize the scarce resources to appropriate beneficiaries. Some common parameters adopted for this ranking are landholding size, employment status, housing, availability of drinking water, cattle and goat holding etc. For example, by using wealth ranking, beneficiaries were categorised into



three groups: Upper, middle and lower. Based on it, monetary and cash related interventions were targeted towards lower wealth groups, as they have a better claim over it.

After the exposure to PRA activities, Officer Trainees were taken to the field for observing physical interventions undertaken in the Bidalna micro watershed. Some of the important structures observed were gabion check dams, retaining walls, gobar gas plants, irrigation tank, piped water supply, cattle sheds, poly house farming etc. It was found that some

interventions are suffering from a lack of maintenance. Thus, the creation of structures like check dams is one thing and their maintenance is another.

Later, the concept of Farmer Interest Groups (FIGs) and cooperative structure was also explained to Officer Trainees. It showed how collective bargaining and linkage to the market is helping in getting better remuneration of produce for farmers. The collection centre of multiple FIGs is called the growth centre. The growth centre also provides backward and forward linkages to FIGs in the form of seed supply, fertilizers, collection of produce and transport to market, lower intermediary charge at mandi and agricultural extension services.

During visit to the growth centre, financial management of the cooperative was explained to the Trainees. The working and functioning of Gram Panchayat (GP), allocation of project, sanctioning, the flow of fund and its accounting and bookkeeping was also explained and shown. Overall, the field exercise gave Trainees vital exposure to watershed management and its holistic implementation. It also showed that a bottom-up approach to planning can be organised with the help of field NGOs, especially for their role as a mobiliser, motivators and interface with people. Moreover, the participatory approach and ensuring the partnership of people in development can help in better management of the watershed. It rubs on the other components of the intervention to watershed and synergises with them to usher in holistic and sustainable development.

National Science Day Celebrations

On 28th February 2022, National Science Day was celebrated with warmth and fervour by Officers' Club, CASFOS Dehradun. On this day, in the year 1928, Sir C. V. Raman discovered the "Phenomenon of Raman effect" for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize. A science quiz was organized with active participation of all Officer Trainees. The Quiz Competition was very interesting and very well conducted. The winners of the Science Quiz were announced by Mr. Pradeep Wahule, Vice President, Officers' Club, CASFOS and the first position was secured by Team Raman, represented by Ms. Samvedana Chauhan, Mr. Arijit Basu and Mr. Elithung B Odyuo.

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