

Forest Forum

Washington County Small Woodlands Association

January, 2017



Water in Washington County: managing our most scarce resource

Jake Constans, Watermaster for District 18 (which includes Washington County and the eastern half of Columbia County) will present a program on water management at the **monthly meeting of WCSCA on January 24th, 7:00 p.m. at the North Plains Fire Hall**. Jake has been Watermaster for District 18 since 2013. He is a graduate of Portland State University, with a degree in Environmental Science. Plan to join us and learn more about the how's and why's of water management in the area from our Watermaster.

Jake's presentation will include general background information on water rights and water management in Washington County. He will also touch on information related to water rights that is available and how to find it.

The Watermaster has 15 surface water monitoring stations within the Tualatin Basin. These monitoring stations are useful in regulating surface water rights based on prior appropriation. Additionally, the Watermaster monitors four groundwater-limited areas within the Tualatin Basin as there are special regulations in place to help stabilize the ground water levels in these areas. Other activities performed by the Watermaster include overseeing well inspections, researching well histories, and calibrating stream gauges.

February Meeting: "Dynamic Geology of the Tualatin Valley"

Scott Burns, Professor Emeritus of Geology and Past-Chair of the Dept. of Geology at Portland State University, will be the featured speaker at our February 28th meeting. Scott specializes in environmental and engineering geology, geomorphology, soils, and Quaternary geology. In Oregon, he has projects involving landslides and land use, environmental cleanup of service stations, slope stability, earthquake hazard mapping, Missoula Floods, paleosols, loess soil stratigraphy, radon generation from soils, the distribution of heavy metals and trace elements in Oregon soils and alpine soil development. He has been teaching for 46 years, with past positions in Switzerland, New Zealand, Washington, Colorado and Louisiana. He is a 6th generation Oregonian who grew up in Beaverton and is very happy to be "home" after a 25 year hiatus! He has been active in mapping landslides in the Pacific Northwest since his return to Portland.

WCSWA Leadership

President – Bonnie Shumaker, 503-324-7825, bshumaker@coho.net
Vice-President – Vic Herinckx, vic.herinckx@gmail.com
Secretary-Treasurer – Bob Shumaker; 503-324-7825
bshumaker@coho.net

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Legislative Committee Chair:

Scott Hayes, 503-992-1509, scotthayes@wildblue.net

Membership Committee: WCSWA Board members

Program Committee: Bill Triest – 503-705-5833, whtriest@gmail.com; John and Cathy Dummer – 503-970-8789, cannbuckley@hotmail.com; Mike Messier, 503-233-2131, mike@troutmountain.com

Tualatin River Watershed Council Representatives: Tom Nygren, primary, 503-628-5472, tnygren@juno.com; Eric Chambers, alternate, 503-647-2458, eric870@hotmail.com

WCSWA Website

www.wcswa.com

Website Manager: Michael Morgan
 Contact Tom Nygren or Bonnie Shumaker for web postings and information.

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/WashingtonCountySmallWoodlandsAssociation>

Forest Forum Newsletter

Editors: Tom Nygren & Bonnie Shumaker
 503-628-5472 or 503-324-7825

e-mail: tnygren@juno.com or bshumaker@coho.net
 Proofreaders: Bonnie Shumaker, Dan Hundley, Tom Nygren, Ardis Schroeder

The Tree Farm Tradin' Post

A free service to our members: List tree farm items/land to buy, sell, or trade. Contact Tom Nygren, 503-628-5472. Got a tool or piece of equipment you don't need any more? Or maybe you are looking for tools, equipment, property, or materials? You can place a free advertisement in Forest Forum. Another way for tree farmers to help each other! (3 month limit)

Wanted: 1) The Program Committee needs your help. Our chapter's strength is due in large part to the wonderful programs we offer throughout the year. Bring your own ideas, help brainstorm ideas, or just be willing to do the contact work to help nail down the events. Contact any member of the Program Committee listed above – and "Thanks."

For Sale: No items offered this month

Event Calendar

January	24	WCSWA Monthly Meeting	"Water in Washington County" 7 pm North Plains Fire Station, see page 1
February	14	Forests, Water, and Health – Public Lecture	4:00 – 6:00 pm, World Forestry Center Contact Amber Morrison at 503-488-2122 or amorrison@worldforestry.org for details.
	Weds. 1 – 22, Sat. 25	Basic Woodland Management Short Course	6-8:30 pm, OSU, Beaverton, 25 th Saturday field day. See article, page 10
	28	WCSWA Monthly Meeting	7 pm, North Plains Fire Station Scott Burns, Geology Professor at PSU, "Dynamic Geology of the Tualatin Valley" soils, rocks, ancient lake beds, loess and Missoula Floods"
March	11	WCSWA Annual Native Plant and	NEW LOCATION – Hillsboro Armory, 848 NE 28 th (near WA County Fairgrounds 9:00-3:00

Leadership Notes

Through our years of membership in WCSWA, Bob and I have learned a lot about best management practices and the diversity of forest management. We have made good friends willing to share their experiences and have gladly joined in leadership activities to keep this Washington County chapter of OSWA vibrant. So, after a long-fought battle, they wore me down, and I agreed to be president of WCSWA for 2017. I had decided not to run again for the board position I held because of my appointment to the Community for Family Forestland representing NW woodland landowners. The CFF reports to the Board of Forestry and holds monthly meetings in Salem. It was great that Susan Schmidlin and Tony Spiering agreed to run for the two open board positions; however, we could not find a candidate to run for president.

It was the rest of the leadership of WCSWA that offered their help and convinced me I could be president without undue stress. My main reluctance to take this role was my lack of enthusiasm for leading monthly meetings. I've never liked speaking in front of a group, and I have a voice that doesn't project well. Not willing to let this excuse hold me back, Doug Eddy and Vic Herinckx (board member and vice president) jumped at the chance to take turns leading meetings. So I will be your silent president when it comes to leading meetings, but welcome one on one conversation. Since being elected president, I have received assurances by at least four other people that they are available to help however they can.

Because of these assurances of help, I'm ready to commence as president for 2017. My goal is to make use of willing volunteers by assigning tasks where appropriate and sharing with board members the administrative tasks of our chapter. For these reasons, this monthly column is titled "Leadership Notes" and will reflect this allocation of duties. I thank you for your support; even from those who have questioned my sanity.

In other more interesting woodland activity, we finally got a picture on our trail camera of our busy beaver. I would print it here, but the quality is bad. The OFRI pamphlet was correct in citing mostly nocturnal behavior. The beaver crossed our camera's lens at 2:30am on a foggy night. The beaver continues to prefer the wild cherry and alder in the riparian zone, and we still haven't figured out where it is living. This beaver has the same problem that I know many of you can relate to. It cuts down the desired tree, but instead of falling to the ground, the tree gets hung up in neighboring trees. Lucky for the beaver, we've pulled a couple of trees the rest of the way down, and they have been cut up and hauled away the next day.

One final note: You all should have received your renewal notice from OSWA in December. OSWA and your WCSWA chapter offer many benefits such as newsletters, educational meetings and tours. It also insures that the voice of the small woodland owner is heard in the legislature and in agencies that offer incentive programs for woodland management. It is very important that you renew your membership promptly, freeing the time spent by the staff in Salem for things more vital than tracking renewals. As an incentive to get that renewal promptly, anyone who renews before January 31st will be entered in a drawing for an Awesome OSWA product (check them out at oswa.org). There will be three winners so get that renewal in NOW!

Bonnie Shumaker

Advertising Opportunity: The Forest Forum is a monthly newsletter sent out to over 250 members and friends of WCSWA. Advertisers receive free newsletters for the duration of their ads. ADVERTISING RATES (PRICE INCLUDES TYPESETTING & AD PREP)

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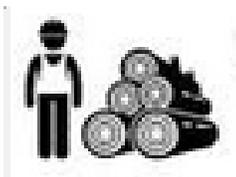
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L – R: Jim Pena, U.S. Forest Service Regional Forester, Mel and Wendy Mortensen, Peter Daugherty, Oregon Department of Forestry State Forester

photo by Mike Barsotti

Mel and Wendy Mortensen accept their Tree Farm of the Year Award at the annual Oregon Tree Farm Award Ceremony in November. (see December Forest Forum for details)

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When Trees Die, Water Flow Slows Down

Mountain pine beetle populations have exploded over the past decade due to warmer temperatures and drier summers, and these insects have infected and killed thousands of acres of western pine forests. Researchers have predicted that as trees died, streamflow would increase because fewer trees would take up water through their roots.

A recent study by University of Utah geology and geophysics professor Paul Brooks and his colleagues in Arizona, Colorado and Idaho, found that if too many trees die, compensatory processes kick in and may actually reduce water availability. When large areas of trees die, the forest floor becomes sunnier, warmer and windier, which causes winter snow and summer rain to evaporate rather than slowly recharging groundwater.

The bad news is that the loss of so many trees may not help alleviate the long-term drought in the West as many have hoped. The good news is that researchers can use the new understanding of forest water cycles to manage healthier forests that are more resistant to drought but still supply water to agriculture and cities downstream. *From materials provided by Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research WSL.*

Tree Characteristics Determine Competition Among Forest Trees

An international team of researchers has revealed that three functional traits -- ***wood density, specific leaf area and maximum height*** – affect neighboring tree competition in predictable ways across all forested biomes worldwide. "This is the first time that we were able to verify key drivers of forest succession globally," explains co-author Niklaus Zimmermann from the Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research WSL. Competition between neighboring trees has a big impact on their growth. Trees have different strategies to deal with competing neighbors. Some grow quickly and tall, overshadowing the others, but die young. Others grow more slowly, but outlive the fast growing ones and cast shade on them over a longer period. These interactions have a strong influence on the dynamics of forests and their functioning as ecosystems.

Forests are crucial elements of earth's system, and for humanity, stretching across ecosystems from boreal regions to the tropics. Therefore, ecologists have long sought an approach that might allow competition to be predicted in a general way across ecosystems and the tens of thousands of different tree species worldwide.

From materials provided by University of Utah

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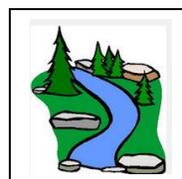
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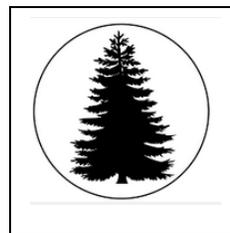
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Structural Diversity in Forests Initiative for Washington County

THE USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Oregon continues its successful forest health funding with a new initiative in 2017 to encourage diversity in forest land. Forest diversity maintains or increases productivity while increasing habitat and soil quality, and reduces wildfire danger and disease.

In 2017 the priority area is the Dairy Creek sub-watershed of the Tualatin River.

NRCS offers technical and financial assistance to private non-industrial forest landowners and producers interested in conserving natural resources on the land. Assistance may be available to help you implement the following conservation activities on your forestland:

Pre-commercial thinning ***Pruning*** ***Slash treatment*** ***Reforestation*** ***Wildlife habitat improvement*** ***And more...***

Contact the Washington County NRCS field office to learn more about how NRCS may benefit you and your land.

Deadline for 2017 Program February 17, 2017
Contact Jeehye Lee, Soil Conservationist at (503) 837-3693

Find the Natural Resources Conservation Service online at www.or.nrcs.usda.gov

"All ethics so far evolved rest upon a single premise: that the individual is a member of a community of interdependent parts. His instincts prompt him to compete for his place in the community, but his ethics prompt him also to cooperate."

Aldo Leopold – A Sand County Almanac



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Announcing the 2017 Basic Woodland Management Shortcourse!

Registration is open now:

Wednesdays, Feb. 1st – 22nd, 2017, 6:00 – 8:30 pm

Saturday field day: Feb. 25th

This annual course is great for anyone just getting started caring for their small woodland.

Topics covered include:

- Getting Started: Assessing your property and your site
- What’s Going on in Your Woods? Understanding tree biology, forest ecology and habitat
- Taking Care of Your Woods: tree planting, care for an established forest, weed control
- Getting it Done: Timber sale logistics, and laws and regulations.
- Field trip to see first-hand examples of what you’ve learned

Location: Washington County Extension Education Center 1815 NW 169th Place, Suite 1000, Beaverton

Course Dates/Times: Wednesday evenings, 6:00 – 8:30 pm Feb. 1st, 8th, 15th, and 22nd, 2017 Sat. field session, Feb. 25th, 9 am – 2 pm

Cost for the course is \$50 for one participant/\$60 for two or more participants from the same family.

The course is taught in a blended online/in person format. Participants will be given short online assignments to complete prior to each class session. The instructor will be Amy Grotta, OSU Forestry & Natural Resources Extension Agent - Columbia, Washington & Yamhill Counties

To attend you must pre-register no later than January 25th. Use the form below or register online at: <http://tinyurl.com/basicwoodlandmanagement>. • Questions? Contact Amy Grotta, (503) 397-3462 or amy.grotta@oregonstate.edu

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 Acres of forestland owned: _____ County: _____

Make checks (\$50/one individual; \$60/two or more individuals) payable to OSU Extension. Mail this form to: OSU Extension Service; attn: Basic Woodland Management Course; 505 N. Columbia River Hwy; St. Helens, OR 97051.

That Darn “Brush” (a New Look at Our Wonderful Forest Understory Habitat)

by Ken Bevins, WA DNR stewardship wildlife biologist



While considered a nuisance by many landowners, shrub growth like black hawthorn (*Crataegus douglasii*) provides important shelter and forage for many, many wildlife species.

Stand in your forest and count the overstory tree species you see. On the west side, this will likely include Douglas-fir, hemlock, cedar and alder. Now, from that exact spot, count the shrubby understory, (or “brush”) species that you see. This may include oceanspray, serviceberry, ninebark, salal, salmonberry, red or blue elderberry, cascara, beaked hazelnut, bitter cherry, chokecherry, evergreen huckleberry and so on. Nearly always there are two

to three times as many species of native shrub understory species on a site as there are tall trees. Wow!

Trees generally have a single stem and reach the highest levels of the canopy, while shrubs have multiple stems and grow in the understory. And yes, sometimes there are plants that confuse us. This rich, and often overlooked and underappreciated, layer of our forests contains some of the best wildlife habitat out there.

Benefits of Brush

Nearly 25 percent of our forest-dwelling wildlife rely on these plants for food or cover, and would not exist on our lands without these wonderfully dense thickets. Song sparrows, spotted towhee, warblers, chipmunks, deer are part of the long critter list that thrives on this critical habitat element. In fact, the shrub layer may be the most important habitat feature for a high diversity of wildlife species in early forest successional stages. Systematic research in Oregon has shown that songbird abundance and diversity are increased when west side plantations are allowed to develop some shrub components.

When sunlight reaches the ground, even in small amounts, the various shrub species will take advantage of this niche and grow, sometimes for many years and to impressive mass. Who hasn't seen a gap in the wet forest where the shrubs have come in to create a little pocket of shrubs in the midst of an otherwise dark conifer overstory? These canopy gaps are a great source of habitat diversity. Mixed stands of mature trees, (conifer and hardwood), openings and substantial shrub components can provide some of the richest and most diverse habitats in our forests. Many shrub species produce “mast,” or fruit, that is eaten by a wide array of wildlife, from birds to the smallest mammals and all the way up to the black bear. The wonderful flowers of our shrub species provide feeding opportunities for pollinators, including hundreds of species of native bees, hummingbirds and butterflies. Unlike the conifer, these flowers produce nectar, a rich draw for many animals including specialized insects. And most of our game species, those big charismatic megafauna, forage on these plants too. Shrubs usually carry these animals through the winter.

Superstars

There are many shrub (“brush”) superstars. Here we highlight just a few of our best wildlife habitat shrub species.



Red elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*): Wetter sites in western Washington grow the red elderberry, a very similar plant to the blue, with a branching brushy form and red berries favored by many wildlife species. These grow in small openings and in the dappled understory of mixed forest stands. In my observation these two plants usually don't occur in the same locations, but both are great wildlife habitat plants.

Blue elderberry (*Sambucus caerulea*): This lovely plant grows in sunny spots east and west of the Cascades. It can take on a fairly large form if given enough time and

light, reaching up to 25 feet high and across. Multiple stems produce lush, compound foliage that is preferred browse for deer, elk and other animals. The abundant purple berries are favorites of many birds and seldom last long. These same berries can even be made into wine or jam. If you want to enhance wildlife habitat by planting shrubs, this one is a great choice.

Salmonberry (*Rubus spectabilis*): Dominating many understories across western Washington is the ubiquitous salmonberry. This plant features dense woody stems that can create a jungle of dense vegetation — perfect places for birds and small mammals to seek shelter. The berries resemble salmon roe (hence the name) and are eaten by most everything, including people.



Indian plum (*Oemleria cerasiformis*): Perhaps the earliest blooming shrub species in western Washington is the gorgeous Indian plum. This rich understory species occurs on many moist forest sites, providing early foliage and flowers for native pollinators. They produce lovely, tiny purple fruits and never last long, being eaten at first chance by many birds and mammals. Watch for the white flowers in the first blush of spring.

Black hawthorn (*Crataegus douglasii*): The spiny hawthorn creates dense cover for birds and a great place for mammals to hide and rest. The fruits (called “haws”) are also eaten by many species. It prefers sun, but will get by in dappled shade. This plant occurs on both sides of the mountains.

Other shrub superstars worth mentioning include serviceberry, mock orange, ceanothus, cascara, salal, willow, dogwood, and even devil’s club. Each of these has great wildlife structure and bears fruit.

Management

Sometimes the dense nature of shrub cover can prevent conifers from regenerating for many years, much to the frustration of those attempting to grow trees for harvest. Vast effort is made to eliminate this competition on lands dedicated to tree production, often by using aerial application of herbicides. This is hard on the shrub layer to say the least. The small landowner, however, usually has mixed objectives, wishing to provide quality wildlife habitat AND grow the next crop of trees. This can be accomplished by identifying the best wildlife shrub species growing on your property and actively maintaining them over time by allowing for space to grow these plants. Conifer competition can be dealt with by physically cutting the competing plants back, and/or strategically using herbicides on individual plants or clumps, thus allowing the conifers to get above the shrub layer and form a new canopy.

Sometimes individual plants are cared for. Planting can work if adequate care is made for each plant. Control competition and prevent browse on young plants. Desired shrubs that have become tall and “leggy” with extended stems and leaf and fruits out of reach of browsers, such as deer, can even be simply pruned back just as we might manage the bushes in our yards.

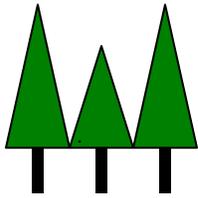
These are just a few thoughts and examples of the fabulous shrub species we encounter on our forest lands that are worth knowing and keeping on the landscape. Find out what shrubs you have on your place. Their value to wildlife as habitat is very great and definitely worth managing for.

Learn and enjoy your brush, or should I say, “shrub habitat.”

Newsletter Editor
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Forest Forum



COUNTY CHAPTER OF THE
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Potpourri

New Members: Welcome to new members **Andy and Leah Mulholland** of Gaston. We are here to help members achieve their management goals. To get the most out of your membership, come to the meetings and tours that are scheduled throughout the year. (You're always invited to the WCSWA meetings!). You'll find many kindred spirits among our diverse membership – and many opportunities to learn and share together! If you have any questions or need help, contact any of the Directors, Officers, or Newsletter Editors listed on page 2 of this newsletter.

Conifer tea: Most herbalists agree that there is a lot of nourishment in a cup of needle tea with many species boasting lots of electrolytes, much more Vitamin C than orange juice, and high Vitamin A levels as well. Frontiersmen often drank conifer tea to stave off scurvy. In his book *Stalking the Healthful Herbs*, naturalist Euell Gibbons said of pine needle tea, "With a squeeze of lemon and a little sugar it was almost enjoyable, and it gives a great feeling of virtue to know that as you drink it you are fortifying your body with two essential vitamins in which most modern diets are deficient." While "almost enjoyable" is fairly faint praise, other sources enthusiastically compare the taste of conifer needles to mint, lemon, or even cola flavors—all with an overtone of forest. So take a hike around your woods this winter, collect some needles, and try a cup. You may be eyeing that Christmas tree for a whole new purpose!

By **Carol Mack**, WSU Extension Forestry, cmack@wsu.edu

Helpful Links:

- <http://blogs.oregonstate.edu/treetopics> to read Amy Grotta's "Tree Topics" blog
- www.oregonwoodlandcooperative.com to learn about the Oregon Woodland Cooperative
- <https://www.facebook.com/WashingtonCountySmallWoodlandsAssociation>