

# Forest Forum

## Washington County Small Woodlands Association

February 2026



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### Forestry in the soils is the topic of February 24 meeting

At the February 24 meeting of WCSWA, Dean Moberg will present a slide show and discussion on the soils of Washington County with a focus on forests. Dean retired after 35 years with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and currently serves on the board of directors of the Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District. He is co-author of the reference book *The Soils of Oregon*.

The presentation will include a review of soil processes and terminology, descriptions of the main soil series that support Washington County forests, and current ideas and tools that can help maintain or improve forest soil health. Specific topics will include the five factors that influenced the formation of our local forest soils and a new tool to evaluate the vulnerability of local forests to higher temperatures and changing precipitation patterns.

### 2026 WCSWA Monthly Programs

|          |    |   |   |
|----------|----|---|---|
| February | 24 | <b>Forestry in the Soils, Dean Moberg</b><br>See above article  | 7:00pm Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District Office. 7175 NE Evergreen Pkwy, Ste. 400.            |
| March    | 21 | <b>Tree School, Clackamas</b>   | Registration opens Feb. 3. See page 6   |
|          | 24 | <b>OFRI Landowner Project Update</b><br><b>Margaret Miller, OFRI Forest Landowner Education Manager</b>       | 7:00pm Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District Office. 7175 NE Evergreen Pkwy, Ste. 400. See page 2 |
| April    | 28 | <b>Bighorn Logging - Past and Present,</b><br><b>Mark Standley, Vice-President,</b><br><b>Bighorn Logging</b> | 7:00pm Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District Office. 7175 NE Evergreen Pkwy, Ste. 400.            |
| July     | 11 | <b>TFOY Tour and Picnic</b>   | Dave & Leslie Rabon's tree farm, Banks, OR  |

□

**WCSWA Leadership**  
**President – Dan Shumaker**  
**Vice-President – Vic Herinckx**  
**Secretary-Treasurer – Melinda Shumaker**

**Board of Directors:**

Pos. #1: Kathy Brock  
Pos. #2: Ashley Tibbs  
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Pos. #5: John Bucsek  
Pos. #6: Mary Spiering

**WCSWA Website – <https://wcswa.com/>**

Website Manager: Michael Morgan  
Contact Cathy Dummer for web postings and information.

**Facebook:**

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

**To contact anyone on this page, email: [wcswa.oswa@gmail.com](mailto:wcswa.oswa@gmail.com)**

Note: Our Gmail address has changed to make it easier to use.

**Legislative Committee Chair:** none

**Membership Committee:** WCSWA Board members

**Program Committee:** John and Cathy Dummer,

Tony and Mary Spiering, Tom Nygren

**Tualatin River Watershed Council Representatives:** Tom Nygren, primary; Eric Chambers, alternate

**Forest Forum Newsletter**

Editors: Norie Dimeo-Ediger and Bonnie Shumaker

Proofreaders: Bonnie Shumaker, Dan Hundley, Tom Nygren, Ardis Schroeder, Norie Dimeo-Ediger

### **The Tree Farm Tradin' Post**

You can place an advertisement in *Forest Forum*. This is a free service to our members (3 month limit). List tree farm items/land to buy, sell or trade. Email ad to [washcosmallwoodlandsassoc@gmail.com](mailto:washcosmallwoodlandsassoc@gmail.com).

**For Sale: No items this month**

**Wanted: No items this month**

## **OFRI Update & Landowner Opportunities** **WCSWA March 24 Meeting**



Margaret Miller is the Forest Landowner Education Manager at the Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI). She works with partners across Oregon to develop and deliver educational programs, publications, and tools for family forest landowners.

In her presentation, *OFRI Update & Landowner Opportunities*, Margaret will provide a general update on OFRI, including current priorities, new publications in development, and recent and upcoming projects. She will also share an overview of the Partnership for Forestry Education and highlight the resources and tools related to forest stewardship, forest health, wildfire preparedness, and long-term land management being created to support family forest landowners.

Margaret is the daughter of tree farmers and holds a bachelor's degree and a graduate certificate from the Michigan State University College of Forestry. When she's not working with forest landowners, she enjoys spending time with her family, including her daughter Bernadette, husband Dan, and their dog, Banjo.

## Leadership Notes by Dan Shumaker

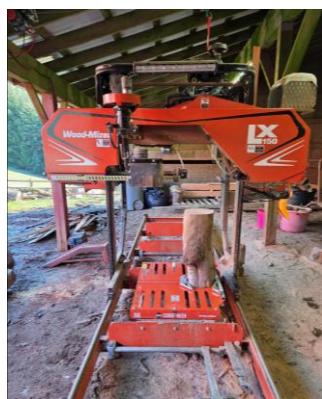
2026 started out with some unseasonably nice weather making an early start for some projects on the forest land possible. We did get a few evenings of frost, so the chanterelle mushrooms are not as abundant as they were in December.

My dad recently purchased a brush mower attachment to fit onto the Kubota KX-033-4 excavator and just started using it. The brush mower has a 40-inch-wide swath. We began using it on some overly dense natural reprod sections. It does a nice job cutting down the reprod plus mulching it up to provide a desirable outcome.

The other project/experiment I am working on is using my Wood Mizer cookie cutter to create some cookies from a madrone tree I had in one of my wood piles. I cut 3 each 1-inch-thick cookies and 3 each 1 ½ inch thick cookies. As many members know, madrone is a hard wood that has a tendency of end checking or cracking. I have taken one set of cookies and covered both ends with an end sealer. I then took two other sets of cookies and put end seal on one end and on the last set I didn't cover either cut end. I will dry the cookies in an insulated heated room. More details to come on the outcome.



Brush Cutter



Cookie-Miser



Madrone Cookies

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## OSU Washington County Small Woodlands Scholarship Endowment Fund Now over \$100,000!

The WCSWA Board of Directors is happy to inform members that our endowment at OSU College of Forestry has reached its \$100,000 goal. This presents an opportunity to invite our members to become part of a committee to assist with our endowment goals on how to direct OSU to distribute scholarship funds. Purpose of the committee: Since the WCSWA endowment fund was generated, the cost of college has increased significantly, and the board is wondering if we need to consider a change to the current \$2,000 annual scholarship. We anticipate a 3-5-person committee meeting approximately three times. If you are interested in being part of the Endowment Goal Committee, reach out to Melinda Shumaker via roster or [wcswa.oswa@gmail.com](mailto:wcswa.oswa@gmail.com)

### History of the endowment:

In 2016, the OSU Washington County Small Woodlands Association Endowment Fund was created. The initial deposit was \$25,000, which came from our native plant sale and seedling sale profits. We have added to the fund over the years from subsequent plant and seedling sales as well as raffles at our annual meetings and Tree Farmer of the Year tours plus private donations and investment gains. We have been awarding an annual \$2,000 scholarship to a student enrolled in the OSU College of Forestry with preference given to a Washington County resident. Funds available each year are 3-4% of the total endowment.

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**Advertising Opportunity:** The Forest Forum is a monthly newsletter sent out to over 300 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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|           | 1 issue | 4 issues | 12 issues |
|-----------|---------|----------|-----------|
| 1/12 page | \$20    | \$40     | \$100     |
| 1/6 page  | 30      | 60       | 150       |
| 1/4 page  | 40      | 80       | 200       |
| 1/3 page  | 50      | 100      | 250       |
| 1/2 page  | 75      | 150      | 375       |
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#### 2025-26 WCSWA Scholarship Winner

Our scholarship winner for 2025-26 thanks WCSWA for our generosity in gifting her the scholarship.

In her words: "This award will help me secure a financially secure future. With this degree, I hope to pursue a PhD in wood science so I can continue to research affordable housing solutions."

*From the editor:*

*We cannot supply name of the recipient due to privacy policy, but we do send our congratulations and are happy to support her forestry education.*

**"If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way."**  
**Napoleon Hill**



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## Fall 2025

### Whatever you need to know



Gail and Gordon Culbertson (2019 Oregon Tree Farmers of the Year)  
working with Lauren Grand (center), OSU Forestry Extension Agent

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Find it at  
[KnowYourForest.org](http://KnowYourForest.org)

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March 21, 8:15 a.m.–4:45 p.m.

Save the date – Tree School 2026  
Clackamas Community College, 19600 Molalla Ave, Oregon  
City  
Cost: \$75–\$90, \$45 for youth (14-18)

Tree School planning is underway! The Tree School catalog featuring classes and supporters is available now on the Tree School website: [google Clackamas Tree School](http://google Clackamas Tree School). Hard copies will be available mid-January. Watch your mail.

Registration opens Tuesday, February 3.

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## **Starker Lecture Series, 2026**

In 1926, Oregon State University acquired the first parcel of what is now a statewide network of 10 research forests. The 2026 Starker Lecture Series will explore the history of these forests and how perspectives and stewardship have shifted with new knowledge and pressures. All lectures are held in the Peavy Forest Science Center (PFSC) on the Corvallis campus, or available to attend remotely on Zoom. All lectures are free and open to the public; registration needed for Zoom webinar option only. The lectures will also be available on OSU College of Forestry YouTube channel, approximately one week after their date.

Register at: <https://www.forestry.oregonstate.edu/news/2026-starker-lecture-series-century-research-forest-discoveries> A reception will be held immediately after the lectures.

### ***McDonald Forest: A Century of Dynamic Landscapes***

Bill Robbins, Emeritus Distinguished Professor of History, Oregon State University

January 21, 4:00 pm-5:00 pm – This lecture is now available on OSU College of Forestry YouTube channel

### ***What We've Learned from Decades of Long-Term Forest Research***

Fred Swanson, Research Geologist (retired), US Forest Service and Emeritus Faculty

March 11, 4:00 pm-5:00 pm

### ***Panel Discussion: Managing Forests for Multiple Values in a Changing World***

Moderated by: Mark Swanson, Associate Professor and Interim Director, OSU Research Forests

May 20, 4:00 pm-5:00 pm

## Bend company earns top regional forestry award for 2,000-acre thinning project.



**Matt Mahoney of Bend-based Boulder Ridge, LLC**

Bend Bulletin, December 4, 2025, By Michael Kohn  
Matt Mahoney of Bend-based Boulder Ridge, LLC, which was named Operator of the Year for Eastern Oregon by the Oregon Dept. of Forestry. A Bend company that specializes in land clearing and excavation has been named Eastern Oregon's 2025 Operator of the Year, leading a trio of companies honored by the Oregon Board of Forestry for outstanding protection of natural resources during timber operations. Boulder Ridge LLC was selected for its work in thinning nearly 2,000 acres of overcrowded ponderosa pine and white fir on the eastern slopes of the Cascades east of Bend. The project, nominated by Shanda Asset Management, reduced wildfire risk and improved forest health by removing trees weakened by dwarf mistletoe. Aidan Myers, director of timber operations for Shanda, said the harvest posed major logistical challenges.

With limited capacity at the local mill, Boulder Ridge coordinated 14 trucking routes to destinations across Central Oregon and as far away as Roseburg.

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### Why wildlife need dead wood in the winter

OSU School of Forestry, [December 19, 2025](#), by Lorelle Sherman, OSU Extension Forester

#### Why do wildlife need dead wood in the winter?

Reptiles and amphibians are ectothermic, meaning they rely on external sources to regulate their body temperature. So, utilizing the insulation of a hollow log, root hollow, rotting log, or slab of dead bark is essential to survival year-round, but especially during the winter months. During cold spells, snakes and lizards will slow their breathing and metabolic rates down (also known as brumation) during the dark days only leaving their insulated safe space on sunny days to bask on top of rocks or downed logs. Salamanders and frogs also brumate, but they don't often bask as their permeable skin makes them highly susceptible to dehydration. Two salamanders that particularly depend on large, downed wood are clouded salamanders and western red-backed salamanders.

Small-bodied wildlife that generate their own internal heat (endothermic) still rely on dead wood for insulation. Mice, shrews, chipmunks, and squirrels will all find cavities or burrow under dead wood to get through the coldest temperatures. There are differences in dependence on dead wood by species.

Small mammals that eat insects benefit even more from large, downed wood as rotting logs can serve as a buffet for food in addition to protective habitat. Insect-eating species like the Pacific jumping mouse and shrew-mole show a strong preference for sites with an abundance of large, downed wood when compared with other small mammals (Maguire 2002). On the other hand, red tree voles don't appear to associate with dead wood because they are canopy-dwellers and rarely come to the ground.

In the Pacific Northwest, most birds start nesting in the spring as warmer temperatures hint at the summer to come. Raptors (not the Jurassic Park kind... the owls, eagles and hawks kind) start courting their mate and selecting nest sites in the dead of winter. Great horned owls will even lay their eggs from January through March. Great horned owls will utilize broken or dead tops of large trees as well as large snag cavities. In fact, many of our owl species nest in snag cavities and will also utilize wooden boxes made by humans to replicate natural cavities.

In winter especially, snags and fallen logs remind us that dead wood and decay are not signs of neglect, but a fundamental part of how forests function. The next time you walk through a winter forest, pause at a standing snag or a large, downed log and take a look around. What wildlife tracks do you see?

## **Idaho's swift timber salvage after Rock Fire hailed as a success**

by CBS2 News Staff, December 11, 2025 at 3:13 PM



**Salvaged timber from the Rock Fire (courtesy of the Idaho Department of Lands)**

with the Boise National Forest, Payette National Forest, and the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) program. Early planning and collaboration allowed salvage activities to commence while the fire was still active, reducing safety hazards and increasing the value of burned timber before deterioration occurred.

"This project is a great example of what can be accomplished when agencies work side-by-side with shared priorities," said Jon Songster, GNA's Bureau Chief. "The speed of this effort not only reduced safety risks for the public but also ensured that resources were put to good use — a real win for Tamarack, the Forest Service, and the citizens of Idaho."

IDL completed its endowment salvage sale package for bureau review by Aug. 27, just 15 days after the fire began. The sale included 700,000 board feet of burned timber across 65 acres of endowment trust land, benefiting the Public School Endowment and State Hospital South Endowment. The sale was successfully auctioned on Sept. 15 and purchased by Tamarack Resort, which hired Miller Timber Services to begin harvesting on Oct. 14.

GNA salvage sales followed closely. Even before the fire was fully contained on Sept. 30, IDL's endowment foresters, alongside National Forest staff working through GNA, were coordinating fieldwork and preparing the ground for safe and timely salvage.

Valley County, ID. In the aftermath of the Rock Fire, which ignited on Aug. 12, 2025, and scorched nearly 2,800 acres across the Boise National Forest, Payette National Forest, and Idaho Endowment Trust lands, the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) has been praised for its rapid response in preparing and auctioning salvage timber. This effort aimed to protect public resources, reduce hazards, and preserve the remaining timber value.

The salvage operation, one of the fastest turnarounds seen by IDL foresters, was made possible through strong coordination



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### **Do You Have an Ash Tree That You Care About?**



Now that the damaging emerald ash borer (EAB) is infesting ash trees in our area, it's time to make a plan.

Review the new Ash Tree Decision Tool in English and Spanish at Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District's website.

Go to: [https://tualatinswcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/EAB\\_DecisionTree.pdf](https://tualatinswcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/EAB_DecisionTree.pdf)

## The Nuts and Bolts of Thinning, Jake Barker, OSU Extension Forester for Washington, Yamhill and Columbia County.



Attentive WCSWA members

Thinning your forest was a popular topic with 50 woodland owners in attendance at the WCSWA January 27 meeting. Jake gave us a lot of information and informative handouts. He stated that "Thinning is an investment in the remaining trees."

Some highlights:

- Thinning recommendations need to be tailored to your forest and its unique characteristics.
- The goal of thinning is to shape the forest structure to match your objectives including forest health, aesthetics, timber production, diversity, and wildlife habitat.
- Early thinning keeps options open.
- Selecting trees to thin or save: Look at 4 sides of tree; imagine creating space on multiple sides, look for defects such as sweep, forked tops or damage.
- Trees die when a stand is near maximum density. The goal is to capture natural mortality with thinning (Thin, let them grow, thin again, repeat).
- Management practices progression: planting, vegetation control, pruning, thinning, harvest.
- Stand density is measured in trees per acre, volume per acre, and basal area per acre.
- How to measure your forest: Plot method (1/20 of an acre – 26.34" radius) 2-3 plots per acre.
- Use the Stand Density Table (handout OSU EM9206) to determine when it is time to thin.
- Thinning Methods: decide on your goals: timber, wildlife, diversity.
- Thinning from below: Remove dead, suppressed, dying and a few co-dominant trees. Keeps canopy intact and fuel reduction.
- Thinning from above: Remove some dominant and co-dominant trees to create more room. Removes more volume. Sometimes larger tree might be removed to favor a higher-quality smaller tree.
- Thinning methods can be uniform or variable: Uniform is easier to log and produces wood and tree growth. Variable produces wood while also enhancing habitat or creating gaps by more careful selection.
- Plan ahead for a thinning. Plan in the winter for thinning in summer.
- When planning a thinning decide what you want your forest to look like, communicate with your logger before and during the thinning.
- Be sure to have a contract with your logger. See EC 1192 for sample contracts.



Jake Barker receiving speaker gift from Dan Shumaker

There was much more information. Jake let us know he will be teaching a Forestry Short Course in Fall, 2026 and a Master Woodland Manager Class in 2027.

## Browse and More in Mid-January

By Susan Schmidlin

All the autumn leaves have fallen, the soils have been saturated by generous amounts of rainfall, the animals are all sporting their winter coats, most groundcover plants are devoid of new shoots, and we are seeing more gray skies than outright sunshine. Yet, it doesn't even feel like winter has begun with the temperate temperatures we have been having, but in spite of that the forest is preparing for the next season in its own quiet way.

It is a good time to perk up out of the holiday haze routine because it is about to get busy! By the time this article gets out, seedlings will be lifted from their seedling beds and be patiently waiting to get put into the soil and start doing what they are ready to do. Before long the tips of each seedling will come alive with new growth and the whole forest will come alive with burgeoning possibilities. With all the new growth, the forest creatures are alerted to tender dinner options and waste no time in trying to trim all the tasty goodness if not completely tearing new seedlings right out of the ground.

A fellow forest owner was talking about the successes he is having with reforestation after a devastating storm took out several patches of trees throughout his property about ten years ago. Many of the timber-sized trees fell during the storm, the falling trees damaged others that were not hit as hard from the wind but sustained serious damage. Many had to be taken out since they had severe injury by bark removal, loss of limbs or topped off crowns. The patches were several acres each and were scattered around the property.

The reforestation was done in phases after the cleanup from the storm since the owner is getting on in years but wanted to do the work himself. With a chuckle he said he took more notes than planting the first two years before he was comfortable with the direction of his plans.

He planted each seedling with the same routine: exact hole depth, insert plant with roots spread along inside of hole, sprinkle dirt to back fill, tamp with fist so each seedling is secure without strangling the tender roots. With each seedling he spread a plate sized area of wood chips around the base to keep moisture in and weeds away, usually no more than a cupful or two per seedling.

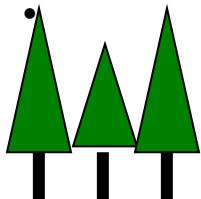
Since then he has groomed the plantings each year by replacing browse netting around bases of the trees to dissuade voles, using large size 5-6" round mesh cages with 3 bamboo stakes to keep deer busy before they nibble, and to discourage browsing from scent by sprinkling the perimeter of each patch with blood meal powder on weeks when it wasn't too rainy. The results vary since the stand ages differ by years and each patch is a very diverse stand, but he reports that many of the seedlings are now above browse height which is a success story for sure.

The amount of attention to detail that this forest owner has given to these patches is more than impressive; it simply could not be scaled up for larger forests or for anyone with time constraints. However, it does show how using old, tried and true ideas along with your own experiments can improve a patch, a plot, or an acre. Keeping a notebook, a daily/weekly photo diary or a t-post with tape marked with the dates that the patch was checked are all notions that can be implemented even in larger forested sites.

***Every forest branch moves differently in the breeze,  
but as they sway they connect at the roots.***

***Rumi***

# Forest Forum



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COUNTY CHAPTER OF THE  
OREGON SMALL WOODLANDS  
ASSOCIATION

## Potpourri

**New Members:** Welcome to **Mike Messier & Mark Ogren**, Trout Mountain Forestry, Portland and **Alexis Ollenbrook**, Forest Grove. 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'll find many kindred spirits among our diverse membership – and many opportunities to learn and share together! Questions? Contact any of the directors, officers, or Newsletter Editors listed on page 2.

### Helpful Links:

#### **Oregon's Forest Protection Laws: An Illustrated Manual 2025**

*This edition is now available as a print copy. You can order at [Oregonforests.org](http://Oregonforests.org). We will also have print copies available at WCSWA meetings.*

**Forestry for the Birds: Western Oregon** was produced by the Forest Stewards Guild. Download at: <https://foreststewardsguild.org/foresters-for-the-birds>

### Recommended Fire Related Brochures:

**Initial Attack Fire Equipment for Woodland Owners Booklet:** [www.wcswa.com](http://www.wcswa.com). About us/links.

**Firewise Landscaping:** [Firewise Landscaping Basics | OSU Extension Service \(oregonstate.edu\)](http://Firewise Landscaping Basics | OSU Extension Service (oregonstate.edu))

**Wildfire Prevention:** [Oregon Wildfire Response and Recovery: Wildfire Prevention : State of Oregon](http://Oregon Wildfire Response and Recovery: Wildfire Prevention : State of Oregon)

### Other Helpful Links:

- [www.oregonwoodlandcooperative.com](http://www.oregonwoodlandcooperative.com) learn about the Oregon Woodland Cooperative
- <https://www.facebook.com/WashingtonCountySmallWoodlandsAssociation>
- For E-Notification: [FERNS - Welcome \(oregon.gov\)](http://FERNS - Welcome (oregon.gov)) or visit an ODF Office