

Forest Forum

Washington County Small
Woodlands Association

March, 2009

March 24th WCSWA Meeting OSWA, Woodland Carbon Company: What's Ahead?

David Ford, executive director of the Oregon Small woodlands Association, and Mike Gaudern, president of The Woodland Carbon Company, will be the featured speakers at the March 24th monthly meeting of the Washington county Small Woodlands Association.

David and Mike will describe the current and projected activities of their organizations. They are both new to their positions: David replaced Mike last fall as OSWA executive director when Mike left to become president of The Woodland Carbon Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of OSWA. Both organizations are facing new opportunities and new challenges due to current economic conditions, world market adjustments, and escalating stresses on small woodland owners.

The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the OSU Extension Office, Capital Center, 185th and Walker Road, Beaverton.



WCSWA President Dallas Boge and AG John Kroger

Oregon AG Speaks to Full House, “Lays Down the Law”

Oregon Attorney General John Kroger, speaking at the February 24th monthly meeting of OSWA, made his position clear on the proposed LNG pipeline: the State of Oregon is challenging the authority of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to permit the Bradwood Landing terminal on the Columbia on the grounds that FERC did not get the required permits. However, he also made it clear that once final legal decisions are made, he will uphold the law.

Kroger began his remarks by stating his priorities for the AG office:

- ***Crime***— fighting crime and protecting victims. Oregon’s crime rate is high, but going down. Cuts in law enforcement, and historical increases during hard economic times will be challenges.
- ***Children and Child Welfare***— Children are the biggest victims of drugs, especially meth. 90% of child abuse cases involve use of meth.
- ***Environmental Protection***— Ensuring that legal protection of the environment is pursued. *See Kroger, page 4*

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Notes from the President

by Dallas Boge

It's not too early to be thinking about attending this year's OSWA state convention. The convention is on June 5, 6, and 7 in Ashland. The agenda is not out yet, but should be available shortly. It is especially important for us in Washington County to attend because we are to host the 2011 state meeting. That is not that far in the future. We last hosted the convention in 2001 (I still use the folio from that event regularly). The makeup of the conventions has changed in recent years with the state taking a prominent role in the organization of the events. This may very well evolve again with the change in leadership. Nevertheless, it behooves us to be there to learn and refresh our memories on the logistics of its operation. If we can put together an event that went as well as the ATFS field day last October, we will do ourselves proud.

I had a call recently from a tree farmer who owns property near the Columbia county line. He does not live on his property and had gone out that weekend to check on the property. He found five alder trees fallen across his access road and his "no trespassing" signs ripped out and thrown in the brush. He was wondering who to report the problem to, the county sheriff, or ODF. My advice was to do both. In a later conversation with Scott Hayes, he reported that there is a little-known law in the state regarding trespass. Apparently the ranchers in Eastern Oregon were having problems keeping "no trespassing" signs on their property lines. Their solution was to go to the legislature and have ORS 105.700 passed.

In effect, paraphrasing the law, one may use a metal fence post with the top 6" painted with fluorescent orange paint, or a blaze of paint at least 50 square inches in size. This, it seems to me is a more subtle way, perfectly legal, to post property. After all, as has been said by countless judges, ignorance of the law is no excuse.

Wildfire season will soon be here again. Yes, we do get wildfires on the west side. The station I work from usually has one in March or April. People want to burn a pile which has waited all winter to be burned. A few dry days come along and the pile is lit. They forget that the dry grass surrounding the pile is dry too, and off we go. While we are at it, let's be sure that the driveway to our forest homes and buildings are clear for a fire engine to access the area. A good rule of thumb would be if a fully loaded log truck can get through without touching any of the roadside vegetation, then the fire truck can probably also. This winter's snows saw a lot of brush and low limbs get bent down, many times into the road. Spring cleaning should include their removal.

That's all for now.

Dallas

OSU Extension Agent Coming Early

The December-January issue of Forest Forum reported that the new Washington-Columbia County OSU Extension agent, Amy Grotta, would report on July 1st. The reporting date has now been moved up to *April 13th*.

Amy is currently the forestry agent for King County, Washington. Plans are for her to have a primary office location in St. Helens, and an auxiliary office in Washington County. The exact split on her time between the two counties has not been determined.

WCSWA Leadership

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WCSWA Website

www.wcswa.org

Website Manager: Kathy Scott

Contact Tom Nygren for web postings and information.

Forest Forum Newsletter

Editor: Tom Nygren

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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)

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Event Calendar

- | | | |
|--------------|-----------|--|
| March | 21 | Tree School – Clackamas Community College, Oregon City. For information and application, contact Cheryl at 503-655-8631. |
| | 24 | WCSWA Monthly Meeting – David Ford, OSWA Executive Director, and Mike Gaudern, The Woodlands Carbon Company President, will discuss OSWA, carbon trading, and family forestland owners. 7:00 p.m. OSU Extension office, Capital Center, 185 th and Walker Road, Beaverton. |
| April | 28 | WCSWA Monthly Meeting - Anatomy of a Chunk of Firewood (How a Tree Trunk Works) , Loren Radford, Arborist. 7:00 p.m. OSU Extension, Capital Center, 185 th and Walker Road, Beaverton |
| May | 19 | WCSWA Monthly Meeting – Annual Potluck – Stub Stewart State Park, beginning at 5:00 p.m. |
| June | 27 | WCSWA Field Tour – Dallas and Sharon Boge's Lone Fir Tree Farm. The tour feature will be measurements, on and off the stump. |
| July | 18 | Tree Farmer of the Year Tour – Scott and Marge Hayes Arbor House Tree Farm, Gales Creek. |

Kroger, continued from page 1

The State's challenge of the FERC decision falls in the environmental protection priority. However, there are ancillary issues also associated with the FERC decision, including private property rights and the effects of the decision on national security, state economic health, and the future energy sources available for the citizens of Oregon.

The latter issues drive Kroger's opposition to the pipeline: he contends that the primary concern for Oregon's citizens may well be the potential for the pipeline, once constructed, to be primarily used for export of natural gas from the U.S. to foreign markets. Abundant natural gas supplies in the Rocky Mountain and central plains basins do not presently have access to international shipping terminals. A connecting pipeline from those gas fields to the Pacific Ocean could create an economic imperative to ship the gas from markets here to higher priced markets in Asia such as Japan. Currently those Asian markets are paying two and one-half times as much as domestic markets.

Over 60 people attended the meeting – primarily WCSWA members, but also including Farm Bureau members and other interested people. A lively question and answer session followed Kroger's presentation, including the following points:

- In response to a statement that there seems to be a vocal minority that opposes farm and forest activity, Kroger stated that most people know that we're better off with a diverse economy
- The law is a blunt instrument, but it does provide access to all, even if it is sometimes clumsy and difficult
- The state has some ability to control water rights – this administration supports the return of more rights from the federal government
- California is the 900 pound gorilla in the LNG room
- The LNG decision is not a done deal – the courts and legislature haven't yet spoken
- The bottom line is economics – what will the ability to ship natural gas to Japan have on our gas prices.

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Trends in Markets, And their Effects

Market trends for wood products have had many secondary effects, as small woodland owners are only too aware. At times it seems like "a perfect storm", as plummeting log prices, low pulp prices, increased fuel costs (earlier), and other factors have made the near term economic outlook bleak.

One factor that has become significant though, is the effect the downturn in U.S. wood markets has on international markets.

For example, the cost of shipping has dropped, as ships lie idle due to the economic doldrums. This has made shipping wood products overseas more cost efficient, as evidenced by the increase in chips moving to foreign markets from the U.S. Wood pellets are also more competitive in foreign markets. While in the short term prices for these products may not show increases, the situation bodes well for more long term market opportunities.

Brings to mind the old axiom: For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction".

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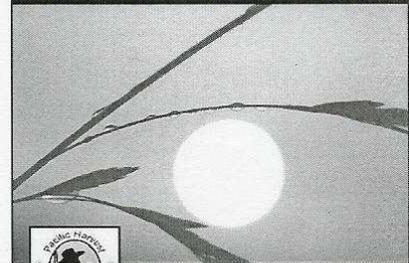
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Economic Downturn Affects OSU College of Forestry

The College of Forestry at **Oregon State University** is cutting staff and suspending most timber sales to reduce annual costs of more than \$1.4 million over the next two years. The college's budget has historically depended, in part, on a statewide tax on timber harvested in Oregon, as well as revenues from timber sales on the College Forests, mostly McDonald and Dunn Forests near Corvallis. Funds from both sources have declined. Reserve funds have been used so far to make up for shortfalls, but that approach is not sustainable, officials said.

"Statewide timber harvests are reduced again this year, off by more than one billion board feet from recent years," said Hal Salwasser, dean of the college. "In addition, our ability to generate profitable timber sales on college forests has been severely constrained by current log market conditions. We expect both of these circumstances to continue through at least the next biennium before they begin to rebound."

Among the steps taken by the college:

- Most operational activities associated with planned timber sales are being suspended immediately;
- Four staff positions in College Forests will be eliminated by early 2010, one other position re-assigned and some student employment on the forest will be lost;
- Until market conditions improve, college forests will reduce administrative expenses, arboretum support, inventory and survey work and infrastructure maintenance;
- Forests will remain open to classes and approved research projects, but faculty will need to do more of their own field support work;
- The forests will remain open for public use, and volunteers will be sought to support recreational trail maintenance or bridge repair work.

Portland Business Journal, February 3, 2009



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Tree Talk

by Bonnie Shumaker

The preparation was done, the weather cooperated and the long awaited “grandkids tree planting day” finally arrived on February 21st. Bob and I had already planted most of our 1700 trees and are excited about the attributes of this year’s seedlings. Last year’s late spring slowed down the seedling’s growth at the nursery which proved to be a plus making the stem to root ratio just about perfect. The only concern we felt was the ground was frozen in some areas and a bit of pesky snow covered some good planting spots. The bud caps we purchased from IFA proved to be easy to apply and flagged the trees well for the coming brush control. After two weeks, we have yet to see any elk or deer damage. With a little luck thrown in, using bud caps may be well worth their 10 cent cost.



Bob and I had saved an area on flat ground that looked about right for planting 100 trees on “grandkids day”. We started out the day by roasting hot dogs over a campfire. With our bellies full, we trekked out to the planting area. Our two sons, Doug and Dan strapped on the planting bags, loaded up with seedlings and manned the shovels. Our daughters-in-law kept cameras busy and provided encouragement. The grandkids put the seedling in the hole, tamped it in and put on the bud caps. After instruction from grandma and grandpa, the planting began. We encouraged careful planting rather than speed and were rewarded with a hard-working crew whose enthusiasm persisted until the last of the 100 trees we had saved for the event were planted. There was even a sprint at the end when only a few trees were left. The area we had saved was exactly the right size, so there was a good feeling of accomplishment as well. After the planting was done, there was time to explore the creek and finish up the dessert from lunch. It was a day we will all remember fondly. With luck, the trees will thrive and the grandkids will see the fruits of their labor grow to tower above them.



Back (from left): Bridget, Chelsea, Halle, Elijah
Front: Annika

Principles of Population Genetics and Willamette Valley Ponderosa Pine

By Larry Miller, Oregon Department of Forestry Geneticist - from the 2008 Annual Report, Willamette Valley Ponderosa Pine Conservation Association – for more information on WVPPCA: www.westernforestry.org/wvppca

Consider what we know about the distribution of the Willamette Valley race of ponderosa pine:

- Even prior to human settlement, ponderosa pine populations in this region existed on the edge of the species range, disjunct from the main population and isolated by a significant barrier to the free flow of genes, the Cascade Range.
- This isolation has resulted in genetic drift, to the extent that Willamette valley ponderosa pine is now considered a separate variety, distinct from ponderosa pine in more central parts of the species range.

While never existing in large continuous stands, the distribution of ponderosa pine in the Willamette Valley 150 years ago was much more widespread than today. Agriculture, human settlement, urban/suburban sprawl, and preference for Douglas-fir have significantly restricted the species distribution, not uncommonly down to just a few isolated trees here and there.

In the study of population genetics, we know that when populations become isolated and contain only a few individuals, crossing increasingly occurs between related individuals. This is called inbreeding, and the effects are almost always bad. Here's why:

Most forest trees of the northern hemisphere, ponderosa pine included, rely upon wind pollination and an outcrossing mating system. There is a strong evolutionary basis for outcrossing, involving the same genetic principles that lead to incest taboos in human cultures. Genes that code for negative fitness traits, because they result in a loss of vigor and thus survival, are present at very low frequencies and are usually heterozygous recessive. This means that such traits are rarely expressed - a good thing for species survival. However, inbreeding often results in these sub-optimal recessive genes becoming homozygous. In trees, negative traits resulting from inbreeding include poor seed set, low seedling vigor, and reduced growth rate of the few inbred trees that do survive. Empirically, this is what we see today in the all-too-common poor performance of wild collected Willamette Valley Ponderosa pine seed.

Because of the long lifespan of trees, generations overlap in space and time. Thus, inbreeding includes many combinations of related matings, such as parent x offspring, half-sib x full-sib, grandparent x parent, etc. The most severe form of inbreeding is called selfing - when a tree pollinates itself. The results of selfing are so bad, that in most cases no viable seed is produced.

As one may well imagine, inbreeding within small groups that cling to existence on the edge of the species range has the potential to become an evolutionary dead end. Thus, the efforts of the Willamette Valley Ponderosa Pine Conservation Association are very important to the long term health and survival of ponderosa pine in the Valley. When trees were chosen for inclusion in the seed orchard at Schroeder, foresters were careful to select trees that were separate from one another. This means that the 160 + families in the orchard are, by-and-large, unrelated to each other. As such, the resulting seed should be predominantly out crossed, and thus will produce high vigor seedlings.

In 2009, the ODF is conducting a study to estimate the rate of inbreeding in Valley ponderosa seed produced at Schroeder. The National Forest Genetics Laboratory, located at the Institute of Forest Genetics in Placerville, CA will, via molecular genetics methods, sample seeds from 20 families and estimate the rate of inbreeding. Our expectation is that the inbreeding rate will be low, given the methods used to select the trees. This information will also help orchard managers make decisions about which trees to stimulate, and how to plan cone harvests.

Larry Miller is the current ODF Geneticist. He has wide experience in genetics and forest tree improvement. BS Forest Management - University of Maine, Orono 1977. MS Forest Genetics - North Carolina State University, Raleigh 1980. He has worked extensively in operational forest tree improvement in Ontario (Canada), Minnesota, eastern Washington, western Oregon, and northern Idaho.

Could 'liquid wood' replace plastic?

Germans engineer an organic alternative from a paper waste product.

By Brian Whitley / Contributor to The Christian Science Monitor/ February 11, 2009 edition

Plastic products have become so cheap and durable that not even the forces of nature seem able to stop them. A soupy expanse of plastic waste – too tough for bacteria to break down – now covers an estimated 1 million square miles of the Pacific Ocean. Scientists have been searching for forty years for a substitute for petroleum, plastic's main ingredient.

Though lignin, a wood derivative, was thought of early on, only recently has research been able to match plastic's value of strength and moldability. Lignin can now be used to create a plastic like material that can be molded but yet is biodegradable over time and economically abundant. A German company, Tecnar, says it found the magic formula. Sold as Arboform, the tough mixture is chock full of lignin – sometimes more than 50 percent, compared with the 30 percent threshold where many researchers would max out. The rest is fiber from wood, flax, or hemp, as well as a few additives. Now, Tecnar's success could revive interest in lignin and propel the search for better and cheaper bioplastics.

But there are tradeoffs. All versions of Arboform are heavier, more brittle, and more expensive than conventional plastics. Arboform costs about \$1.60 per pound when purchased in bulk, compared with less than a dollar for a pound of polypropylene, a traditional plastic. The US mostly backs a different plastic substitute. After giving up on lignin, American scientists focused on starch – a cheap and renewable resource, though one also important to food production. One company in California can pump out 50 million pounds of starch-based plastic a year for compostable forks and biodegradable containers. However, this product also competes with crops also grown for food.

But there is more to the story. Lignin is currently a waste product from use of wood cellulose for paper and other products. Burning as fuel is the common disposal method – releasing great quantities of carbon in the process. Using lignin for a plastic substitute would remove significant portions of carbon from being released, and instead keep it stored in durable lignin based items.

The bottom line: another beneficial use of lignin could result in less carbon released, more value for wood products – and more value-added for wood producers.

Thanks to Don Sparks, WCSWA member, for providing this information

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Bigleaf Maple Syrup? Wine?

There is a fledgling maple syrup industry on Vancouver Island. Last year 60,000 litres of syrup were produced. The value of a litre of sap is \$1, and a liter of syrup is worth \$75. It takes 43 litres of sap to make a liter of syrup.

An alternative is maple wine, made from the sap. The ratio of sap to wine is much more favorable – 1:1, but the value has not yet made the enterprise favorable.

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All seedlings will meet the minimum contract specs of 5mm RCD and 70cm height.

The stock is currently frozen and would need to be planted relatively quickly after thawing. The seedlings will be thawed and immediately delivered to my cooler in Forest Grove on approximately March 31st.

The price is \$240 per thousand to cover the cost of seed and production. Please contact me if you know of any interest in this stock.

Many thanks...

Mitch Taylor

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U.S. Timber Harvests Stable Since 1986

In contrast to a 13% increase in U.S. timber harvests in the period 1976-1986, timber harvests have remained stable since. Harvests have consistently been in the 14 billion board foot range in the last couple of decades, though there have been shifts in type of product, and source within the U.S.

Sixty-four percent of the harvest has been conifer, and 36% hardwood – a 5% increase in hardwoods since prior to 1986. The South has gained during this period – up 13% since 1986 to a level of 63%. The gain is likely due to lower harvesting restrictions on the predominately private southern timberland.

Lumber and plywood made up 49% of the total, with hardwood veneer at 9%, pulp and paper at 35%, and fuelwood and miscellaneous at 7%. *Source: RPA report, U.S. Forest Service*

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Quotes of the Month:

Guido Rahr, president of the Wild Salmon Center.

We have to realize private-land timber companies are our friend. Once land gets broken up into smaller pieces, our ability to protect it is eliminated".

Lawrence Selzer of The Conservation Fund: "The environmental community has spent 40 years perfecting the art of saying no and has almost no ability to say yes".

Oregonian, Dec. 20, 2008

Private Forests are Key to Offsetting Carbon Emissions; Calls on Congress To Act

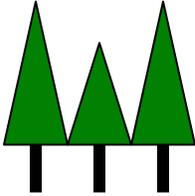
A new coalition representing virtually all sectors of the forest community: the forest products industry, conservation and wildlife groups, foresters, private forest owners, academics, and carbon finance groups have called upon Congress to include *private working forests* as a central part of federal climate change policy. The American Forest Foundation, along with The Trust for Public Land launched the diverse group a year ago.

Drue DeBerry, Senior Vice President for Conservation for the American Forest Foundation said In the end, it was too important not to agree on core principles. There was unanimous agreement on the urgency of stepping up forests capacity to remove carbon emissions from the atmosphere. It's cost effective, it's ready now, and it works while at the same time conserving water, wildlife and flood control properties of forests.

Washington County Small Woodlands Association
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Forest Forum



COUNTY CHAPTER OF THE
OREGON SMALL WOODLANDS
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Potpourri

Welcome to New Members!

William Pressly of North Plains, and **Sean and Shari Hathaway** of Portland have joined OSWA and WCSWA. We are here to help you achieve your management goals for your woodland. 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! If you have any questions, or need help, contact any of the Directors, Officers, or Newsletter Editor (listed on page 3).

Wood Market Forecast for 2009 (courtesy of Forest2Market newsletter, March, 2009)

The general economy in the U.S. will continue to contract in 2009, with predictable impacts on employment and consumption. Oil prices will remain low (around \$35/barrel) through April, but they will then trend higher for the rest of the year. Despite lower transportation costs, reduced demand and a stronger dollar have put a dent in exports of U.S.-manufactured forest products. The housing market shows some signs of turning a corner. Two indexes published by the National Association of Realtors indicate we are near the bottom: the Housing Affordability Index, which shows that homes are more affordable now than at any time in the last 25 years, and the Pending Home Sales Index, a forward-looking indicator based on signed contracts, which was revised upward for November and rose 6.3 percent in December. While housing may begin a recovery in 2009, however, the way back will be slow and far from smooth because of weakness in the general economy.