

Forest Forum

Washington County Small Woodlands Association

March, 2016

Roads.... *Integral Part of Forest Management*



Woodland roads are an integral part of forest management. These roads are a woodland owner's gateway to enjoying their woods, and good woodland roads are critical to protecting and managing woodlands. Just as state and county road departments maintain their roads, landowners must also take care of their roads.

Mary Castle, Senior Mining Engineer and Project Manager at Weyerhaeuser, will be the featured speaker at the **March WCSWA meeting on March 22, 7:00 pm at the North Plains Fire Hall**. Mary will discuss forest roads, including general road maintenance (recreational and heavy haul), and rock type and quality consideration. She will also discuss third party road maintenance agreements and access considerations.

In addition to her position at Weyerhaeuser, Mary is on the board at Forests Forever, Inc., the non-profit organization that operates and manages the Hopkins Demonstration Forest. She has also taught classes at Tree School. We're looking forward to having her speak!

Old and New Forestry Issues: *Mike Cafferata*

Mike Cafferata, District Forester for Northwest Oregon, Oregon Department of Forestry at Forest Grove, deviated somewhat from his planned presentation at the monthly meeting of Washington County Small Woodlands Association on February 23rd. Mike was scheduled to speak on the proposed Salmonberry Trail and the new riparian regulations – and he did. However, on the top of his mind at the meeting was following up on an old issue (growth and yield from thinning Douglas-fir stands), and introducing a new one (target shooting).

Mike addressed these topics, and answered audience questions. See **Cafferata on page 7** for his comments.



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Contact Tom Nygren or Bonnie Shumaker for web postings and information.

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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)

- Wanted:**
- 1) Computer savvy WCSWA member to monitor and suggest changes/updates to our website www.wcswa.com Contact either newsletter editor (see Forest Forum newsletter box above)
 - 2) Alternative representative from WCSWA to Tualatin River Watershed Council – contact Tom Nygren, 503-628-5472 for more information
 - 3) Forest caretaker and home for rent at Gales Creek timber property. Call 503-357-4258.

For Sale: No new For Sale ads

Event Calendar

March	22	7:00 p.m. North Plains Fire Hall 31370 NW Commercial Street	Mary Castle , Weyerhaeuser transportation and mining engineer, will discuss woodland roads
April	26	7:00 p.m. North Plains Fire Hall 31370 NW Commercial Street	Brandy Saffell , OSU Forestry Extension, will present on invasive species, and Steve Fitzgerald , OSU Department of Forestry, will discuss plans and progress on the Matteson tract (the private land donated to OSU near Hagg Lake).
May	TBA	TBA	Annual WCSWA Potluck

The Woodland Beat

Our annual plant sale takes place (or took place) on March 12. As I write this it is a couple of weeks out and the planning is coming together. I'm sure it will once again be a successful event promoting planting native plants, letting our neighbors know about the Washington County Small Woodlands Association and supporting students through scholarships from the proceeds. On this last point I want to take this opportunity to let you all know that we've been working with the College of Forestry at Oregon State University on administering the scholarship money we raise from the native plant sale. From the pool of scholarship recipients selected by the school, our scholarship funds will be awarded to a Washington County resident studying forest engineering, forest/civil engineering, forestry, natural resources or renewable materials in the College of Forestry at Oregon State University. If there are multiple qualified candidates the plant sale proceeds will be split evenly between all qualified candidates; if there is only one qualified candidate the entire amount will be awarded to that student. Should there not be a qualified candidate the funds will be awarded the following year. Generally the amount of our donation is in the range of \$3,000 to \$5,000 each year. There had been some question about administration of the scholarship funds and how all that was working. I hope this clarifies that.

You may have noticed at our February meeting that our speaker had a microphone and his voice was amplified. This is in response to members mentioning that they were having difficulty hearing at the meetings. We want everyone to be able to participate in our meetings and get as much out of them as possible. If you aren't getting as much as you could out of our meetings let a board member know if you've got suggestions and we'll see what we can do to make the experience better. If something is keeping you from participating it likely is also keeping others from participating as well.

There are a few opportunities to get involved, or further involved, in the organization if you are interested. We are in need of an alternate to work with Tom Nygren as our representative on the Tualatin River Watershed Council. Representing the interests of small woodland owners in the county and in the Tualatin Basin is part of our mission and this is one way that we can do that. There are monthly meetings and some additional coordination associated with the position and an opportunity to find out more about what is going on in the watershed. If you are interested in helping out with this get in touch with Tom. His contact information is found on page 2 of this newsletter.

Other opportunities to get involved are to become a board member or join the program committee. Cathy and I are in the final year of our term as co-presidents. If you are interested in helping out with a leadership role in the organization give us a call and we'd be happy to share with you what it entails.

Until next time – Happy Small Woodlanding!

John and Cathy Dummer

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Tree Talk

by Bonnie Shumaker

We have a small plot set aside for growing Christmas trees, about twenty trees in all. We try to plant some every few years, so that sizes vary and there will be something just the right size each December. We have planted Noble fir exclusively since it pretty much grows on its own with no shearing required or extra help of any kind.

This year, a couple of friends asked us where to get Noble fir seedlings and after checking around, we found they were in short supply. Then the Weyerhaeuser Public sale, which we had heard was cancelled, reappeared and listed Noble fir as one of their choices. WCSWA member and friend Kent Grewe went to the sale and was going to share some of his bounty with us, but when he arrived at the sale, the Nobles were all gone. Instead Kent picked up some Fraser fir plugs and he offered us a few. The plugs look healthy with a good root-to-stem ratio, but are really small - only four inches! Bob and Kent joked that they could forget the planting shovel and instead plant them with a spoon!



Fraser fir

We filled up the space in our Christmas tree plot with seven seedlings and had two left over. These we planted in our fruit orchard where a blue spruce used to be. The blue spruce had once been a living Christmas tree that was planted outside about thirty-five years ago. It outgrew its welcome and was shading the fruit trees, so it had to go. Since spruce isn't that good for firewood, the trunk now serves its purpose as "downed woody debris" in our woods. I quickly put loggers tape around the two tiny Fraser firs so that an errant lawnmower didn't wipe them out.

I decided to find out more about our new trees. Here is a summary of what I found on the National Christmas Tree website. Fraser fir branches turn slightly upward. They have good form and needle-retention. They are dark blue-green in color. They have a pleasant scent. Fraser fir was named for John Fraser (1750-1811), a Scot botanist who explored the southern Appalachian Mountains in the late 18th century. The species is sometimes called Southern balsam or Southern balsam fir.

In reading about Fraser fir grown for Christmas trees, shearing is recommended. My first thought was "Oh, no!" but in reading further, it was noted that some people like a more open tree and that the Fraser fir has a natural conical shape; that sounds more our style. It will be fun to watch them grow.

In other woody news, we are still working on pre-commercial thinning of the stand of Douglas-fir planted in 2002. All the double tops and suppressed trees are coming out; I'm guessing about one-tenth of the trees. We're developing a nice stack of stems for firewood and the stand is looking good.



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***“Planning is bringing
the future into the
present so that you can
do something about it
now”***

Alan Lakein, author

Wind Speed – Do All Trees Break At The Same Speed?

Whether it's a slender poplar, a gnarled bristlecone pine, or a sturdy oak, wildly different trees have one thing in common: Their branches tend to snap when lashed by winds of a certain speed, new research suggests, says Tia Ghose, senior writer of *Live Science* (February 5, 2016).

It turns out that many of the trees' characteristics, such as wood softness or size, tend to counteract each other, the researchers found. While a bigger tree has a more robust trunk to withstand wind forces, "a high tree undergoes larger aerodynamic forces due to its larger exposure to the wind and it has statistically bigger defects and thus a higher chance to break." The pros and cons of bigger and smaller trees tend to nearly cancel each other out, the researchers found.

In January 2009, wide swaths of France experienced the wrath of a huge storm called "Klaus," which uprooted nearly 210 million cubic feet (6 million cubic meters) of wood. Researchers mapping tree damage noticed that the top wind speed in an area correlated strongly with how many trees were broken — whether they were uprooted or snapped like matchsticks. Interestingly, both hardwood trees, such as oaks, and softwood pine trees, seemed to be equally affected.

Emmanuel Virot, a doctoral candidate in mechanics at the École Polytechnique in Paris, and his colleagues wondered why harder trees didn't fare better. They tested different woods for their flexibility, and found such differences that they wondered if stresses in the wood were a major factor. They realized trees would inevitably have knots, cracks, and other types of imperfections. So they referred to other work, which showed that in large enough hunks of material, the number of imperfections in that material rises with the square root of the material diameter. Next, they wanted to see how a uniform wind speed, which hits all parts of a tree trunk equally, would affect their calculations. When they crunched their numbers, they found that the critical wind speed needed to snap a tree was a factor of the wood strength, air density, tree shape and tree diameter and length.

Interestingly, however, all these factors only had a slight effect on the critical wind speed, and tended to cancel each other out. For instance, trees with bigger, heftier trunks tend to have more internal flaws and also have more surface area exposed to the wind.

The end result was that most trees tended to snap when winds reached about 94 miles per hour.

Mike Cafferata..... continued from page 1

Growth and Yield – Thinning

Mike pointed out that questions had come to him about his comments on thinning young stands at an earlier WCSWA meeting, specifically about the difference in results between thinning and not thinning. He wanted to clarify this point, since it may be a key consideration in a forest owner's decisions on thinning. He gave an example from his own family's tree farm thinning experience.

The Cafferata family thinned a portion of a 23 year old plantation which had 750 trees per acre. They thinned it down to 270 trees per acre. The thinning harvest volume at the time was "break-even" on cost versus return. However, Mike pointed out that from a broader perspective there was a "plus" for the community in terms of jobs and economy. The Cafferata family used the Organon growth and yield model, available to the public from Oregon State University, to predict harvest volumes from the stand. Looking out 22 years into the future, at age 45, the stand was predicted to have roughly the same standing volume whether it was thinned or not. The volume per tree was greater in the thinned portion of the stand – which may yield a higher per acre recovery. This makes sense silviculturally; the stand is predicted to fully occupy the site in both scenarios and so can grow roughly the same amount of wood, it is just distributed differently.

Target Shooting

Target shooting on the Tillamook State Forest and in the local area is a very popular activity. However, there are some downsides to consider, especially when the activity occurs during periods of high fire risk. Mike described some recent fires, the hazard conditions that went with the fires, and the cost to control the fires. Mike said that the cost from target shooting caused fires amounted to \$500,000 last year. Target shooting of regular rifle or hand gun bullets can spark fires when fine fuels are in the 5 to 8% fuel moisture. Tracer rounds and exploding targets are also the cause of fire starts, but most people recognize this. Two examples of hazardous fire conditions when these target shooting fires occurred from standard bullets were:

Wolf Creek – a dry day, with south-facing slopes and 1 hour fuels (fine fuels - small twigs, leaves, needles) at 5-6% moisture content, and 1000 hour fuels (logs, large limbs and other fuels) at 16% moisture content.

Rock Creek – 1 hour fuels at 8% and 1000 hour fuels at 13%.

Mike pointed out that these conditions can occur any time during fire season, particularly in dry summers like we've had the last 2 years. Research is showing what is causing these fires. It is when bullets fragment on impact, dropping bits of super-heated metal onto receptive fuel beds. Bullets with steel and copper hitting steel targets or rock are most likely to start fires in this way. (Mike described this as the transformation of kinetic energy to thermal energy!).

The Oregon Department of Forestry plans to take several steps to reduce both the hazard (fuels) and risk (opportunity) of fires from target shooting by "fireproofing" popular target shooting sites on the State Forests. They plan to remove fuels from the areas (stumps, fine fuels, other flammable material), and develop earth backstops. They also plan to continue their full-court press efforts to educate shooters about the hazards. His talk was part of this effort and it is our jobs to spread the message!

The rest of Mike's presentation dealt with the Salmonberry Trail progress, and the current status of riparian rule changes approved by the Board of Forestry last fall.

Salmonberry Trail

Activities and planning for the proposed Salmonberry Trail have increased over the past year since Mike last gave us an update. Interested agencies, organizations, and individuals that form the Salmonberry Coalition continue to support the planning and actions needed to make the Trail a reality. A master plan has been prepared and finalized

Continued on next page

showing the vision of what the trail could become. Because coordinating among all the parties involved is complex and requires definitive leadership, a new agency called the Salmonberry Trail Agency has been formed to manage the process. A capital campaign has been initiated to generate funds for the effort and a consultant retained to help develop and execute a capital campaign. A project manager, Dennis Wiley (State Parks and Recreation) has been hired to be the project manager.

A concurrent step to fundraising is the issue of ownership. A concept called “rail banking” will be used to transfer the corridor from rail use to trail use, while retaining a placeholder for future use of the old railroad right-of-way as a railway again. Another issue (raised by a question from the audience) is how the existing old culverts along the rail line will be maintained, and possibly modified for fish passage. This site by site work and improvement will come later, during trail development. Improving the environment is part of the project goals, and Mike hopes each of these sites can be addressed. Mike said the official position right now is “the Salmonberry Trail is not a currently accessible or active trail system” so please wait for it to be open before exploring this corridor.

Riparian Rule

The decision to revise the Forest Practices Act rule for water protection on small streams, made by the Board of Forestry last November, is based on an Oregon Department of Forestry research project called “Rip Stream”. In this study 33 sites, 18 on private land and 15 on state forest land, containing medium and small fish-bearing streams, were monitored before and after timber harvest. On private land, Forest Practices Act rules were followed. On State lands, their management plans (which exceed FPA requirements) were followed. The effectiveness of the FPA rules and State plans were evaluated for water temperatures. Two standards were used to measure effectiveness:

- 1) Bio-based numeric – 30 of the 33 sites met the criteria of staying below the 16 to 18 degree Centigrade thresholds.
- 2) PCW (Protecting Cold Water – limit temperature increase to no more than .3 degrees Centigrade) – State Forest sites met the criterion, and on private sites, there was a 40% chance of exceeding this criteria.

A downstream analysis was also conducted, finding that there is little effect of any temperature change 300 meters downstream of harvest site.

Considering these analyses, public review and comment, and modeling of effects, ODF prepared draft rules for the Board of Forestry to consider. A decision on basic rule changes was made at the November Board of Forestry meeting. This decision must now be developed into actual rules. An advisory committee of interested agency and private representatives will work with ODF to prepare the rules. OSWA is on this committee. The schedule for actual final rule calls for implementation in early 2018.

Do Trees Have A Social Network?

Presenting scientific research and his own observations in highly anthropomorphic terms, Peter Wohlleben, a career German forester, has delighted readers and talk-show audiences alike with the news — long known to biologists — that trees in the forest are social beings. They can count, learn and remember; nurse sick neighbors; warn each other of danger by sending electrical signals across a fungal network known as the “Wood Wide Web”; and, for reasons unknown, keep the ancient stumps of long-felled companions alive for centuries by feeding them a sugar solution through their roots. Wohlleben found that, in nature, trees operate less like individuals and more as communal beings. Working together in networks and sharing resources, they increase their resistance. By artificially spacing out trees, the plantation forests that make up most of Germany’s woods ensure that trees get more sunlight and grow faster. But, naturalists say, creating too much space between trees can disconnect them from their networks, stymieing some of their inborn resilience mechanisms.

By Sally McGrane, New York Times, January 29, 2016



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Many thanks!



Thanks to a generous donation from the Washington County Small Woodlands Association, we were able to purchase rain ponchos, additional forestry supplies and translate education materials into Spanish. This helps us continue to connect school children with Oregon's forests.

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The care of the earth is our most ancient and worthy and, after all, our most pleasing responsibility. To cherish what remains of it, and to foster its renewal, is our only legitimate hope.

Wendell Berry, *The Art of the Commonplace: The Agrarian Essays*

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Family forestland owners Dale Cuyler and Brenda Woodard.

Randy Bays – A Life Well Lived and a Family and Tree Legacy Left

Randy Bays, well-known and respected Washington County small woodland owner, passed away on January 31st. Randy was 93 years old. Randy and his son Jim made important contributions to the small woodland community over the years. Randy was president of WCSWA in the early 1990's, and was Washington County Tree Farmer of the Year in 1992. Randy was a mentor to many small woodland owners (as he himself was mentored early on by his friend Barney Douglas, well-known Christmas tree expert and advocate).

Randy and his wife Anna purchased a 160 acre forest on Green Mountain, and then a 70 acre forest near Banks, on which they built a residence and raised their family. They also grew Christmas trees and fruit here. Many local folks look forward to the fine peaches, nectarines, and apples trees they raised! Jim will continue the Bays tradition.

Randy will be greatly missed by his many friends in the woodland community.



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Forest Health Conference – A Wealth of Knowledge and Experience *by Tom Nygren*

I was fortunate to be able to attend the recent Forest Health Conference held at Oregon State University on February 16th and 17th. This conference brought together the top forest health experts in the Pacific Northwest to present the results of current research, experience, and on-going on-the-ground surveys of the factors affecting forest health in Oregon and Washington. The conference was comprehensive and covered ***insect, disease, weather and climate, wildlife, and fire agents.***

Following individual presentations on each of the health factors, the conference turned toward the concepts of ***resiliency, biodiversity, and barriers to overcome.*** Some thoughts to ponder:

- Resiliency concept originated in the 17th century, but applied to wood as a material, not forests
- Resiliency defined (Aney) – Creating conditions that work well, but of what? For who? When?
 - a. Resilient landscapes
 - b. Fire-adapted communities
- When is a tree dead? Lots of different opinions – from the point of attack (when tree death is certain), to the actual initiation of decay. This makes a big difference for salvage operations, legal implications (to salvage trees after fire particularly)

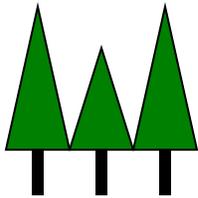
Over the next few issues, I will be summarizing some of the information presented. The conference presentations will be posted online in the near future, and I will put the link in the Forest Forum. The Oregon Department of Forestry also publishes "Forest Health Highlights in Oregon", which summarizes the most recent damage and trends for insects, disease, invasive species, weather, and wildlife. The last edition was for 2014, and was published in March, 2015.

Quotable Quote (from Bill Aney): "Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forward" – Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855)

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Forest Forum



COUNTY CHAPTER OF THE
OREGON SMALL WOODLANDS
ASSOCIATION

Potpourri

New Members: Welcome to new members **Carol and Norbert Le Page** of Forest Grove, **Leland Samuelson** of Hillsboro, and **Eric & Marilyn Thomas** of Newberg. 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.

Thanks to our friends! **Lon and Laura Rankin** of Lebanon - we appreciate your thoughtfulness and contribution!

Drought Effects: Forests across the United States are feeling the heat from increasing drought and climate change, according to a study by scientists from 14 research institutions. While the effects have been most pronounced in the West, the team found virtually all US forests are now experiencing some degree of change and are vulnerable to future declines. A new publication, **“Effects of Drought on Forests and Rangelands in the United States: A Comprehensive Science Synthesis”**, resulted from their study. This science synthesis from the US Forest Service characterizes droughts, details drought impacts on forest processes and disturbances such as insect outbreaks and wildfire, and projects consequences of drought for forest values. The link to this publication online is:
http://www.fs.fed.us/sites/default/files/DROUGHT_book-web-1-11-16.pdf

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>