

# Northwest Woodlands

A Publication of the Oregon Small Woodlands, Washington Farm Forestry, Idaho Forest Owners & Montana Forest Owners Associations

## WOODLAND OWNERS OF THE WEST

**Thinking on a Landscape-Scale**

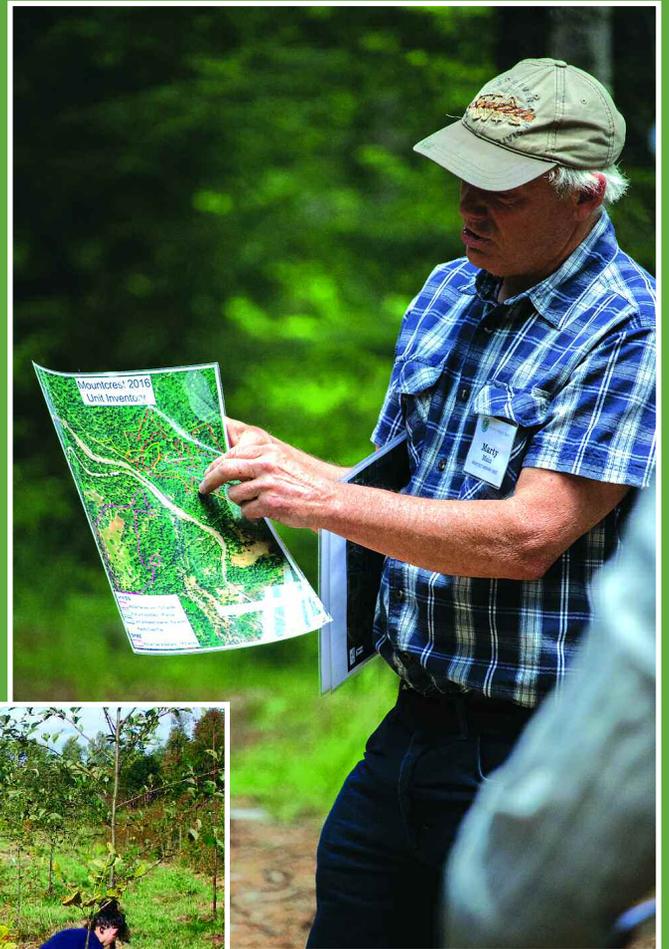
**Riparian Forest Restoration**

**Big Sky Wind Drinkers**

**Who Will Own the Forests in Idaho?**

**The Mountcrest Conservation Easement**

**Managing Patchwork Ownership**



**NEXT ISSUE . . .  
Policy and  
Legislation**

This magazine is a benefit of membership in your family forestry association. Contact the officers listed on page 5 for membership details.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Fall 2018

## FEATURES

8

### GOOD NEIGHBORS WORKING ACROSS FENCES TO SOLVE LANDSCAPE-SCALE PROBLEMS

*This study is examining how and why family forestland owners are engaging in coordinated forest management activities. The goal of the study has been to inform policy efforts that encourage “all-lands” approaches to reducing wildfire risk, pests and diseases, and other forest health problems.*

BY PAIGE FISCHER

12

### RESTORATION IN A PASTURED FLOODPLAIN

*Woodland owners often go to great lengths to restore riparian areas on their property. In this example, the Henriksons partnered with the Conservation Reserve Program to create high-quality salmon-rearing habitat with trees for shade and other beneficial attributes.*

BY JOHN HENRIKSON

14

### TOUR DE CRITTERS

*A Montana family forestland owner promotes natural resource and forest management education through running and hiking events on the property for organizations like Big Sky Wind Drinkers and the Bozeman Track Club.*

BY FRANKLIN COLES

17

### IDAHO FAMILY FORESTLAND OWNER BEHAVIORS

*What are the potential impacts of anticipated changes in ownership of forestland in Idaho? This survey found a potential for many family forests to change ownership in the next five years.*

BY DR. DENNIS BECKER AND PHILIP COOK

20

### FAMILY CONSERVATION OF A WELL-MANAGED FOREST

*This collaboration among private landowners, public agencies and nonprofit organizations resulted in a conservation easement on The Mountcrest Forest. Active forest management with a focus on wildlife and watersheds made this a workable arrangement for the landowner.*

BY CONNIE BEST

24

### FOREST MANAGEMENT IN THE CENTRAL CASCADES CHECKERBOARD

*The Nature Conservancy will manage for long-term forest health in the Central Cascades Forest. Selective harvest and thinning, planting, brush control and habitat improvement will be implemented in collaboration with tribal, public agency and community partners.*

BY KYLE SMITH

## DEPARTMENTS

### 3 PRESIDENTS' MESSAGES

### 7 DOWN ON THE TREE FARM

### 28 TREESMARTS

### 30 TREEMAN TIPS

### ON THE COVER:



*Planning, working or playing, forestland owners are providing benefits not only to the forest, but their families, communities and watersheds. Rebecca Kenney and Heather Emerson on annual maintenance chores, Marty Main planning for Mountcrest Forest. Photos courtesy: John Henrikson and Pacific Forest Trust.*

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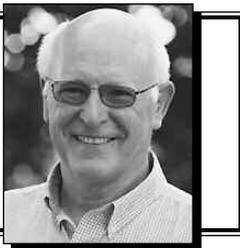
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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



MIKE BARSOTTI



# Woodland Owners are Special People

**T**he theme “Woodland Owners of the West” is a great one to discuss as I begin my 2-year term as OSWA’s president. I became a woodland owner just 17 years ago when my wife and I purchased 20 acres of trees in the Cascade foothills. I’m a retired forester who worked 32 years for the Oregon Department of Forestry. For most of that time I was focused on family forestland owners and their issues, first in the field and then at ODF headquarters in Salem.

For me, woodland owners are special people. I don’t know if caring for a forest makes one a far-sighted, other-centered person, or if this type of person is naturally drawn to stewarding trees. Whichever it is, I had to become one.

There are just over 140,000 woodland owners in Oregon and, as in the rest of the U.S., they come from all walks of life. Some inherit their property, some buy it and some create it. Their careers cross the full spectrum found in the country. Annual income is also extremely varied. But even with all this being true, I’ve found that the clear majority have one thing in common: they love the land and want to leave it better than they found it.

Most of us are not poets, but one was: Bob Mealey wrote about why he plants trees. If you don’t already have it, Google “When You’re So Old” by Robert Mealey. It says a lot about Bob, but also a lot about woodland owners. Bob was a forester with the U.S. Forest Service, owned land in Linn County and spent his retirement

years nurturing his forest and the woodland owners of the Willamette Valley.

It’s a challenge to “leave the land better than you found it” and the meaning keeps changing. We know more about it than we did in the past and I’m sure we will know more in the future. I think for many of us, constantly learning is part of the joy

in managing forestland. While the goal is constant, what it means is ever-changing. There sure is a lot more to it today than I learned in college at Oregon State University back in the 1970s.

A current challenge for me is providing songbird habitat in this year’s clearcut. How am I going to keep competing vegetation out of next winter’s tree planting, control my major invasive species—scotch broom and Himalayan blackberries—and leave native shrubs, such as hazel, vine maple, ocean spray, serviceberry and salal for songbird nesting and a food source? This is a challenge for sure, but an exciting one.

We each have something about our trees that excites us and sharing it with other woodland owners make us all richer in so many ways. It’s great to be a woodland owner. ■

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Montana

MIKE CHRISTIANSON



# We Value Our Trees

It seems impossible to stereotype a woodland owner of the West.

Each owner has his or her unique interests and goals for his or her woodland. The goal may be holding onto the land and one day building a house or cabin to retire. Others may have no plans for property that they inherited. Others may plan to log the land for profit or maintain the woodland for wildlife, whether it be hunting or viewing. Yet, others may wish to merely live on and enjoy the land.

Most owners do however seem to

have one thing in common: they value their trees and do not want anything to happen to them. One might call them possessive of such a valuable commodity. Some, with no silviculture experience say, "Do not touch my trees—I like them just the way they are and want nothing to happen to them." Others with catastrophic fires on their mind decide to remove the deadfall, particularly in the defensible space. Others with more silvicultural experience remove live trees for the sake of the whole forest.

Some woodland owners open their forests to others for special events, such as you will see in an article by Bozeman's Franklin Coles in this issue. For years he has sponsored events to benefit the community. Some owners sponsor a Walk in the Woods during Montana's Forest Products Week (October 21-27, 2018) and invite school children or the community. The good news is that we can share our enjoyment and hard work with others who may not have a forest of their own, and other forest owners can get ideas for their recently acquired forests.

Individual forest owners are from all walks of life—each has a unique and different life experience and views the world from his or her own perspective. Yet, they have one thing in common—they value their trees. Value means different things to different owners, but in the end, it means they want their trees preserved and protected for their unique goals.

It falls upon each of us woodland owners to respect the fact that each owner has his or her unique perspective which may very well not coincide with ours. We must do our best to understand and respect that our woodland neighbor may appear the opposite of us but deep down that owner deserves and merits the respect of his or her own values. A possible place to start working with others might be to remind ourselves that our neighbor values his or her property just as much as we value our own. Value is in the eye of the beholder. ■

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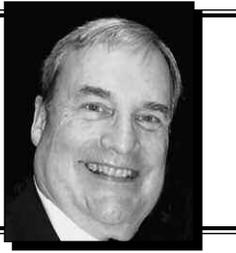
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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

 *Washington*

VIC MUSSELMAN



# Definition of a Washington Small Forest Owner

The Washington Department of Revenue defines a small forest ownership for ad valorem tax purposes as one contiguous property at least 5 acres in size. The Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) defines a small forest landowner as one who harvests no more than two million board feet annually, averaged over a 10-year period. In Washington, there are a total of 215,000 small forest ownerships of 2.5 acres or more in size. There are only 55,000 small tree farms that are 20 acres or larger. The average size of all tree farms 5 acres and larger in the state is 37 acres.

Roughly 20 percent of all small forest ownerships in Washington are actively managed for timber production or other economic return. About 10 percent are passively managed, that is cutting timber when necessary to meet the ownership goals set by the landowner, but which do not generate a steady forest products income. The remaining 70 percent own their tree farm for various forest amenities, such as enjoying the aesthetics of living or recreating in the forest, protecting wildlife or protecting water resources.

In general, small forest owners are subject to the most regulation of their forest practices than any other region in the nation. In fact, Washington is the second in most-regulated forest practices. Fortunately, when the legislature passed the Forest and Fish Act in 1999, to ratchet up forest regulation to protect salmon habitat, they recognized that small forest landowners

would be disproportionately impacted. Accordingly, the legislation directed that a Small Forest Landowner Office be created under the WDNR to help small forest owners cope with the increased regulation through the use of alternate management plans and harvest restrictions for small harvest units that would have a relatively low impact on aquatic resources. The legislature also directed that the WDNR establish and maintain a voluntary "Forestry Riparian Easement Program" to buy standing timber required to be set aside in riparian buffers.

Over the subsequent 20 years, the Washington Forest Practices Board continued to adopt new rules that have resulted in what we forest owners call "regulation creep." Being a small forest owner in Washington means not only diligently looking out for threats to his or her forest from sources like fire, insects and wind, but also keeping an eye on what the state government is doing that will impact their ability to manage their land. ■

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



DAVID A. EASLEY



# The Diversity of Woodland Owners

**T**he woodland owners of the West take on a variety of forms. I feel that these owners are, for the most part, everyday people who want to keep forests growing and thriving. Woodland owners are divided into four basic groups. First of these four groups includes the long-term woodland owners, who have been tending woodlands for years. The second group are the people who would like to own woodlands and are learning how to work with their land. The third group are the land sellers. The fourth group is the government: federal, state or county.

The long-term woodland owners

have been raising and caring for their woodlands for years. This group is made up currently of primarily older individuals who have done this for many years if not their entire lives. These folks are farmers with woodlands, people with woodlands in their family history or people who love their woodlands and this way of life. They usually have known their forester for a long time and, for the most part, have a good working relationship with them. This group is usually the mainstay of the forest owners' associations.

Lumber and paper companies also fall into this first group. The woodland-based industries are also into the long-term use of the forest. This group will harvest, replant and raise trees as an investment towards their continued future. This part of the first group owns large tracts of

woodlands in the West.

The second group includes people who are retiring or just getting out of urban life. This group is usually a little younger and they are not as knowledgeable about woodland care. These folks are learning how to maintain and improve their woodlands and should be making connections with their respective state forestry department, foresters and forest owner association. Most of this group would like to maintain and improve what they have. This group contains most of the small woodland owners who live on or near their woodlands.

The third group are those people/entities who buy and sell land as investors or speculators. These people buy land for short- or long-term investment. This is also where group two may purchase their woodland. The short-term investors usually are developers who subdivide the land and sell quickly. The long-term investors buy the land in speculation that its value will increase. This third group usually does not invest very much time or effort in the woodlands.

Though woodland owners of the West are a very diverse group, most of us would like to keep the woodlands we own in a biodiverse and usable condition. On the other hand, some of us just call it home. ■

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# Down on the Tree Farm

## NOVEMBER

- ✓ Winterize and complete maintenance on your equipment. Clean off mud that can “freeze” moving parts, drain fire hoses and pumps, sharpen your hand tools and store them in a dry place, and check your antifreeze levels. Good tool maintenance pays off!
- ✓ Check your culverts and evaluate your road drainage. Good ditches, waterbars and culverts can prevent washouts, costly repairs and degradation of water quality. Better water quality and habitat mean better fishing!
- ✓ Pruning can reduce fuels, repair storm damage and improve aesthetics, visibility and log quality. Be sure to leave enough live crown to support the tree’s photosynthesis and cut just outside the branch collar to encourage “healing” of the cut.
- ✓ Consult with your accountant to plan your year-end tax moves.
- ✓ Assess wildfire damage to your forestland and make plans for restoration if necessary.
- ✓ Seed bare ground with native grasses to control erosion and invasive species.
- ✓ Burn your slash piles when conditions allow a clean burn and no unintended spreading or smoke intrusion.

## DECEMBER

- ✓ Donate or sell your holiday greens, boughs, mistletoe, cones and trees.
- ✓ Hold a family meeting to review accomplishments and reaffirm your tree farm goals and objectives. Inspect your forest with family and friends. Take a family photo on the property. Watch for evidence of wildlife to encourage your heirs to continue the tradition of good forest management.
- ✓ Refresh your property boundaries and signage.
- ✓ Renew your association membership and plan to attend or organize meetings, tours and classes.
- ✓ Check into membership and certification in the American Tree Farm System.
- ✓ Complete your record-keeping for 2018 and your financial planning for the future.

*Down on the Tree Farm is a compilation of all of the excellent tips contributed to this column by experienced volunteers over the last 16 years. Suggestions are always welcome and may be sent to the editor at: [annewithnww@gmail.com](mailto:annewithnww@gmail.com).*

## JANUARY

- ✓ Plan your 2019 projects, contact consultants, hire contractors and file for necessary permits.
- ✓ If the ground freezes, it could be good timing for your logging operation to reduce soil compaction and risk of fire.
- ✓ Your management plan is a dynamic document. Spend some time updating and refining it with input from your family’s future forest managers.
- ✓ Tree planting can begin in January if snow or frozen soil aren’t present. Pay attention to soil moisture and temperature, seedling source (zone and elevation), quality and species, and proper handling/planting techniques. You’ll be glad you did it right the first time!
- ✓ If your forest is accessible, this is a good time for cruising, road layout, marking property boundaries and establishing continuous inventory plots and photo points so you can see the effect of your hard work over time. Check out the links on this page for excellent publications on doing your own inventory and making your own inventory tools.
- ✓ Monitor nesting activity so you can protect or improve the habitat and avoid disturbing wildlife while they are sensitive.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION...

check out these favorite websites and publications:

- [forestsandfish.com/environmental-protection/road-improvements](http://forestsandfish.com/environmental-protection/road-improvements)
- [cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/eb1984/EB1984.pdf](http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/eb1984/EB1984.pdf) (conifer pruning)
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# Good Neighbors Working Across Fences to Solve Landscape-Scale Problems

By **PAIGE FISCHER**

**O**n a warm spring day, a group of landowners gather together to set fire to the weedy understory of the oak-hickory forest that spans their properties. The landowners are members of an association, “Woody Hills Properties” (a pseudonym to protect researcher-subject confidentiality) that formed to collectively plan and implement restoration activities across their shared landscape, a small drainage in southeast Michigan. With help from a small crew of trained local youths, the landowners conduct a prescribed burn to remove invasive garlic mustard and honeysuckle that are smothering out native species. Their goals are both social and ecological. They aim to protect local biodiversity, engage youth in stewardship, build community and conserve the mosaic of prairies and woodlands that historically



PHOTO COURTESY: JACK GLAAB

*Landowner associations find cooperative prescribed burning to be beneficial on a landscape-scale by sharing resources, expertise and workload.*

defined the area. When the landowners first decided to consider prescribed burning as a management tool, they worked with a non-profit organization to arrange a workshop with a restoration ecologist with expertise in prescribed fire. Some of the landowners

already had experience conducting prescribed burns for agricultural purposes. Together they developed and launched an experimental program of prescribed burning. The group of landowners burns more than 150 acres per year on average and monitors the effects of the burning on native and non-native plant communities. The burning helps build community as well: the landowners often end a burn day with a picnic or celebrate the end of burn season with a barbeque.

Across the country, in northern California, a group of landowners steward forested parcels that used to comprise a single ranch, “Silver Ridge.” Forest fire is the number one risk, as devastating wildfires have affected both the immediate vicinity of their small community and the broader area in the past; however, they are also concerned about weeds and pests. The landowners formed an association, and, with the help of a local nonprofit organization, they

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communicate with each other and sometimes meet to plan their efforts to reduce the risk of forest fires and respond to wildfires when they occur. They share information about the conditions on their properties so they can assess the fire hazard. When necessary, they pool their labor and equipment to help each other clear and thin hazardous vegetation to reduce the collective risk of fire. They also cooperate on the maintenance of a shared roadway to prevent forest fires from moving across the area and to ensure egress in the event of a fire. The landowners rely on local non-profit organizations to support their planning efforts and help secure work crews for larger projects. However, the landowners attribute their success at working together to the close-knit nature of their community. Like the association of landowners in southeast Michigan, they regularly interact through potlucks and other social activities with respect for each other's capacities and limitations as land managers.

Managing ecosystems on the landscape level is important, since many ecological processes and disturbances occur over large spatial extents. It is especially relevant in forests where management challenges are a function of conditions and processes that interact across large geographic areas, such as wildfires, invasive plant incursions, and pest and disease outbreaks. Landscapes often extend across multiple property ownerships, requiring cooperation among property owners for management. Individual forest landowners (i.e., small woodland owners or family forest owners) are particularly important for cooperative landscape management efforts. Their lands have a major impact on the connectivity of forests and many ecological conditions and processes, as they occupy approximately one-third of total forest area nationwide and are interspersed around public lands. However, their parcels are typically quite small—approximately half are 100 acres in size or less—and their

land use goals and approaches are typically multifaceted, both of which can make management by this group inefficient compared to corporate or public landowners. Nevertheless, cooperation has the potential to increase the economy of scale of individual landowners' operations and, potentially, the collective impact of their practices.

Despite the potential ecological and social benefits of cooperating on forest management at the landscape scale, such approaches are uncommon in practice among individual forest landowners. Although individual forestland owners share information and equipment and coordinate within formal organizations, they rarely make and implement integrated management decisions. The lack of cooperation despite potential benefits has prompted substantial research interest in cooperative land management efforts involving individual landowners. However, only a handful of studies have investigated cooperative management that occurs directly between individual forest landowners. As a result, suitable models of cooperation and the factors that enable and constrain cooperation among owners are poorly understood. This knowledge gap may impede policy efforts to foster landscape management and limit scientific understanding of cooperation among individuals in private property rights systems.

To gain a better understanding of how and why individual forest landowners cooperate to solve landscape-scale problems, I worked with two students to study real world examples of cooperation among individual forest landowners in the Upper Midwest and Pacific Northwest. We examined eight cases of communication and coordination among landowners (see Table). We identified common ways that landowners work together to address wildfire, invasive plants and other management challenges that occur on large areas, as well as some of the factors that influence whether and how landowners

cooperate. We characterized how groups of individual forestland owners cooperate on management and the outcomes they associated with cooperating, and we identified factors that influenced cooperation. We investigated whether formal organizations and policies may be needed to facilitate cooperation or if conditions internal to the group of landowners are more important.

In the eight cases we investigated, owners jointly planned and implemented integrated management decisions on their collective forest properties. Joint planning was more common across the cases than joint implementation. Joint planning through informal communication (e.g., discussing management activities at social events, through email and in daily interactions) occurred in all cases. Landowners also engaged in formal communication through organized meetings and announcements to plan forest management together and in cooperative fundraising efforts, such as writing grant proposals to pay for management activities on their lands. Owners implemented management activities together by sharing equipment, jointly hiring crews and participating in work days on each other's properties. "It is definitely a pooled labor idea," said a landowner in the Network of Active Environmental Stewards, "that we could get a lot more done if we weren't working in isolation. It is a lot more fun to do a project with a bunch

*—Continued on next page—*



Case (pseudonym)	General location	Number of landowners	Parcel sizes	Management Focus	Cooperative practices	Context
Woody Hills Properties	Southeast Michigan	10	10-300 acres	Ecological restoration, invasive plant mitigation	Conducted prescribed burning; invasive plant removal; hired crew to assist management activities	Self-organized association of rural landowners within commuting distance from a mid-sized city; properties composed 600 acres in total surrounded by private land in an oak and mixed deciduous woodland ecosystem; owners sought scientific information, support, and fundraising assessments from non-profit organization in nearby city
Blue River Properties	Northern Michigan	26	10 acres	Wildfire risk mitigation	Conducted fuel reduction around structures and along roadways	300-acre rural subdivision surrounded by state land; mixed pine ecosystem near site of 2015 wildfire that burned 9,000 acres and damaged structures; self-organized as a homeowners association and Firewise community and developed Community Wildfire Protection Plan
Network of Active Environmental Stewards	Southeast Wisconsin	80	5-100 acres	Ecological restoration, invasive plant mitigation	Conducted prescribed burning for ecosystem restoration and timber stand improvement	Several dozen properties spread out over multiple counties in an oak woodland ecosystem; self-organized as email network of landowners with prescribed burn training
Perry Lake	Northern Minnesota	12	1-2 acres plus 200 acre common area	Wildfire risk mitigation	Fuel reduction including brush removal and shared use of a chipper	A dozen private parcels with seasonal homes and a collectively owned common area in a remote high-amenity area within fire-prone mixed conifer boreal ecosystem; located near site of a 2007 wildfire that burned 75,000 acres; owners were part of preexisting homeowner association and Firewise community
Riverview Road	Central Washington	65	20-100 acres	Wildfire risk mitigation, ecological restoration	Fuel reduction	Self-organized informally; meet annually and maintain communication through email; sought out cost-share grants for individual; received collective grant; private parcels with year-round residences; ponderosa pine ecosystem; surrounded by federal forestland
Cougar Hills Estates	Central Washington	13	20 acres	Wildfire risk mitigation	Fuel reduction; roadside fuel breaks	Originated as a 269-acre ranch now second homes for recreational use and as retirement homes; ponderosa pine ecosystem; surrounded by federal forestland; sought educational and financial assistance from local nonprofit organization
Windy Creek	Southwest Oregon	12	10-40 acres	Wildfire risk mitigation	Fuel reduction; fuel breaks along national forest boundary	Community in narrow valley with private parcels surrounded by steep, rugged federal forestland; self-organized to influence forest management on federal land; with assistance from local non-profit organization and forestry contractor, focus shifted to private land
Silver Ridge	Northern California	6	20-60 acres	Wildfire risk mitigation, ecological restoration, invasive plant mitigation	Fuel reduction	Six properties occupying 395 acres of land in mixed conifer ecosystem; experienced large wildfires in the 1970s and 1980s; self-organized as an informal group of neighbors; has received assistance from local nonprofit organization

of people and you can get so much more done that it keeps you from getting overwhelmed.”

The landowners in the cases we investigated perceived several beneficial social and ecological outcomes of cooperation. Cooperation provided access to information and opportunities to acquire technical skills and build self-confidence and management capacity, while also reducing the individual physical and financial burden of management. Cooperation also enabled them to treat a larger area than they would have by acting individually. Another landowner in the Network of Active Environmental Stewards explained, “We are able to accomplish a lot [by working as a group]. It gives you a real psychological boost when you go out with a group and get a whole section cleared or a whole area burned.” Landowners also attributed improved ecological conditions, such as greater species abundance and reduced wildfire risk, to cooperative management.

One of the key factors that fostered the emergence and continuity of cooperative management, according to the landowners in our study, was shared concern, especially about risks to their properties and the health of their forests. A landowner in “Silver Ridge” described how risks of invasive plants and wildfire on one property was a risk to all properties, and that this shared concern catalyzed cooperation: “A big fire hazard [or] a noxious weed that can take over a lot of area—we don’t want that to come onto our property, so we are totally willing to help [another landowner] put the time and effort in to get rid of it . . . before it gets too big.” Two other important factors were pre-existing social networks (such as groups of residents who come together for potlucks, to plan community activities, or to form associations) and the high levels of trust that come with such networks.

Access to external expertise and resources through agencies and organizations was also important. In “Perry

Lake,” landowners were motivated to build their management capacity but felt their individual knowledge and skills were inadequate given the risk that wildfire posed: “We all realized that we are in the middle of the forest, and that we are at risk, and we need help; we need support from the outside organizations; we can’t do it ourselves,” a landowner said. Finally, strong local leadership by an individ-

ual or group within the community, particularly a formal organization such as homeowner or road association, was considered important. Often, landowners speculated that they would make more progress if formal organizations existed within the community. For example, a landowner member of “Woody Hill Properties”

—Continued on page 31—



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# Riparian Forest Restoration in a Pastured Floodplain

By **JOHN HENRIKSON**

**G**arrard Creek is a large salmon-bearing tributary of the Chehalis River in southwest Washington state. Wild



Thyme Farm sits astride the creek, less than a mile before its confluence with the river. For most of the past century, this reach of the creek has been free of trees, utilized by cattle grazing up to its banks without fences or buffers. In the mid-1990s, we coordinated with the Chehalis Indian Tribe when they installed fencing on both sides of the creek, 35 feet from

the bank. They also installed “nose pumps” for the cattle to access water without entering the buffer zone and planted native trees in the buffer. Unclear as to our role in the maintenance of the buffer, we did no follow-up tending of the newly planted trees and were rewarded with a mortality rate exceeding 95 percent. Thick brush and reed canarygrass ensured that there would be no easy transition to a forested riparian buffer.

In 2000, we enrolled in a 10-year contract with the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). A detailed plan was drawn up to plant 3,000 trees and shrubs on approximately 6 acres on



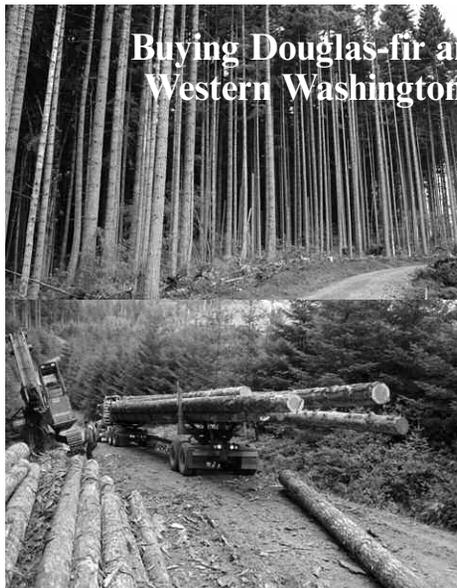
PHOTO COURTESY: JOHN HENRIKSON

*Tractor mowing in the high grass in the early establishment phase. Choking grass and voles would kill most of the trees if not controlled.*

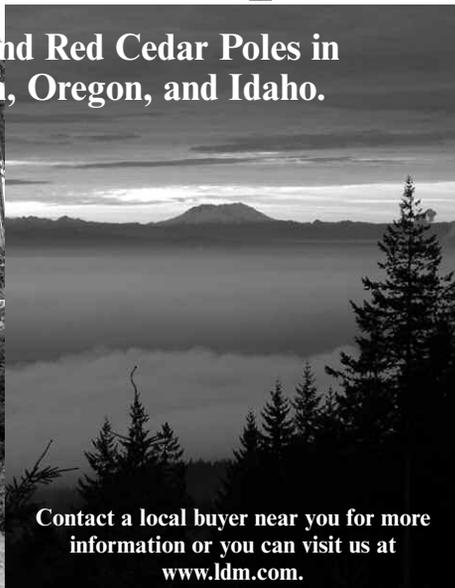
the north side of the creek, nearly all of which was in the flood plain. In the fall of 2000, we hired a Hygro-tiller to drill several thousand planting holes: 3 feet wide, 3 feet deep and 10 feet on center. The Hygro-tiller is an attachment at the end of an excavator arm that breaks the sod and loosens the soil without removing it. The following winter and spring (2001), we enlisted family and friends for repeated work parties to get the trees and shrubs in the ground. Eight plots were defined, containing a mixture of native species in patchy groves. Red alder was the dominant species at around 30 percent, followed by Oregon ash, other hardwoods and conifers.

The first two years passed without incident, as we continued the old pattern of sitting back and watching the trees grow without much intervention. By the third year, it was clear that the resurgent grass was starting to take a heavy toll on our seedlings, and mortality began to increase. Voles discovered new habitat and cover from their predators in the tall grass, and their population exploded as they girdled hundreds of our young trees. The prospect of constantly weed-whacking six acres of thick grass seemed unbear-

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able, and we were not willing to use herbicides at that time. Nevertheless, we were contractually obligated to keep the trees alive and maintain an 80 percent or greater survival rate. NRCS paid in full for the planting costs in addition to an annual \$85 per acre lease fee, and it was our job to ensure success.

A new Kubota tractor with a belly-mounted mower deck was the tool that turned the tide. With up to five times a year and ten hours per mowing session, the ground reappeared and the voles were vanquished. After about five years of intensive mowing, most of the trees were free to grow and the mowing became lighter and more intermittent, ceasing completely by year ten. But by then a much larger rodent had discovered our project and moved in to feast on our trees. “Build it and they will come” speaks to the ideal habitat we created for the flat-tailed beaver and they were here to stay. Hundreds of small trees were felled annually by the beaver, but we noticed that their most preferred targets were “coppice-style” trees that regrow easily, like cottonwood, willow and ash. Our solution was to mass-plant those species to saturate their demand and eighteen years into the project it appears to have worked. Beavers are permanent residents, but their population has stabilized and they take far fewer of the larger trees.



PHOTO COURTESY: JOHN HENNINGSON

*Riparian zone flood and 12-year-old planted stand.*

Flooding of the site is routine during the winter and it appears to have minimal effect on the trees. In the early years, an annual task was to remove flood debris and straighten up small trees that were pushed over by the rushing floodwater. Re-planting dead holes was another annual task to maintain the required stocking levels. Nearly all trees are planted with protective plastic collars and cedar trees are permanently caged against beaver.

Over the years, we have increasingly planted conifers for a longer-term trajectory towards the desired future condition outlined in state forest practice regulations.

Starting with 3,000 seedlings, we estimate that we have ultimately planted twice that to keep up with mortality. The site is now fully stocked, but with fewer trees than originally plant-

*—Continued on page 27—*

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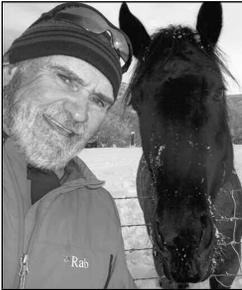


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# Tour de Critters

By **FRANKLIN COLES**

**R**unners ready, take your mark, get set, go... slowly and savor the wildflowers! Usually, these are the commands given to start the annual Tour de Critters for the Big Sky Wind Drinkers (BSWD), a Bozeman, Montana running club, in the family forest of Shelley and Franklin Coles. This was the fourteenth year the run was held. The race is held in early to mid-June, at the height of wildflower season when the hills and valleys are a sea of color with myriad wildflower species dominated by arrowleaf bal-



sam root, lupine, larkspur, shooting stars, prairie smoke and Montana's brilliant state flower, bitterroot. The 2018 run looked like it was going to be an epic year for color as the deep winter snows and late onset of spring compressed the blooming period of these flowers. In late May, the hillsides started to glow with radiance and we speculated that the peak for blooms would coincide with the June 6th run date. Alas, how nature humbles the hopes of man. Five days before the run a devastating wind-driven hail storm destroyed the wildflowers and left untouched only the flowers in the downwind shadow of trees. So, in hills adorned only in varied shades of green, the BSWD runners toed the starting line to the usual starting command: "Ready, Set, Go."

The total of 3.6 miles of trails for

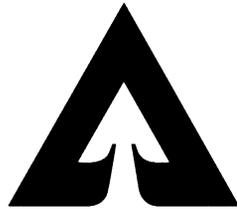


PHOTO COURTESY: ROBERT JOHNSON

*The author has incorporated his passion for running into several recurring events on his forestland near Bozeman, Montana.*

the Tour de Critters and other group events were constructed primarily by hand with a Pulaski, and a Council combination tool. These trails are entirely single track, including switchbacks to the tops of five forested hills and a loop through the less vertical terrain. All course options are on the same trails with cutoffs for those seeking less-challenging routes. Courses include the 1.6-mile "Bobcat Trail" with 400 feet of climb, the 2.4-mile breath-sucking "Wolf Trail" climbing 620 feet and the extremely technical 3.2-mile "Cougar Trail" with 940 feet of climb. Signage helps runners navigate the various routes. For a senior project in a GIS major at Montana State University, a young lady near graduation painstakingly hiked the course with a high-quality GPS. (She wore a leg cast as a result of a skiing accident.) Then, using MSU software, she created a stunning map with color-coding for the routes. The large, weatherproof map is displayed on a tripod at the start of events for participants to study.

The BSWD are not the only group to course the trails on a regular basis, as an objective for our family forest is to share the beauty of our land with others. The Bozeman Track Club (BTC), a developmental running



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group for elementary and middle schoolers, holds their cross-country season opener on the trails. In 2016, Bozeman High School Boys Cross Country Team won the national championships and the next day on the cover of the “Bozeman Chronicle” was a picture of the starting line of that race. Each of the three BHS starters pictured had BTC Tour de Critters trail dust on their shoes.

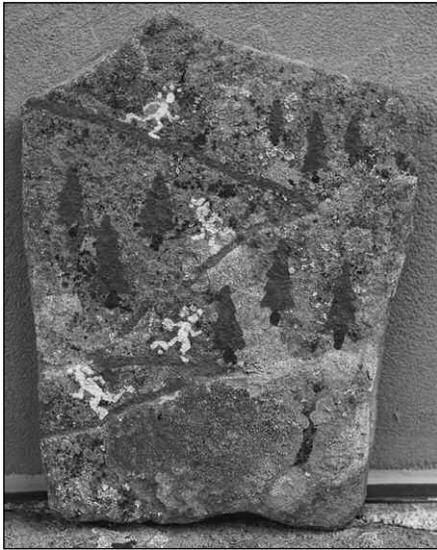


PHOTO COURTESY: FRANKLIN COLES

*Some participants are treated to souvenir “petroglyphs” created by the author.*

Following the track club runs, I raffle off “petroglyphs” that I paint on rocks from the forest, so some participants can take a piece of our forest home. The BTC run is not just for the track club members. Their coaches and families also negotiate the single track. Also running the trails is the adult winter-trail-running group, the Snow on Trails Runners (SNOTRS), who finalize their winter running schedule with a run and BBQ in the forest. In July, we’ll host the “Cousins’ Camp” hike on the trails for hordes of cousins. Parents leave their children with neighborhood grandparents and then disappear to enjoy a child-free vacation week. Before each group event, I preach a brief sermon about sustainable forest management and I inform runners and hikers what to look for regarding our management practices.

Another group traveling the trails

is composed of local adults who are physically or intellectually challenged. Unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate those confined to wheelchairs because of the rugged terrain. The group’s year-round recreational activities are arranged by a local nonprofit organization. We structure activities to suit participants’ abilities, attention spans and interests. Although the primary focus is immersion in nature, we also attempt to educate participants about sustainable forest management practices. We learn to identify several species of conifers, forbs, herbaceous plants and noxious weeds (which we hand dig). We also search for and identify animal tracks and scat. We examine the varied contents of nests in nesting boxes and learn which materials each bird uses.

I preserve cougar tracks for these events by covering the muddy tracks with flat rocks. Also, the group learns to use the trail maintenance hand

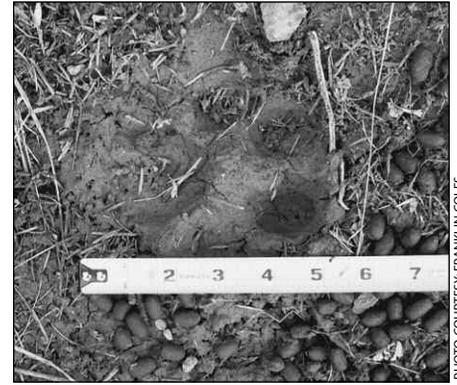


PHOTO COURTESY: FRANKLIN COLES

*Identification of animal tracks and scat is a part of the informal forest management curriculum during the events.*

tools and help maintain the trails. This effort includes building and maintaining rock terracing for single track on steep hillsides. After the trail portion of the event, each participant is awarded an “Assistant Forester Certificate” followed by the obligatory forest picnic.

Community involvement in our

*–Continued on next page–*

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family forest is not limited to the warmer months. After Thanksgiving we begin the Christmas tree harvest. Neighbors and individuals who we catch doing good deeds are invited to hike the snowy trails and harvest trees for their seasonal celebrations. At the summer runs we also raffle off Christmas tree tickets, entitling the recipients to harvest a tree for themselves and friends. Some trees we wish to be removed we flag with engineer's tape. However, we provide the tree hunters with a handout for tree harvesting. Although detailed, the guidelines essentially set parameters for removal of saplings that will be negatively affected by competition with neighboring trees for sunlight and soil moisture. We have found that the tree hunters are respectful of our wishes not to remove trees that are unencumbered by competing neighboring trees. Their actions indicate a degree of ownership. This activity provides those participating with an opportunity to enjoy the forest and learn about effective forest management practices. Plus, those who harvest trees help us thin competing trees and remove the slash. (Similar to how Tom Sawyer got his fence painted.) Also, we encourage repurposing of the trees. We suggest

that the retired Christmas trees be tied to a post outside to provide protection for the birds visiting their feeders.

Our family forest is best characterized as marginal with limited contiguous canopy. The forest has open spaces which provide ideal habitat for wildlife. To extend our marginal forest, we transplant seedlings to establish groves of trees in areas that are treeless. To improve the survival rate, we practice snowpack management by erecting sections of snow fence upwind of the transplant groves. Also, to expand wildlife habitat and involve the community, we construct and give bird-nesting boxes to our neighbors for use on their properties. Included with each gift box is a detailed instruction sheet describing the appropriate location for the box and yearly care directions. We usually give nesting boxes that are designed specifically for bluebirds. The dimensions are suitable for a wide variety of other forest species including tree swallows, chickadees and wrens. If properly located and cared for, the bird houses will provide the neighbors with years of enjoyment and will enhance the population of neighborhood birds.

As hinted at in the last paragraph, not all our efforts of community out-

reach are intended to target humanoids. Considerable effort is expended in outreach to the community of denizens who make the forest worth visiting for those humans not fortunate enough to reside in its midst. Of course, I am referring to our winged and four-legged neighbors who provide us copious joy and entertainment. As Aldo Leopold might have speculated, it is involvement of these neighbors who transform sterile land into fertile country. We strive to create habitat and environments suitable for our most welcomed neighbors. Our forest is ripe with bird boxes and nesting platforms. Snags are cherished in stands of thriving trees, as these remnants of living trees provide the apartment houses for future generations of winged and furry critters. Not all lopped ladder fuels are scattered: some are piled to provide housing for a variety of critters which, considering the dictates of nature, may feed other neighbors. To attract chickadees to our deck feeders, we broke recommended cultural practices of spacing transplants for correct ventilation. The chickadees prefer dense thickets that provide protection from their hungry predators. As soon as we planted transplants to the chickadees' liking, they rewarded us with their presence. Even at a recent community run, we extended our outreach to our furry neighbors. At the start of the event the commands were as follows, "Runners ready. Take your marks. Get set. Wait, don't go. Let the swift fox on the trail cross the field." ■

*Although he has degrees in English, oceanography and hydrology, it was FRANKLIN COLES' running that led him to construct miles of trails through his family forest. As a highly successful and competitive 100-mile Rocky Mountain Ultra Runner, he decided to build the trails on his land so that he would be closer to his training venue. And he enjoys sharing his trails with others. Franklin can be reached at 406-582-4994.*



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# Idaho Family Forestland Owner Behaviors

By **DR. DENNIS BECKER AND PHILIP COOK**

**T**he family forests in Idaho contribute to the state's beauty, ecology, economy and culture. Collectively, family forestland owner decisions enhance or degrade that landscape. Knowing how owners manage their forests, whether they plan to convert them to other uses and how those forests connect to other ownerships is of significant public interest.



Dr. Dennis Becker



Philip Cook

In 2016, the policy analysis group at the University of Idaho surveyed 2,869 owners from the more than 36,000 family forest owners in the state owning 5-5,000 acres. A total of 903 usable survey responses were received. Respondents answered ques-

tions about their reasons for owning forests, their past and intended future management actions and plans for selling or transfer of those lands.

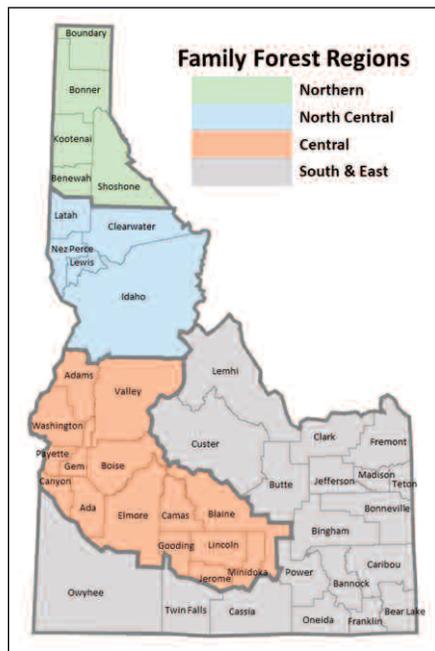
Idaho family forest ownerships average 66 acres, with 34 percent of respondents owning between 5 and 10 acres. Most owners reported living on or within 1 mile of their forestland. The average age of owners was 64 years, with only five percent less than 40 years of age. These survey results are actively informing forestry assistance programs in the different regions of the state and helping to guide private forest investment decisions.

many reasons, our survey results identified beauty or scenery, personal privacy, nature protection and wildlife habitat as the most important reasons in Idaho. Owners in the central and south & east regions indicate higher importance for their forests as a vacation homesite, while owners in the northern region indicate less importance for grazing income. By forest size, owners with the smallest family forests (less than 50 acres) indicate less importance for family heritage and timber products. As acreage increases, owners were more likely to place importance on grazing income and less likely to

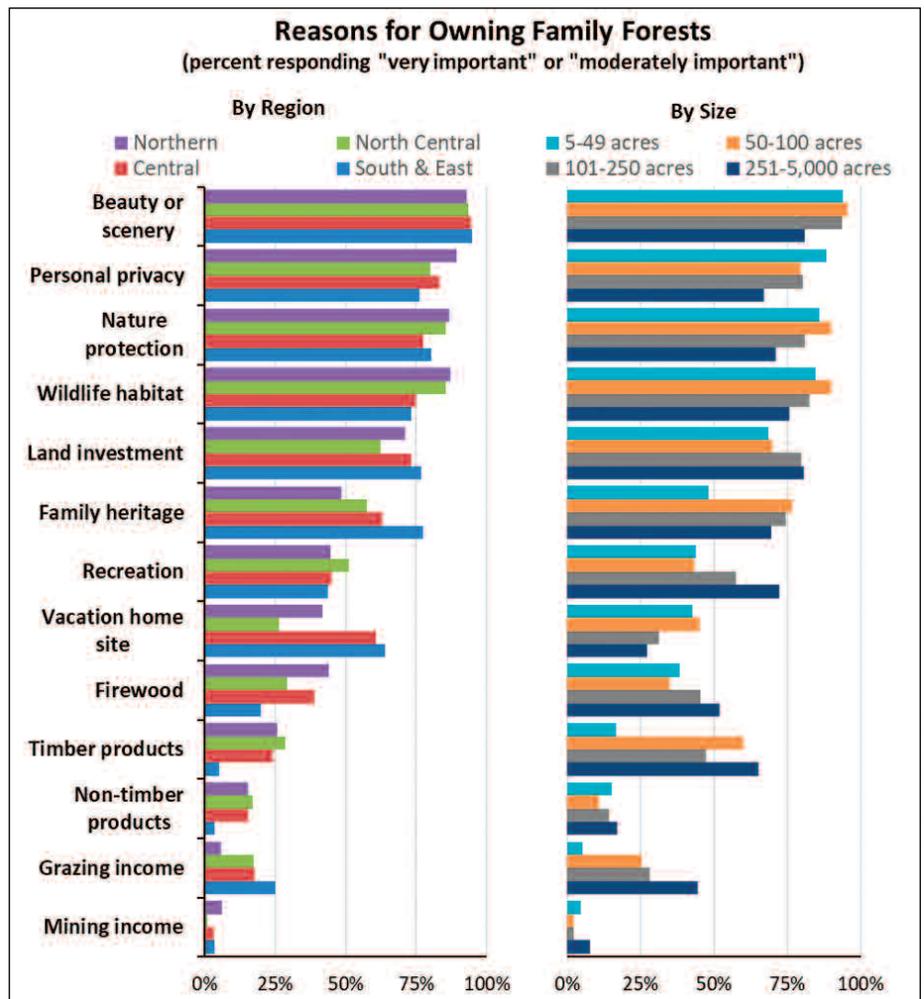
## Reasons for ownership

While families own forests for

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The survey addressed four regions in Idaho and received over 900 responses.



Graphic representation of reasons for owning forestland in Idaho.

place importance on personal privacy. All differences reported are statistically significant.

### Landowner actions

Concern exists that, as land is sold or passed to heirs, the level of activity and investment will change. Less active management could lead to increased fuel buildup and greater wildfire risk, decreased yield taxes from timber harvests for counties



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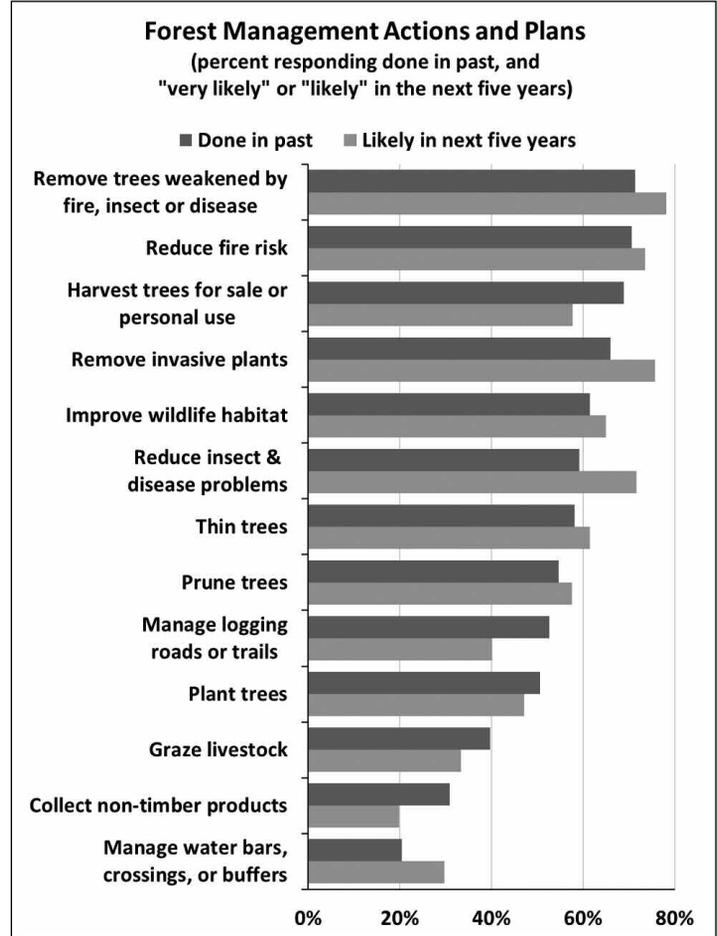
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and conversion of forests to non-forest uses. The survey included several questions about family forest owners' management actions, barriers to action and types of technical assistance needed. We compared this information to forest owner age, whether they lived on or near the property and acreage.

Almost 90 percent of survey respondents reported having undertaken at least one management action on their land.

Overall, one-third of owners reported having commercially harvested timber. On average, they last harvested timber in the early 2000s, with more than one-quarter over 20 years ago. Few harvests took place during the Great Recession, 2007-2011. Owners in the north central region reported harvesting more recently than owners in other regions, and the largest landowners (greater than 250 acres) reported harvesting more recently than smaller owners. Size or age of trees, negative impacts to wildlife and diminished aesthetics



Management activities carried out in Idaho in the past and those planned for the next 5 years.

or appearance were reported as the most limiting factors to commercial harvesting. Other people's opinions and personal opposition to timber harvesting were least limiting.

Other survey findings include:

- Resident owners were more likely to harvest trees for sale or personal use and engage in forest improvement.
- Owners who have commercially harvested timber, removed invasive species or managed water crossings or buffers were on average older than those who had not.
- Owners who have commercially



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harvested timber were more likely to own larger forests (more than 50 acres) and to be in the northern and north central regions of Idaho.

- Family forest owners who have participated in the University of Idaho Extension Forestry Short Course were more likely to have engaged in all forest management actions, except livestock grazing.

When asked about management actions that owners are likely to take in the next 5 years, 91 percent indicated they are likely or very likely to undertake at least one action. Owners with larger forests are more likely to graze livestock, manage logging roads or trails and manage water crossings and buffers. Similarly, resident owners are more likely to reduce wildfire risk, remove invasive plants and reduce insect and disease problems.

### Forest management planning

Twenty-eight percent of family forest owners report having a written plan. More forest owners had plans in the northern and central regions compared to the north central and south & east regions. Notably, 28 percent of management plans are at least 20 years old.

Numerous factors can limit owners' decisions about which management actions to take. Costs were reported as the most limiting, followed by forest health conditions, access to the correct tools or equipment and ability to do the work themselves. Age of landowner was significantly related to certainty about actions to take and the ability

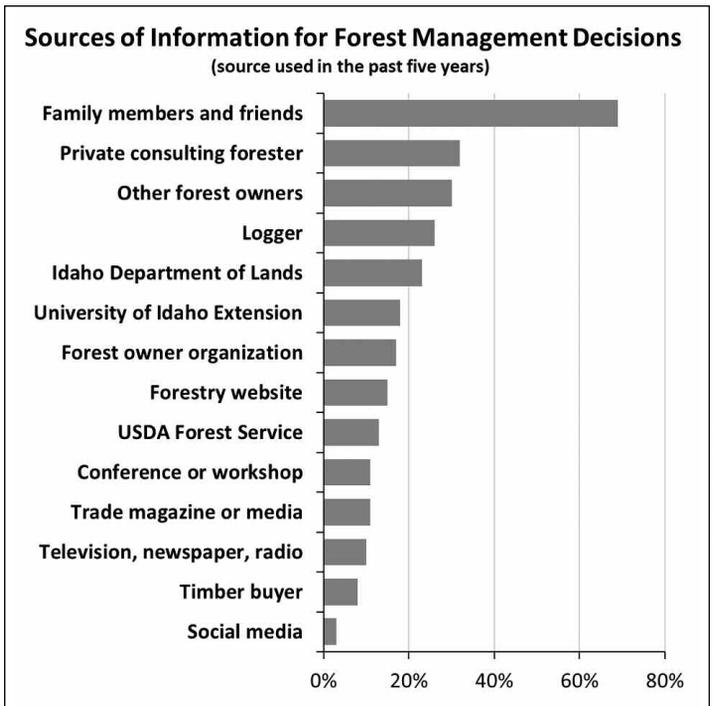
to do work themselves or find the right contractor.

In terms of land transfer, 33 percent of all Idaho family forest acres are owned by someone who plans to sell or bequeath some portion of their forest within the next 5 years. Of those lands, approximately 76 percent will be sold to non-family members. The significant number of expected new

owners suggests that educational programming may need to address inter-generational transfer and focus on audiences with less experience, training and practice managing forests.

### Information sources for forest management

Family forest owners are faced with numerous management decisions. For



Idaho owners are most likely to consult with family and friends when making forest management decisions.

owners, knowing where to obtain information and who to trust are important. Knowing the way owners prefer to receive information can facilitate efficient delivery of forest management assistance.

In this survey, we found that spouses, other family members and

—Continued on page 29—



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# Family Conservation of Well-Managed Forest

By **CONNIE BEST**

**O**n the Siskiyou crest, eight miles south of Ashland, Oregon, the 1771-acre Mountcrest Working Forest has seen



Hudson Bay explorers, train robbers and even a U.S. President. Now, after almost 100 years of ownership by the Parsons family, a permanent conservation easement on Mountcrest lays the groundwork for the next 100 years—for healthy forests, working people and threatened wildlife.

In 2013, the Mountcrest Working Forest was at a crossroad: Would the family sell off the property—managed for wood, water and wildlife for generations—to a company ready to clearcut its well-stocked older forest stands and then subdivide it for vacation homes? Or could Mountcrest be kept as a well-managed working forest providing wood for local mills and habitat for myriad creatures? Jud Parsons, who helped manage the for-



PHOTO COURTESY: PACIFIC FOREST TRUST

*The Mountcrest Forest is well-suited to fulfill multiple resource objectives because of its unique location, diverse habitats and carefully tended forest.*

est for 60 years, was worried because his extended family wanted to move on. He decided to take up the challenge. He formed Mountcrest Forest LLC to buy out his relatives with the help of three other family members—his brother George Parsons, cousin Hugh Brady and sister Alice Petrich’s trust, managed by her son Kevin Tucker. They succeeded but the forest

now needed to help pay for itself. So, Jud turned to the Pacific Forest Trust (PFT) to assist him in realizing his vision for the long-term protection of Mountcrest as a working forest.

“I’ve been on my grandfather’s timberland for a long time and seen the results of both good and bad decisions,” Jud explained. “I was determined to do my best to protect the property from repeat mistakes, and to ensure sound management into the distant future. This could not have been done without the expertise of the Pacific Forest Trust, and the support of my family and our forester, Marty Main.”

What Jud had in mind was selling a “working forest conservation easement” to PFT, a land trust dedicated to conserving private working forests for public benefit. The proceeds could pay down some of the capital costs of the Mountcrest purchase and put the property on course for long-term self-sufficiency.

Conservation easements are binding legal agreements between a landowner “grantor” and a land trust “grantee” that permanently restrict certain land uses to conserve site-specific natural values. A conservation easement designed for a working for-



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est recognizes that well-managed forests can provide public benefits for watersheds, wildlife, scenic beauty, open space and even public recreation, while allowing for wood production that supports local and regional economic well-being.

Thanks to the careful forest management practiced by Jud with his consulting forester, Marty Main of Small Woodland Services, Mountcrest's forestland could produce income from log sales while providing lots of public benefits, including enhancing habitat values for rare and threatened species like the northern spotted owl. We at PFT were happy to help Mountcrest's fine forests stay as productive as possible for all their values, forever.

After five years working with the Mountcrest Forest partners—including investigation of the property's history and natural values, negotiation of suitable easement terms, public outreach and raising grant funds to pay for the easement's independently appraised value—Pacific Forest Trust purchased a working forest conservation easement from the owners in 2017. This conservation easement was unprecedented in Oregon—conserving a large, family-owned working forest for its wildlife and watershed values in partnership with a non-profit land trust, acquired with state and federal funds. The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) led the funders, joined by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation through The Nature Conservancy to protect lands likely to be resilient as climate change impacts grow. As two miles of the Pacific Crest Trail traverse Mountcrest, the Pacific Crest Trail Association provided support. Mountcrest Forest LLC also made a very generous donation of more than a quarter of the value of the \$3.2 million conservation easement, bringing the cash purchase price down to \$2.5 million.

A portion of the easement value can be treated as a charitable tax deduction (gift). If more than 50 percent of an owner's income is derived from agricultural production, he or she may be able to deduct the value of a qualified conservation contribution up to 100 percent of income under IRS rules, with the ability to carry forward unused deductions to future years (see IRS Publications 526 and 561).

Why did Mountcrest Forest gain

such significant public investment in its conservation? It is due to its extraordinary natural qualities that have been carefully nurtured by the Parsons for so long. First, there is its location. At the heart of one of the most biodiverse spots on earth, Mountcrest connects the Klamath-Siskiyou and Cascade mountain ranges, as well as the Rogue River-

—Continued on next page—

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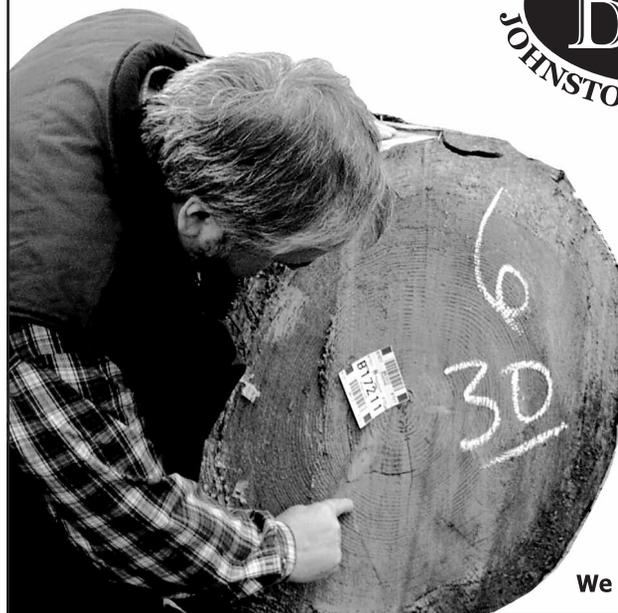
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Siskiyou National Forest and the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, creating a critical land bridge for wildlife on the move. Second, its array of habitats includes not only mature mixed conifer forests, but oak woodlands, a wet meadow, dozens of springs and five creeks that flow into both the Rogue River and Klamath River basins. With so many habitat niches, lots of critters call Mountcrest home, likely among them northern spotted owl, coho salmon and gray wolf—all listed under the Endangered Species Act—as well as dozens more rare or imperiled species such as the Pacific fisher, western pond turtle, great grey owl and northern goshawk. In fact, the combination of such diverse habitats, differences in elevation and aspect, as well as ample water sources, are what make Mountcrest Forest considered a “best bet” among scientists for being resilient in the face of climate change.

The presence nearby of northern

spotted owls turned out to be key to solving the dilemma of how to raise the funds needed to conserve this special place. Mountcrest Forest is situated in a gap between identified critical habitat for the threatened owl on federal lands. The older, denser and more complex conifer stands on Mountcrest are just the sort of places enjoyed by northern spotted owls. PFT’s efforts with OWEB to conserve Mountcrest’s forests and its wildlife-friendly forest management caught the attention of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Agency biologists were struck by the opportunity to help recovery efforts for this well-known threatened bird by working with a private landowner who was voluntarily protecting and enhancing critical habitat values.

Meta Loftsgaarden, Executive Director, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, explained the state’s investment this way: “Oregon’s watersheds and wildlife need the conservation of large landscapes, across

public and private boundaries. As a partner with the Parsons family and Pacific Forest Trust, we applaud the conservation of the Mountcrest Working Forest as a leading example of the contributions excellent forest management make to meeting our strategic goals for thriving fish and wildlife.”

So, in the case of Mountcrest, the northern spotted owl came to the rescue of an imperiled forest. And what a forest it is. The stands consist of a mix of Douglas-fir-dominated mixed conifer, Douglas-fir/white fir/mixed evergreen, true fir and mixed deciduous. Douglas-fir and white fir are the most common species on Mountcrest, comprising about 85 percent of the estimated timber. In general, the property has a much higher proportion of large, older trees than most private timberland in Oregon. Numerous standing dead trees and good volumes of down wood also occur. These, together with larger, limby trees and trees with loose bark and cavities, provide key habitat elements for many wildlife species on Mountcrest.

The terms of the conservation easement include:

- Not allowing the break up or subdivision of Mountcrest into numerous parcels.
- Allowing for only one residence, in a well-accessed area along the county road.
- Permitting grazing to help maintain the health of the meadows, but not allowing agricultural conversion.
- Establishing forested buffers.

These are to be managed for riparian

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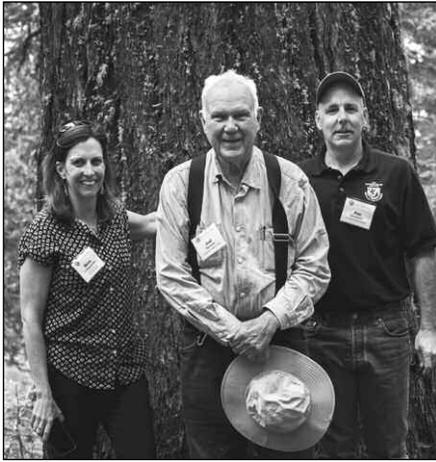


PHOTO COURTESY: PACIFIC FOREST TRUST

**Mountcrest landowner Jud Parsons (center) with representatives of two key public funders of the project, Meta Loftsgaarden of the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (left) and Jim Thraikill of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (right).**

vegetation, including large conifer and hardwood trees in multi-storied stands.

- Preserving water rights.
- Permitting only multi-aged silviculture.
- Allowing up to 25 percent of the volume of standing timber to be harvested per decade to foster an older forest with more big trees.
- Designating special habitat management zones on 317 acres of the property. This includes an oak woodland-meadow area, a white fir glade-wet meadow, aspen groves and certain stands to be managed to restore old growth forest characteristics.
- Establishing a scenic buffer within 100 feet of the Pacific Crest Trail.
- Protecting historic sites from disturbance, including the route of the Siskiyou Trail as well as remains of the cabin where the notorious D'Autremont brothers were said to



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have hidden before their famous train robbery in 1923.

Forest management is the most important use on Mountcrest. The terms of the conservation easement are meant to maintain a healthy, diverse forest with high habitat value and late-seral qualities. Jud and Marty are currently working on fuels management as part of the Ashland Forest All-Lands Restoration Project. They are thinning overstocked stands, reducing ladder fuels and varying spacing among trees to reduce the intensity of a wildfire that is bound to move through Mountcrest someday.

While a significant public investment has been made in assuring Mountcrest Forest can continue to flourish far into the future, the value of the commitment made by its family owners to voluntarily protect the property is priceless and will continue to yield returns to the public for generations to come—from clean, cold water for fish and people, habitats for

furry and feathered creatures, scenic enjoyment for hikers and other travelers along Interstate 5 and logs to provide jobs in the local community. ■

*A conservationist, successful entrepreneur and forest owner, **CONNIE BEST** is a leader in advancing strategies that harness the power of commerce to accomplish conservation objectives. A winner of the EPA Climate Protection Award, she is the principal author of America's Private Forests: Status and Stewardship and "Capital Markets and Sustainable Forestry: Opportunities for Investment." She is a past board member of the American Forest Foundation, the Land Trust Alliance and Ecotrust among others. Prior to founding Pacific Forest Trust, Ms. Best founded and led the company that created America's first all-natural soft drink, Soho Natural Soda (sold to Seagrams), revolutionizing the soda market. Connie can be reached at 415-561-0700 or cbest@pacificforest.org.*

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# Forest Management in the Central Cascades Checkerboard

By **KYLE SMITH**

**T**he Nature Conservancy (TNC) is working in central Washington to restore forests through active management, employing local people in the forest industry and working with the community to ensure community benefit.



The forests that spread across the Cascade Mountains in Washington have supported the region with timber jobs and opportunities for hiking, hunting, fishing and other recreation for more than a century. They provide vital habitat for wildlife, such as elk, bear, mountain goats and wolves, and are the headwaters for the Yakima River, which supports significant salmon and trout populations and sustains the rich agriculture of the Yakima Valley.

But these forests have been frac-

tured, divided up in a checkerboard pattern of ownership that affects the entire West, dating back to the days when President Lincoln gave land grants to the railroad companies to encourage them to develop the West. That has left a legacy of land ownership broken up between private landowners, states and the federal government.

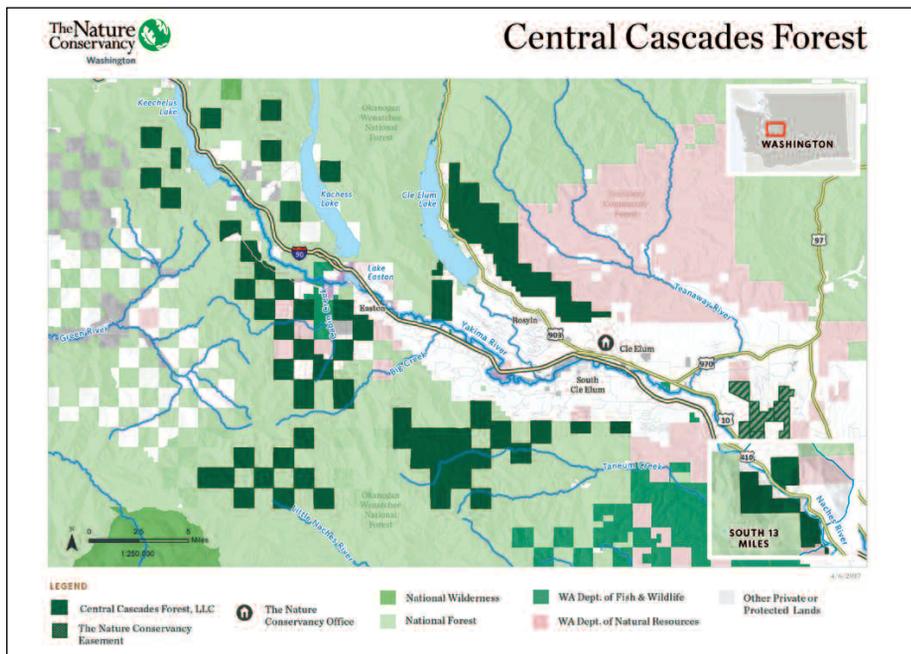
Wildfire suppression, intensive timber harvesting, mining and grazing throughout the 20th century have led to dramatic changes in these forests, contributing to increases in wildfire and insect-and-disease mortality, and amplifying risks to local communities, their water supplies, timber production, wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities. Increasing population growth and desire for recreational property have led to development of residential homes in the woods, making forest management more challenging and straining the resources of local com-

munities to provide services.

In 2014, TNC had an opportunity to pause the threat of development by working with Plum Creek Timber Company to secure about 48,000 acres, in the largest land conservation project ever undertaken by TNC in Washington. This land, now the Central Cascades Forest, was acquired through interim financing provided by private investors. It's scattered section-by-section in a checkerboard pattern amidst federal, state, local and private forests. It stretches north and south of I-90 between Ellensburg and Snoqualmie Pass, and south to Hwy 410 east of Mount Rainier.

TNC is working to restore long-term health and productivity of these forests through active forest management, all guided by the best available science and implemented in collaboration with community partners, tribes and public agencies. The primary goals for the Central Cascades Forest in Washington are to:

- Improve landscape health and resiliency through active management, restoration and stewardship of forest and stream habitats.
- Increase habitat suitability and connectivity for fish and wildlife and improve their ability to respond and adapt to a changing climate.
- Improve the Upper Yakima watershed's ability to store and deliver clean water for fish and wildlife, and downstream municipal and agricultural users.
- Sequester carbon in growing forests and reduce carbon emissions by decreasing the risk of uncharacteristically severe fire.
- Produce income from sustainable forest harvesting to offset costs associated with land management and restoration.
- Support a locally sustainable natural-resource-based economy consisting of forest management and forest products, landscape restoration and diverse recreation industries.
- Improve human well-being in neighboring communities by providing outdoor recreational opportunities that



*President Lincoln gave land grants to railroad companies to encourage them to develop the West, resulting in checkerboard ownerships that complicate many forest treatments.*

PHOTO COURTESY: THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

are consistent with conservation objectives, reducing the risk of uncharacteristically severe fire, and maintaining access to resources that are important for sustaining tribal cultures.

- Earn respect as exemplary land stewards from local communities and resource management partners, while also maintaining Forest Stewardship Council certification and Land Trust Accreditation status.

- Seek permanent ownership and management solutions for the forest that enhance conservation and community values.

As a forester, one of the first things I do when working to understand a property is learn the history, and this property had a long and rich history of logging, mining and grazing. However, the most significant factor affecting these lands are how they entered private ownership and created a checkerboard pattern throughout the West.

In 1864, the U.S. Congress authorized the Northern Pacific Land Grant to facilitate the expansion of the Northern Pacific Railway from Lake Superior to Puget Sound.

Instead of direct funding for the line, Congress granted Northern Pacific every other square mile section in a corridor spanning 10-40 miles on either side of the railroad right-of-way (25,600 acres of land per mile) with the federal government retaining the sections in-between. Ultimately, the land grant transferred 40 million acres in a checkerboard swath from St. Paul to Seattle—two percent of the landmass of the contiguous United States. Over time, these lands became owned by major timber companies, including Plum Creek Timber Company, a subsidiary of Burlington Northern.

Because of this history, and for more than 150 years, vast stretches of western land have been managed in a one square mile checkerboard pattern of public and private ownership. This pattern has many ecological disadvantages when we think about forest management on larger scales—not the least being the difficulty and costs associated with managing a checker-

board landscape.

To address the challenges of the ownership pattern throughout the region, TNC has helped to develop forest collaboratives, including the Tapash Sustainable Forest Collaborative. This collaborative of five agencies and organizations (U.S. Forest Service, Washington Departments of Natural Resources and Fish and Wildlife, The Yakama Nation and TNC) signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in 2007 to work collaboratively across ownership boundaries on 2.3 million acres of forest east of the Cascades in Washington.

Although each landowner has its own mission, through the Tapash Collaborative the members have identified shared goals and areas where they can work together to improve forest health and protect clean water

and wildlife habitat. By working collaboratively, the partnership can manage for greater efficiency and effectiveness in landscape-level restoration and management activities.

The Central Cascades Forest managed by TNC falls entirely within the boundaries of the Tapash Collaborative, which has enabled us to move forward with effective restoration.

TNC's foresters develop on-the-ground harvest prescriptions and restoration treatments that follow the principles of ecological forestry. We use the structure, composition and landscape patterns created by natural disturbances and other forest development processes as guideposts for management. The goal is to restore and sustain core ecological functions while also providing for economic benefits

*—Continued on next page—*



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and other social goods and services.

Active management includes thinning in dense forest stands, logging to create openings and diverse forest structure, prescribed fire and management of forest fuels, planting to build forest diversity, upgrading roads and trails and restoration of stream habitat complexity.

The Central Cascades Forest is managed under a certificate of the Forest Stewardship Council, which ensures that our practices meet an international standard of sustainable forest management.

Under agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service, all forest management will meet the requirements of a federal Habitat Conservation Plan that was originally adopted by Plum Creek Timber Company to conserve and protect a suite of threatened or endangered fish and wildlife species, such as grizzly bears, wolves, northern spotted owls, salmon and bull trout.

### Community emphasis

TNC also recognizes that for this project to succeed it must have the support of the local communities. During the development of the Central Cascades management plan,

TNC hosted multiple community public meetings with more than 300 attendees, presented to more than 35 clubs, groups, committees and associations and worked with local, county, state and congressional government leaders to gather input and local knowledge on the best use of these lands. While our primary goal for the Central Cascades Forest is conservation, TNC has always included community benefit in its planning. We understand the importance that local and regional communities place on these lands for recreation, and the economic importance of recreation for the local communities.

After hearing from the community and stakeholders, we developed a recreation policy on TNC's managed land that includes, but is not limited to, hiking, bird watching, horseback riding, off-road vehicle riding in select areas, mountain biking, skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, dog sledding, and other activities such as hunting, fishing, subsistence gathering, nature and wildlife viewing and spiritual ceremonies. There is no fee for recreation in the Central Cascades Forest, but hazards exist with ongoing logging and land management activities, so recreationists must use caution and enter at their own risk.

A major component of our goal for an economically sustainable forest has been providing local jobs in the forest industry. Our forest management activities employ local logging, road construction and reforestation crews. As of July 2018, TNC has:

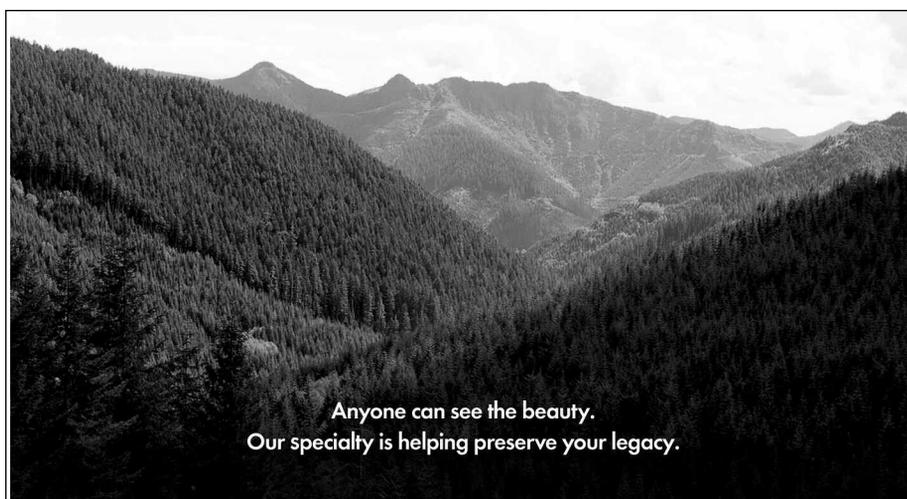
- Planted more than 130,000 trees in burned areas
- Thinned 350 acres
- Delivered 13 loads of logs to the Yakama Nation Tribe for in-stream restoration work on Ahtanum and Toppenish Creeks
- Infused the local economy with about \$2 million through internal jobs, restoration contracts and subcontracts, and donations of Christmas trees to support local charities

### The future

While we can make progress in restoration now, the checkerboard ownership pattern of these forests remains a barrier to successful long-term conservation. Our intent in acquiring the land was that it be placed in permanent conservation status ensuring the benefits to local communities, outdoor enthusiasts and wildlife continue. Our goal has been to identify some mix of public and perhaps private ownership in a pattern that makes sense for conservation and community values, and for landscape-scale restoration, solving the fundamental problem presented by the checkerboard ownership pattern.

TNC continues to work with all who have a stake in the Central Cascades Forest, including federal, state and local agencies, tribes, local residents, conservation partners, businesses and elected officials, to develop a shared vision for the future of this land. ■

*Kyle Smith is the Washington forest manager for The Nature Conservancy, a certified forester with the Society of American Foresters and a member of the Forest Guild. Kyle can be reached at [kyle\\_smith@tnc.org](mailto:kyle_smith@tnc.org).*



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## Riparian Forest Restoration in a Pastured Floodplain

*continued from page 13*

ed due to the wider spacing required by larger trees. Some natural thinning occurred, especially among the species planted between the aggressive red alder. Beaver depredation provides small openings for a shrub layer to develop and is great habitat for birds. After 18 years, the most successful stands now have trees spaced 15-20 feet apart, growing vigorously.



PHOTO COURTESY: JOHN HENRIKSON

*Partners Richard Henrikson (left) and Jack Wight in 10-year-old stand.*

An ecological regime change from grassland to forest (afforestation) is much more difficult to implement than the natural cycle of reforestation after a clearcut. Grasses and their allies, such as voles, actively suppress tree growth so intensive tree care early and often is the key to success. As with conventional forestry, once the trees get established there is not much more to do except for the occasional thinning.

After our CRP contract expired at year ten, we reenrolled in the more extensive Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). Along with initial funding for some replanting closer to the creek amongst the reed canarygrass, the annual lease fee is much higher, at approximately \$300 per acre. When the CREP con-

tract expires in 2020, we will have a fully established forest ecosystem in the riparian zone. Although the termination of our contract with this federal agency technically allows us to mow it all down and return it to pasture, it is unlikely that the state Department of Natural Resources will allow this new forest to be harvested at any time in the future, as it is nearly entirely within the boundaries of the Riparian Management Zone buffer.

The income from the CREP program might be enticing, but the landowner needs to be aware of land use implications at the end of the program.

For more information about our riparian project, please visit this page

on our website: [wildthymefarm.com/ripcrprogram.html](http://wildthymefarm.com/ripcrprogram.html). ■

**JOHN HENRIKSON** is the manager and co-owner of Wild Thyme Farm in Washington, that includes a mixed forest and farm landscape in Oakville and a conservation parcel on Willapa Bay. Wild Thyme Farm specializes in agroforestry, riparian habitat restoration and value-added lumber production. For more information, visit [wildthymefarm.com](http://wildthymefarm.com). John is currently chair of DNR's Small Forest Landowner Office Advisory Committee and co-chair of Washington's Tree Farm Program. John can be reached at 360-701-7656 or [john@wildlogic.com](mailto:john@wildlogic.com).



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# TreeSmarts: Forest Research You Can Use

▲ TreeSmarts: Forest Research You Can Use appears in every other issue of Northwest Woodlands. Column editor Ed Styskel reviews research being conducted from a host of sources, sorts through the items of interest to family forest owners, and provides a short summary of the pertinent results in understandable language. If you have a suggestion to share with Ed, please contact him directly at [edstyskel@gmail.com](mailto:edstyskel@gmail.com).

▲ **Should I Stay or Should I Go Now? Or Should I Wait and See? Influences on Wildfire Evacuation Decisions**, authored by S. McCaffrey, R. Wilson, and A. Konar. 2017. Risk Analysis (DOI: 10.1111/risa.12944). Accessed on May 6, 2018 at [www.fs.usda.gov/treesearch/pubs/55590](http://www.fs.usda.gov/treesearch/pubs/55590). 15 pgs.

▲ The biggest risk to public safety in wildfire-prone forests occurs during last-minute evacuations. Waiting too long to evacuate increases the possibility of being overrun by the flame front, hindered by thick smoke or stranded by foregone escape routes. To understand factors that influence different evacuation decisions, researchers surveyed homeowners in Chelan County, Washington and two other U.S. areas that recently experienced wildfire.

▲ Persons inclined to evacuate

believe in the effectiveness of evacuation. Persons inclined to stay and defend have a higher tolerance for risk and believe they know how to prepare their property for wildfire. Persons who wait and see are not wholly committed to one course of action and wait to see whether to stick with their initial inclination. This wait and see group has the largest number of individuals.

Risk attitudes (likelihood of engaging in risky behavior) may be as important as risk perception (likelihood of negative impacts) in understanding the different choices.

All persons are somewhat influenced by official cues (evacuation notices encouraging preparation, mandatory orders for action and in-person pleas from law or fire officials). Those inclined to leave early pay primary attention to cues from officials. Social cues (family or friends recommending evacuation, or neighbors seen leaving) are moderately important factors.

For persons who wait and see, the following physical cues are very important: (1) seeing flames approach; fire within a mile of home; (2) seeing embers near or on property; (3) smoke too dense for visibility; and (4) wind blowing fire toward their location.

The wait and see group might benefit the most from a better understanding of: (1) how to appropriately assess physical cues (e.g., how fast a fire can travel); (2) the challenges of making an accurate assessment; (3) under what conditions such cues may reasonably inform a choice; and (4) how to stay and defend safely.

**Use of Created Snags by Cavity-Nesting Birds Across 25 Years**, authored by A.M. Barry, J.C. Hagar, and J.W. Rivers. 2018. J. of Wildlife Management: DOI: 10.1002/jwmg.21489. 9 pgs.

Intentional snag creation is often used in managed forests to mitigate the long-term declines of naturally created snags and biodiversity. At Oregon State University's McDonald-Dunn Research Forest, researchers studied how timber harvest treatments (small-patch group selection, 2-story and clearcut) and snag configuration (scattered versus clustered) influenced nesting in and foraging on 25 to 27-year-old Douglas-fir snags by cavity-nesting birds.

At the time of timber harvests in 1989-1991, snags were created by chainsaw-topping live trees at an average height of 56 feet (minimum 50 feet). The created snags averaged 30 inches DBH (range 13-78 inches) and density of 9.4 per acre. During breeding-season observation periods in 2015-2016, researchers recorded nesting, foraging, perching, calling and singing activities of cavity-nesting birds using those snags and compared them to data from 1996 and 2001.

The period of greatest use occurred within 5-15 years after snag creation. Nine cavity-nesting species of birds—including 3 woodpeckers—made a total of 81 nesting attempts in 1996 and 169 attempts in 2001.

Twenty-five years after creation, most created snags were still standing and available for use by cavity-

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nesting birds, but they received limited use for nesting and foraging across all harvest treatments and snag configurations. Snag use by strong excavator bird species (pileated woodpecker, northern flicker, red-breasted sapsucker and hairy woodpecker) declined after 10-12 years and is nearly absent at 25 years (two woodpecker species made one nesting attempt each). This is relevant because woodpeckers drill tree cavities that are subsequently used by many other animals, including species not capable of excavating their own chamber.

Conifer snags created more than 25 years ago are unlikely to meet the needs of most cavity-nesting bird species that inhabit closed-canopy Douglas-fir forests. Nevertheless, created snags are used for foraging and nesting at earlier points in time and do serve as important habitat for cavity-nesting birds during their lifetime. Land managers whose goal is to create snags could consider staggering the time of snag creation within a stand to have a succession of snags that provide a timely and consistent series of food and nesting sites. Taking steps to retain natural snags and live trees with defects that indicate possible decay (e.g., broken tops) may also be important in managed forests, particularly for strong-excavator bird species. ■



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## Idaho Family Forestland Owner Behaviors

*continued from page 19*

friends were the most influential when making decisions. Private consulting foresters, other forest owners, loggers and public agency foresters were important sources, but much less so. Consulting foresters and loggers were used much less in the central and south & east regions of the state, probably because fewer consultants work in those regions.

Approximately 55 percent of family forest acres are owned by someone who has received information from the Idaho Department of Lands, University of Idaho Extension or the U.S. Forest Service. The majority prefer to receive information about forestry programs through the mail, with electronic media such as email, websites, TV or radio much less preferred. Among current owners, social media was the least-used source and the least-preferred method of receiving information.

### Recommendations

Survey findings point to significant changes in family forest ownership and management over the coming decade. Anticipating turnover in ownership and changes in management priorities can help providers forecast tax revenue, plan for wildfire and emergency services, identify investment opportunities and craft landowner assistance programs to match family forest owner needs. To help prioritize actions:

- Build on networks among landowners, their families and neighbors to share experiences. Using only agency foresters to convey information may limit the number of landowners reached and the impact on forest management decisions.
- Design programs that target forest health improvement. Given own-

ers' reasons for owning forests and their past and planned actions, such programs are likely to be successful.

- Traditional communication methods will remain important to effectively reach the intended audience.
- Plan for audiences with less experience managing forests. New forest owners may not have forest management training or practice.
- Over half of family forest owners in Idaho have no written management plan. Those who do have plans developed them on average more than 20 years ago. The reasons vary, but greater financial assistance may have an impact.

See the full report at: [uidaho.edu/-/media/UIdaho-Responsive/Files/cnr/PAG/Research/PAGreport38.ashx](http://uidaho.edu/-/media/UIdaho-Responsive/Files/cnr/PAG/Research/PAGreport38.ashx). ■

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# Tips From The Treeman



Steve Bowers

▲ **DEAR TREEMAN,** Is our wild carrot the same as what I've heard some people call Queen Anne's Lace? I always thought the latter one looked like wild carrot except the lace has the dark spot in the middle that represents a drop of blood when Queen Anne pricked her finger while sewing. —*Weedwoman*

▲ **DEAR WEEDWOMAN,** *Daucus carota*, whose common names include wild carrot, bird's nest, bishop's lace and Queen Anne's lace, is a white-flowering plant in the family Apiaceae, native to Europe and southwest Asia, and naturalized to North America and Australia.

▲ Carrots are a domesticated form of the plant. The modern carrot was developed by Dutch growers in the 16th century. A story of questionable repute states the orange carrot was to honor William of Orange. The wild variety is considered a noxious weed in several states because of its detrimental effects on crops and livestock.

▲ Various names refer to the structure of the flower. Legend has it that Queen Anne, wife of King James I, was challenged to create lace as beautiful as a flower. While making it, she pricked her finger, and the purple-red dot in the center represents a droplet of her blood.

▲ Botanists believe the floret was a

genetic oddity with no utility to the plant. Many modern experts disagree. Some suspect the colored floret tricks predatory insects into thinking that a bug is sitting on the flower, thus enticing them to stop for a meal, thereby aiding in pollination.

Anyone contacting mature seeds will quickly learn man-made Velcro has nothing over Mother Nature. Various weed seeds nicknamed "hitchhikers" stick to clothing and fur, ensuring they will travel far and wide. We could find no definitive listing of wild carrot as a hitchhiker, but it certainly fits the bill.

The flower head is edible cooked or raw. Seeds can be used in soup or to flavor tea (you knew something named after a Brit couldn't escape reference to the ubiquitous consumption of tea.) and when still reasonably tender, roots and leaves are edible. But beware, Queen Anne's lace looks a bit like poisonous hemlock, so don't pull a Socrates.

Identify the Queen Anne's lace flower as one that resembles lace, oftentimes having a solitary purple dot in the center. One major difference in hemlock is that Queen Anne's lace flowers are much tighter, and hemlock is absent the solitary purple flower. The best way to distinguish the two is to smell the root: wild carrot does indeed smell like carrots.

While Queen Anne's lace does not make the top-10 disgusting plants list, it's a nuisance nonetheless. We tend to harbor opinions and prejudices based on personal experience, reason or facts be damned. The personal exploits of the author allow us to identify a top-10 obnoxious plants list. In order of obnoxiousness...

1. Poison oak: Far and away the worstest plant of all time. As a kid, mistakenly identified it as Charmin. Need we say more?

2. Himalayan blackberry: A ubiquitous invasive. Left to its own devices, will rapidly become an impenetrable barrier.

3. Prickly or pucker pear: Pucker pear is a domestic pear crossed with some type of armed tree species. The result: a fruit that will make you "pucker" when bitten and thorns that makes kids-play of the hawthorn. No plant anywhere is tougher to eradicate.

4. Canada thistle: This pernicious weed will appear seemingly out of nowhere on disturbed sites and in a short time looks like a cultivated crop. Neither man nor animal will travel through heavily affected areas.

5. Beggar's-lice: The genus *Desmodium* has several plant species that have the unique capability of hitching a ride on any unsuspecting client. The small, hairy seeds look like bugs and attach themselves to clothing and fur and often remain even after washing and drying. A royal pain.

6. Foxtail: These grasses are a health hazard for dogs and other domestic animals in which they can become irreversibly lodged. One of the hitchhiker plants, foxtails cling and burrow their way through clothing, causing extreme discomfort.

7. Galium aparine: Commonly called stickyweed, catchweed or grip grass. And it does just that. The plant has creeping straggling stems which branch and grow along the ground and over other plants. Miserable stuff.

8. *Urtica dioica*: The stinging nettle contains hollow, stinging hairs called trichomes that inject chemicals that produce the well-known stinging sensation when you come in contact. It leaves a painful, disgusting rash and can be deadly for some.

9. *Arborvitae*: A welcome home to spider mites and aphids which leads to dispersal of these pests elsewhere. Twig and tip blight results in browning, dying and shedding of tips and branches. Nothing looks worse than a row of sickly arborvitae.

10. KMX: A cross between knobcone and Monterey pine. The KMX was yet another example of man's belief he could do better than Mother Nature, with the creation and application being an abject failure. Nothing but dead and/or dying trees as a fire risk and an eyesore for everyone.

Thanks for reading yet another obnoxious Treeman. —*Treeman*

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## Good Neighbors

continued from page 11

suggested that “Opportunities for grants would increase, and you would have more participation by more property owners [because] expecting [someone] to do that on their own time continually—it is not going to work. I put my heart into this stuff for years and I finally had to step back because I was just doing too much.”

Our study contributes to the understanding of landscape management through an examination of how groups of individual forest landowners cooperate on forest management across property boundaries. By identifying key factors that foster the emergence and continuity of cooperation, our findings shed light on the social conditions that foster landscape man-

agement. Policies, planners and organizations that want to promote landscape management in areas with many ownerships may want to target landowners in such social conditions or promote these social conditions. Several existing models for providing information and assistance to individual forestland owners, including peer-to-peer and learning networks, exhibit some of the cooperation factors that we found to be important. Several efforts to involve private forestland owners in collaborative forest management efforts have been modeled after such networks. For example, prescribed fire councils and Firewise groups engage landowners, land managers and other stakeholders in planning processes—although not management activities specifically—around forest thinning and prescribed burning to reduce wildfire risk across property lines. These networks provide examples of types of cooperation that are well-suited to dealing with large-scale problems that are beyond the capacity of a single landowner, without resorting to heavy government involvement, which many landowners seem to loathe.

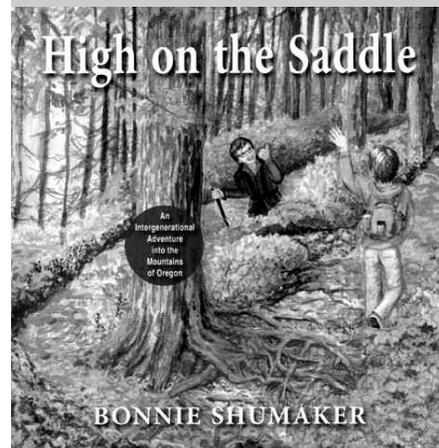
For more information about this research project, refer to the following publication: Fischer, A. P., Klooster, A., & Cirhigiri, L. Cross-boundary cooperation for landscape management: Collective action and social exchange among individual private forest landowners. *Landscape and Urban Planning*: doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2018.02.004. ■

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## ADVERTISERS' INDEX

Adams Timber Service .....	28
AKS Engineering and Forestry .....	23
American Forest Management .....	26
Arbor Info LLC .....	9
Bancroft Buckley Johnston & Serres .....	21
Cascade Hardwood .....	8
Forest Seedling Network .....	18
GeneTechs .....	27
Hampton Tree Farms, Inc. ....	22
International Veneer Company, Inc. ....	15
Lorenz Forestry .....	4
Lusignan Forestry .....	19
McFarland-Cascade .....	12
Millwood Timber Inc. ....	3
Norm Michaels Forestry LLC .....	5
Northwest Farm Credit Services .....	11
Northwest Hardwoods .....	23
Northwest Management .....	29
NW Forest Properties .....	27
ODF—Private Forests Division .....	13
Oregon Forest Resources Institute ..	Back Cover
Pacific Fibre Products .....	19
Port Blakely Companies .....	16
Professional Forestry Services, Inc. ....	31
Rosboro .....	4
Silvaseed Company .....	20
Starker Forests .....	25
Stuntzner Engineering & Forestry .....	6
Sustainable Forestry Initiative .....	6
Tree Management Plus .....	7
Trout Mountain Forestry .....	18
Victor Musselman .....	22
WACD Plant Materials Center .....	30
Weyerhaeuser Company .....	14
Willamette Valley Forestry .....	3
World Forest Investment .....	13

## Book Review



One of our members achieved a personal goal recently by writing and publishing a children's book called “High on the Saddle.” The author, Bonnie Shumaker, says, “It’s a book about the special relationship between an adventurous grandma and her nature-loving grandchild.” The story takes place on a working farm and forest in the foothills of the Oregon Coast Range where the family lives, and on nearby Saddle Mountain. This grandma knows the value of sharing her passion for the natural world with children. If you want to share your passion too, this story is a good one for boys and girls. It is available for purchase at Barnes and Noble, Amazon and from the publisher, paloma-books.com.

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