



The Quarterly Bark

Volume 33 | Issue 2

April 2026

Mark Your Calendar! 2026 Family Forest Convention

It's probably on all your calendars already, but if not, make sure to add this year's Family Forest Convention, June 25-26-27. What a treat to get to travel to Douglas County for this year's convention—and the Tree Farmer of the Year tour at the Big-K Ranch is certainly not something to be missed. Watch all your mail boxes (physical and digital) for more information about the schedule of events and registration information.

Advocacy Update

Government Affairs Team | Forest Policy Committee

Government Affairs Team | The 2026 short session is in the rear view! Thanks to Nicole Mann, Rick Spring and Mike Cafferata in particular for keeping interested OSWA members up to date on bills of concern to small woodland owners. Open to everyone, the GAT is a great way to stay in the loop throughout the legislative session and to have a front row seat to OSWA's advocacy work for small woodland owners. One of the big wins of the session was that projected cuts to the OSU Statewides (Extension, Research Forests, Ag Research Stations) were averted. Part of it was because the dire budget projections—and related 7% cut to the Statewides, as well as elimination of FFA funding—were not as bad as feared, but it was also because many of our local chapters and state OSWA were extremely vocal in their support for the invaluable role played by the Statewides to the resilience, innovation and vitality of natural resources in Oregon. Check Mike's latest newsletter for a more detailed legislative recap.

Looking ahead: After the closing meeting of the legislative session, Mike and Rick pulled the Team together to begin thinking about ways to prepare for the coming long session. Topics of concern were brainstormed, with the goal of building relationships both with potential new Committee chairs and with newly elected legislators, particularly in the coming months when they are back in their districts. Aiming high, what if our Representative and Senators had a small woodland owner on speed dial, to provide "expert" feedback on natural resource questions that would impact the forest sector as they arise rather than after "bad bills" were already in process. So consider inviting local legislators to your summer chapter events and tree farm tours. Remember, no one tells our stories better than we do!

In this Issue

General News & Notes

An array of updates, announcements and reflections from OSWA, partners & friends
OTFS | OFRI | OSU | ODF

Benton County

Lane County

Lincoln County

Linn County



Published quarterly, in January, April, July, and October, *The Quarterly Bark* is a joint venture of the Benton, Lane, Lincoln and Linn County Chapters of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association.

Editor: Kate McMichael

To offer contributions to an upcoming edition, please contact: quarterly.bark.23@gmail.com

Forest Policy Committee | While the GAT's focus is on legislative issues and meets primarily during the session, the Forest Policy Committee meets throughout the year (last Fridays of the month, 7:00-8:00am), focusing on broader policy concerns such as tethered logging rule-making conversations at the Board of Forestry level or working directly with ODF on streamlining the process of making corrections to stream maps. As we all know, models can only do so much. That said, it is up to landowners to ground-truth to ensure the validity of what the maps indicate and, if not, take proactive steps to work with their stewardship forester to replace the incorrect data.

Another topic that has emerged over the course of the year is to establish criteria by which OSWA as a statewide voice for small woodland owners might choose when and how to weigh in on initiatives and ballot measures, whether in particular counties or statewide. After some discussion, the Committee drafted a policy rooted in ORS 527.714, a statute that guides state forest policy rule-making. The key elements of this ORS require that: (1) decisions should be grounded in the best available science; (2) there should be clear need for the change under consideration; and (3) solutions should be the least burdensome necessary to achieve the intended outcome. While these criteria seem workable for a statewide stance on issues, the Committee also encourages all members to read the full text of any measure under consideration, make their own reasoned judgement and then vote as their heart, mind and conscience guide them.

Effective Advocacy Reflects Many Voices | If this sort of direct engagement in this aspect of OSWA's Stewardship - Advocacy - Fellowship - Education cornerstones appeals to you, email Mike at mike@oswa.org to get connected with either (or both!) groups.



Partnership for Forestry Education

Logos include: Forest Service, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon State University, Oregon Forest Resources Institute, Oregon Small Woodland Owners Association, Society of American Foresters, Oregon Loggers, Inc., NRCS, American Forest Foundation, ecotrust, Committee for Family Forestlands, and WFCA.

A New Approach to Forest Management Planning is on the Horizon

Margaret Miller | OFRI

Dave Bugni | OTFS Board Chair

Forest management plans are one of the most valuable tools a landowner can have. They help clarify goals, guide decisions, and open doors to programs like cost-share, certification and tax incentives. But getting a plan written can sometimes feel a lot like doing your taxes. There are forms, various requirements and different agencies involved, and it's not always clear where to start or what's actually needed.

That challenge is exactly what a group of partners in Oregon and Washington are working to address. Through the [Partnership for Forestry Education](#) and in collaboration with partners in Washington (including Washington Department of Natural Resources, Washington State University Extension and others), we are exploring a new kind of digital forest-management planning tool. Informally, we've been thinking of it as a "TurboTax-style" approach to forest planning.

The idea is simple: Instead of navigating multiple systems and starting from scratch, landowners would be guided step by step through the planning process. The tool would combine mapping and property data (similar to what's available through tools such as [Landmapper](#)) with answers you provide about your goals. The result would be a more complete and usable management plan that reflects your property and your priorities.

This effort is grounded in real feedback from landowners and forestry professionals across Oregon and Washington. Over the past year, nearly 350 survey responses and multiple focus groups helped identify what’s working and where the biggest challenges exist. Many landowners shared that planning feels confusing, fragmented across agencies and difficult to maintain over time.

With support from the Oregon Forest Resources Institute and Oregon Department of Forestry, along with additional support from the U.S. Forest Service, the project team has completed the first phase of work. This includes user needs assessment, identification of key barriers and opportunities, and development of functional requirements and a conceptual system design.

The project is now moving into the next stage, securing funding and developing a Request for Proposals to build the tool itself. While there is still work ahead, the goal is clear: Create a more streamlined, user-friendly way for landowners to develop, use and update forest management plans over time. We’re excited about the potential of this effort and will continue to share updates as it progresses.

Breaking News from OFRI

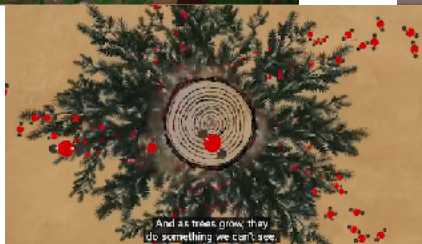
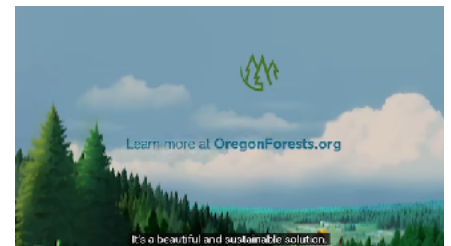
Two New Animated Educational Ads Airing This Month!

The ads, called [“Forests for All”](#) and [“What We Can’t See,”](#) can be watched on [OFRI’s YouTube page](#). They’re part of a campaign aimed at informing Oregonians about the importance of replanting trees after logging to sustain forests — and all the benefits they provide — for future generations. The animated ads are airing in television markets statewide, as well as on streaming services and social media, through early June.

Although OFRI’s educational advertising program has long been a part of its work to advance the public’s understanding of the social, environmental and economic benefits of Oregon’s forests, this is the first time the Institute has produced animated ads. The animation was created for OFRI by the Portland-based video production and animation studio Deep Sky. OFRI and Deep Sky worked for nine months to complete the suite of animations.

“Animation allowed us to highlight the amazing things that forests and trees do that you simply can’t capture through live action, such as speeding up the process of a forest growing to maturity or zooming into the trunk of a tree as it absorbs carbon molecules from the atmosphere through photosynthesis,” says OFRI Director of Communications Jordan Benner.

The ads, called [“Forests for All”](#) and [“What We Can’t See,”](#) can be watched on [OFRI’s YouTube page](#). Both spots direct viewers to the Institute’s main website, [OregonForests.org](#), where they can learn more about reforestation, carbon sequestration and sustainable forest management, among other topics.



Neighbor-to-Neighbor Tours: Sharing Knowledge and Building Support for Stewardship

Margaret Miller | Forest Landowner Education Manager | OFRI

One of the most valuable ways woodland owners learn isn't always from a textbook or presentation. It's from each other!

Neighbor-to-Neighbor tours organized by the Oregon Small Woodlands Association provide an opportunity to walk the land together, see management practices firsthand and have open conversations about real-world decisions. Whether the focus is oak restoration, thinning, fuels reduction, wildlife habitat or reforestation, seeing these practices on the ground helps bring forest stewardship concepts to life. These tours create space to share lessons learned, ask questions and connect with others facing similar opportunities and challenges.

Just as important, these tours help neighbors who may not consider themselves woodland owners gain a better understanding of why and how forests are actively managed. This shared understanding helps build broader community support for forest stewardship and strengthens relationships across landowners, neighbors and the public.

One of OSWA's goals this year is to encourage members to consider hosting tours in collaboration with other groups that have a shared interest in forests and natural resources. These could include local woodworking groups, Boy Scout or Girl Scout troops and their parents, farming or 4-H communities, or other local organizations whose members would enjoy the opportunity to get out in the woods and learn firsthand about forestry. These partnerships expand the reach of tours and help more people develop a deeper appreciation for forest management.

Many landowners are interested in hosting a tour but aren't sure where to begin. It's normal to feel like your property needs to be "perfect," but that's not what makes these tours meaningful. Some of the most valuable learning comes from seeing works in progress and hearing honest reflections about what has worked well and what hasn't. I'm learning firsthand about this feeling of wanting things to be perfect or wanting my understanding of a topic to be spot-on. At the Rediscovery Forest I manage, we're in the process of

completing an oak restoration ourselves. We're combating invasives, removing encroaching trees and making decisions about what to plant in the understory. I'm working with partners to host a training/tour of this work, and I, too, have had to become comfortable with sharing what we've done and the lessons we've learned, knowing it hasn't been perfect and some of our management decisions might not work. Being OK with sharing failures along with successes is hard, but it's also the backbone of learning and exactly the kind of conversation Neighbor-to-Neighbor tours are meant to create.



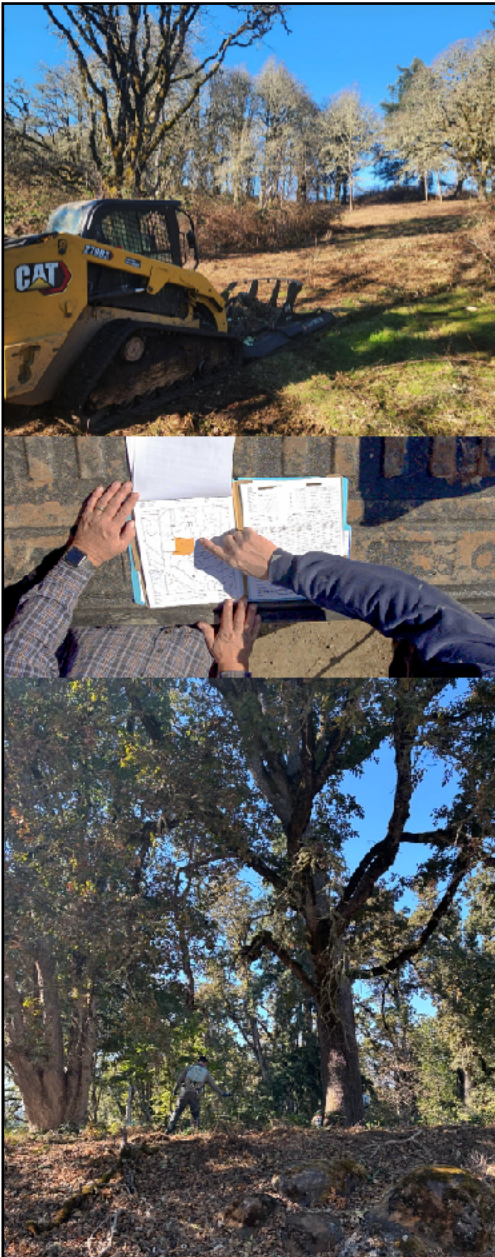
Updated for 2026-2027!

Copies available both in physical and digital form at oregonforests.org/publication-library/resources-family-forest-landowners

Please consider attending the upcoming oak restoration training at The Oregon Garden on Friday, April 24 from 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. This training will highlight the oak restoration work currently underway and provide an opportunity to see the project in progress, hear about the decisions we’ve made along the way and discuss what we’re still learning. Like many Neighbor-to-Neighbor tours, it’s not about showcasing a “perfect” property but about sharing experiences, asking questions and learning together. Registration is now open and landowners are encouraged to sign up. Learn more at www.oregongarden.org/event/oak-workshop. To make hosting a tour more accessible, OSWA worked

toolkit includes a variety of templates and resources, a great place to start is simply reviewing the tour checklist. This provides a clear overview of the basic steps and helps make the process feel manageable.

There are also many resources available to support landowners. KnowYourForest.org provides publications, tools and connections to subject matter experts who can help answer questions or participate in tours. ODF stewardship foresters and OSU Extension agents are also eager to support the work you do. And, as you all know, the Oregon Forest Resources Institute will happily mail you free publications that can be shared with attendees



Right Tools, Right Place: Combating Invasives & Restoring Oak Habitat

Friday, April 24th | 8:30 am - 3:30 pm
The Oregon Garden | Silverton, OR

Oregon’s oak woodlands and savannas are under pressure from invasive plants, ice damage, and changing conditions that make it harder for oaks to thrive.

Join us for a one-day training focused on the ecology and restoration of Oregon oaks. Participants will learn about oak ecology, common invasive species, and management tools used to improve forest health and restore oak landscapes.

The program will include presentations from regional experts, field demonstrations and a tour of The Oregon Garden’s oak restoration project.

This training is geared toward landowners, but is open to anyone interested in learning more about oak restoration.

Learn more and register at:
oregongarden.org/event/oak-workshop



to reinforce key topics and provide useful take-home information. Neighbor-to-Neighbor funding may also be available to help support tour costs. Landowners interested in hosting a tour are encouraged to reach out to Mike Cafferata (mike@oswa.org) to learn more about available opportunities.

I’m also available to help. If you have questions or feedback, or need support, please don’t hesitate to reach out to me directly at miller@ofri.org.

with some experienced hosts to develop a Toolkit for Hosting Forestry Tours, which is now available on the OSWA website at oswa.org/tour-toolkit. While the

our knowledge as we grow (and share lessons learned in) our forests!

Here’s to growing

Celebrating 20 years of the Wildlife in Managed Forests program

By Fran Cafferata, Wylda Cafferata and Julie Woodward

Building on nearly 20 years of the Oregon Forest Resources Institute's Wildlife in Managed Forests program, OFRI's newest publication, *Forests Working for Wildlife*, showcases real examples of habitat stewardship, key research findings and practical actions that help keep common species common. This publication highlights how Oregon's private forest landowners are supporting native wildlife through thoughtful, science-based management.

According to the National Woodland Owner Survey, providing habitat for wildlife is among the top objectives for forest managers. OFRI started the WIMF program to provide landowners and managers with practical information for managing habitat for wildlife in forests of all ages. The educational publications, fact sheets and reference guides OFRI and partners produce through this program include management recommendations for species such as marten and fisher, deer and elk, amphibians, native bees, songbirds, and lots, lots more. As the program has grown, more and more landowners and forest managers have incorporated these tools into their day-to-day operations — and the results are paying off.

In *Forests Working for Wildlife*, you'll find some excellent examples of the amazing contributions Oregon forest landowners are making to support native wildlife. We'll highlight a few here, but to read about them all, check out the full publication.

Passionate about pollinators? Timber management companies such as Starker Forests and Hampton Lumber have helped pave the way for creating and maintaining pollinator habitat in working forests.

Starker Forests has been managing their "Butterfly Meadows" site for over 20 years in collaboration with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Jennifer Beathe, forester and outreach manager for the company, has been a dedicated steward of this project, working closely alongside their consulting wildlife biologist to help with the ongoing recovery of the recently downlisted threatened species, the Fender's blue butterfly.

Hampton Lumber has been running their pollinator program since 2017. Lindsey Davis, Hampton's community engagement and stewardship coordinator, currently oversees the program. Davis coordinates wildflower seed

plantings in conjunction with the company's logging plans, ensuring that the program maintains pollinator plots until replanted trees grow large enough to shade out the flowering plants. By then, other nearby plots of flowers will be ready for foraging bees, creating a choreographed dance between logging operations and pollinators. These efforts from Beathe and Davis to further advance pollinator habitat in working forests have encouraged other land managers to do the same.

Maurizio Valerio, a small woodland owner, manages about 500 acres in northeastern Oregon. Born and raised in Verona, Italy, Valerio now lives outside the town of Union and has been managing his land for 35 years.

Valerio's love for elk was what originally attracted him to this part of the state, where he would pack in horses and mules to hunt in the Eagle Caps. Helping elk and other wildlife thrive is a top priority that has factored into almost every management decision Valerio has made for his property. He's logged portions of his forests several times but has also kept some areas "off-limits," leaving them completely untouched. Valerio is very intentional in his management techniques, including making sure that there are a variety of habitats across his forestland, ranging from young trees to old trees, and open areas to very thick areas.



The elk in particular have found his property to be a safe haven, especially after Valerio removed over 7 miles of barbed-wire fencing and replaced them with wildlife-friendly fences. He replaced the fences with smooth wire on top and bottom or low wooden fences after finding a dead cow elk entangled in the barbed wire. Since replacing the barbed wire, there have been no wildlife entanglements, now that elk can easily

pass through by jumping over or going under.

For Valerio and his wife, a favorite pastime is to sit on their porch and spend hours watching wildlife, especially the elk. As an avid hunter and hunting instructor, Valerio believes "we are the stewards to the land and the stewards to this immense patrimony of wildlife we have. Not just for me, but for everybody to enjoy." Valerio's dedication and

stewardship of the land is truly remarkable, and he is an inspiration to many small woodland owners. Thank you, Maurizio, for everything you do for Oregon's forests!

Whether you own thousands of acres or manage what's in your backyard, intentional management is a common goal. All forests provide habitat for wildlife. It's important that landowners, foresters and wildlife biologists work together to determine the best actions for wildlife and forests. After all, that's what makes Oregon's forests so special.

Print and electronic versions of *Forests Working for Wildlife* are available to order or download for free through the publications library on OFRI's website, OregonForests.org.



Oregon Forest Resources Institute

The Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) supports the forest sector and the stewardship of natural resources by advancing Oregonians' understanding of the social, environmental and economic benefits of our forests. Learn more about OFRI and order or download its free educational publications at the Institute's website, OregonForests.org.



The Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI), in partnership with the Western Forestry & Conservation Association (WFCA), will host a two-day summit this spring focused on strengthening Oregon's forest sector workforce.

The OFRI Workforce Summit, scheduled for May 13-14 at the Riverhouse Lodge in Bend, will bring together leaders from across the forest sector to examine the current workforce landscape, identify challenges and gaps in education and career pathways, and develop practical, collaborative recommendations and next steps for supporting sector workforce development. The summit will coincide with WFCA's Mapping the Course conference, which will take place May 11-13 at the Riverhouse Lodge, and all conference registrants are invited to also attend the OFRI summit for no additional charge.

Along with Mapping the Course attendees, OFRI and WFCA encourage participation from Oregon forest sector employers, educators and training providers, workforce and community partners, land managers, policymakers, and anyone interested in collaborative, solution-driven approaches to forest sector workforce development. The OFRI Workforce Summit is free to attend and open to all interested participants.

More information about the Mapping the Course conference and OFRI Workforce Summit, as well as registration for both events, is available on WFCA's website.

Weaving Research with Reflection

The Willamette NF's rich landscape has provided opportunities for hundreds of researchers over the past century. Ecosystems are complex, and the depth of our ignorance is profound. But intrepid souls, armed with calipers and cameras and a variety of other recording devices have scrambled through the Forest seeking answers to often simple questions that, in aggregate, can lead to profound insights. This column, written first for the Cascade Volunteers newsletter, will be a regular feature to highlight the often surprising findings from these endeavors.

For more information on the rich Science-Management partnership on the Willamette, check out the H.J. Andrews Experimental Forest webpage: <https://andrewsforest.oregonstate.edu/>

Pacific Banana Slug

Cheryl Friesen | USFS Science Liaison/
Ecologist, Retired

I'm greenish to yellow, sometimes brown, sometimes spotted. At about 7" long, eye-like structures sit on pedestals that wave above my furrowed forehead. You could say I "ooze," but that's not completely accurate. I prefer to think I "surf" across the forest on my magic carpet of slime. In 2023, Sarah Boomer from Western Oregon University, decided she just had to know more about my digestion, so she set out to study me and my fellow Pacific banana slugs. We were scooped up in early spring, right after the winter freeze lost its grip on the forest floor. We had been overwintering below the frost line, tucked in old vole burrows and other places of respite. We were surprised to find ourselves whisked into mason jars, and our first instinct was to poop, which was exactly what Sarah wanted to happen. She collected our droppings and returned with them to her lab. I know what I like to eat -- I know what to avoid and what keeps me alive, but not being able to just point things out (no fingers) and not being able to tell her (no vocal cords), extracting the DNA from cells in my excrement was her only option (unless she wanted to follow me around and watch me munch, which actually was how early elk researchers figured out what those big mammals eat)! So what did she find? She already knew that we eat

detritus (dead organic matter), including fallen leaves and plants, animal feces, moss, and mushroom spores, which we recycle into nutrient-dense waste that fertilizes the soil. Critical to her study, she explored our rich gut biome that helps our digestion. Much like humans, we have helpers—bacteria and fungi—in our digestive system to help extract nutrients. She found thousands of them! As a human, you may eat a daily serving of yogurt to get probiotics for healthy digestion. We slugs pick them up in the forest – easy breezy. We are part of an army of invertebrates that recycle everything that falls to the forest floor. Next time you see one of us, say "thank you!" for helping keep our forests healthy. And thanks to Sarah for her inquisitiveness – we knew we were important, but now humans know too!

P.S. Sarah did not harm any slugs during this study. Koosah, pictured below, was put back near her waterfall.



2026 STATE OF THE STATE: FOREST HEALTH IN OREGON

Conference Summary | Part 1

Wylde Cafferata

On Wednesday, March 18, 2026, forest scientists and forest managers from private and public forests met in person in Corvallis and remotely from all over Oregon for an intense day studying many aspects of forest health. OSU Dean of the College of Forestry Tom DeLuca introduced the day, emphasizing that while the multiple sectors of the forestry community often disagree on forest issues, we all come together on the need to understand the growing and diverse challenges to forest health, and the importance of training the next generation to detect and meet these challenges.



The day's program consisted of four sessions: Statewide Disturbance trends; Insects; Pathogens; and Mitigation Strategies and Responses. Each session included several presentations. These notes will cover the first two sessions; the next *Quarterly Bark* will cover the third and fourth sessions.

Session One: Statewide Disturbance Trends

1. Drought in Oregon: Current Conditions, Operational Tools and Monitoring, and future Projections.



Larry O'Neill, OSU Associate Professor and Oregon's State Climatologist presented on Oregon's Snow Drought: Monitoring,



EXPLORING COAST REDWOOD MANAGEMENT ON THE OREGON COAST

COME CONNECT WITH EXPERTS, ASK QUESTIONS, AND SEE REAL-WORLD EXAMPLES OF COAST REDWOOD MANAGEMENT ON THE OREGON COAST

Join us for a unique, on-the-ground learning experience focused on growing coast redwood in Oregon. Whether you're already growing this species or considering it for your property, this tour offers a chance to learn directly from professional foresters who have years of hands-on experience. You'll hear what's working, what's challenging, and what they wish they'd known from the start.

Along the way, we'll explore practical insights and current research on topics such as: Assisted migration and climate considerations; Tissue-culture cultivars vs. seedlings; Nursery options and availability; Alternative Reforestation Plans with ODF; Stump sprouting behavior; Herbicide use and vegetation management; Volume growth comparisons; Marketing opportunities; And animal, disease, and weather-related damage.

All participants will travel in vans during the tour rather than using personal vehicles. If you'd like to catch a ride from the Roseburg or Eugene area, please indicate so when you register.

WHEN:

Friday, April 24, 2026
10am - 2:30pm

WHERE:

Meeting in Gardiner, OR
Address sent by email prior to event

COST:

\$20/person

REGISTRATION:

Registration required
Ends April 21, 2026

MORE INFORMATION:

Alicia Christiansen
(541) 672-4461
beav.es/piq



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OSU Extension Service prohibits discrimination in all its programs, services, activities, and materials. This publication will be made available in an accessible alternative format upon request. Accommodation requests related to a disability should be made by 4/10/26. Please contact Alicia Christiansen (541) 672-4461 alicia.christiansen@oregonstate.edu

Learn more and register at

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/douglas/events/exploring-coast-redwood-management-oregon-coast>

What is a watershed?

Webinar and Q&A with Annette Patton,
OSU Extension Forest Watershed Specialist

April 15
6 - 7:30 pm

Online webinar

Register online:
beav.es/GRA

Fee: \$5
(scholarships available)

Did you know? Most of Oregon's drinking water is sourced from our forests!

Join us for an introduction to watersheds, including:

- General overview of what a watershed is
- Importance of watersheds
- Water processes across the landscape

For more information, contact Carrie Mack at (541) 237-6808 or carrie.mack@oregonstate.edu



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Impact, and Future Outlook.” He began by stating grimly that this drought is historically significant, with wet winters no longer a guarantee of drought-free summers because of low snow-packs. He showed an amazing January photo of Willamette Pass totally without snow and mentioned the late winter fire at LaPine. He mentioned “flash droughts” that are brief but suck moisture from the soil, and the snowpack being 28% of normal for this time of year. Even if we have more rain this spring, Larry predicted, we cannot recover. The La Nina we are experiencing is not helping, though they usually do, because of the unusually warm temperatures. This winter has been the warmest winter since 1895. Looking to the future, the prediction of a 4-8°F rise in temperature by 2100 brings a range of outcomes on forest growth, fire, insects and more. The Oregon Climate Service will be monitoring and reporting on these.

2. Fire and Forest Health

Mark Swanson, OSU Associate Professor and Starker Chair of Family Forestry, reviewed Oregon’s complex fire history, pointing out that historically we had shorter fire regimes, less intense fires, and a mosaiced landscape much patchier than we have today. With the late 19th century and 20th century exclusion of fire, those regimes changed, resulting in far denser forests and higher intensity wildfires. Dr. Swanson advocates for an increased cultural awareness of fire’s positive role in forest health. He champions a combination of prescribed fire and forest thinning to increase forest health, reduce fungal mycelia (thus reducing root disease), and increase the diversity of shrub layers. He emphasized that, of course, Oregon is climatically and geologically diverse, and differing aspects call for differing strategies.

3. June 2021 Heat Dome

Dave Shaw, Professor Emeritus of the OSU College of Forestry originated the idea of a Forest Health State of the State Conference in 2010, and they have been held biennially ever since. For this presentation, Dr. Shaw reviewed the events of the two days in late June 2021, when high temperatures resulted in 725,370 acres of scorched forests in western Oregon. Dr. Shaw emphasized that it was the high temperatures, not drought, that have produced lasting effects. Regional hotspots include the Olympic Peninsula, the NW Coast Range, and the Cascade Mountain foothills and river valleys. Studies have shown that trees are more scorched on one side of the trees (an exposure issue), with north

aspect trees having a 10% damage rate contrasted with a 15% rate for south-facing trees. Different species suffer different effects, with red alder and Douglas fir less sensitive, and Sitka spruce, Black cottonwood, Western hemlock, Western red cedar and others more so. Dr. Shaw reported that heat dome effects are still under study, and we should all stay tuned.



Session 2: Insects

1. Bark Beetle/Woodborer Trends and Emerging Issues in Oregon Forests.

Dr. Melissa Fischer, a forest health specialist with the Washington Department of Natural Resources, briefly described six species of beetles.

Douglas Fir Bark Beetle: With an extensive range in western Oregon, these small (3-5 mm) beetles produce one generation a year with two flights: one in April and one in August. Look for boring dust mid-way up trees and streams of resin above eye-level. They prefer large trees, down trees, and logs. Endemic to western Oregon, they have outbreaks every two to four years, often after stand disturbances. Fire-damaged, defoliated, and root-rot infested trees are more susceptible.

Mt. Pine Beetle: These are found mostly east of the Cascades. They prefer stressed trees, trees in dense stands, and old trees. Look for long, straight galleries.

Western Pine Beetle: These are found only in Ponderosa pines. They carve winding galleries. Look for woodpecker-chipped bark.

Pine Engraver Beetle (Ips.) An East side beetle, they like fresh slash and move from that to healthy trees in over-stocked stands. They prefer trees of 5-8” diameter. They also attack Willamette Valley Pine.



Fir Engraver: These attack true firs, usually in July, beginning by killing the tops of trees and scattered lower branches. They create long horizontal galleries.

Flat-header Borer: These are wood rather than bark beetles. They like Douglas fir, true fir, and larch. After emerging they feed on needles. They are active in drought-stressed trees and are an increasing problem. Look for thin crowns and stress-crop cones. We are seeing earlier-in-the-year flights due to the warmer temperatures of climate change.

2. Insect Defoliator Trends and Emerging Issues in Oregon Forests.

Former Oregon State Entomologist Dr. Robbie Flowers reminded us that insect defoliators consume needles and leaves, and feed on sap, leading to wide ranges of damage. If native, they can be managed by maintaining proper density in our forests and potentially by using pesticides and pheromone injections or patches. Needle/leaf-eaters that Dr. Flowers mentioned included butterflies and moths (specifically Spruce budworm, tussock moths (outbreaks every 3-4 years), pandora moths, tent caterpillars, and fall webworm), Conifer sawflies (same family as wasps), and leaf beetles. These cause patchy damage but can kill trees. Sap-feeding pests mentioned include aphids, scale insects, leaf-hoppers, spittle bugs, and lace beetles. The Spruce aphid is non-native but well-established-damage begins in the crown and can kill the tree. In answer to a question, Dr. Flowers informed us that stink bugs are not forest pests and as predators, eat insects that eat trees.

3. Mediterranean Oak Borer Update.

Dr. Christine Buhl, OSU Entomologist, referred us to the ODF website section on Forest Health Highlights for more detailed information. The Mediterranean Oak Borer was first detected in Oregon in 2018. It is an exotic ambrosia beetle that brings fungus into its galleries causing wilting disease in oaks. Contrary to other ambrosia beetles, it is considered a pest. By 2026 it has been found in five Oregon counties. It targets stressed trees, though Dr. Buhl acknowledged that these days most trees are stressed. Its broad native range includes Europe, Africa, and Southwest Asia. The females are active most of the year, with one or two peak flights. It often arrives here via wine barrels but is difficult to find point sources. Dr. Buhl reminded us that it is often transported via firewood, and we should all “buy it

where we burn it.” She noted that the fungus blocks water absorption, and that once here, the fungus can be transported by other insects. She predicts an expanded area of damage. Symptoms include whole-branch die-back, pale frass with tiny brown beetles in the frass. Management options include avoiding over-watering and compaction. There is no biological control as yet and chemical repellants have not been useful.

4. Emerald Ash Borer Update

Matt Mills and Kat Bethea, part of ODF’s Emerald Ash Borer Support Team, described how the EAB feeds beneath the bark and girdles and thus kills the tree. There have been over 100 million ash trees killed since the 1990s in the U.S. It was first detected in Oregon in 2022 and has spread to five Oregon counties thus far. There is an ODF hotline to report sightings of the insects; these reports must include a photo to ensure positive recognition. Go to www.oregoneab.com for more information. Matt and Kit reported there are many great partnerships and many resources for working to protect Oregon from this pest, including some new biological controls, and a quarantine system that limits the export of wood from counties with positive identification.



As small woodland owners, we can be grateful that so many researchers are working hard to understand the dynamics of sustainability, and grateful as well that the research is being shared with us.

remaining 2026 Meetings:

June 10
September 7

Meetings take place quarterly, at ODF in Salem, but a virtual option is available as well. Sign up to be notified of meetings, receive the agenda, watch past meeting recordings, and learn more about the Committee's work on the [CFF webpage](#).

The Committee for Family Forestlands



OSWA members serving on the CFF:

Dave Bugni - Chair
NW Oregon

Gary Jensen
SW Oregon

Maurizio Valerio
Eastern Oregon

Kate McMichael - Vice Chair
at large

SFO Office Update

Thinking About Taxes?

It's that time of year again, when many of us have taxes on our minds. Are you planning to harvest in the next few years and have streams on your forestland? If so, you may want to consider whether the Forest Conservation Tax Credit (FCTC) is right for you.*

By following the Standard Practice rather than the Small Forestland Owner Minimum Option when harvesting along streams, you may be able to receive the FCTC, which provides a state tax credit for the value of your unharvested trees, plus related costs. That credit can be applied toward the amount you owe in Oregon corporate or personal income taxes but cannot be used to pay harvest taxes. The tax credit never expires, so if you have a low income tax burden the year it is issued, you can save the credit and apply it in a future year or multiple years until all of the credit has been used.

You may be wondering, is a tax credit the same as a tax deduction? Not exactly. In simple terms, a tax credit is an amount that can be subtracted directly from the total amount of tax a person owes, as opposed to a tax deduction, which is an amount that can be subtracted from the taxpayer's income when calculating how much tax they owe.

There are a few rules to follow for the FCTC program, a form to complete, and a timeline to observe in order to receive the credit, but we're here to help you every step of the way. You can learn more by talking to your local ODF forester or by visiting the FCTC web page at <https://www.oregon.gov/odf/pages/fctc-program.aspx>.

Do you have questions for us or topics you would like to see in future newsletters? Let us know! We would love to hear from you at smallforestlandowneroffice@odf.oregon.gov.



*Our office does not give tax advice. You can check United States Internal Revenue Service and Oregon Department of Revenue guidelines or contact a tax professional for assistance with tax implications for your particular situation.

| photo: Angela Malcolm-Stucker, SFO Implementation Coordinator at Tree School Clackamas

Benton County Chapter News

President's Reflection

Diana Blakney

I was visiting relatives who live on the high desert of the Indian Wells Valley in California when I saw pistachio orchards for the first time. The trees are lovely, cloaked as they are in ghostly white bark. The nuts are delicious and are a valuable cash crop. The orchards undoubtedly require a substantial investment to establish. However, pistachio trees are a thirsty bunch, and in the Indian Wells Valley rely on an increasingly diminished aquifer for their survival. Are these orchards sustainable? Time will tell.

This concern for the future of an investment is not unique. History is replete with tales of fortunes that have been made and then lost - victims of the inevitability of change. Life can be unpredictable, and choosing how and where to invest your money, time, and passion is fraught with risk. Markets change; cultures change; laws and regulations change.

As small woodland owners, we cannot strategize the investment we make in our forests on a short-term basis. Regardless of whether we manage for income, sustainability, diversity, or habitat, our projection of likely future conditions necessarily extends beyond our lifetimes.

I don't know how much of the future is predictable, but I will do my best to ensure the survival of the forest I share with my siblings. An important component to my effort is continued active participation in OSWA where exposure to multiple sources and types of information allows for decisions made with confidence. I hope you will do the same.



2026 Benton Small Woodlands Association Board Members

President: **Diana Blakney**
Treasurer: **Jane Brandenburg**
Membership &
Program Director: **Sarah Edwardsson**
Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year
Coordinator: **Mike Magee**
Education **Rita Adams**
OSWA Liaison &
OTFS/OSWA Ambassador: **Dave Ehlers**
Media Coordinator: **Sarah Johnson**
At Large: **Dena Oakes**
Darrell Oakes
Pat Boren
Nancy Hathaway
Lily Hull

BSWA Annual Meeting Photo Recap



above: The January Annual Meeting was held at the Grange, our favorite venue



right: Extension Forester Lorelle Sherman gave a compelling presentation on forest mushrooms, forest animals, and trees



above: OSWA member Diana Thompson models the windbreaker she won at the raffle



right: OSWA members Sid Picht and Sandra Mancini considered the Annual Meeting "date night"

A Linn & Benton Small Woodlands Association Collaboration!

Spring Plant Walk
Saturday, April 4th, 2026
10am-Noon
Finley Wildlife Refuge
Corvallis OR
Woodpecker Loop Trail

The Linn and Benton chapters of the small woodland association are planning a plant walk on April 4th at Finley Wildlife Refuge. It will be led by Mike Albrecht and Jody Einerson and other knowledgeable individuals who may be attending.



It will take place on the Woodpecker Loop Trail, a relatively easy 1¼ mile, well-maintained, gravel trail, with gentle elevation gain.

All are welcome! Bring a friend (or two). Bring whatever devices and accessories you wish; camera, plant guides, binoculars, snacks...whatever. Dress for the weather.

You're welcome to bring a sack lunch to enjoy after the hike.

Please note, dogs are not allowed on the refuge.

Questions or accommodation requests?
Contact crystal.kelso@oregonstate.edu

PLEASE RSVP
for Spring Plant Walk Here:
[Eventbrite Spring Plant Walk
Registration](#)

Save the Date!

2026 BSWA Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year Tour Dave & Sarah Ehlers' J2E Tree Farm

June 6, 2026, 8:30 am – 3:00 pm

Come celebrate 26 years of management on this family owned timber tree farm, focused on sustainable growth of merchantable timber, maximization of carbon sequestration, carbon storage, ecosystem services & ecosystem function.

Participants will explore the J2E Tree Farm's Partnerships during three separate tours. Observe up close the diversity of this Coast Range gem, nestled in the Luckiamute Watershed across the valley from Fort Hoskins.

1) Join the Landowner with Oregon Department of Forestry and US Fish & Wildlife Services experts on a tour of year-round & seasonal ponds, discussing construction and multiple uses with a wildlife and fire focus, all while exploring various timber stands along the way.

2) The Riparian Management Area will be explored with an ODF expert, discussing new rules & alternate practices within the RMA. Luckiamute Watershed Council experts will discuss restoration project selection and will showcase completed restoration sites. A National Resources Conservation Service expert will explore funding of restoration projects that include Forestry.

3) Private & OSU Extension Foresters will lead participants through various timber stands: 46 yo Doug Fir moderate conifer site, 101 yo Oregon White Oak poor hardwood site, 56 yo Doug Fir good site, and 31 yo OWO & DF poor hardwood site. Get up close to colossal legacy old growth Conifer and OWO trees. They will make your day!

Free Delicious Lunch | Registration to Follow

Lane County Chapter News

Intent vs Impact *redux*

Theresa Hausser

As noted in this space in October 2024, there are many times when having a partner in the whole of life makes life a whole lot more livable. One of those times is when said partner has a reflection to share right when the Quarterly Bark needs one. Thanks, partner, for bailing me out yet again from the over-commitment hole I so effectively and consistently dig for myself!

Thank you, as well, for providing me, and all of us in Lane County, with some pre-May 19 election food for thought.

Back in the mid '90s—early aughts, when I worked for the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, we brought in a group called Tools For Change (still operational) to do interactive anti-oppression workshops for our volunteers. This was to help expand the volunteers' capacity to think systemically, rather than purely personally, about the inequities they tried to respond to in their work.

A key element in both being aware of our own social location and in thinking systemically was to go beyond thinking of our own **intent** in our actions, to also consider the experienced **impact** of those actions. Intent vs. impact.

Don't we all know this one on a personal level? Many of our stories begin with, in the light-hearted all's-well-that-ends-well category, "It seemed like a good idea at the time." In the more fraught category is, "I never meant for that to happen!" Who hasn't been there personally? And we know that the impact ranges from annoyance to devastation.

What does that look like systemically? What can and can't we predict? And how can we remedy harmful consequences, if it turns out that the troubling impact of the original intent has run amok?

Unfortunately, forest land owners know this one all too well. Most immediately, the recently accepted post-catastrophe salvage rules in riparian areas will probably have to be revisited (again) after the next catastrophe hits riparian areas and the unforeseen (?) consequences of the rules are themselves devastating to riparian health.



Lane County Board of Directors

Kate McMichael | President
Rick Olson | Vice President
Jo Von Dollan | Treasurer
Wylda Cafferata | Secretary
Gary Jensen | Past President
Gordon Culbertson
Dan Kintigh
Tim Gurton
Becca Fain
Theresa Hausser
Dan Menk | ODF
Lauren Grand | Extension



In Lane County, we have a chance to avoid the potentially devastating impact of a purportedly beneficial measure before it can be passed. Measure 20-373, the Lane County Watersheds Bill of Rights, will be on the May ballot in Lane County.

Trigger warning: this could be seen as political. I would argue that it's actually about uncovering the very obvious flaws in a difficult-to-locate piece of writing, summations of which conveniently ignore or obfuscate its most troubling elements. Time well spent to untangle intent from possible impact.

First, to find the complete text of 20-373, settle in somewhere comfortable. Go to the Lane elections page (lanecounty.org, click on Government, go to Elections on the drop down menu.) Once on the Elections page, scroll down to #14, **where can I learn more about petitions.** Under **Petition Approved to Appear on May 2026 Ballot, 2023 Watersheds Bill of Rights**, click on **and the full text of the measures [here](#).** *Every other place, including #11, what measures are going to be on the ballot, will give you summations of the measure, not what Lane County residents will be voting on: the actual words of the actual measure.*

Many of us, in discussing our concerns about the measure, do not address the preamble. I will tend toward the same since the principal concerns are with the provisions for enforcement, but with one observation: people and cities are a part of watersheds. 20-373 never acknowledges the built environment as a threat to watershed health, even as it asserts, without providing evidence of, ever increasing contamination of watersheds.

Page 2 of the measure, containing statements of (new) law and enforcement, is clearly an issue, and tends to be summarized as "Allows actions against corporations, governments, or other entities for violations." But that is not what the measure actually says. **The measure does not require evidence of violations.** Section 2d says that "when there is evidence of a violation of the rights set forth in section 2 **or a danger of damage** resulting from activities of corporate, government, or other business entities, any resident of Lane County and any watershed, ecosystem or natural community wholly or partially within Lane County shall have these rights in actions brought in Circuit Court: (1) to achieve reduction or elimination of damage by nullifying or modifying any

government authorizations for such activities; (2) to require the government to adopt protective and effective measures to prevent and/or remedy actual **and potential violation of the rights declared within this ordinance, even when there is not scientific certainty or full evidence of the risk.**" (Emphasis mine)

(Interestingly, individuals are exempt from lawsuits to protect the watersheds. When Kate and I lived in Springfield before moving to our woodland, we watched driveways being sprayed every spring and summer weekend, generally by people in shorts, short sleeves, and flip flops, and then sometimes those same drives were hosed down, with runoff going into the storm drains.)

The measure continues, in section 3e, "**Any resident of Lane County** or watershed, ecosystem, or natural community **may enforce or defend the provisions of this law in any appropriate court. Any resident of Lane County**, watershed, ecosystem, or natural community **also has the right to intervene in any action concerning this law in order to enforce or defend it...**" (Emphasis mine) Justin Green, a lawyer who shared with the Springfield Chamber of Commerce his analysis of the potential hazards of 20-373, read "right to intervene in any action..." as lawsuit-related. It's hard to know how "any resident of Lane County" might interpret "the right to intervene in any action concerning this law in order to enforce or defend it." (Justin Green's presentation is available at protectourcounty.org, under Events.)

Are bad outcomes unforeseeable here?

I listened to and read 20-373 proponents' public comments before the EWEB Board of Commissioners, in which they tried to persuade the EWEB Commissioners that EWEB activities—including riparian restoration projects—would not be at risk of lawsuits. (EWEB's Board of Commissioners did vote to formally oppose 20-373. EWEB's lawyers were clear on the risk 20-373 poses to lawful EWEB actions.) The proponents are very insistent that only "bad actors" need worry, that the measure's primary target is "industrial clearcutting and aerial spraying." That is a different conversation and, more to the point, **it is not what the measure says.** The "any resident of Lane County" articulated in the measure includes people other than the framers, who may assess "danger of damage" differently than the framers and

proponents seeking to assure us of our safety from lawsuits.

Additionally, “other business entities” (section 2d)—any business, no matter how small—can be sued by anyone for virtually anything. That could be some of us, who file Farm schedules or have created LLCs. Might some of these lawsuits be thrown out? Maybe/certainly/it depends. But would you show up in court without a lawyer? Especially if your home or woodland were at risk? No matter the outcome, there’s an immediate expense before a suit could be dismissed.

Someone I highly respect recently asked, “You don’t think this has a chance of passing, do you? It’s horribly written.” And that is the heart of the issue. He **read** the measure. How many people will? The title and the summations and even some of the rallying points (bad actors, industrial clearcuts, and aerial spraying) will be very attractive to many voters, including even some of you reading this. But the actual measure? That should give all of us pause.

I’d put it this way: Healthy watersheds? Absolutely! 20-373? No. **We are voting on the words of the measure itself**, not on the reassurances given by the measure’s proponents. Please, *please*, read it for yourself.

If you want to learn more about the Coalition in opposition to Measure 20-373, including additional concerns related to potential impacts of the measure, visit the ProtectOurCounty.org website. If you are interested in yard signs in opposition to the measure, they are available at the Springfield Chamber of Commerce.



On a more positive note, May’s election also provides all of us an opportunity to support OSU Extension through a Local Option Tax Levy. Passage would allow Lane County Extension to continue and expand present programming while increasing program access to additional rural areas.

The currently proposed levy would provide 5 years of funding for Extension programs in Lane County. The proposed tax rate is 5 cents per \$1,000 assessed value. A property assessed at \$200,000 would pay \$10.00 per year.

Learn more at <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/lane/support-funding>



Oregon State University
Extension Service

Mark Your Calendar!

Upcoming Events

Candidate Forum

April 11
10am-noon | Walterville Grange

What is a Watershed

April 15
6:00-7:30pm | webinar

Save the Dates

May 2 — Annual Meeting in Vida
May 23 — McKenzie Watershed
Council site tour
May 28 — Long Tom Watershed
Council site tour

2026 Board Meetings

April 2

2:00-4:00pm | Veneta

June 4

2:00-4:00pm | Springfield

August 6

2:00-4:00pm | Veneta

October 1

2:00-4:00pm | Springfield

December 3

2:00-4:00pm | Veneta

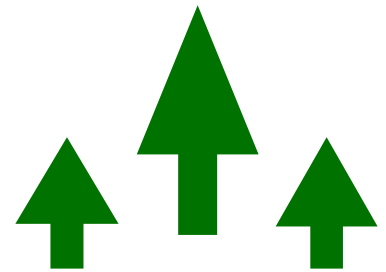
notes:

Board meetings take place at ODF offices, rotating between the East Lane/South Cascades and Veneta locations.

Springfield: 3150 Main Street

Veneta: 87950 Territorial Hwy

All members are welcome to attend!



More details, from timing to food to registration will be forthcoming after our April 2 Board meeting.

For the moment, plan on an opportunity to learn a bit about post-Holiday Farm Fire restoration up close and personal. Plan for some reasonable walking during the morning, with the option for a selection of more strenuous small hikes after the end of the official program.

There will be some business meeting time, but we'll keep it short and sweet so that more time can be spent catching up with friends old and new.

This event will help us get to know candidates for County Commissioner and State Representative and Senate seats, learn more about them and their positions—and give us the chance to share both our concerns and the importance of farming and natural resources in Lane County. Please feel free to share this invitation with colleagues, family and friends.

Candidates with a Lane County constituency have been invited to participate in this event, with a particular but not exclusive emphasis on the eastern portion of the county (County Commissioner positions 1, 2 & 5, House District 12 and Senate District 6). Currently nine candidates have confirmed they will be attending.



Your Vote Counts

Lane County Candidate Forum

April 11 | 10am
Walterville Grange
39259 Camp Creek Rd | Springfield

Join us for a chance to meet Local & State candidates seeking to represent us.
Hear their hopes - Share our concerns

Question - Listen - Learn - Vote







OSU Extension Service | Forestry & Natural Resources

What is a watershed?

Webinar and Q&A with Annette Patton,
OSU Extension Forest Watershed Specialist

Did you know? Most of Oregon's drinking water is sourced from our forests!

Join us for an introduction to watersheds, including:

- General overview of what a watershed is
- Importance of watersheds
- Water processes across the landscape

For more information, contact Carrie Mack at (541) 237-6808 or carrie.mack@oregonstate.edu

April 15

6 - 7:30 pm

Online webinar

Register online:

beav.es/GRA

Fee: \$5

(scholarships available)



Watersheds are in the headlines a lot these days, but what do we really know about them? Where are they? What are their boundaries? What natural forces impact them? What about human impacts? Here's your chance to find out answers to these questions and more!

This is the first of a co-hosted series that will combine webinars, workshops and field tours at locations throughout the county, exploring the different facets of watersheds and human roles in their health and resilience. Plans are in the works for site tours with both the McKenzie and Long Tom Watershed Councils for the latter half of May--with more topics and tour locations to come!

Learn more and register at beav.es/GRA

January

LCSWA members joined with members from the Emerald Chapter of the Society of American Foresters, a few local politicians, the Executive Director of Oregon Small Woodlands Association, and members from Lane Families for Farms and Forests at Elmer's Restaurant in Eugene to hear a presentation on Lane County Ballot Measure 20-373.



February

Our annual Seedling & Native Plant Sale was well-attended —and blessed by long awaited rain!

Emerald SAF & LCSWA members gathered again to learn from Jim Mehrwein, who is in the process of developing a carbon credit program for small woodland owners. He is creating a not-for-profit company with the goal of making a carbon credit program affordable and financially rewarding for small woodland owners. He hopes to have his program functioning by late this year.



The Oregon Logging Conference provided a great opportunity to catch up with beloved friends, as well as to promote both OSWA and OTFS.



March

Lots of planning going on: setting the groundwork for a Watershed series, from webinars to site tours; selecting our Tree Farmer of the Year; crafting questions for the upcoming Candidate Forum and dreaming up a list of ideal speakers for our Annual Meeting.



Welcome to Lane OSWA!

New Member Spotlight



Lane County SWA is happy to welcome Brian Halstead as our newest member. Brian plans to make the family forest property near Creswell easier to manage. It needs thinning and has storm damage to remedy.

Brian's goals for the property are to learn more about basic forest management so he can replant, control invasive species, and potentially plant alternative species in wet areas of the forest. Brian is proud of his four sons and, looking to the future, hopes to make the forest profitable for them in the long run. We look forward to discussing these forestry practices with Brian at upcoming OSWA events.

Welcome Brian and family to the Lane Small Woodlands family!

Dad's Thinning

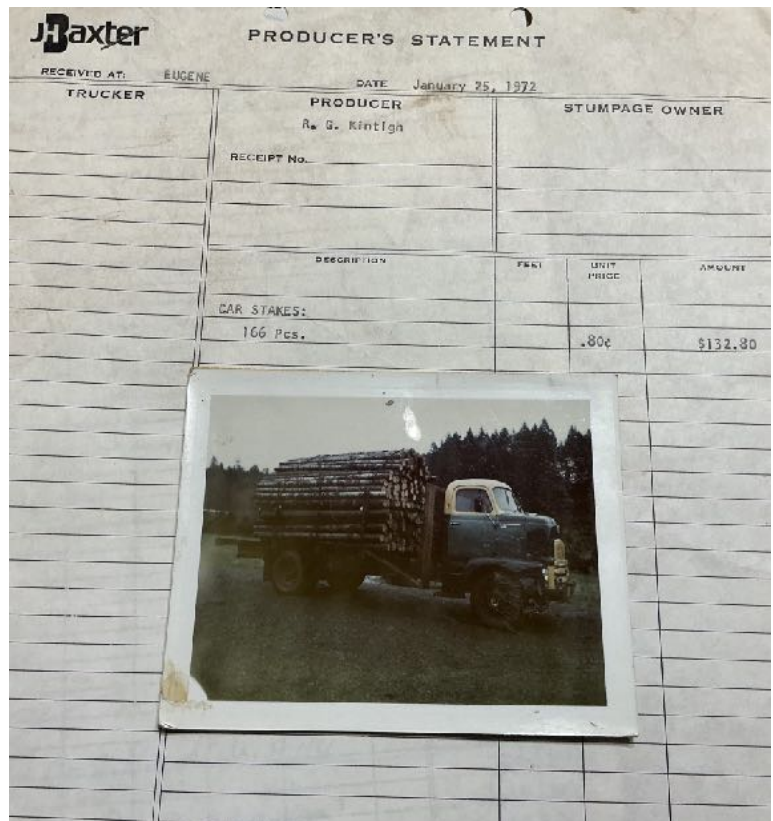
Dan Kintigh

In the early 70s, my father sold what he called "car stakes." They were used on railroad cars to keep logs from falling off. I was only 10 years old at the time, so I wasn't involved in the harvest and what I know about it was overheard from my father's discussions.

The farm had been heavily seeded after the homesteaders gave up. I've heard it said that there were as many as 1700 trees per acre, so he had plenty of thinning to do. \$.80 a stick was probably good money. Using inflation calculators, that's about \$5-6 per stake in today's money. It would be really nice if we had some kind of market like this currently to help pay the cost of thinning.

He had an old Ford tractor, no winch. I remember it had an arch with welded hooks for connecting chains. Dad never had any kind of loader, so he backed the truck up to a bank to facilitate loading.

I have many memories riding in this old truck. Interestingly enough, trucks of this style are now highly sought after for restoration and hot rodding. I've seen some crazy money put into them and they look really cool.



kintighs.com

Healthy Trees Start from the Roots



Lincoln County Chapter News

President's Reflection

Ben Barclay

I'm hoping you all are enjoying the ending of winter (soon) and can make good use of the added daylight hours.

We had a great meeting on February 7 at the new ODF offices in Newport/Agate Beach and it was well attended in person and via virtual meetings. Our speakers were Mike Cafferata, State Director OSWA and Richie Gardener, Area Forester for ODF and his staff. Both were very informative on what is going on in the state and locally. A lively question and answer session shed light on a variety of topics to finish off the meeting. Also in attendance, Senator Dick Anderson and County Commissioner Walter Chuck.

Our annual fund raising Seedling sale was held on February 28 and was a success again thanks to the efforts of Joe Steere and all the volunteers who attended to help out. We raised more than \$6000.00 to help with the school forestry programs in Waldport and Taft High Schools as well as any other outreach programs we may take on. There are leftover seedlings still for sale and you can contact Joe or me for current inventory. Hit up your neighbors to help move these little trees to a good home!

Speaking of Waldport High, I have been in contact with Jeff Scirvin who teaches the Forestry program and we are trying to organize a "Tree Farm Tour" for teachers who educate our youth and hopefully send them all on the right path in their thinking on forest management. We will follow up with Taft High depending on the success of the first event. More on this later.

On March 24 we will have an on the ground event to discuss/demonstrate the Forest Practices Riparian Management Rules (Buffers). We will be looking at flow permanence surveys, buffer width measurements, etc. and the effect on harvesting. Richie Gardener, Reilley Sitton, South Lincoln Stewardship Forester and Kevin Grey, Area Biologist will lead the charge and should be very enlightening. We will meet at 12 pm at my place -- 300 E Boundary Road, Tidewater. At MP 13 on Highway 34- cross the river and go back West to the first right. RSVP so we don't leave you behind. My cell is 907-240-1473.

If you have a friend or neighbor you think should be a member, don't



Lincoln County Small Woodlands Association Board Members

Ben Barclay, President
Joe Steere, past President
Judy Pelletier, Secretary
Jan Steenkolk, Treasurer

Steve Allen
Connie Battles
Joe Steenkolk
Scott Steenkolk
Rex Capri
Christana Woods
Todd Holts
Jim Holt
Tim Miller

hesitate to invite them or forward me their contact info for follow up. We need more members (numbers) to improve our influence in legislative efforts and help our industry.

Best wishes to you all.

Linn County Chapter News

President's Column

Better Timber Management is Needed on Public Lands

By Jim Merzenich | LCSWA president

The O&C Lands consist of 2.4 million acres of public land in western Oregon, managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Originally granted to the Oregon & California Railroad in 1866, the acreage returned to federal ownership in 1916.

Seventy-five percent of the net proceeds from the sale of timber from these properties is awarded to each applicable county.

The 1994 Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) was a legally mandated strategy to resolve the “timber wars” on federal lands managed by both the BLM and the US Forest Service (USFS). As part of this plan, federal lands considered essential habitat for the spotted owl, and other old-growth dependent species, were designated as *Late Successional Reserves (LSRs)*.

The BLM has proposed to increase in the timber harvest level on O&C lands. Pressure to increase harvest levels on Forest Service land is also likely. My views on this topic, as a retired USFS analyst, follow.

While regeneration harvests are generally not permitted in LSRs, commercial thinning is allowed. Much of the acreage contained within LSRs was cut-over and reforested during the period from ~1940 to 1994. Very little thinning has occurred in these stands in the past 32 years.

Thinning these regenerated stands would open up the forest canopy, reduce the risk of stand-replacing fires, and result in healthier and more resilient forests.

The suppressed trees removed by thinning are tight grained. This dense wood is used for producing mass plywood panels and cross laminated timber. I support periodic commercial thinning of these stands to meet the intent of the NWFP.

On federal lands outside of the LSRs almost no harvesting has occurred in the past 32 years. Harvesting to provide early seral habitat for songbirds and other wildlife is needed in these areas.



2026 Board Members

Jim Merzenich — president
Christy Tye director — director, treasurer, scholarship co-chair
Jim Cota —director
Lauren Parks —director, membership chair
Anna Merzenich — director, secretary
Dan Lowrie— director
Greg Harty — director
Timbre White — director
Mike Barsotti — past president

2026 Board Members

Bonnie Marshall — scholarship co-chair
Lee Peterman— activities chair
Fay Sallee —4-H forestry education chair
Larry Mauter —publicity, Bob Mealy committee
Tim Otis — past president
Lorelle Sherman — OSU Extension agent
Colin Pyle — Linn County Sheriff's Office

In the short term, increasing the harvest on public lands may depress log prices and hurt small woodland owners. The Labor Day fires in 2020 burned more than 400 thousand acres of industrial land that will not be available to harvest for 40 years. Without additional harvests from public lands, mills may close.

Following wildfires, many oppose salvage logging and believe the forest should be left to recover on its own. While this strategy may be appropriate in wilderness areas it does not work on managed lands. In fact, without human intervention exotic scotch broom and blackberries quickly invade the site while non-native grasses compete with tree seedlings for moisture causing massive regeneration failure.

Roadless areas and unique habitats on federal land should still be managed with a lighter touch. Our family property abuts the *Oak Basin Area of Critical Environmental Concern*, which is a unique botanical area designated by the BLM. We jointly manage habitat to support the Fender's Blue butterfly.

To learn more about managing your forest property attend as many events as possible in the upcoming quarter. Event details are posted in the OSU Extension newsletter *The Needle* and on our website Linncountyswa.com.

Chapter volunteers of the year saluted

Joe and Shirley Holmberg honored for decades of service throughout 2026

By Jim Merzenich | LCSWA president

The American Tree Farm System (ATFS) was established to promote responsible forest management. The Oregon Small Woodlands Association (OSWA) helps our members manage their property to achieve ecologically sustainable tree farm goals.

Prior to European settlement frequent fires burned across the Willamette Valley. These fires maintained open stands of oak, ponderosa pine, and Douglas-fir as well as seasonally wet and dry prairies. After a wind, ice storm, or other event, fire cleared out the debris and undergrowth and provided a seed bed enabling conifers to regenerate and thrive.

Areas logged and not properly reforested, or areas of untended farmland, now suffer a different fate. Non-native grasses and shrubs quickly invade the site. These weeds utilize available soil moisture in our dry summers and prevent conifer seedlings from becoming established. Exotic invaders such as English hawthorn, Himalayan blackberries, and Scotch broom make sites unproductive to society and wildlife for decades. Our valley ecosystem is out of sync and is no longer capable of restoring itself. Tree-farmers help by restoring the land and showing neighbors that rehabilitation of even the smallest acreage is significant.

Tree farmers often buy land that has history of abuse because they cannot afford well-managed land with existing saw-timber. When clearing a site to replant, significant snags, downed logs, and riparian corridors for wildlife are retained. After planting the appropriate tree species, grasses and weeds around each seedling are controlled until the trees are "free to grow." Without this effort most planted seedlings would die from drought. Whether the primary interest is timber production, wildlife, or recreation, rehabilitated timber stands become a tree farmer's pride and legacy.

Joe and his wife Shirley Holmberg moved to Oregon and purchased property on Mt Hope Drive east of Lebanon in the year 2000. Joe retired from the Corps of Engineers in 2001 and then worked until 2007 with OSU Forestry Extension. Their tree farm was soon certified and both Joe and Shirley became Master Woodland Managers. Joe has actively assisted other tree farmers, OSU Extension, and the Linn county chapter of OSWA ever since.

For 20 years Joe helped select the County Tree Farmer of the year and organized tree farm tours. In 2016 Joe and Shirley represented Linn County in the tree farm competition. The commitment in the Holmberg

household runs deep. In addition to hosting many board meetings Shirley was the Linn County OSWA chapter treasurer for the past 10 years.

The Holmbergs exemplify the determination and spirit of tree farmers. Joe and Shirley are retired and could easily have spent their remaining years in town. They chose, instead, to buy 50 acres of hard-scrabble brush along with an uninhabitable century-old house. Their rehabilitated stands of oak, ash, and pine and their restored home are now a jewel in the local landscape and serve as an inspiration to others.

We were proud to honor Joe and Shirley Holmberg at the annual meeting as the Linn County Volunteers of the year for 2025.

Regrettably, Shirley passed Jan. 9. Her funeral was Feb. 27 in Albany.

Over the course of more than five decades, Shirley dedicated herself to volunteer work. Beyond her work with our woodlands group, she both worked and volunteered at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Albany.

Shirley will be laid to rest at Alturas Cemetery in Alturas, California, on Saturday, June 20.

OSWA director outlines goals

Annual membership meeting in Scio featured speakers, food and 4-Hers

By Larry Mauter | LCSWA member

Mike Cafferata is the new executive director for the Oregon Small Woodlands Association (OSWA). He was welcomed to Linn County Jan. 17 as a guest speaker at the Linn County Small Woodlands Association (LCSWA).

Cafferata explained OSWA has the four key values — fellowship, education, stewardship and advocacy.

He previewed upcoming “Show and Tell” opportunities incorporating zoom technology to reach audiences unable to attend live events.

He also touched on the need to improve the success rate of reforestation for small woodland owners.

The annual meeting opened with a potluck meal at noon at the Z Hall in Scio. Close to 60 people attended.

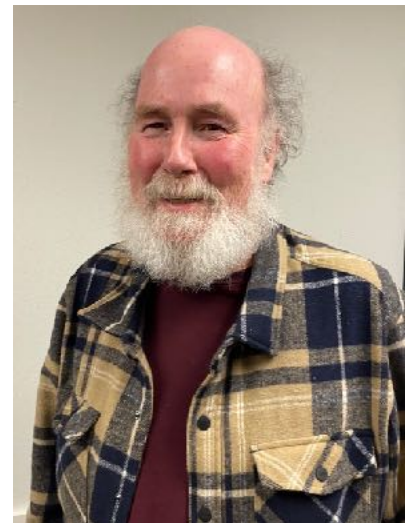
Among the business items, three members were elected to the board by the membership.

Christy Tye, Dan Lowrie and Greg Harty were each elected to three-year terms. Lowrie and Harty are new to the board. Tye is the current chapter treasurer.

Forestry 4-Hers provided displays of their work and oral reports. Faye Sallee, 4-H forestry leader said nine 4-Hers are enrolled in the program this year.



above: Dan Lowrie
below: Greg Harty



“It went very well for us,” she said. “The kids spoke up.”

Sallee said the focus of the presentations was October trail clearing. “Our theme was edible plants,” she added.

Another guest speaker at the meeting was Crystal Kelso, an Oregon State University Extension Service agent. She outlined resource programs available to woodland owners.

One of them, she pointed out, is the Master Woodlands Manager program. It’s a high-level course for private woodland owners interested in intensive forest management training and sharing that knowledge with people in their local communities.

The course is being offered beginning March 5 through May 21 every other Thursday at woodland sites in Benton, Linn, and Polk counties. For details see <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/mwm>.

Mike Barsotti, LCSWA past president, highlighted last year’s activities in a power point presentation.

LCSWA President Jim Merzenich introduced the membership to planned activities — more than a dozen events not including board meetings — in 2026. He also spoke about passing of three-long time members during 2025 — Bud Baumgartner, Shirley Holmberg and Karyn Callaway.

Door prizes, furnished by local businesses, were also part of the afternoon activities.

Members also heard reports on the annual seedling sale, a treasurer’s report and an update on the college scholarship program. Three university students are currently receiving financial assistance from seedling sale profits.



Forestry 4-Hers shared their plant books and other activities at the membership meeting. | Photo credit: Mike Barsotti



Jim Merzenich, LCSWA board president, solicits bids for a BroomMagic broom — one of the items offered at the annual meeting’s auction. | Photo credit: Mike Barsotti

The eagle has landed

Majestic chainsaw art bench is scooped up during LCSWA annual meeting

By Larry Mauter | LCSWA member

Peter and Anna Conerly didn’t show up at the Linn County Small Woodlands Association (LCSWA) annual meeting looking for a bargain.

But they came away with one.

A chainsaw-carved bench with an eagle perched on one side was their reward in a winning bid during the Jan.17 potluck gathering.

The membership meetings close with a fund-raising auction.

“It was in the front of the grange hall when Jim Merzenich announced that it was to be auctioned off, so Peter and I went over to take a closer look at it,” said Anna Conerly in an e-mail.

“We didn't actually discuss bidding on it. Peter just shot his hand up,” she said.

The winning bid was \$190.



Peter, Anna and Maya Conerly try out their new bench at the Z Hall in Scio Jan. 17 following the annual meeting of the Linn County Small Woodlands Association. | Photo credit: Mike Barsotti

The artist and age of the American folk art piece is unknown at this point.

LCSWA board member Jim Cota brought the item for auction. He said Mike Melcher bought the Douglas-fir piece at auction decades ago. “It was in the back shop for 20 years at least,” said Cota.

He said Melcher suggested it as an OSWA auction item.

“It probably weighs a couple hundred pounds,” said Cota. “They got a pretty good buy for themselves.”

“Peter was the one who was nudging the bids upward, and we really feel like we got a steal on it,” Anna Conerly said.

She is the conservation manager for the Corvallis-based Greenbelt Land Trust. The trust was formed in 1989 and is among 13 in the state.

“(Peter) and I both knew that it would be perfect for the grove. It’s (now) a lovely seating area right outside our dining room where we often eat meals and relax in the summer,” Conerly added. “It’s a centerpiece of art in our outdoor entertaining area.”

Overall, the auction raised \$460, according to LCSWA Treasurer Christy Tye.

BroomMagic brooms — the hardwood handles come from Linn County Tree farms — were also among the auctioned items.

A portion of the auction proceeds is donated to the historic Z Hall in Scio.

Seedlings dispersed

Volunteers are heart of effort to raise LCSWA scholarship funds

By Larry Mauter | LCSWA member

Volunteers totaled 390 hours over Valentine’s Day weekend to cap the 31st annual Linn County Small Woodlands Association (LCSWA) Seedling Sale.

After filling 163 pre-orders totaling 6,700 plants over two days, 4-Hers and LCSWA members returned Feb. 14 for plant pickups, with additional sales, plant displays and a Local Woods Fair.



Filling orders: Teams of 4-Hers and other volunteers filled 163 seedling pre-orders ahead of Feb. 14 | Photo credit: Mike Barsotti

Before Saturday, teams of 4-Hers, parents and other volunteers counted out orders, wrapped the goods in moist sawdust and newspapers and then bagged the order with correct paperwork.

“We started on Thursday at noon and were done on Friday by noon setting a new record,” said Fay Sallee, team leader of the 4-H Clever Clovers.

“Some of the volunteers also helped on Saturday handing out seedlings and answering questions from the customers,” she said. Total time recorded for the sale reached 390 hours, Sallee noted.



Selling seedlings: Saturday morning shoppers looked over merchandise at the Santiam Building at the Linn County fairgrounds. | Photo credit: Mike Barsotti

“It went smooth this year and I saw a lot of happy customers,” said Lena Tucker, seedling sale chair. “Our day of sale credit card transactions totaled \$1,408 net,” she said.

“Less expenses, we will net about \$8,000 from the sale to go towards student scholarships,” according to Christy Tye, LCSWA treasurer.

“We started with about 9,100 tree, shrub, flower and sword fern seedlings for sale,” Tucker said.

“We had minimal leftovers and Jim Cota and I were able to find the leftover pine, redwood, incense cedar and a few assorted shrubs a home last week,” she added.



Orders ready for pickup: About \$8,000 was raised this year to fund university and 4-H scholarships. | Photo credit: Mike Barsotti

“On ‘our’ side of the hall, the crowds seemed somewhat larger this year, or at least equal to the busiest of the past events,” said LCSWA member Lee Peterman.

He is the coordinator for the Local Woods Fair, a showplace for local wood artisans who find customers among people picking up plant orders.

“Generous donations from those vendors who had a good show were gratefully accepted and deeply appreciated,” said Peterman. “The information booths seemed to be constantly busy and making good networking connections.”

All of the flowering perennials (Narrowleaf mule-ears, Meadow checkermallow, Red Columbine and Slender cinquefoil) were very popular, Tucker said. The few that remained after the pre-orders were packed were sold fast the day of the sale, she noted.

“Our customers also enjoyed some new varieties of shrubs this year. Yellow twig dogwood and Lemonade sumac were popular,” said Tucker.

Sources for this year’s sale include 7 Oaks Nursery in Corvallis, Scholls Valley Native Nursery in Forest Grove, and Drakes Crossing Nursery in Silverton. LCSWA members Steve and Katie Kohl supplied the sword ferns, added Tucker.

Once again the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis donated live potted Douglas-fir trees for the sale. They purchase and pot trees for their fellowship for living Christmas trees.

Those that don't get planted outdoors are donated to LCSWA to support the scholarship program.

The Sale date for next year is Saturday, Feb. 13. We anticipate the opening of the online store for pre-orders around the first part of December 2026.

OSU grad looks forward

Joseph Passenant has earned natural resources degree aided by LCSWA scholar money

By **Bonnie Marshall** | LCSWA scholarship co-chair

Every February the Linn County Small Woodlands chapter hosts a very successful seedling sale. Proceeds from this fundraiser are used to provide several college scholarships to local students studying forestry, natural resources, or a closely related major, as well as financial awards for local 4-H students.

The scholarship committee is proud to highlight **Joseph (Joey) Passenant**, who has received one of our scholarships for the past four years. He will be graduating in June from Oregon State University with a Bachelor of Science in Natural Resources and a specialty in Ecological Restoration.

Joseph is looking forward to working in ecological restoration or forest-based conservation where he can work in planning actions and getting his hands dirty.

He has a summer job lined up with Albany Parks & Recreation, working mostly with the city’s trees. He is interested in other forest restoration work.

When asked if he had any words of wisdom for current or incoming students, his response was: “Find a way you study and/or work best. Understanding how you work/learn best is very helpful for making your academic life easier.” Joseph also stressed the importance of familiarizing yourself with any technology you use as some functions are more helpful when you learn them early on.

His final tip was to “maintain a social life or at least something to keep you grounded,” as that helped get him through some rough academic moments.



June OSU graduate Joey Passenant greeted LCSWA members during the annual meeting | Photo credit: Mike Barsotti

Joseph also shared several things that surprised him during his college studies including “open note” exams (which mirrored real-life applications of the information), the positive and useful experiences gained from labs, and the intensive number of scientific articles used in some classes. While he found these articles interesting, it was sometimes challenging dealing with the “jargon” and frequent referencing of sources.

The Linn County Small Woodlands Association is pleased to have been a part of Joseph’s college experience and see him regularly at our annual meeting, tours and the seedling sale. Joseph states, “this scholarship helped me majorly. I’m super grateful for the support I received, along with the people I got to interact with through this scholarship.”

Opening up the woods

Melcher, Cota host pulp processing activity at Fun Forest

By Jim Merzenich | LCSWA president

We arrived at 12:15 p.m. Feb. 24 and the hosts invited us to their warming fire. Hot coffee, water, soda, and snacks were provided.

On the two days preceding the tour we had three inches of rain and local streams were at flood stage. This did not deter people from attending and enjoying the Linn County Small Woodlands Association (LCSWA) event. We expected nine attendees and 17 showed up.

The 22-year-old stand that was being thinned is adjacent to the Fun Forest barn. This stand was planted at about an eight-foot spacing and contained more than 600 trees per acre.

While standing alongside the road we watched Chris Melcher run the cut-to-length harvester which cut each tree and then laid it horizontal to de-limb it. The machine was calibrated to separate the larger diameter “chip and saw” logs from the smaller pulpwood logs. The entire process takes about 30 seconds per tree. The cut limbs

are left on the ground and used as a cushion for the processor.

Melcher is a practicing forester and graduate of Oregon State University. After the demonstration Melcher described the machine calibration and the reasoning for thinning the stand. He also described how trees self-prune dead branches over a short period of years.

After this demonstration host Jim Cota led a road tour where we viewed stands ranging from 20 to 80 years of age that had been managed and thinned over time. Hearing the life history of each stand, we learned that Fun Forest current owners are efficiently managing their land and stands for the generations to come.

The Linn County Chapter’s summer picnic will be held at the Fun Forest Barn on Saturday, July 18. We will have additional tours of their tree farm at that event.



left: Chris Melcher looks over a patch of Douglas-fir that was just thinned with a cut-to-length harvester | right: Rain gear was in order Feb. 24 as tour attendees witnessed thinning of a 22-year-old stand north of Berlin Road. | Photo credit: Jim Merzenich



Full slate of dates

LCSWA plans woodland events, activities

By Larry Mauter | LCSWA member

A full year of activities relating to woodlands management has been scheduled by the Linn County Small Woodlands Association (LCSWA).

Board President Jim Merzenich presented an outline of the calendar events at the Jan. 17 annual membership meeting.

He emphasized the activities are open to all members as well as the general public interested in tree farming. "Other ideas on tours, workshops, and other topics to cover are welcome," said Merzenich. "We need members to volunteer for our planning committee."

He is also scheduling one-hour presentations ahead of the quarterly board meeting — open for all OSWA members and guests.

In February, the scholarship fundraising 31st annual seedling sale and Local Woods Fair was held the weekend of Feb. 14.

Another February event featured a pulp thinning tour in 22-year old Douglas-fir stand.

March events included Woodland Information Night, in Corvallis, a board of directors meeting and a workshop on noxious weeds at the Oak Basin Tree Farm.



A hike to Gordon Meadows is scheduled July 1. The wildflower tour in 2025 was a success. Lorelle Sherman, our OSU Extension Service agent, has agreed to lead another visit. | Photo credit: Larry Mauter

Upcoming Linn County Activities | April-June

Wildflower/Bird Walk: Saturday, April 4: 10 am to 1 pm. **Registration required**

Woodpecker loop, Finley Wildlife Refuge (south of Corvallis). On this tour, sponsored jointly by the Benton and Linn County chapters, we will identify both wildflowers in bloom and native birds.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/linn-benton-small-woodlands-association-spring-plant-walk-tickets-1984161596748?aff=oddtcreator>

Camas Springs Property tour: Fri May 1: 10 am – 1:00 pm **Registration required**

38717 Crawfordsville Drive, Sweet Home

Natural soda springs attract Band-Tailed pigeons to this site. View large Incense cedar and other native plants on a restored site. The tour will occur when pigeons have arrived for the summer and camas is in bloom. Host Phillip Callaway's wife Karyn, who passed away in 2025, will be honored.

Dragonfly Ranch tour: Saturday May 30 10 am to 2 pm **Registration required**

33691 Totem Pole Rd, NE of Lebanon

Landowners Dan and Sandre Nelson will be our hosts. On a walking tour we will view restored oak stands abutting managed wetlands on One Horse slough. View active beaver dams providing habitat for river otters, and waterfowl. Wildflowers will be in bloom and native birds should be active. Lunch will be provided.

LCSWA board of directors meeting: Thursday June 4. All members and potential members are welcome to attend. Location is near Waterloo at Mauter Family Tree Farm, 32181 Bellinger Scale Road.

Linn County Tree Farm Of the Year Tour: *Registration required*

Saturday, June 20. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Larry and Nancy Mauter will be our hosts. Nancy's pollinator garden will be featured. The couple rehabilitated a 15-acre site they purchased in 1997. Their forest is diverse but is dominated by Douglas-fir and Willamette Valley Ponderosa pine. Lunch will be provided. Location is 32181 Bellinger Scale Road, near Mallard Creek Golf Course.

OSWA annual meeting and State Tree Farmer of the Year tour: June 25 - 27 Douglas County won the state TFOTY competition in 2024. Their OSWA chapter will host this event at the Bar-K Guest Ranch near Elkton.

July - December

Gordon Meadows: Wednesday July 1: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

These meadows are located at 4,000-foot elevation east of Sweet Home in a Forest Service roadless area. The wildflower tour in 2025 was a success. Lorelle Sherman, our OSU Extension agent, has agreed to do a repeat. A work party to help restore these meadows is also possible later in the summer. We will carpool from the Oregon Department of Forestry office in Sweet Home. High clearance vehicles are needed to access the trail-head. Vehicles and clothing must be weed free to visit this site.

Linn County OSWA Summer picnic and tour: July 18 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Jim Cota and Mike Melcher will host this event at the Fun Forest Barn on Berlin Ridge Road. This will include tours on the Fun Forest Tree Farm. This tree farm, managed by the Cota and Melcher families, was the Western Regional tree farm of the year in 2010.

Rogers Mountain Tree Farm Tour: August TBD

We will view a 40-year-old Douglas stand being commercially thinned using cut-to-length methods, a recently built farm pond, and managed conifer plantations. Land use issues affecting tree farms in Linn County will also be discussed.

Reforestation Workshop Tour: Aug-Sept.: This will be an evening classroom event followed by a tour. The target audience are private landowners planning a harvest in the next year, regardless of whether they belong to OSWA or not. We expect to get funds from OFRI for this event and have the support of the executive board.

LCSWA board of directors meeting: Thursday Sept. 3. All members are encouraged to attend. Time and location will be announced.

Mill Tour: September-October: Location and Date TBD

My preference is to have a tour of the Sierra-Pacific mill on Hwy 99 S of Junction City. I have toured the mill with Lane County members and have sold logs to this mill. It's the closest mill to our farm south of Brownsville. We ask our members to make more suggestions.

Sunnyside Park pine restoration: October *TBD*

The Bob Mealey demonstration Ponderosa pine stand near Foster Lake needs our help. This would be a "breakfast" event to clear out blackberries and other noxious weeds while pruning the trees, if necessary. We chose October to avoid creating problems with the Ips bark beetle.

LCSWA board of directors meeting: Thursday Dec. 3. All members and guests are invited. Location and time of meeting will be announced later.

Contact Merzenich at jim@oakbasin.com