



The Quarterly Bark

Volume 32 | Issue 4

October 2025

Happy Forest Products Month!

Even if national Forest Products Week isn't for three more weeks, Oregon's forests—and the people who work in, steward and love them as only small woodlands owners can—certainly deserve a full month of celebration. In that spirit, this is a very full issue of *The Bark*. Apologies for its size, but it is shared in the hope that you will discover things you didn't know and be inspired to sign up for the next tour or workshop or Tree School.

Celebrating Family Forests

OTFS Annual Meeting Set for November 15

Join the Oregon Tree Farm System for the Annual Members Meeting and Awards & Recognition Luncheon on Saturday, November 15 at the Polk County Fairgrounds, from 9-2:30pm (doors open at 8:30am). The morning will include a keynote from Ann Stinson, author of *The Ground at My Feet: Sustaining a Family and a Forest*. After lunch, County Tree Farmers of the Year from Columbia, Grant, Lane and Yamhill counties will be honored. As Jim Merzenich said in 2022, every tree farm and every tree farmer has a story that's worth sharing. Be reminded how true that is as each candidate video plays. How wonderful it is to be part of such a remarkable community of dedicated land stewards!

Go to the Eventbrite link below to register.

Registration is open
through November 7.

We hope to see you there!



OTFSAnnual2025.eventbrite.com

In this Issue

General News & Notes

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

Benton County

Lane County

Lincoln County

Linn County



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Editor: Kate McMichael

To offer
contributions to an
upcoming edition,
please contact:
[quarterly.bark.23@
gmail.com](mailto:quarterly.bark.23@gmail.com)

Staying in the know

KnowYourForest.org has been updated



Know Your Forest

The Partnership for Forestry Education has updated its KnowYourForest.org website, which serves as a gateway to the information, tools and educational opportunities available to Oregon's forest landowners.

The Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI), founding member of the Partnership for Forestry Education, worked in close collaboration with partnership members, which include government, nonprofit and private organizations, to update the website and ensure it provides the most current information and [educational resources](#) available to forest landowners. Visitors to the site can find information on topics such as forest management planning, forest health, wildlife and forest habitat, timber harvest and sale, and forest protection laws. The updated website also includes an [assistance map](#) aimed at helping landowners across Oregon easily access information about agencies, organizations and other groups offering forestry assistance in their local areas, along with a [calendar](#) of upcoming forestry education events offered by partnership members.

OFRI led this most recent update to the site, which went live in late August. Additional funding for the project was provided in part by a U.S. Forest Service grant for small forest landowner education administered through the Oregon Department of Forestry.



Partnership for
Forestry Education

The [Partnership for Forestry Education](#) is a collaborative group of state, federal and private organizations that provide valuable educational resources to Oregon's forest landowners, managers and operators.



Oregon State
University



Oregon Forest
Resources Institute



SOCIETY OF
AMERICAN
FORESTERS
OREGON



American Forest Foundation



ecotrust

COMMITTEE FOR
FAMILY
FORESTLANDS

WFCA

And the Survey Says...

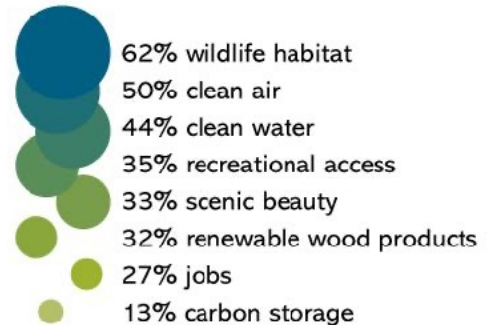
By Jordan Benner | Director of Communications, OFRI

The Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) conducts public awareness research every year, often in coordination with our educational advertising. In addition, about every five years, OFRI conducts a more in-depth research survey. Earlier this year, OFRI's Forest Values and Beliefs survey, conducted by DHM Research, asked 800 Oregonians their opinions about, and knowledge of, forests and forest management in Oregon. Here are some takeaways from the research.

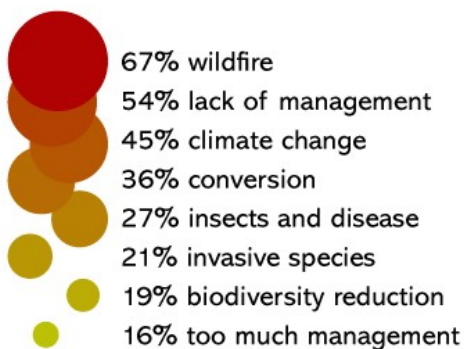
Oregonians' top forest values: wildlife habitat, clean air, clean water

Over the years, OFRI has asked the public, "Which forest benefit do you value the most?" Although some values move up and down the rankings, the top three rarely do. Wildlife habitat ranked as the public's No. 1 forest value this year, followed by clean air and clean water.

Forest values, ranked ("in your top three")



Forest threats, ranked ("in your top three")



Oregonians' top forest threat: wildfire

OFRI also asked, "What are the biggest threats to Oregon's forests?" In response, 67% ranked wildfire as one of the top three threats. Additional questions related to fire showed that Oregonians prefer taking action to reduce the risk of wildfire, rather than leaving forests alone. They also support logging trees that have been burned by wildfire.

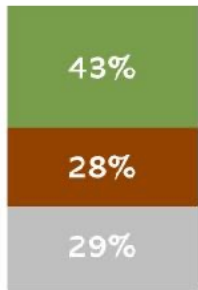
Oregonians remain positive about forestry, but less so

When asked their general impression of the forestry and wood products industry, 65% of respondents submitted a favorable opinion. Two-thirds is a positive result; however, it's a smaller percentage than in 2019, when 74% of Oregonians held a favorable impression of the forest sector. When asked why they had a favorable impression of forestry and wood products, this year's top response was "jobs" (19%). For those who had an unfavorable impression, the primary reason was "clearcutting" (16%).

Impressions of the forestry and wood products industry



Who owns the most forestland in Oregon?

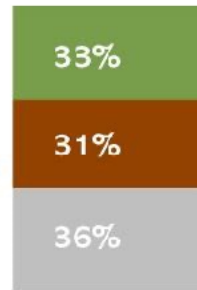


Answered Correctly

Answered Incorrectly

Unsure

Where does most of Oregon's timber supply come from?



Choices: Private, Federal Government, State Government, Tribes, not sure

Who owns the forest? The majority don't know

The majority of those surveyed didn't know who owns the forests of Oregon, or where the timber supply comes from. When asked, "Who owns the most forestland in Oregon?" and provided with the choices of federal government, state government, private landowners or tribes, only 43% of the public knew the correct answer: the federal government. When asked, "Where does most of Oregon's timber supply come from?" and given the same choices, only 33% of the public were aware that the majority of our timber comes from private forests.

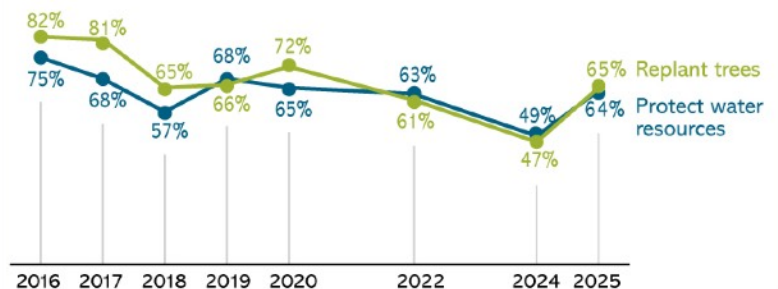
Knowledge of forest protection laws is declining

Over the years, OFRI has monitored the public's general understanding of a few forest practice laws. The questions have remained consistent over the decades:

- Does Oregon law require forest landowners to replant trees after logging?
- Does Oregon law require protection of streams and aquatic habitat in forests that are managed for timber production?

Over 6 in 10 are aware of Oregon's laws around replanting trees and protecting water resources

Percentage of "Yes" responses



OFRI has seen a slight, gradual decline in understanding of these basic laws over time. These are yes and no questions. For the most part, declines are the result of people moving from a "yes" response to one of "not sure." We see this shift — from positive knowledge and opinion to neutral or uncertain — in a number of other survey questions as well.

What to make of this data?

There's more to this research project than the highlights shown here. Overall, there's a decline in understanding about the forest sector in Oregon. Some results indicate more uncertainty than in years past. However, overall impressions of forestry and wood products are still positive, and this provides an opportunity for all of us. At OFRI, we believe the key to raising public awareness is education. That doesn't come from one person, one organization or one agency. Everyone plays a part — including you — to help family, friends and communities understand more about Oregon's forests and forest sector.

See the full report at OregonForests.org.

Lessons from New Growth

Margaret Miller

As many of you know, over the past six months I've been tending to a very special seedling: my daughter, Bernadette! Some of you even had the chance to meet her at the Family Forest Convention this past June. I'm so thankful for the time I had to devote to her. Maternity leave was its own season — one of slowing down, practicing patience and seeing the world through a fresh lens.

Coming back, I can't help but notice how much caring for a baby and caring for a forest have in common. With both, you're in it for the long haul, celebrating the milestones along the way. As landowners, you know that so much of what you do is about investing in what's ahead. Planting seedlings, creating wildlife habitat and controlling invasives aren't tasks that always yield instant results. They're acts of trust that the care and attention we give today will continue to grow and provide benefits for years to come. The goal in both forestry and parenthood is to grow something strong and resilient.

As a landowner, you turn to your management plan as a compass for decision-making, just as I find myself turning to parenting books for help. Both offer direction for today while reminding us to think about the next stage. Looking ahead is where succession planning comes in. I know it isn't an easy topic, because no one likes to picture the day they won't be here. In the same way, as a new mom, I don't like to think about how quickly my baby is growing. But we know children do inevitably grow up, just as forests outlast any one generation. So, taking time to plan for the future, whether it's by talking about goals with family members or putting together a formal succession plan, helps ensure that the care we put in today carries forward.

Our forests remind us that the stewardship we practice now shapes the world our children and grandchildren will inherit. My encouragement to you is to keep being stewards of the land and to make space for bigger conversations, including succession planning, to ensure your forestry values live on. If you haven't already, please visit the Oregon State University Extension Service's events page, where you can find numerous trainings happening this fall as part of our [Ties to the Land: Succession Planning for Forestland Owners](#) program.

You'll also want to explore the Partnership for Forestry Education's newly updated [KnowYourForest.org](https://www.knowyourforest.org) website. It's a one-stop hub for forest landowners, offering tools, publications and information to support you at every stage of ownership.

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

And just for fun, enjoy this photo of my baby on her very first forestry tour. Here's to growing our knowledge as we grow our forests!



Margaret Miller, CF
Forest Landowner Education
Manager
Oregon Forest Resources Institute

The Oregon Forest Resources Institute and partners are hosting the inaugural Forest Wildlife Research Summit Oct. 30 at Oregon State University in Corvallis to highlight scientific research on the habitat needs of forest-reliant wildlife and their response to forest management actions.



Oregon's forests provide habitat for a wide range of wildlife species, and forest managers play a key role in supporting them. Ongoing research offers crucial insights on the needs of individual species, as well as the effects of various management strategies.

The Forest Wildlife Research Summit, scheduled from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at OSU's CH2M HILL Alumni Center, will provide the opportunity for scientists, forest managers, woodland owners, students and others with an interest in forest wildlife to discuss current research on the diverse array of wildlife species that depend on forests. Summit sessions will cover a variety of topics related to wildlife research in Oregon, including disturbance and early seral ecosystems, late seral ecosystem management and conservation, and the role of fire and fire-associated species. The summit will also feature a panel discussing how research translates to on-the-ground habitat management.

OFRI is organizing and sponsoring the event, which is free to attend, in partnership with the OSU College of Forestry, OSU Extension Service, and National Council for Air and Stream Improvement Inc.

For more information and to register for the summit, go to forestwildlifesummit.eventbrite.com.



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.

Melittoflora: A tool for selecting plants for native bees

By Andony Melathopoulos, Pollinator Health Extension Specialist, Oregon State University

If you're a small woodland owner interested in incorporating restored areas for native bees, you'll be confronted by a myriad of plant lists. The trouble with these lists of plants is that they're often the product of informal observation, which can be biased towards visits by common bees. Such common bees — such as honey bees, many species of bumble bees and sweat bees (genus *Halictus*) — are ubiquitous and not at any risk of decline. One can think of shrubs such as lavender, oregano and heather, or chokecherries (*Prunus virginiana*). Bees will reliably visit all of these — just not the more uncommon and rare bees.

Up until now, the only place to find information on the rarer bee-plant interactions came from musty old journal articles authored by the handful of professional melittologists (scientists who study wild bees). Not anymore. Back in 2018, Oregon State University launched the Master Melittologist program that broke through the professional barriers of melittology by training anyone with interest on how to document the occurrence of different bee species on different plants. In Oregon, this effort is known as the Oregon Bee Atlas, but there are also atlases in Washington state, British Columbia, Idaho and New Mexico, all staffed by volunteer Master Melittologists trained from OSU. In Oregon, volunteers have documented over 150,000 bees visiting over 1,700 plant species. The Oregon dataset is now the largest of its kind in the world.

Earlier this year, OSU launched a new tool to help professionals on working lands explore the vast Oregon Bee Atlas dataset. The tool is called Melittoflora, and it can be accessed online at the OSU website. The tool consists of a map with all the records of the Oregon Bee Atlas plotted, projected across Oregon's nine Level III ecoregions (Figure 1). The motor behind the Melittoflora tool is a series of filters that allow professionals to narrow down the data by region, elevation or month in order to visualize only the bees and bee-plant interactions they're interested in (Figure 2). These interactions are depicted graphically using a bipartite graph color coded to each of the six families of Oregon bees (Figure 3). The width of the

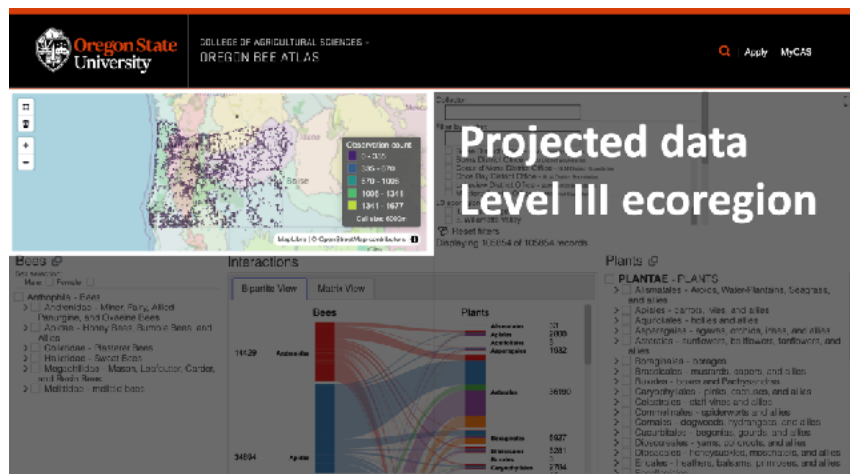


Figure 1: Map component of Melittoflora tool

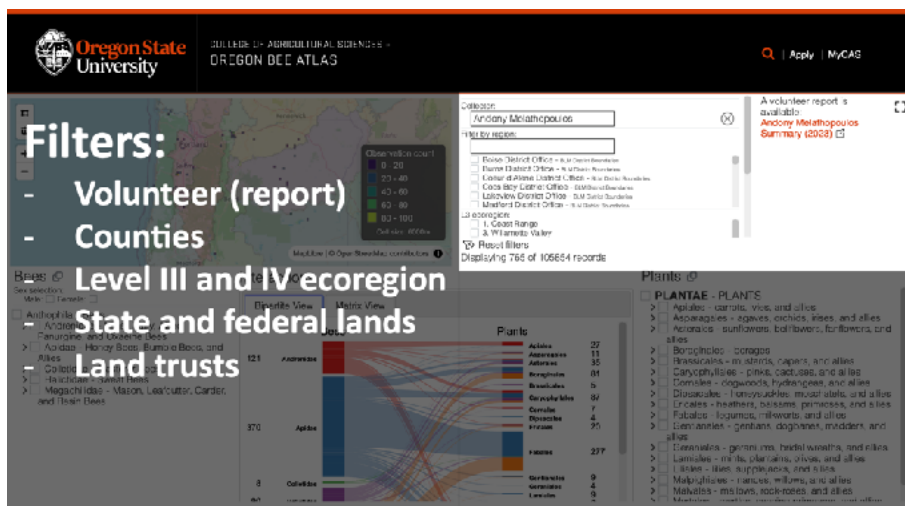


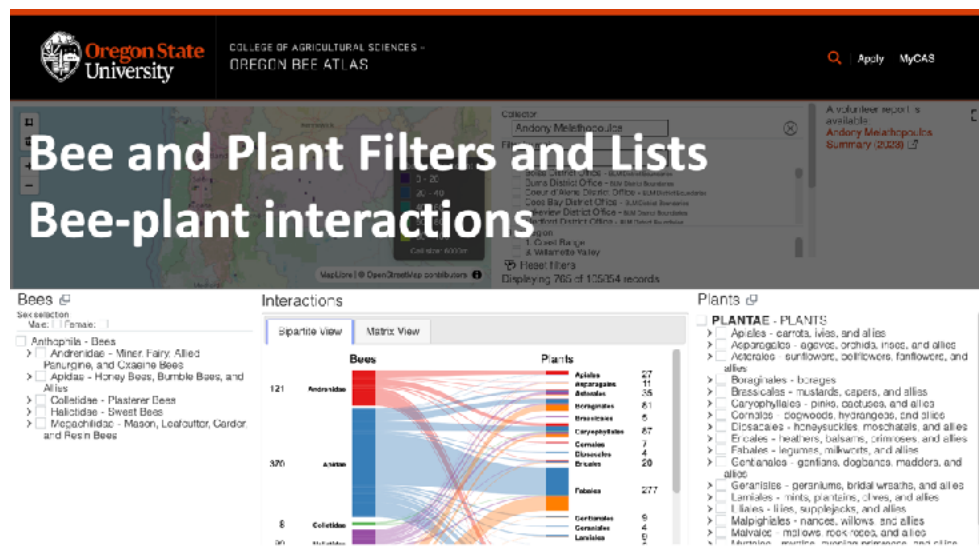
Figure 2: Regional and seasonal filter components of Melittoflora

bar in the bipartite graph indicates the strength of the interaction between the bee and plant taxa. Plant and bee lists can be copied at any point in the filtering process, and multiple filters can be applied simultaneously.

If you're interested in seeing all the bee visitors to the perennial -heal all(*Prunella vulgaris*) in the Willamette Valley, for example, you can simply filter to the Willamette Valley Level III ecoregion, then click down the Lamiales on the plant side until you come to the genus *Prunella*. You'll see a graph of the visitors to -heal all, and you

can use this tool to compare the bee species composition for different potential seed mixes by selecting the plants in each mix and comparing the number of interactions across all the plants in the mix.

The potential benefits of Melittoflora for restoration work in woodlands are broad, and we're only scratching the surface of how this tool can be used. We anticipate many new functions will become available over the coming year, so stay tuned.



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/>

Breathe

Cheryl Friesen

Breathe in. Breathe out. Breathe in. Breathe out. So necessary for human life that our bodies do it automatically. In. Out. As you sit on a log aside a sun dappled trail, you can almost feel the oxygen coursing through your veins. In. Out.

We all learned in junior high that plants, including trees, also “breathe” – taking in carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen and water through leaf pores called stomata. Known as “photosynthesis,” this is an essential process for life on earth. Chris Still, a scientist at HJ Andrews Experimental Forest, did some deeper thinking on this phenomenon: he wondered, in a warming climate with very hot, dry summer days, do trees control their “breathing” to conserve moisture? When humans -- and trees -- exhale, water vapor is released with each breath (why we get dehydrated on hot, dry days). Chris found that trees have the ability to close their stomata pores when relative humidity falls to a critical level. Water is conserved, but at the expense of photosynthesis. The absence of evaporative cooling also puts their leaves at an increased risk of dangerous warming. This begs the question: is there a threshold where this adaptation begins to work against itself? On hot, dry days, are the trees feeling like an overheated asthmatic? Wanting to gulp for air, but unable, they patiently wait for nightfall, when temperatures drop and moistures recover. Breathe in. Breathe out. Breathe in. Breathe out. Next time you sit in the shade on a hot day, along a sun-dappled trail, listen. Sense the effort being undertaken by the trees around you to survive. To thrive. To breathe -- in and out.



Ties to the Land: Succession Planning for Forestland Owners comes to Benton County

Oct 24th, 2025 | 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

\$40 per family

4077 SW Research Way, Sunset Room |
Corvallis, OR 97333

This workshop is designed for forestland owners interested in planning for the future. We will cover a succession planning framework designed to meet your own vision and goals for your rural property. Learn tips for dividing the succession planning process into manageable sections. We will cover considerations for holding family meetings, developing a succession plan timeline and strategies for engaging your successors.

Multiple generations for each family are encouraged to attend this workshop.

Snacks and drinks provided!

pre-registration is required!

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/benton/events/ties-land-succession-planning-forestland-owners>

TREE SCHOOL LANE

October 25, 2025 • Churchill High School, Eugene

Something for everyone

Classes on forest management, wildfire preparedness, forest health, weed management, wildlife habitat, forest fungi, and more!

New this year: two new class tracks dedicated to oak research and management and urban forestry!

Registration

- Early bird fee: \$65 through 10/8
- Fee increases to \$75 on 10/9
- Deadline: 10/19

Register: beav.es/Tree-School-Lane

Full catalog
available online.
For a paper
catalog or more
information call
541-237-6808.

**32
EXCITING
CLASSES
to choose
from!**

OSU Extension Service prohibits discrimination in all its programs, services, activities and materials. Accommodation requests related to a disability should be made by October 9, 2025, to Carrie Mack: 541-237-6808 or carrie.mack@oregonstate.edu.



**Oregon State
University**



Join us on **October 25 at Churchill High School in Eugene**, for a day packed with forestry education, expert-led sessions and networking with fellow woodland enthusiasts.

Whether you're a seasoned landowner or just starting your forestry journey, Tree School Lane has something for you!

Registration closes
October 19

No walk-in registration available

Register TODAY!

Some classes are already wait-listed —although there are still great options available.

Classes & Demonstrations

Exhibitors & Vendors

Meet new people & greet old friends

See the full catalog and register online at
<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/lane/events/tree-school-lane>.

Join OSU Extension and Women
Owning Woodlands Network
(WOWNet) for a festive forest
decor workshop! Make wreaths,
centerpieces and swag with
greenery harvested from the
woods. Learn about native trees
and shrubs, non-timber forest
products, and the best ways to
harvest materials from your
woodland. Each participant will
take home their creation.
Greenery and decorations
are provided.
Come create festive decorations
with other women landowners!

Registration required: [https://
extension.oregonstate.edu/
lane/events/festive-forest-
holiday-decor-workshop](https://extension.oregonstate.edu/lane/events/festive-forest-holiday-decor-workshop)



THE FESTIVE FOREST A HOLIDAY DECOR WORKSHOP

In collaboration with Women Owning Woodlands Network

Fee: \$20 per person
Space is limited, registration required

Register online: beav.es/xde



**Oregon State University
Extension Service**

Saturday, November 22
10 am - 12 pm
OSU Extension office
996 Jefferson St, Eugene

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



MASTER WOODLAND MANAGER TRAINING

Benton County, OR

**SPRING
2026**

More info coming soon!

Questions? Contact crystal.kelso@oregonstate.edu
or (541) 730-3539

Save the Date!

March 2026- May 2026

Field Locations across Benton, Linn
and Polk Counties

Registration opens this Fall

To get on the interest list:
crystal.kelso@oregonstate.edu
(541) 730-3539

Save the Date!

The Committee for Family Forestlands



OSWA members serving on the CFF:

Watch September's annual
report to the Board of Forestry
on Youtube:

The Committee's report begins at roughly 24:17

Dave Bugni

NW Oregon

Gary Jensen

SW Oregon

Maurizio Valerio

Eastern Oregon

Kate McMichael

at large

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 2026 meeting calendar will be published in the January issue of *The Bark*.



SFO Office Update

Investing in Fish Habitat on Family Forestlands

In 2024, the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) launched the Small Forestland Investment in Stream Habitat Program (SFISH). SFISH provides grants to eligible small forestland owners (SFOs) for projects that improve fish habitat on their land. Examples of eligible SFISH projects include replacing water crossings on fish-bearing streams, repairing abandoned roads, and stabilizing road sections near streams.

SFISH is currently funding the replacement or removal of 27 culverts, which will improve access to nearly 60 miles of habitat for cutthroat trout, steelhead, Coho salmon, and redband trout. These projects are at various stages of development, with most scheduled for implementation next summer. A few projects are already underway, however, and some are nearing completion.

Interest in SFISH continues to grow, with nearly 50 projects waiting for funding. ODF encourages landowners to connect with their local ODF forester to explore opportunities and apply for SFISH support. When selecting projects, SFISH considers how long a landowner has been waiting for funding.

To learn more about SFISH, contact your local ODF forester or visit the SFISH webpage at www.oregon.gov/odf/pages/sfish-program.aspx.

Excavation work begins on an SFISH-funded project to replace an old culvert, making way for a new fish-friendly bridge.



Benton County Chapter News

Sharing Space with Wildlife

Diana Blakney

It shouldn't come as a shock to learn that your woodlands are home to a multitude of wildlife, some species being substantially larger than you are, possibly equipped with sharp claws and long teeth. Still, it is revelatory to see a lithe, golden cougar gracefully slipping through the woods on a trail you yourself tread on regularly! It is no less frightening when the sighting is via the game camera you placed.

I'm completely cool sharing space with deer, squirrels, salamanders and banana slugs. But I get chills when the game camera picks up an elk, a bear, or (gulp!) a cougar. I don't think it is because I am easily frightened or because I dislike these large animals. I think perhaps it is because they make me feel vulnerable. I mean, who hasn't read a headline such as "Innocent Woman Mauled by Hungry Cougar!"

It is true I lack basic knowledge of the big cats' history, culture, behaviors, habits, likes and dislikes. Therefore, I think it is time I face my fears by reading some of background materials available through Extension, OFRI, Oregon State and OSWA.

I'll let you know how it works out.



2025 Benton Small Woodlands Association Board Members

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



The Benton County chapter
would like to acknowledge
the life and contributions
of Dick Powell.

Our condolences go out
to his family.

We know he will be missed.

Richard "Dick" Leroy Powell passed away peacefully on July 30, 2025, after a courageous battle with cancer. He met his diagnosis with characteristic determination, never allowing it to dim his love for life, learning, and adventure. His boundless energy and can-do spirit defined him as a forester, educator, artist, and explorer of the natural world.

Born on November 24, 1944, in Mitchell, South Dakota, Dick moved with his family to McMinnville, Oregon at age 12, and shortly after to Corvallis, which became his lifelong home. He graduated from Corvallis High School in 1962 and earned his degree in Forest Management from Oregon State University in 1967.

Shortly after graduating from OSU, Dick joined the U.S. Air Force, serving as a Radio Intercept Analyst in Texas and Vietnam. He was stationed at numerous bases during his 4 year USAF career, including a year at DaNang AFB in 1969. In 1971 he was awarded an Air Force Commendation Medal. While stationed in San Antonio, fate brought him to a moment that would change his life; spotting Rachel, his future wife, being heckled by Bob Hope at a live performance. They officially met six months later in a wedding party and after a brief engagement, married on November 19, 1971.

In 1972, Dick began a 43-year career as a forester with Starker Forests. His early work focused on reforestation, timber harvests, road construction, and silvicultural burns. Over time, he became a respected representative of sustainable forestry practices, speaking at universities and forums across the state. But his greatest passion emerged in his later years-education. As Starker's first Public Outreach Forester, he developed and led tours along the Starker Forest Trail near Blodgett, teaching both kids and adults about forestry and the natural world. He was the lead organizer of the Benton County



Youth Natural Resource Forest Expo and helped facilitate the annual SF Tree Planting Day.

Known as "Tree Man" to the thousands of students and adults he guided, Dick had a special talent for making science approachable and fun. Up until 2024, Tree Man led nearly 1,800 participants each year in programs on tree identification, wilderness survival, soil science, and indigenous plant uses-often with his signature dry humor and warmth. He'd typically remind students, "Not all conifer cones are pine cones," and that soil isn't "just dirt."

Dick helped revive Corvallis Outdoor School and was instrumental in securing its statewide funding through the Oregon Lottery. He was also a co-founder of programs such as the Marys Peak Alliance, Forest Field Days, and one of his proudest initiatives: Kids Day for Conservation.

In addition to his educational outreach, Dick was a lifelong mentor. In the 1980s and 1990s, he volunteered with the Boy Scouts and Explorer Post and spent over a decade volunteering his time teaching woodturning to middle schoolers in Philomath-slyly sneaking in math lessons from behind the lathe. He served on numerous

boards, including Coast Range Natural Resources, Oregon Natural Resource Fund, Forests Today & Forever, the Oregon Logging Conference, Friends of Paul Bunyan Foundation, the Oregon Tree Farm System, and Philomath High School's Forestry Program. He was a 23-year member of the Willamette Valley Woodturners, serving as Vice President and Treasurer.

Dick's contributions earned him many awards, including: Boy Scouts District Award of Merit (1991) & Silver Beaver Award (1998), Oregon SAF Forester of the Year (1993), National SAF Outstanding Communicator Award (2005), Honorary Member of the Associated Oregon Forestry Clubs (2006), Mary Rellergert Forestry Education Award (2009), SAF "Fellow" (2014) and the Samaritan School Volunteer of the Year (2019).

In retirement, Dick found joy in woodturning-especially using salvaged or sentimental wood to create beautiful, one-of-a-kind bowls, vases, and baskets. He often gave the finished pieces back to the people who had provided the wood. He exhibited regularly at local craft shows and was a proud member of Gallery Calapooia in Albany. For Dick, the true reward wasn't in selling his art, but in connecting with his community and sharing stories.

He was never far from the forest. His hard hat and boots stayed on the front seat of his truck, and his bumper sticker, "Wood is Good!" summed up his lifelong passion.

He loved hiking and camping, especially around Mt. Jefferson, Mt. Hood, and, in later years, Larch Mountain overlooking the Columbia Gorge. He summited Mt. Hood more than once with his young son and never lost his childlike wonder for the natural world.

Tree Man's legacy lives on in the forests he nurtured, the students he inspired, and the countless lives he touched with his passion, humor, and generosity. Kids remember him for the mischievous twinkle in his eye and for his infamous peach cobbler. He was a man who never stopped learning, never stopped giving, and never stopped living. As one friend beautifully said, "Dick, may the Forest be with you."

Dick is survived by his wife of 53 years, Rachel; daughter Candi and spouse Jesse of Corvallis; son Jason and daughter-in-law Cassie of Ketchikan, Alaska; and his grandson, Henry. He was preceded in death by his parents, Frank and Doris Powell and twin daughter, Elizabeth Powell. He is also survived by his brother Ronald Powell and sister Verna Hill.

In lieu of flowers, the family encourages donations to: Elizabeth Powell Memorial Scholarship, c/o Willamette University, 900 State St., Salem, OR 97301 or Oregon Natural Resources Education Fund, OSAF Subfund: <https://www.onref.org/donate>.



Join our Facebook group here [BCSW FB Group](#).
Visit us online at <https://oswa.org/benton>
and watch for emails from our President, Diana Blakney.



Ties to the Land: Succession Planning for Forestland Owners comes to Benton County

Oct 24th, 2025 | 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
\$40 per family

4077 SW Research Way, Sunset Room |
Corvallis, OR 97333

This workshop is designed for forestland owners interested in planning for the future. We will cover a succession planning framework designed to meet your own vision and goals for your rural property.

Learn tips for dividing the succession planning process into manageable sections. We will cover considerations for holding family meetings, developing a succession plan timeline and strategies for engaging your successors.

Multiple generations for each family are encouraged to attend this workshop.

Snacks and drinks provided!

pre-registration is required!

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/benton/events/ties-land-succession-planning-forestland-owners>

Save the Date!

March 2026- May 2026

Field Locations across Benton, Linn
and Polk Counties

Registration opens this Fall

To get on the interest list:
crystal.kelso@oregonstate.edu
(541) 730-3539

**MASTER WOODLAND
MANAGER TRAINING**
Benton County, OR

**SPRING
2026**

More info coming soon!

Questions? Contact crystal.kelso@oregonstate.edu
or (541) 730-3539

Lane County Chapter News

Behind the Caricature Masks

Kate McMichael

A few weeks ago, I found myself (having said yes to a request from Mike Cafferata to attend as an OSWA representative since he was unable to do so) in a “working retreat” with people from California, Washington and Oregon. Titled *All Hands, All Lands: Cross-boundary collaboration for the more effective management and conservation of fully functioning mature and old forests in the Pacific Northwest, now and into the future*, the intent of the Monday-Thursday gathering was to bring people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives—from conservation groups to lawyers, land managers to regulators, scientists to forest investment managers—to find common language and strategies to address the role of older forests as a climate solution.

As a high introvert, I find being in large groups of people daunting—doubly so a group of strangers. Both from the title of the gathering and perusal of the roster and bios of attendees, I was a bit intimidated and more than a little anxious about just how out of place I would be in the conversations to come. As part of the opening session, we were asked to share hopes and fears for the days ahead. Listening to others around the circle made it clear that the range of perspectives on mature and older forests, on forest management, on rural economies and infrastructure, on the urgency of finding climate solutions and securing policy change was broad. My voice shook as I shared my own fear that “mature and older” trees would keep becoming younger and smaller until no cutting of trees would be allowed, until forest management was forbidden, with all the downstream impacts to forest health, forest products, rural communities, small landowners like us.

The next days were not always comfortable, but the conversations, both facilitated and casual, were thoughtful. Differing perspectives led to further conversation, unpacking the whys rather than assuming them. Although there were nametags, none of us were labeled. Without our caricature masks to get in the way, conversations ranged more widely and points of connection—our relationships, our cats, loved places, favorite foods—opened doors to deeper conversations about experiences and worries and struggles related to forests and forest stewardship. We walked, we shared meals, we discussed, we disagreed, we found areas of agreement, we laughed around the fire pit outside after dark. We



Lane County Board of Directors

Kate McMichael | President
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Gary Jensen | Past President
Gordon Culbertson
Dan Kintigh
Tim Gurton
Becca Fain
Theresa Hausser
Dan Menk | ODF
Lauren Grand | Extension



encountered one another as human beings first, as agencies and departments and organizations second.

In the listening and engaging, we discovered that our common ground—fire resilient, healthy, productive forests; thriving forest sector economies; engaged (and respected) forest managers and stewards—was solid enough to hold our differences. Standing on that ground, we committed to carry the momentum of our conversations forward, to craft pilot projects and cross-boundary partnership ventures, to find ways to share our successes and to invite others to the table.

Why do I share this? Because I was dreading the gathering because the initial description felt like a repackaging of the creeping broadening of what constitutes “old growth” and how we must protect it until any harvestable trees are out of bounds—and it wasn’t. I was happily surprised to find that even participants whose bios make me want to go in the opposite direction turned out to be people with whom I could find common ground around the vital role played by forest management.

And that gives me hope, both for the forestry conversation in the PNW, but also for Lane County. Yes, there are strident anti-forestry voices in Lane County that are loud in their “defense” of our watersheds, in their derision of both the tools for forest management and the fact of forest management itself—but they may not represent the prevailing sentiment. They are just loud.

Beneath all the noise are other voices. People like those I met at this conference. People willing to take off their caricature masks and engage, to be vulnerable, to be human. Committed, thoughtful people—committed to healthy landscapes, healthy communities, healthy respect for diverse views and experiences—can make a tangible difference to our forests and shared future, one step at a time, together.

and many thanks to T, for reading my first draft and asking “but so what?”

Upcoming Events

October 1

Lane County Forestry Education
Showcase
Public House | Springfield
4:30-6:30pm

October 25

Tree School Lane
Churchill High School
Eugene

Early bird pricing ends
October 8!

<https://beav.es/Tree-School-Lane>

Interested in exhibiting or
sponsoring? Reach out to
[Carrie Mack](#) or [Lauren Grand](#).

2025 Board Meetings

October 2

2:00-4:00pm | Springfield

December 4

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

Our 2026 meeting calendar will be
set at our December meeting.

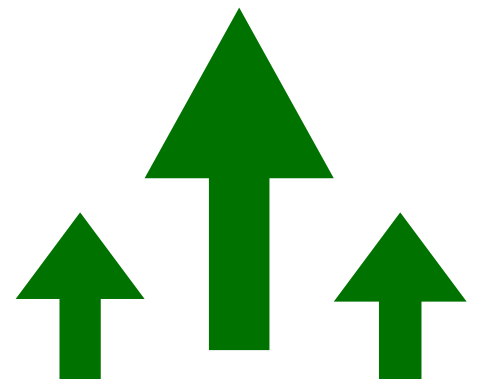
All members are welcome to attend!

In the Works

Annual Seedling & Native Plant Sale

February 7
Alton Baker Park

more details in the January issue of
The Bark—as well as on our website
& social media platforms



A volunteer opportunity and casual drop-in to celebrate forest products & forestry education in Lane County all in one!

Like last year, we'll be bagging up matchsticks for the Forests Today & Forever high school module on forest fire.

Join us for as little or as long as you like—and feel free to bring a box (or two or three) of 2" wood matches!

All are welcome!



interested IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT
FORESTS
FOREST PRODUCTS
AND FORESTRY EDUCATION
in Lane County

then join us!
October 1 | 4:30-6:30pm
PublicHouse | 418 A St #4606 | Springfield

Drop in, grab a beverage, learn more about Forest Products Month, local groups who are passionate about forests, and educational opportunities for learners of all ages.
(Look for the table of obviously fun women measuring out matchsticks.)

Oregon Women in Timber | To Root In | **FORESTS TODAY & FOREVER** | Oregon State University Extension Service | Central South Woodlands

TREE SCHOOL LANE

October 25, 2025 • Churchill High School, Eugene

Something for everyone

Classes on forest management, wildfire preparedness, forest health, weed management, wildlife habitat, forest fungi, and more!

New this year: two new class tracks dedicated to oak research and management and urban forestry!

Registration

- Early bird fee: \$65 through 10/8
- Fee increases to \$75 on 10/9
- Deadline: 10/19

Register: beav.es/Tree-School-Lane

Full catalog
available online.
For a paper
catalog or more
information call
541-237-6808.

32
EXCITING
CLASSES
to choose
from!

OSU Extension Service prohibits discrimination in all its programs, services, activities and materials. Accommodation requests related to a disability should be made by October 9, 2025, to Carrie Mack: 541-237-6808 or carrie.mack@oregonstate.edu.



Oregon State
University



Join us on **October 25 at Churchill High School in Eugene**, for a day packed with forestry education, expert-led sessions and networking with fellow woodland enthusiasts.

Whether you're a seasoned landowner or just starting your forestry journey, Tree School Lane has something for you!

Registration closes
October 19

No walk-in registration available

Register TODAY!

Some classes are already wait-listed—although there are still great options available.

Classes & Demonstrations
Exhibitors & Vendors
Meet new people & greet old friends

See the full catalog and register online at
<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/lane/events/tree-school-lane>.

Join OSU Extension and Women Owning Woodlands Network (WOWNet) for a festive forest decor workshop! Make wreaths, centerpieces and swag with greenery harvested from the woods. Learn about native trees and shrubs, non-timber forest products, and the best ways to harvest materials from your woodland. Each participant will take home their creation.

Greenery and decorations are provided.

Come create festive decorations with other women landowners!

Registration required: <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/lane/events/festive-forest-holiday-decor-workshop>



THE FESTIVE FOREST A HOLIDAY DECOR WORKSHOP

In collaboration with Women Owning Woodlands Network

Fee: \$20 per person

Space is limited, registration required

Register online: beav.es/xde

Saturday, November 22

10 am - 12 pm

OSU Extension office

996 Jefferson St, Eugene



**Oregon State University
Extension Service**

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

New Member Spotlight



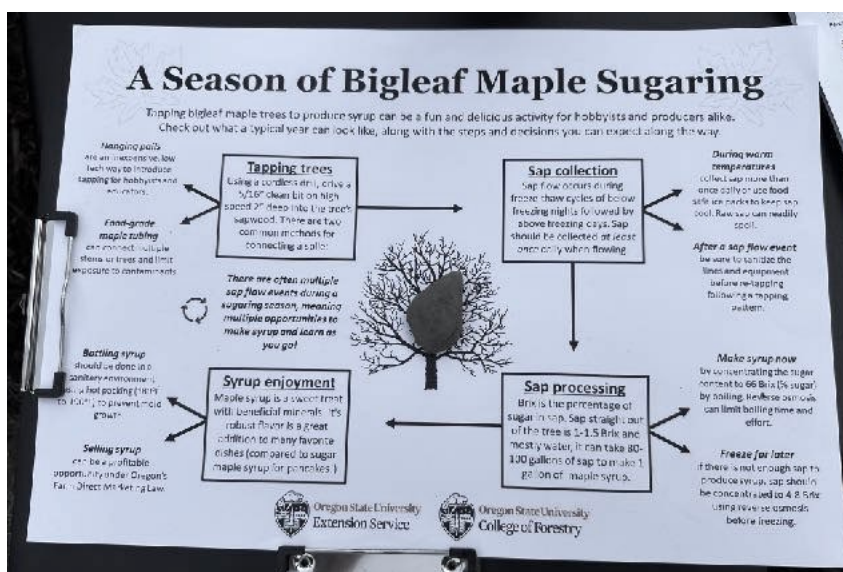
Welcome to LCSWA, Matt & Malia!

We welcome Malia McInerney and Matt Cordero to our Lane County Small Woodlands community! The couple makes a great addition to our membership and will help to spread OSWA's mission of Stewardship, Advocacy, Fellowship, and Education. Matt and Malia's goals center around creating a healthy, sustainable forest, and supporting small farmers. They have owned their forest land for about a year, and since it had been neglected for some thirty years, keep very busy prioritizing what needs to be done. Additionally, they lease part of their land to a local organic farm. In common with many of us, they are working to understand the choices involved with thinning, providing wildlife habitat, and managing wetlands. They say they have a steep learning curve, but have taken Lauren Grand's Management Planning class, so they are well on their way. Matt's penchant for physical labor, Malia's long-standing conservation ethic, and their combined love of their forest is heartwarming and ensures they will achieve their goals. We're grateful to Lauren for letting them know about OSWA and are so glad they joined! They will help amplify our voice to support the sustainability of Lane County's forest land.

Small Woodland Owners Out & About in Lane County



Learning about Maple Sugaring in the Mohawk Valley



*Intrigued? Want to learn more?
Our hosts are presenting at Tree School Lane on October 25!*

Doing trail work at HJ Andrews Experimental Forest



Celebrating—and Learning From—Linda & Dell Jensen, our 2025 Lane County Tree Farmers of the Year





Holiday Farm Fire, 2020 | Photo Credit: KLCC

WILDFIRE AND SMOKE SURVEY

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

[Survey Link](#)



Wildfire and smoke affect us all in Lane County. This short survey will help local agencies better understand how residents experience the impacts of wildfire hazards and smoke to improve how we support communities before, during, and after wildfire incidents.

We will also ask about your communication preferences so we can get you valuable information – from protecting your home to preparing for smoke to knowing when, how, and where to evacuate.

Your input will help us identify where we can improve our support for Lane residents to prepare, and live with, fire. The survey can be accessed using the links and QR codes below and will be available through **October 17, 2025**.

Creepy Crawlers

By Dan Kintigh

Vining plants such as Western Honeysuckle and Poison Oak will climb your trees and deform or girdle them. Climbing plants usually start making their way up the tree when it is young, but once it has established itself on the tree, it will remain and can girdle young re-prod near the tops. This weakening is particularly harmful in the event of a severe weather such as the ice storm last winter. The tops are much more susceptible to breaking, but the girdling alone may kill the top.

Recently, I went to prune a 15 year old stand on our family tree farm and discovered there was a severe problem with these vining plants. Luckily, I discovered it in the nick of time. The trees in this particular stand are a little further apart than most people prefer. My thinking was the extra light would make a full, uniform stand. I speculate now that the extra light may have contributed to the vining problem, but don't know for sure. I discovered heavy vines winding up my trees. Upon further examination, I realized that they were starting to cause damage closer to the tops where the bark was thinner. The vines were cutting into the trees and starting to girdle the tops.

If you cut the heavy vine at the base of your tree, the vine will usually rot away fast enough that it will prevent further damage to your tree. If it's climbing up young or small re-pod you would need to pull it off fully and implement some kind of spray program. Check your trees often and make sure to keep an eye out for creepy crawly vines before they do permanent damage!

top to bottom: honeysuckle | vines climbing
a tree | broken top due to vine girdling



Lincoln County Chapter News

President's Reflection

Ben Barclay

Oops! Where did Summer go? Maybe a little time left to enjoy dry weather and preparation for Winter? Next year maybe I'll make it last longer.

On August 9, Lincoln County chapter held our annual meeting at the beautiful home of longtime member, Peter Bregman. It sure looked to me like everyone had a really great time visiting with the people in attendance and hearing what our speakers had to present to the group. At the end of the meeting it was an honor to present Peter, a 25 year member of Lincoln County OSWA, with the OSWA Volunteer of The Year award.

Our first speaker was Dan Newton, current OSWA State President. Dan re-introduced Mike Cafferata as the new Executive Director and our high expectations for the benefits Mike's long and distinguished accomplishments with ODF bring to OSWA. Recruitment of new members was identified as a very important goal statewide. Dan also ran through the goals of OSWA – Stewardship, Advocacy, Fellowship and Education (SAFE). A summary of the successes of the past legislative session was given as well as praise for our lobbyist- Nicole Mann- and the great job she did representing OSWA interests.

Dan also talked about streams and the new rules put forth in the PFA and how some of the good science on streams and what is good for fish was ignored in crafting the new rules regarding harvesting near streams. More to come later on this...

Onno Husing with Lincoln County Planning was invited to speak about the new FEMA floodplain rules and what had happened to date and where it was headed. He was short details and new information, but three counties—Tillamook, Clatsop and Columbia—filed a lawsuit against the rules that were required by FEDS. I'm personally disappointed that Lincoln county elected not to join the action which is currently on hold while discussions continue. My initial thought was "who in their right mind uses FEMA and Endangered Species Act in the same sentence"????

The last item on our agenda was a presentation by Ms. Adedayo Akande, who recently received her Masters of Science in Geomatics (surveying). Ms. Akande was commissioned by the Lincoln County



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

chapter using GIS technology to analyze and quantify the stream data on the Alsea River drainage basin and the amount stream length on private forest land. Then if you assume a 40 year rotation, statistically in any given year 2.5% of this length would be logged in any given year. The bottom line is on this large basin, 0.79% of the total stream (tributary) length would be contributing to the “buffers” in any given year. Not really going to change the temperature of the river in my opinion!!! The results of this study as well as one in progress on the Siletz Basin may be useful in future discussions/arguments with DEQ about dissolved Oxygen.

The meeting was closed out with door prizes raffled off. Ben Barclay turned bowls out of Douglas Fir, Bigleaf Maple, Red Alder and Madrone. Two garden mushrooms turned from some Sequoia Redwood found homes as well.

All in all it was a beautiful day in a beautiful setting with good food and friends. Thanks go to Peter and his wife Alice Bregman!



Lincoln County Landowner Peter Bregman Named Oregon Small Woodlands Association Volunteer of the Year

The Oregon Small Woodlands Association (OSWA) honored Lincoln County forestland owner Peter Bregman with its prestigious *Volunteer of the Year* award, recognizing his decades of service, leadership, and commitment to sustainable forest stewardship.

Bregman’s recognition reflects not only his contributions to the Lincoln County OSWA chapter but also his dedication to addressing issues of long-term importance to Oregon’s natural resources. “We must recognize the responsibility we all have—not just for a special interest group, but for the greater public interest,” Bregman said. “In today’s complex society, it is a challenge to govern in a way that benefits all, including Mother Nature. Our role as stewards is to preserve the delicate balance of nature so that future generations understand their responsibility to maintain it.”

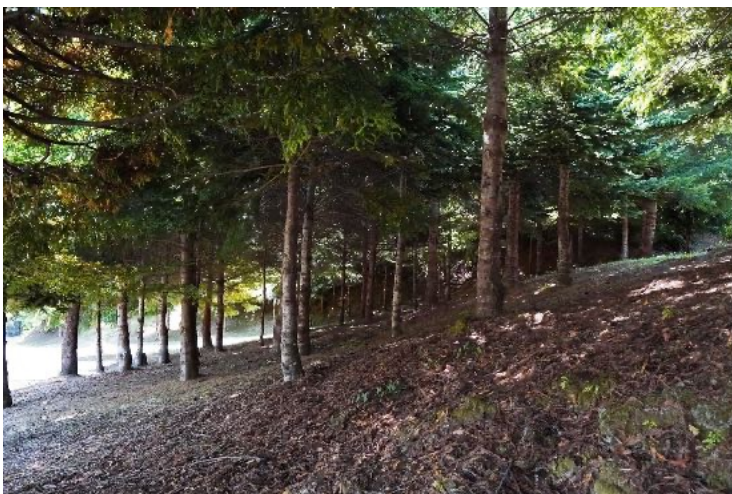
Over the past 20 years, Bregman has been a visible and active force in OSWA programs, including hosting educational tours, mentoring new woodland owners, and contributing to discussions that shape forest management practices across



the state. His efforts embody OSWA's mission of fostering collaboration between landowners, agencies, and communities to protect Oregon's forests for the future.

Ben Barclay, Lincoln County small woodlands chapter president praised the recognition, noting that "Peter's leadership and dedication demonstrate how individual landowners can have a statewide impact. His work exemplifies what it means to be both a caretaker of the land and a bridge-builder within Lincoln County and statewide community."

The *Volunteer of the Year* award is one of OSWA's highest honors, underscoring the importance of local leadership in advancing sustainable forestry. Through education, advocacy, and hands-on stewardship, honorees like Bregman ensure that Oregon's family-owned forests remain healthy, productive, and resilient for generations to come.



Linn County Chapter News

President's Column

More focus on noxious weed control coming

By Jim Merzenich | LCSWA president

The number one concern of Linn and Benton county tree farmers is **the control of noxious weeds**. The Benton County chapter held a woodland weeds workshop and tour on the MacDunn Forest on Oct. 4.

Our chapter is planning a workshop in Linn County next year with a focus on restoring native vegetation in woodlands, grasslands, riparian, and oak habitat. Together our two chapters hope to make weed workshops annual events open to all.

On our farm the seasons are determined by weeds. **Plantation** season begins in February when we spray circles around planted conifer seedlings.

Thistle season starts in March when Italian and bull thistles appear. We spot spray thistles until they go into the flowering stage. Later we pull, pile, and cover remaining plants so they can be burned in the fall. Thistle seed can remain viable in the soil for up to 10 years before germinating. It takes years of control to get these species in check.

Shrub season starts in summer when we mow, cut, pull, and spray Scotch broom, hawthorn, blackthorn, etc. in woodland, riparian, and meadow habitat.

Berry season begins when non-native berries (Himalayan, evergreen) are in bloom and ends in November when we spray Garlon-4 in plantations without killing the saplings.

Non-native grasses are a problem year-round. Tall fescue dominates our upland prairie and smothers out native forbs. Attempts to kill this grass results in an explosion of non-native annual grasses and ox-eyed daisy.

Closing notes: We have no clear solution for controlling ox-eyed daisy, meadow knapweed, tansy ragwort, false brome, fox-glove,



2025 Board Members and term expiration

Jim Merzenich — president, 2027

Christy Tye director — incoming treasurer, scholarship co-chair, 2025

Shirley Holmberg —director, treasurer, 2026

Jim Cota —director, 2026

Lauren Parks —director, incoming secretary, membership chair, 2026

Tim Otis past president — director, 2025

Bonnie Marshall — director — scholarship co-chair, 2025

Anna Merzenich — director, 2027

Mike Barsotti — past president, 2027

shining geranium, penny royal, and many other exotics. On oak woodlands Douglas-fir may be a weed.

Noted horticulturalist Luther Burbank brought “Himalayan” (*Rubus armeniacus*) blackberries to the US in 1885. Thomas Jefferson grew and admired Scotch broom at his Monticello estate before it became recognized as a noxious weed.

Reforestation Workshop and tours: Reforestation success is poor in Linn County. By working cooperatively with ODF and private consulting firms (e.g. Cascade Timber Consulting and Trout Mountain Forestry), we plan to have reforestation workshops and tours on an annual basis. By obtaining a list of landowners who file ODF harvest permits, we will assist forestland owners who belong to neither Tree Farm nor OSWA.

Mike Barsotti, a retired ODF stewardship forester, and Greg Harty, a professional forester who is now active in our chapter, inspired this project. We plan to develop a model of efficiency that can be used state wide.

Upcoming Linn County Activities

LCSWA board meeting

The board will meet from 4-6 p.m. Thursday Dec. 4 at the Oregon State University Extension Service office in Tangent. All members are welcome. OSU Extension office is located at 33630 McFarland Road, Tangent 97389.

LCSWA annual meeting

All members are encouraged to attend. The annual meeting is set for Saturday Jan. 17 from noon to 4 p.m. at the Z Hall in Scio. There is a business side and a social side to the annual meeting. The afternoon will begin with a potluck lunch. 4-H presentations, door prizes, selection of officers and an auction are scheduled.

Keep it clean and open too

Gordon Meadows visit highlights climate change, need to avoid spreading seeds

By Larry Mauter, LCSWA member

If you are hiking to the Gordon Meadows complex, remember to wipe your feet — just like showing up a grandma’s house for a holiday meal.

At 4,000 feet elevation, a July outing was the perfect time to catch wildflowers in bloom and enjoy the lush green surroundings.



Gordon Meadows is about 60 acres and sits at about 4,000 elevation in the Willamette National Forest.

There are plenty of big trees to view on the half-mile downhill trail to the meadows — spruce, hemlock, cedar and Douglas-firs that survived an 1870 wildfire.

As recently as the 1930s the national forest land was leased out for cattle grazing. Animals were herded to the site and later trucked to the meadow to pasture. Today, evidence of elk and deer has replaced the cattle.

Gordon Road is a spur off Highway 20 in the Willamette National Forest about 15 miles east of Sweet Home. The event — hosted by the Linn County Small Woodlands Association (LCSWA) attracted 15 hikers who learned about the area's geology and plant life.

Gordon Meadows is a special place for many people. Jim Merzenich, a Lebanon native, is one of those people.

Merzenich organized the event. It is familiar territory going back to teen years and more recent camping or hiking with family.

He recalled visiting the meadow with his brother in the 1970s on Memorial Day weekend and encountering 2-3 feet of snow.

With his son, he's hiked the trail from the meadow up to Gordon Lakes.

Forest ecologist Lorelle Sherman — an OSU Extension Service agent — provided details on flowering orchids, mushrooms and other plants.



OSU Extension agent Lorelle Sherman, right, identified plants on the meadow hike. She located six varieties of orchids during the July visit.

"I was surprised by the lack of water in the wet meadows," Sherman said in an e-mail. "The lack of snowpack this year may have contributed to a lack of recharge of the meadow in the summer," she added.

Patchiness of plant groups she observed may relate to soil moisture conditions or acidity in the soil.



Forest ecologist Lorelle Sherman spotted this well-camouflaged crab spider eating a bee at the meadow.

The outing was Sherman's first trip to the meadow, but noted diversity throughout the rich bottomland is evident. "The spatial distribution of plants ranges from mixed species to patches of single species in areas with slightly different microhabitats," said Sherman. She identified six varieties of orchids during the visit. Sherman studied forestry and wildlife biology at the University of Vermont and forest ecology while at Oregon State University.

The meadows — about 60 acres in total — lie within the old Cascades, a mountainous region formed by lava forcing the upward movement of materials. The soils are the result of both volcanic and glacial activity. They have remained stable at least 10,000 to 12,000 years, according to US Forest Service reports.

Restoration of the half-mile-long meadow is serious business to the Forest Service.

A notice and stand at the trailhead asks visitors to clean their boots before entering with a goal of keeping invasive species at bay.



Hikers are requested to clean their boots and gear before hiking to Gordon Meadows in an effort to discourage invasive species.

As winter snowpacks have melted earlier Douglas-fir and other invasives have pinched the meadows' edges. To answer the incursion, forest service crews when time is available have cut down trees and burned slash piles.

The dominant canopy species surrounding the meadows' edges include *Abies amabilis* (Pacific silver fir), *Abies procera* (Noble fir), *Tsuga heterophylla* (Western hemlock), *Tsuga mertensiana* (Mountain hemlock), *Picea engelmannii* (Engelmann spruce), and *Pseudotsuga menziesii* (Douglas fir), according to a US Forest Service study completed in 2009.

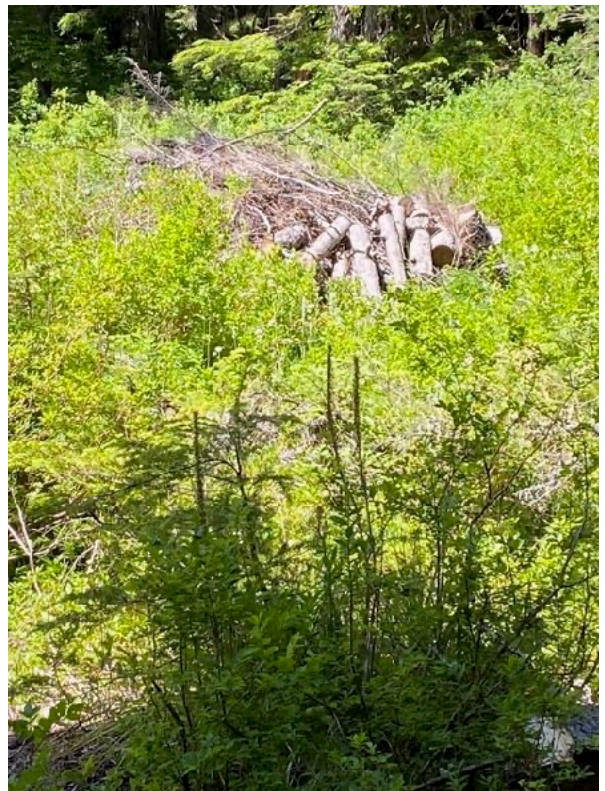
That study, written by Kathryn Skelton, declared "current data suggests that there has been an increase in seedling establishment along meadow boundaries over the last ten years. Climate changes will have a significant impact on the future management of mountain meadows.

"If the Forest Service and meadow stakeholders wish to maintain Gordon Meadows as a large mountain meadow

complex, land managers may have to consider more intensive management of forest boundaries," Skelton's study concluded.

Hikers travelled about five miles for the day.

On route to the meadows, the group met hikers carrying a five-gallon Jerry's bucket brimming with medicinal and edible plants destined for that week's Oregon Country Fair in Lane County.



A pile of slash sits at the meadow edge, part of the US Forest Service effort to keep the meadow open.

Trailside huckleberries provided snacks for the outing. A lunch at the headwaters of Falls Creek provided time for socializing. And on the dusty road into the trailhead a timber harvest was active. Truly a land of many uses.

Photos for this article were taken by Bonnie Marshall, Cole Mauter and Larry Mauter

Santiam stalwart

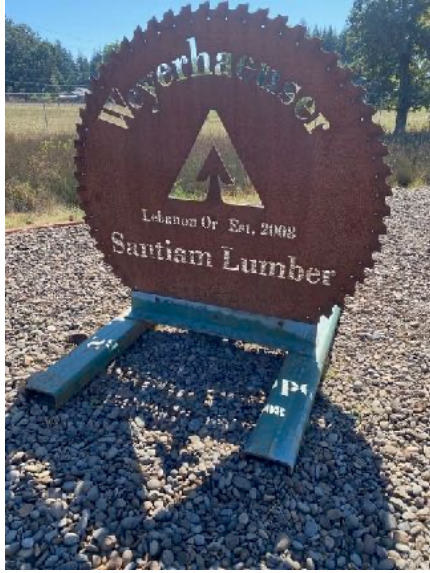
Tour rolls through Weyerhaeuser mill that is firm's top producer

By Larry Mauter, LCSWA member

For growers of Douglas-fir in Linn County, sooner or later the Santiam Mill near Waterloo will come into focus.

Built by Weyerhaeuser in 2008, it is an economic powerhouse that spits out finished product at around 400 million bf per year.

Put another way that's about "1.2 million boards a week," explained Troy Nokes, a Weyerhaeuser manager, during an Aug. 19 morning tour.



For the public, the mill is accessed from Fairview Road. | All photos by Larry Mauter.

The visit was arranged by the Linn County Small Woodlands Association (LCSWA).

Total employment at the mill is about 160 people. It is Weyerhaeuser's most productive mill (Longview Wa. is next) and contributes about \$43,000 annually to community projects.

Roughly 50 percent of the mill's incoming logs are harvested from Weyerhaeuser property.

"We own approximately 138,000 acres in Linn County. A portion of that is in our Springfield tree farm (Calapooia) and the majority of this is in our Snow Peak tree farm," said Ted Curtis, Weyerhaeuser raw material manager.

Linn County itself is roughly 1,477,760 acres.

The mill processes Douglas-fir logs ranging

from 5 to 22 inches diameter and 16-48 feet long — in a computer and laser-driven process.

"Absolute cannon barrel" logs up to 24 inches can be handled, said Nokes.

A network of huge electrical motors, drive belts and saw blades churn in the 110,000 square-foot Weyerhaeuser facility as visitors follow the procession of planks from catwalks.

Mill ends are reduced to sawdust, another outgoing product from the mill for the South Seattle Wa.-based company.

Shawn Adams is an operator in the plant's control room. He sits at a console with rows of buttons and levers as well as banks of screens and an open view to the production floor.



Mill tours utilize catwalks for views of processing logs at the Santiam facility.



As logs are shaped, the by-products of chips and sawdust are ever present.

This is where incoming logs are evaluated and routed for processing. "You've definitely got to have your head on a swivel to see what's going on," he commented.

Amanda Backman told tour goers the plant operates on two shifts — 5 a.m. and 5 p.m. starts — with workers clocking in for four 10-hour shifts a week.

Weekends are reserved for maintenance, she said.

The mill site — previously the Bauman Mill — is about 120 acres



Crews at the mill work four 10-hour days with weekends reserved for maintenance.

along Highway 20. From there 2x4s and 2x6s of various lengths are shipped via rail, truck and van.

Various lumber firms — Allweather Wood, MCL Lumber Products, Turner Lumber and Home Depot are among the mill's biggest customers.

"Our largest is Home Depot for sure," said Backman. "We can deliver a store-direct finished product" that benefits both Home Depot and Weyerhaeuser, she said.

Trucks drive north to Longview Wa. where barges transport lumber south to Long Beach, Ca. for further distribution.

The firm offers tours to the public, but participants must be 16 years old for safety reasons.

All tours begin with safety video. Hardhats, ear and eye protection along with long pants and closed-toe shoes are also required. The LCSWA group had about 25 people who were escorted in two groups — each with two guides.



Finished 2x4s and 2x6s are shipped from the site via rail, truck and vans. Home Depot is the mill's biggest customer.

Picnic site tour is triple header

Blue Den Ranch hosts LCSWA annual summer gathering

By Larry Mauter, LCSWA member

What do a nationally recognized 600-acre timber farm, a trout hatchery with ponds and an expansive private museum have in common?

They are all part of the Blue Den Ranch near Scio — the site of the Sept. 13 annual summer picnic for the Linn County Small Woodlands Association (LCSWA).

Bentz family members Randy, Julie and Clint led segments of the tour.

Clint Bentz welcomed more than 50 guests to the ranch and provided a history of the property his father Ron Bentz purchased in 1964.

"There were lots of big stumps in the ground" he noted.



The Bentz family's efforts resulted in national honors from the American Tree Farm System.



Clint Bentz led the group to view a 40-acre commercial thin in a stand of Douglas-fir. The 700-acre Blue Den Ranch has about 600 acres in timber production.

A cattle ranch soon became a tree- growing operation along with a fish hatchery and trout ponds. Another leg of income was Ron Bentz's real estate efforts — he focused on ranches and farms.

By 2001 Ron and Barbara Bentz were LCSWA tree farmers of the year. The family was named national tree farmer of the year for 2002 by the American Tree Farm System.

Today, said Clint Bentz, ownership of the farm includes 18 family members. "We're now working on the fourth generation —the oldest is 12."

Stewardship is a key driving force in decisions, he said, with a goal of "leaving the ground better than when we found it."

Under sunny blue skies, the tour looked at the progress in a 40-acre commercial thin of Douglas-fir.



Fingerling rainbow trout rise to the surface for feeding during the tour.

Lunch followed — the menu included grilled burgers, brats and veggie patties along with salads and deserts provided by guests. The Blue Den Ranch provided apple cider.

The afternoon tours divided the group — a visit the the state's second oldest fish hatchery — or a stroll back into the 1800s or early 1900s for a look at farm and pioneer life.

Randy and Julie Bentz provided an overview of raising trout from eggs into trophy-size catches.



Randy Bentz, left, and Julie Bentz explained the early life stages of rainbow trout raised at Blue Den.



Ron Bentz sold farm and ranch real estate. Those connections helped him locate 1880s and early 1900s antiques that are part of a private museum.

Their operation includes a pond with sturgeon and coy. The sturgeon have doubled in size in about seven years, said Julie Bentz. “They are adaptable fish,” she said, as well as being playful. Through a lease, members of the Oregon Fishing Club have access to three ponds that can yield 6-7 pound trout.

The state of Oregon and Blue Den have also partnered in a youth education program focusing on the fish hatchery.

Source of the water for the hatchery and ponds is Bilyeu Creek.

The Blue Den Ranch museum is straight out of an episode of American Pickers.

As Ron Bentz sold farms and ranches he collected rusty relics of the past — farm equipment, logging gear, a barbed wire display, household items and even tobacco tins and rows of brass spittoons.

The cache of the early 1900s and even late 1880s antiques is housed in a 10,000 square foot building, well-lighted and well organized.

Clint Bentz explained the family has a “passion” for Ron’s collection. He noted a brother-in-law is still adding items.

Beyond the museum walls is the outdoor collection — old mowers, threshers, road graders and other weathered treasures that have found a home at the Blue Den Ranch.



A lined pond at Blue Den is home to some koi and a dozen sturgeon that have been “boarded” there for the past seven years.



Photos for this article were taken by Larry Mauter and Bonnie Marshall

Clint Bentz displays a curve-head ax that was used to make boards from lumber.



Old household items — including a wooden washing machine— are on display at the 10,000 square foot museum. Outside the walls are hundreds of pieces of old farm equipment.

Linn chapter steps up to fund high school education

\$10,000 donation to ONREF endowment will provide forestry education

By Tim Otis, LCSWA past president

The Linn County Small Woodlands Association (LCSWA) has, from its beginning, been focused on education. Some of the original funding for our group was from Bob Mealy, and was identified to be used for public education.

Through the years, we have raised funds for this purpose, primarily through our annual tree seedling sale. The funds raised have been used for college scholarships, targeting students pursuing careers in forestry and natural resources. We have also funded annual scholarships for 4-H students. In 2022, we completed an educational kiosk in Sunnyside Park, east of Sweet Home. Our tours and classes on small woodland owners' properties have also been designed to provide continuing education in all areas of woodland management.

Several years ago, we were discussing one group which we have somewhat neglected in our support for education — high school students. This is a time in life when many students are choosing their future careers.

We wanted to do something to assist them. We decided to target this group by funding grant funds from the Oregon Natural Resources Education Fund (ONREF).

ONREF was established in 2001 through the Oregon Community Foundation, who manages the funds. Its primary mission is to provide grant money for Oregon high schools to provide natural resource education.

In 2020, LCSWA along with several other Oregon Small Woodlands Association (OSWA) chapters started the OSWA sub-fund within ONREF. The funds are managed as an endowment — using earnings to support the annual grants to high schools. At last year's ONREF board meeting, we had a large number of applications, and could not provide funding to some deserving programs.

At the next LCSWA board meeting we discussed the idea of providing additional support, and voted to give another \$10,000 to support the OSWA fund. We received a very kind note from Pete Sikora, ONREF Association board president, thanking the Linn chapter for the generous contribution.

He commented "I am aware that Linn County small woodlands owners have been very actively supporting forestry education for many decades, so I guess I shouldn't be surprised . . . we are grateful for your continued support."

Trio to share \$12,000 in LCSWA scholarship money

By Bonnie Marshall, LCSWA scholarship co-chair

The Linn County Small Woodlands Association (LCSWA) is excited to announce our three college scholarship recipients for the 2025-2026 school year. While this is just a brief introduction to our scholars, we look forward to introducing them at our chapter events and tours throughout the year.

A total of \$12,000 in scholarship money has been awarded this year.

Joey Passenant, a returning scholar from Albany, is entering his senior year at Oregon State University School of Forestry. Passenant is majoring in Natural Resources with a focus on Ecological Restoration and is very appreciative of the scholarships he has received each year. He recently shared, "This scholarship has been a cornerstone of my education and the community behind it has encouraged me to push on with a sense of belonging."

Mason Montigue, a student from Sweet Home, is entering his second year at Linn-Benton Community College and is pursuing a forestry degree with interests in forest management and fire prevention, as well as pre-civil engineering.

Montigue shared his career goal is “to be part of the solution, actively working to preserve and protect our natural resources.”

Emmaline Westfall is from Corvallis and starting her second year of college. She is dual enrolled at Linn-Benton Community College and Oregon State University where her declared major in the School of Forestry is Natural Resources with a focus on Ecological Restoration. Westfall stated, “I’m a brand-new volunteer for the Mary’s River Watershed Council and hope to gain hands-on experience related to ecological restoration.” In addition, she is a member of the OSU Forestry Club and looking into possibly joining the logging sports team.

In the past, our LCSWA college scholarships were limited to students who lived in Linn County and were majoring in Forestry or a closely related field.

We have recently expanded our scholarship criteria geographically to also include students from the surrounding counties of Marion, Benton, and Lane who are majoring in forestry or a closely related field. Scholarship applications for the 2026-2027 school year will be available in the spring of 2026.

On-line seedling sale shop opens doors Dec. 1

LCSWA’s 31st annual event raises money for scholarships

By Lena Tucker, LCSWA seedling sale chairperson

The Linn County Small Woodlands Association (LCSWA) will host its 31st annual tree and shrub seedling sale on Feb. 14, 2026 from 8 a.m. until noon at the Linn County Fair and Expo Center in Albany.

Pre-orders can be placed online at the LCSWA seedling shop starting on Dec. 1. Watch our LCSWA website <https://linncountyswa.com/> for more details on when and how to place your pre-order. **All pre-orders must be picked up on Feb. 14 from 8 to 11 a.m. at Expo Center.**

We will have bare root Nordmann fir this year which is a popular Christmas tree. Our shrub and perennial offerings are focused on native and pollinator beneficial species as well as adding interest to woodland gardens and landscaping.

Narrowleaf buck brush, Oceanspray, Red flowering currant, Lemonade sumac, Meadow checkermallow and Narrowleaf mules ear are a few of the 14 shrubs and perennials we anticipate offering. Order early as some quantities may be limited. We typically plan to have additional tree and shrub seedlings for purchase on the day of the sale.

This year the conifer seedling selections will be offered as greenhouse grown plugs rather than bare-root stock.

Seedlings grown as a plug have a soil mass surrounding the roots, are easier to plant and have a higher survival rate.

Sometimes nurseries have unexpected problems with their plants and cannot provide all or part of what was ordered. They may occasionally be able to substitute a different size. If a nursery cancels an order prior to the day of the sale, refunds will be issued back to your credit card.

Pricing for our seedlings is reasonable as we buy in bulk directly from wholesale nurseries.

The seedling sale is a fundraiser for LCSWA to offer college scholarships to Linn County students with forestry and conservation majors. It also provides annual funding for 4-H scholarships. These local 4-H students, their parents and LCSWA members provide a volunteer workforce to make the sale a success. Happy planting.

For more information, please contact Lena Tucker via the seedling sale contact form at <https://linncountyswa.com/contact-us/>

