

Wednesday August 8th 2007.

If you don't understand me the first time, I'll try to listen to why

Seeing little progress in the forestry debate, Family Forest volunteer group takes leadership by listening to neighbors rather than shouting louder.

Members of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association, a volunteer non-profit, that provides opportunities to family woodland owners, have begun efforts to move conversations about Oregon's forests and the benefits they can provide, forward toward real action in the state's 4 million acres of family woodlands.

The group is hosting "Howdy Neighbor!" Full Spectrum Forestry Tours at three family forests, finding cost effective ways of delivering valuable and understandable information to family woodland owners.

These groundbreaking events are scheduled from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at family forests in Clackamas (September 15th), Yamhill (September 29th) and Polk (October 6th) Counties.

"We are looking to engage with the thousands of families who own forest lands close to our cities and want to do the right thing but are frustrated with the politics that surround our trees. We see a need to use language and events that better fit the changing habits and values of family forest owners" said Mike Barnes, OSWA's volunteer president.

According to a recent OSWA survey, people own forests for a great many reasons. In addition, those reason and words used to describe them, change over time. Public opinion research also suggests that the public is at the end of its tether with the conflict between the forest industry and environmental groups and are looking for a new start.

Mike Gaudern, OSWA executive director, commented, "We recognize there are habits that many people and organizations fall into as part of the "Internet, instant messaging" age. As society discusses the future of our natural resources we revert to the British tourist model of communication, where if you don't understand me the first time, I'LL JUST TALK LOADER UNTIL YOU DO!!!! The problem is that the public and landowners don't have to listen, therefore interest groups and service providers need to base our efforts on their values.

It is as though we have forgotten the number one rule in marketing, which is give the customers what they want. Oregon's public sees a need for forest management that balances economic, social and environmental needs both here and abroad. They are smart enough to see the hypocrisy of locking up our back yards while invading other countries for our energy needs. They see the link between climate change, biomass energy for forests and forest fires. Rather than watching a new war over spotted owls and old growth, Oregonians, like all Americans, are looking for positive action that can ensure a better world for the generations to come both here and abroad.

As a society, we have awakened to the effects of our global consumption footprint and we are starting to think globally and act locally. Our forests, the industry that helps provide jobs in them and products from them, the environment and social benefits for them, are a big part of our future. Moreover, the cornerstones of many of these forests are the families who own them.

We need to give landowners and their heirs reasons to continue to own forests and move beyond the blame game of our consumption.

Titled "**Howdy, Neighbor! Full Spectrum Forestry Field Tour**", the idea for the events is to listen first and talk later.

As part of their registration, attendees will be asked, "Do you have a question about the wonderful forests of Oregon just outside your doorstep?"

On the day, each tour will start with an interactive question and answer session about full spectrum forestry, hosted by OSWA volunteer Forest Dan!

Every aspect of forestland ownership will be likely touched upon, including best practices in planting, wildlife management, marketing, generational planning, streams and water protection, with references to further information, as well as the combined knowledge of the helpful volunteer members to help guide people upon their quest.

Mike Barnes concluded. "If you have any interest in supporting family forests, where to find out something about forests, or want to get out in the fresh air and enjoy the family forests these are events for you!!! Come join us for a blast of information, experiences and vision, for the wonderful family forests of Oregon. You know we need to make these forests fun and take responsibility for both

their and our future"

To register, complete and return flyer to the OSWA state office or visit www.oswa.org, email Mike Gaudern at oswaed@oswa.org or call 503 588 1813. Please state your contact details, issues you wish to discuss, tour/s you wish to attend and number of attendees at each.

The event is led by Volunteers of Oregon Small Woodlands Association and supported by Oregon Small Woodlands Association State Office, Marion and Polk Small Woodland Association, Clackamas County Farm Forestry Association, Family Forests Of Oregon, Oregon Forest Resources Institute, Yamhill Soil and Water Conservation District, Stimson Lumber Company's, Manager Forest Program and Oregon State Extension.