Greetings OSWA members, families and friends  Spring 2016  Feb, March & April

It has been a nice wet winter and the spring is upon us. While there are many trees that didn’t make it through the long hot summer last year, or thought they may have and find when they try to wake up, that it doesn’t work, most of us have probably suffered moderate losses this winter to wind throw or other ‘winter events’. On your pres’ property, more trees were lost to the creek changing course than to storms, though 2 weeks of high water certainly helped move everything along, downstream.

This past year or two, our directors have gotten together and organized quite a few mill tours, mostly in the valley, but also to the coast and into neighboring counties, from Molalla to Toledo and Mill City to Eugene. We really thank the mills for hosting us as we bite into their productive days, but also for representing how each fits into the bigger picture of where our logs go and why. Just in the last 6 months we’ve visited the large diameter capable Zippo log mill in Eugene, where they accept logs up to 60” diameter and 50 feet long, to the ultra-modern Weyerhaeuser mill near Lebanon that takes logs only up to about 13” diameter and produce only 2x4’s and 2x6’s in the 8 to 12 foot length range. Wow, what a difference and obviously going to different markets. Also, the Frank Lumber mill near Mill City, where the word Quality (echo, quality, quality, quality) rung in our ears as the crew sorted and trimmed and teased every last bit of yes, quality out of each board as they prepare lamination stock for just 10 customers, mostly here in the PNW that make glue-lam timbers.
This brings to mind the sorts and handling and routing that must go into every logging operation on every parcel, in order to bring the best return for the effort. Are each of us up to that individually, or will we be better served (and rewarded) if we bring a professional forester into the picture, who knows these mills and their log buyers and can make those matches made in heaven, or more probably, in the greater economy. Or are some of us too small for the greater economy to care? Is it economically feasible to hire a logger to move in on our sometimes small jobs? There is certainly a break-over point where it finally becomes a viable size to do commercial operations, by which I mean hiring someone.

So what about all the non-timber resources we are supposedly raising, what are they, really? We could be selling Carbon Credits, but I don’t see any ads in the Capital Press saying “Wanted; someone to grow trees to store my carbon, top dollar paid” We could attempt to sell our water cleansing and storage services to everyone downstream of our properties, but would we also be required to buy the same from the ones above? But some aspects might be viable, such as tourism; day trippers that want to spend some time on a private forestland, perhaps learn something and have lunch. Or overnighters, renting your backwoods cabin or camping on certain beautiful sites you have. And what about those mosses and mushrooms and floral greens? Well, let me lead into the next paragraph with that…

How much do we really know about what is desired, what has value? Have you checked out the Oregon Forest Industry Directory? Started 11 years ago and featured at the first Oregon Forest Fair that our chapter put on, the OFID is a listing of everyone and anyone that has anything (forest, forestry, wood) to buy or sell, that want to list their wants, needs or offerings. You should check it out! www.orforestdirectory.com is the web address, which is where it is posted and hosted, and where 1665 companies and individuals have posted their information. As of this writing, we are putting some good tips and techniques on how to best use the directory on our chapter’s page of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association website; www.oswa.org. Please make yourself familiar with this great resource and possibly develop a listing of your own. There is no cost.

As tax time is coming upon us, please refer to our chapter page (Marion-Polk) on the www.oswa.org website, to see one of our director’s comments, suggestions and summary of forest land taxation issues. This is about property taxes, not income and the deadline with your county tax assessor is April 1st, not the 15th. Thank you Terry Lamers for your expertise on this issue.

This 3-month quarter we will have tours of 2 mills; first, Thursday, Feb 11th at 9:30 am we will tour the Weyerhaeuser Foster (Sweet Home) veneer mill at 6011 Hwy 20e 97386, just past downtown on the right.

Then Wednesday March 16th, at 9:30am we will have a tour of the Marr Bros Barkdust firewood operation. The address is 875 S. Pacific Hwy, Monmouth, OR 97361 which is quite easy to find just south of Monmouth on hwy 99. They have a natural gas kiln, large firewood processor, and considerable infrastructure for making firewood bundles in massive quantities.

These businesses deserve our attention and your attendance as they are also buyers of our timber products! For both of these tours; please bring eye, ear and head protection and a high-vis vest if you have. Put these tours on your calendar!

Yamhill county OSWA chapter to the north has meetings at the Yamhill Co OSU Extension auditorium, 2050 NE Lafayette Ave, McMinnville. Social half hour begins at 6:30 and the meetings begin at 7pm Wed. Feb 24th the topic is “What’s New in Forest Products by Scott Leavengood, OSU Wood Innovation Cntr Wed. March 23rd will have Kevin Boston, OSU Associate Professor will speak on Innovations in Harvesting Wed. April 27th the topic will be Climate Change with Amy Grotta, OSU Extension forester.