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

 MANAGEMENT PLANS

What, Why, and How

Toward a Uniform Forest Management Planning System

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Crystal Lake resident Karen Preston and her nine-year-old son Jack took an active role in the 30th Annual Crystal Lake Community Tree Farm Day held in March. Photo courtesy of Chuck Holland.
Top photo: A mixed conifer stand on Janet Heubach’s property. Photo courtesy of Janet Heubach.

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He asked, “Do you remember me?” There were many familiar faces at our OSWA 2010 annual meeting, but 32 years is a long time. “I’m Bill Collins and you wrote our first management plan.” I did remember Bill...and Jackson County...190 acres on Sardine Creek.

Oregon woodland owners in the 1970s were still learning about the new Forest Practices Act and its rules, all printed in a shirt-pocket handbook. The legislature funded over 20 service foresters and the Department of Forestry assigned Joe Misek and me to Jackson and Josephine counties. For a decade we helped hundreds of landowners with management planning. I’d often wondered how many plans were used, and improved, over the years.

Today’s management plan templates have evolved. Bill and his wife Marion said they have a new plan, written by consulting forester Marty Main. It’s most likely computer created with satellite images, charts, and graphs. It’s probably modeled on the newest forest management plan standards, with words like biomass, special sites, invasive species, performance measures, threatened species, and best management practices. Gone are typewriter-created plans and words like “multiple use” (I like multiple use.) But the basics of a plan are still the same, whether it’s seven pages like the Collins’ first plan, or 20 times that length—goals, objectives, timelines, soils, timber types, roads, streams, animals, insects, disease, fire.

Offering management plan advice and training is a good way to recruit new members. A few years back Oregon State Extension Forester Amy Grotta hosted a management plan short course. Each attendee was assigned a mentor from our Washington County OSWA Chapter. At the end of the course, we had several enthusiastic new OSWA members. Another partner, the Oregon Tree Farm System, also offers a very good management plan template for current and future members. We updated our tree farm plan to these new standards, although I included multiple use a lot, for old times’ sake.

Today, OSWA lists almost 1,800 on our membership roster. Recent numbers from the Oregon Department of Forestry claim an astonishing 81,000 family forestland owners with 1-9 acres, plus another 54,000 owning 10-99 acres. Together they own over 1.75 million acres. The remaining 7,000 owners with 100+ acres have 2.6 million acres. My guess is less than 10 percent of these 142,000 owners have a management plan.

Why do people own forestland? Oregon Forest Resources Institute has a 2004 survey of western Oregon and Washington woodland owners. Some of their findings are still likely valid. Aesthetics and green space were the primary reason 17 percent owned forestland; land investment stood at 18 percent; forest as part of the farm counted six percent; and 37 percent had a forest residence as their primary reason. Surprisingly, only four percent stated timber production as a primary reason, but 74 percent reported a harvest during their ownership. Our challenge is to encourage the thousands of forest landowners in Oregon to actively manage their own forestland.

Whatever a person’s reason for owning forestland, writing and following a good management plan is worth it. I think Bill would agree.
Is a Plan for You?

Should you have a forest management plan? As in most forestry questions the answer is...it depends...though I will attempt to make the case for the majority of forest landowners that a written management plan makes sense.

Before you decide on whether a written forest management plan is appropriate for you, let’s take the opportunity to walk down through some of the types of management plans available to you and then briefly describe them.

• personal/estate
• county assessor
• cost share
• certification
• Long Term Forest Practices Application (WA)

A personal- or estate-based plan should outline your goals and objectives for managing your forestland over time. This sort of plan can be essential when you are attempting to transfer your stewardship ethic and love of the land to another generation.

Most county tax assessors offer a reduced tax rate for lands used for forestry purposes. All Washington counties require a written forest management plan to qualify for forestland taxation rates. The complexity of these plans varies by county.

Several forest activity cost sharing programs remain at the federal level. The US Department of Agriculture administers both the Forest Stewardship Program and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Both programs require a written management plan and recently some EQIP funding has been allocated to develop Conservation Activity Plans (the Natural Resources Conservation Service version of a forest management plan).

Two internationally recognized forms of forest certification are available to family forest landowner. The American Tree Farm System (ATFS) and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) both require a written forest management plan.

In Washington state, family forest landowners have a unique opportunity under our forest practices rule to apply for and receive a Long Term (15 year) Forest Practices Application (LTFPA). Once this process has been completed and the application approved, landowners simply file a five-day written notice to begin harvest on any stands included in the application. A written forest management plan will significantly simplify meeting the requirements of the LTFPA.

Sign me up for all of the above you say? But wait...now I have to write five different management plans? Fortunately, you do not. Thanks to the efforts of the folks at WSU Extension, DNR Forest Stewardship, Washington Tree Farm Program, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, a multiple-use forest management planning template has been developed. The Washington State Integrated Management Plan will qualify you for county-level forest tax classification status, cost-share programs (Forest Stewardship, EQIP and CAP), and forest certification (FSC has some additional requirements) programs. It will provide the framework for an efficient Long Term Forest Practices Application process. Most importantly it will provide you with the tool to transfer your knowledge, goals, and objectives for the management of your forest to the next generation.

The Washington State Integrated Management Plan Template can be found at www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/fp_sfio_fs_intmgtmgtnlns.pdf. An article on page 12 also explains the uniform management plan concept.

Our friends at the American Forest Foundation have also been working on an online forest management planning tool called My Land Plan, which provides a variety of information including photos for the development of your plan. My Land Plan can be found at www.mylandplan.org.

Excellent information on a variety of forestry topics can also be found at the WSU Extension website at http://extension.wsu.edu/forestry/.

Good luck on your forest management planning endeavors!
To Plan or Not to Plan, that is the Question

Ye, that is the question, but in many respects it has already been answered since our failure to plan is still a plan, although it may not be the most desirable. Forest management planning is not unlike estate planning in that most of us have something in our head of how we would like to see things proceed, but without writing it down it most likely will not happen. The difference is that forest management planning for most landowners does not need to be a costly or burdensome endeavor.

Having recently retired from the Idaho Department of Lands after 34 years, I’ve been through my share of various forms of long-term planning, some of which were more worthwhile than others. For nearly 16 of those years I served as a forest practices advisor/private forestry specialist and a good share of my job involved assisting landowners with various forms of forest management plans. This was generally a very enjoyable part of the job as it involved sitting down with landowners and hearing their stories and how they would like to see their land become a part of that story. Active management means different things to different people, but as long as it involves sound forestry principles it should be possible to achieve their goals.

One goal that much of our collective public would like to see for both public and private lands in their backyards is for it to “stay wild and beautiful, just like it is now.” Unfortunately, this is not a realistic goal because Mother Nature abhors a vacuum and change is an inherent part of forest establishment-growth-decline-death-rebirth. It is more a question of our planning horizon, that is, how long we are looking out to achieve our goal. Having worked in the same area of north Idaho for over 30 years with many of the same stands, along with our own tree farm that we have owned for 29 years, I am continually astounded how quickly things in the forest really do change. There is great satisfaction in seeing those seedlings you planted with your kids that are now over 30 feet tall or that plantation that you had the kids prune that is now nearly of merchantable size.

Over the years, when working with other private woodland owners, one of the most appreciated items I could give them was a map of their property with some form of stand delineation. This was something few of them already had and it seemed to be a meaningful way for them to grasp just what they had and “where” it was. This combined with a timber cruise of “what” they had and “where” it was. This combined with a timber cruise of “what” they had and they were nearly ready to move to the implementation phase.

There are many different types of forest management planning tools available to the landowner today that make this process easier, particularly the mapping aspect with the advent of free Google Earth tools. I would encourage all landowners to still seek the advice of a professional forester, either a consultant or state service forester, to assist them in developing their own unique forest management plan. Not only will the plan help you in achieving your own long-term goals but it will be of immense value to your heirs when they pick up the chainsaw and hoedad to hopefully continue your legacy.
TIPS & TRICKS OF THE DAY: Pruning your trees could reduce mortality from a wildfire.

WHAT TO DO IN . . .

AUGUST

► Planting this Winter?
- Order seedlings if you haven’t.
- Time to rip and break up compacted ground while the soil is dry. Your ground is probably compacted if you are converting pasture to timber.
- Time to do site preparation spray while target plants are in full leaf.

► Good Time to:
- Rock a road, maybe just a few inches deep so you have access to your property for winter management projects.
- Take a “staycation” before the kids go back to school.
- Pick the Himalayan blackberries before you start your fall spray program to eradicate or control them. Spray season for invasive Himalayan and evergreen blackberries starts once the berries are ripe. Probably ends with the first good frost.

SEPTEMBER

► To Prune or not to Prune?

Reasons to Prune
- You heard a cup of coffee followed by vigorous exercise was good for your health.
- You’ve got nervous energy and need something constructive to do.
- Hard work is good for the soul and builds character and you want your children and your children’s children to be of good character and experience how empowered you can feel after a good day’s work. I hear the piece rate for building character is a dollar a tree pruned to eight feet.

- Aesthetics: You like the appearance of a clean stand and pruning removes the limbs before Mother Nature gets around to it.
- Reduces the fuel ladder for fire. Pruning the forest around your home site might keep a fire from reaching your tree crowns. Pruning along your roads would enhance your road as a possible fire break.
- You are a gambler and are betting that you will get a premium for clear wood when your timber is ready for harvest.
- Clear western redcedar siding and clear hardwood boards are currently selling for a premium.
- Cedar boughs are purchased for holiday season greenery, so pruning your cedar in November could generate some income as well as clear lumber.
- Clean-peeled poles for visible posts in housing construction are gaining in popularity. Best time to peel is when the sap has just started to flow in the spring to avoid staining.
- Increased wood volume in the pruned log. Trees put on significant diameter growth at the bottom of the live crown, increasing the scaling diameter of the first log in a tree (this assumes you would buck the first log below the bottom of the live crown). Pruning moves the live crown up the tree earlier than Mother Nature. The live crown portion of a tree is basically shaped like a cone with uniform taper from the base of the live crown to the tip of the tree.
- Production goes up for cut-to-length harvesting in pruned stands.

► Pruning Rules

- Prune live limbs when the sap is not active in your trees—generally September through February. You can prune dead limbs whenever you have the time. Pruning while the sap is active can result in insect damage to your stand.
- Leave 50 percent of the total tree height in live crown.
- Where you cut the limb is critical. Flush with the bole is generally too close. You want to leave the tapered area at the base of the limb on the tree and cut the limb just beyond the end of this tapered area. Too close to the bole wounds the tree and too far away makes it hard for the tree to heal and start growing clear wood.
- Tree Sunburn aka Sun Scald—You need to use caution or possibly protection when pruning trees that will get direct sun on their bole between 2-6 p.m. Young trees have thin bark that can get hot enough to kill the cambium beneath and result in long-term damage and reduced value rather than clear wood and increased value. Thin-barked trees are more susceptible than thicker-barked trees. The obvious solution would be to leave limbs on the tree to shade the bole between . . .

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2-6 p.m. Or leave a whorl or two of limbs lower on the south side than the north side of your pruned tree. Or apply white paint or a light color paint that would absorb less light and heat than the color of your pruned tree’s bark. Sun scald at my place in the mid-Willamette Valley at 1,000 feet elevation is a narrow band on the tree four hours after noon, sun time. It occurred on my Douglas-fir and grand fir and not on my bigleaf maple or red alder. I spoke to a valley ponderosa pine tree farmer and he did not believe he had any sun scald in his pruned pine plantations. Normally trees pruned within a stand are protected from direct sun by the shade of trees to the south. Use your backpack sprayer to apply the paint. I did my first painting a few weeks ago using free recycled latex paint from Marion County, Oregon’s recycling program. The paint went through my back flow device and screen filter without a hitch. If your paint seems thick, you need to add water to dilute your paint. Your paint should be on the runny side vs. the thick side. All the colors of the rainbow mixed together produce a grey paint though. Dry on the tree, the grey is clearly lighter than the dark green of my Douglas-fir tree boles. Let me know if you have similar or different experience with sun scald and I will share in the next issue.

Pruning Tools

- Chain saw. Although many pruning purists do not recommend use of chain saws due to the damage they can inflict to the boles of your trees, if you use them carefully, they can do some good work for the first 4-5 feet of the bole. This is particularly true if you waited until your trees were a little older and the limbs were larger.

- Shears and loppers. Some love a cheap set of pruning shears and just get another pair when the current pair wears out. These are available at your favorite hardware store or hardware department in a big box store. If you are looking for a higher grade and price of lopper, the Timbersaw brand prunefor lopper is a good choice. Shears and loppers work best on smaller green limbs.

- Pruning saw. These are hand-held human powered saws with sharp blades designed to cut small limbs. I prefer a saw to loppers. Mark Havel (Forest Dan) designed a nice saw that is now available through www.logrite.com. Silky, Corona, Fiskars, and Felco also make nice pruning saws. These saws are made to cut by pulling, not pushing them.

- Pole saw. These were originally designed to prune fruit trees and you can get them with telescoping fiberglass handles and with blades you can have sharpened. Probably limited to a pruning height of 20 feet or so and the last eight feet is hard work.

- Ladders. You need a ladder with non-pole saw pruning saws to get above about eight feet. McCallum Ladders from New Zealand can be purchased at www.terratech.net. Terratech is located in Eugene, Ore. Forestry Suppliers carries the Colmar ladder. These ladders were designed for pruning, are lightweight and come in several lengths.

- Tools for very Small Limbs. Small tools for small limbs. Terratech and Forestry Suppliers carry the Timbersaw brand epicormic knife for pruning the really fine limbs. The epicormic knife I bought years ago is a six-inch piece of band saw blade with about 20 teeth to the inch and a handle. It only cuts when pulled. Small pruning shears you run with one hand also work well on fine limbs.

- Safety. You should have a scabbard for all your tools if you are working from a ladder. You can hang onto the tree with one hand when using a saw but with loppers you need a safety harness as you need both hands to run the loppers. Someone should know where you are working and when you plan to return.

Fall is Here and Winter is Just Around the Corner.

- You should be wrapping up seeding and mulching projects so seeds have a chance to germinate before the weather turns cold.

- Move firewood to your storage area close to where you plan to burn it.

- As a rule of thumb, logging operations on dirt roads west of the Cascades should be wrapped up by the 15th.

- Drain the water out of equipment or add antifreeze.

- Check your culverts and waterbars and clean and repair as needed.

Know Your Woods Words

- Epicormic Branch: This is a branch or cluster of branches that germinate from an adventitious bud (dormant bud) on the tree bole after the original crop of limbs has run their life cycle or have been removed by pruning. True firs are great epicormic branchers when their bole is exposed to more sunlight by the removal of a shading tree to the south. You end up with short green limbs on the bole below the trees live crown.

Down on the Tree Farm is edited by David Bateman with help from Linn County Small Woodlands members Aaron White, Joe Holmberg, Jonathon Christie, Ray Stutzman, Steve Kohl, Neal Bell, Jim Merzenich, Rick Fletcher, and Brad Withrow-Robinson. This column is a project of the Linn County Small Woodlands Association and the OSU Extension Master Woodland Managers. Suggestions always welcome; send to Dave Bateman at knothead@smt-net.com.
By AMY GROTTA

What is a forest management plan?

In essence, a forest management plan is a written document that outlines your family’s vision for your forest, describes the current forest condition, and outlines a plan of action to achieve your management goals. Some people refer to the plan as a forest stewardship plan—I tend to use the two terms interchangeably. Importantly, a forest management plan is not just about the forest. Through forest management planning you take stock of all the resources on your property—roads and infrastructure, water, wildlife habitat, recreation assets—anything that is relevant to your family and your goals.

Why have a plan?

Writing a management plan yourself takes a lot of work and obtaining a professionally written plan is a financial investment. So why bother? I think there are intrinsic and extrinsic reasons for having a management plan, and both are worth considering. Intrinsic reasons are those that support your personal motivations, management strategy, and skill as a landowner. I’ll explain by way of some quotes from various individuals that I’ve helped to write management plans.

“It’s our quick reference when we need information.” Your management plan will have details on your timber resources, your soils, your roads and infrastructure, forest health issues, and many other aspects of your property. It will also contain information that you may not implement for many years. The most effective management plans do not sit on the shelf, but are continually updated when activities are carried out or when new information is learned.

“The plan will remind us of a selected course of action that was arrived at by careful consideration rather than the exigencies or whims of the moment.” Constantly putting out fires on your property? (Hopefully they are figurative, not literal ones!) Your management plan will help you to prioritize your tasks and keep you focused on the big picture so that you can realize your long-term goals. Of course, markets, regulations, and family circumstances change, which is why your plan is on paper and not carved in stone.

“It will be a guideline for best management practices so we can teach our children how to manage the land…It is a written history of our property.” Many landowners have children or others that stand to inherit the property, but are currently disconnected from the property’s management. If you were an heir in this position, wouldn’t you want some sort of guidance on what to do? A management plan can help future managers understand what you’ve accomplished, what your vision is, and who

Forest Owner Bob Burns discusses his family’s forest management plan during a Tree Farmer of the Year visit. The Burns family was selected as the Washington Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year in 2006.
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Forest Management Planning
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to go to for help when you are not around for them to ask.

Extrinsic reasons to have a management plan are those that maintain or increase your access to programs or funding, or satisfy agency requirements. In some cases, these reasons may be the driving factor for developing a plan in the first place, but through the planning process you discover the intrinsic benefits described above.

Forest certification bodies such as Tree Farm and Forest Stewardship Council require a written forest management plan. Many landowners’ involvement in the Tree Farm program predates the management plan requirement. If this is the case, you’ll need to develop a written plan to stay in the program. Contact your state Tree Farm coordinator for details and help.

Financial assistance to carry out certain activities such as fuels reduction, weed management, wildlife habitat enhancement, or stream restoration is sometimes available from state and federal agencies. In some cases, access to these funds is dependent on having a management plan, and in other cases, having the plan ranks your application higher.

In some places, property tax deferral status is dependent on having a written forest management plan. You probably know about this situation if it applies to you.

**What is in a forest management plan?**

Every forest management plan is different in terms of its content, level of detail, and length because the plan should fit with the landowner’s management goals, style of management, and property size. However, plans generally share these common elements:

- **Introduction**—a description of the property’s location, size, and topography; a map and aerial photo; and a brief history of the property.
- **Goals and objectives**—this is perhaps the most important part of the plan because it drives the rest of it. Here the landowner outlines the primary uses or reasons for owning the property, as well as intentions for the future. Professionally written plans should always acknowledge the landowner’s goals, which may be quite different from what the professional thinks is “right.”
- **Resource descriptions**—an assessment of the current condition of the property. Common resources to be addressed include:
  - Timber—stand descriptions including age, species composition, and stocking;
  - Soil—soil types found on the property and any erosion, compaction, drainage, or fertility issues;
  - Water—streams and wetlands and their classifications, springs and ponds, and riparian habitat condition;
  - Wildlife—species known to utilize the property and species of interest to the landowner; habitat elements that are present or missing for desired species;
  - Roads and Infrastructure—access for vehicles and non-motorized uses; security issues; and road maintenance needs or opportunities;
  - Forest Health—insect, disease, or abiotic concerns; wildfire hazard; invasive weed presence; and strategies employed to address these issues;
  - Protected Resources—acknowledgment of any known sensitive, threatened, or endangered species; cultural resources or historical sites that require protection; and
  - Recreation and Aesthetics—current or potential recreational or educational uses of the property and description of any aesthetically important areas.
- **Management recommendations**—Based on the stated goals and objectives and the current resource conditions, a set of recommendations intended to move the landowner and the property forward is developed. These recommendations may be organized at a stand-by-stand level, by resource category, or provided for the property as a whole.
- **Schedule of activities**—A timeline of what should be done on what parts of the property, extending out at least 10 years or more if desired by the landowner.

Various forest management plan templates and standards are available, and they vary by state and by program. If your management plan is to be used for Tree Farm certification, for cost-share purposes, or for

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**Support Responsible Forestry.**

When you consider that only 10% of the world’s forests are certified, we have a long way to go. The good news is that there are a number of credible forest certification programs. And each one, including SFI, encourages responsible forestry.

For more on forest certification and what you can do, visit www.sfiprogram.org.

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tax deferral, you will need to meet those program’s standards, which likely exceed what’s described above. In Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, recent efforts have attempted to synthesize and combine various plan formats and standards into one standard acceptable for a variety of purposes. See the article on Uniform Planning later in this issue.

How to get a forest management plan?

There are different ways to obtain a forest management plan. Perhaps the quickest is to hire a professional consulting forester to write one for you. Some consultants specialize in writing management plans, but it’s important when working with a consultant that you clearly communicate your management objectives and philosophy so that the resulting plan reflects what you want from your property. The cost of a management plan can vary widely depending on the size of your property, the level of detail that you want, and the purpose for your plan. It’s a good idea to get a couple of quotes and ask for references.

Federal assistance programs are available to offset the cost of having a professionally written management plan. The U.S. Forest Service has historically provided these funds through the Forest Stewardship Program, and they are in turn administered by the state natural resources agency (Oregon Department of Forestry, Washington Department of Natural Resources, or Idaho Department of Lands). More recently, the Natural Resources Conservation Service has also allocated a pool of its EQIP funds to forest management plans (they are called Conservation Activity Plans). The availability of these funds is variable depending on locality, so contact your local NRCS office for details. To be eligible for NRCS funds, you must contract with an approved “Technical Service Provider” to write your plan. The number of consulting foresters that are approved TSPs continues to grow.

Lastly, you can write part of or your entire plan yourself. The upside to this approach is that you not only get the final product, but you benefit from the process of learning about your property that comes with developing the plan. You are the one conducting the timber inventory, doing the research on weed management, wildlife management, and the like, and you’ll use that knowledge for years to come. The downside is that since you aren’t paying someone to do the work, it’s too easy to procrastinate.

Your local Extension program is a good place to start for assistance with writing your own plan. WSU Extension has conducted the Forest Stewardship Coached Planning course for two decades, and thousands of landowners have participated. An online version of this course was launched in 2012. In Oregon, through the Mentored Management Planning workshop, landowners are paired with an experienced mentor (typically a Master Woodland Manager) who provides one-on-one guidance in conjunction with the course. Idaho has a Master Forest Stewards Program that is administered through the University of Idaho Extension Service.

In summary, getting a management plan might seem like one of those things that you know is a good idea, but you never get around to (kind of like flossing your teeth or checking your tire pressure). However, the benefits are great and there are lots of resources to help you get started. Make it a family affair, keep your plan up to date, and you’ll find your plan to be an invaluable tool.

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Toward a Uniform Forest Management Planning System

By JIM CATHCART, ANDREW B. PERLEBERG, ARA ANDREA, AND STEVE GIBBS

Forest landowner assistance programs—no matter what state or jurisdiction—have as their fundamental goal the achievement of sustainable forestry—a steady flow of economic, environmental, and social goods and services to various communities of interest. Sustainable forestry is akin to Adam Smith's invisible hand in neoclassical economics—if forest landowners individually are provided the education, technical assistance, and access to diverse forest products markets to achieve their individual goals in owning forestland—collectively these forests will meet society’s needs today and tomorrow. But, like Adam Smith's invisible hand equating supply and demand in market economies, sustainable forestry, in terms of providing maximum benefit to society, is only achieved when there are no imperfections in the system.

One way of ensuring perfection in the system is to make sure family forest landowners have access to the technical assistance and management planning tools that get them, or the next generation, engaged with their property. Enter written forest management plans as a key tenet of landowner assistance and forestland certification programs. Why? Because the process of writing a forest management plan, if done correctly, places the landowner on a journey to: 1) get to know their forestland in terms of current conditions and natural resources present; 2) decide their goals defining what they want to do with their forestlands; and 3) take action (including no action) to achieve their goals, and by doing so, transforming their forest from current condition to desired condition. A sustainable forest is no accident.

The need for uniformity

For as many state and federal natural resource agencies, and for as many non-governmental forest certification programs that there are in this world, there is an equal number of sets of guidelines and templates—plus a few extra—for what constitutes a forest management plan. Not that they markedly differ from one another mind you, but different nonetheless. Confounding the issue is that Agency A requires Planning System A to be completed; and if one finds out they instead want the services of Landowner Assistance Program B, well then Planning System B better have been the one used. And so on.

Enough of that! With an eye on improving services, government agencies, non-governmental certification programs, small woodland associations, and the professional natural resources business community are partnering up to come up with just one—yes, just one—forest management planning system. Well, one for each state. In Idaho, until a true unified plan is established, it is generically referred to as a forest management plan; in Oregon it is called the Uniform Resource Plan; and in Washington it is called the Integrated Forest Management Plan. Montana has adopted its own version of the uniform plan; California too. There is even a national version, designed to be molded, tweaked, and adapted to the unique differences within each state put out by the American Tree Farm System (ATFS), the national office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the national program staff of USDA Forest Service’s Forest Stewardship Program (FSP).

Idaho’s Forest Management Plan Template

Over half of Idaho’s private forestlands are owned by nonindustrial family forest landowners, making management on these lands vital to Idaho wood-based markets, clean water, productive wildlife habitat, and forest recreation opportunities. The Idaho Department of Lands (IDL), administering the Idaho Forest Stewardship Program, works collaboratively with the University of
Idaho (UI) Extension Program, ATFS-Idaho Tree Farm Program, NRCS, and private forestry consultants to provide professional forestry advice and technical assistance to forestland owners, enabling them to develop usable, meaningful forest management plans. The common goal of all these organizations is to equip Idaho family forestland owners to plan and implement good stewardship through active forest management.

Idaho forestry agencies and organizations work as a team to see that landowners receive the education and assistance needed to meet that goal. For example, forest management plans can be developed by forestland owners through the use of private forestry consultants using cost-share funds provided by agency programs. Examples are plans authored by NRCS plan-certified Technical Service Providers (TSPs) paid in part through the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Idaho NRCS’s state forester works very closely with IDL, Idaho Tree Farm, UI Extension, and family forest owners to provide face-to-face support and assistance.

For the last several years, in parallel with national agreements and efforts, these groups have worked collaboratively to create a single, accepted-by-all forest management plan template that meets the requirements of: 1) the Idaho FSP; 2) the NRCS Conservation Activity Plan (CAP 106); and 3) the ATFS Tree Farm management plan. In most Idaho counties, this plan would also suffice to justify a forestland owners’ property tax classification. Idaho’s uniform plan template is in the final stages of completion with an eye on reviewing and incorporating provisions of the national template referenced above.

Oregon’s Uniform Plan

With funding provided by the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Region, State and Private Forestry, the state of Oregon has embarked on developing a Uniform Resource Planning and Endorsement System. Key partners include Association of Consulting Foresters of America, Forest Stewardship Council-US, Oregon Department of Fish and –Continued on next page–

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Wildlife, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI), Oregon Small Woodlands Association, Oregon State University (OSU) Extension Service, Oregon Tree Farm System, USDA Forest Service and Oregon NRCS. The project is designed to build upon an already agreed to—15 years in the making—set of guidelines and template used by Oregon’s FSP, Oregon Tree Farm System, OSU Extension, and OFRI. The four main goals of the project are:

1. Develop a common set of forest management planning guidelines and templates that each agency and certification program would use as their forest management planning standard;
2. Write the guidelines in a manner that would not only provide clear direction to natural resource professionals, but also in a manner understandable and educational to forestland owners themselves;
3. House the guidelines and templates—along with supporting references and forest management planning tools—on a common website that provides one-stop access; and
4. Develop a set of agreed-upon quality assurances and quality-control mechanisms (including training) such that plan approval by one particular agency or program would automatically result in mutual approval and acceptance by all other participating agencies or programs.

Over 25 plans were developed—at no cost to the landowners—to field test a draft Uniform Resource Plan in a variety of planning environments. Final versions of the guidelines and templates—incorporating what was learned through the field testing—are posted on a state-of-the-art website that breaks down the complexity of the guidelines using nested web pages, “click on” tips, links to helpful mapping and other planning tools, and video landowner testimonials. Another outcome of the project is the emergence of using addendums to address needs that go beyond the core plan. The addendums are specialized add-ons designed to meet unique requirements of individual programs (e.g., NRCS job sheets for use in EQIP).

Washington’s Integrated Forest Management Plan

Washington recently adopted Integrated Forest Management Plan Guidelines to allow landowners to simultaneously meet the “management plan” requirements for cost-share and financial incentive programs, “Stewardship Forest” recognition, ATFS certification, and current use property tax classification. The new guidelines are a result of collaboration between the USDA Forest Service, NRCS, Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Washington Tree Farm Program, and Washington Department of Revenue.

Financial assistance may be available to landowners that hire a private consulting forester to prepare their plan. NRCS offers financial assistance for development of a CAP 106 through EQIP where plans must be prepared by an NRCS-authorized TSP. Additionally, the Eastern Washington Forest Landowner Cost-Share Program, funded by USDA Forest Service grants and administered by DNR, offers 50 percent cost share for development of a Forest Stewardship Plan using the new Integrated Forest Management Plan Guidelines. In order to be eligible for financial reimbursement, landowners...
must have written approval before the plan is prepared. Landowners that wish to learn how to prepare their own plan are encouraged to participate in one of the popular Forest Stewardship Coached Planning short courses sponsored by Washington State University Extension and DNR at locations around the state.

Is the Northwest becoming uniform in its uniformity?

“There’s never a good wind for a sailor who sets no course” (Spanish cliché). By striving for uniformity across agencies and programs in their respective states, progress is being made toward an improved product that can benefit landowners. All efforts are maintaining the shared goal of multiple-use planning that is very similar to most forest owner’s multiple-objective management styles. Whether prepared by a natural resource professional or through coaching at a university Extension workshop, the uniform plan ultimately becomes a powerful piece of an estate plan—identifying beneficial programs, history of the land, and the owners’ biological, physical, and political management realities. The plan also gives families a common language with which to communicate about their forest.

Ironically, the push for uniformity is creating complexity in the guidelines, templates, and approvals—perhaps an unavoidable downside. For example, the uniform plan is overkill if a landowner simply wants a timber tax plan that validates her intent and site suitability for managing for future harvests. States may need to break-down the planning requirements into specific steps or milestones for the planning journey—from a simple woodland discovery phase that meets tax planning needs—to a core management plan suitable for forest certification or FSP recognition—to a full-blown CAP 106 that gives the landowner the highest priority rating for EQIP. Another challenge will be for the states to adjust their cost-share rates to the added complexity faced by plan writers so quality plans still result. Finally, the uniform plan needs to be embraced by all programs if it is to truly create multiple benefits for landowners. Continued field testing and future monitoring and assessment by all states is needed to confirm the collaborating organizations’ supposition that the uniform plan is making it easier for landowners to access multiple sources of financial and technical assistance.

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- **Coos Bay, OR** (541) 267-0419
- **Garibaldi, OR** (503) 322-3367
What do a young man from New Jersey and a young woman from Detroit know of forest management plans? Certainly nothing that an abandoned homestead, 40 acres of forest, and 37 years of evolving stewardship couldn’t teach them!

In 1976 our first order of business was to run power, fence out the range cattle, build a studio home, and restore overgrazed fields via installing irrigation. The process of water permitting and reclaiming an old irrigation pond led us to the (then) Soil Conservation Service. That started a process of connections to appropriate professionals and forestry education that has continued for 37 years. All this while we farmed the land, Mike worked away parts of the year on cross-country pipeline construction, I commuted to “town” employed as a school speech pathologist, and we raised two children.

Desire to be good stewards on a working ranch/residence and curiosity about local history and the unique characteristics of the Entiat Valley in semi-arid north central Washington were necessary ingredients for developing our path. Thanks to the local district conservationist we began learning about a cost-share program for thinning, pruning trees, and native seeding. Logged in the 1920s and 1950s, we conducted a precommercial thin of the regrowth Douglas-fir in this ponderosa pine elevation of 2,000+ feet to open up the crowns. The forester we hired for the sale certified our Tree Farm in 1984. It was relatively simple, as our focus was basically forest health, soil and water…and fire. The latter is what came to play in our management goals for the next certification that happened in 1988.

Our closest neighbors are a mile-and-a-half down-canyon, and we are surrounded by US Forest Service land, which was leased for grazing at the time. The Entiat Valley has a unique fire history, particularly with lightning-caused storms. We learned from our retired USFS fire management officer neighbor that natural fire events occur every 6-12 years on average. Then, the human-caused Dinkelman Fire in 1988 spurred us to contact our local ranger district to do an “Agreement for Individual Voluntary Services.” The prescription for this agreement was outlined by Forest Service personnel and included cutting out certain trees less than eight inches dbh, pruning the branches of live trees up to 12 feet, and bucking up firewood-sized logs and piling the rest. The labor was done by us, with our saw and fuel. The following two winters our family of four (including children aged five and nine) thinned, pruned, and piled slash for later burning by the Forest Service, thus creating a modified shaded fuel break on public land adjacent to our home on the west line.

The Forest Service then did an underburn in 1991. This work served us well in July 1994 when the Tyee Creek wildfire came “crowning” toward our property. This fire devastated 140,000 acres, 19 homes, and 76 outbuildings, but our home still stands and we lost only our barn, about 40 percent of our stems, and 30 percent of our board footage.

An aerial view of the Mallon property taken in 2009, looking from north to south, includes: the irrigated field; the group of trees in the upper right (east) were part of the 1984 precommercial thin and survived the crowning Tyee Creek Fire on July 26, 1994; the scattered trees around the edges of the field and foreground (north) survived as the fire went through. The group of trees to the upper right adjacent to the house was part of the shaded fuel break created on USFS land in 1989-91 which saved the house. The barren background at the top (south) is USFS land that burned hot.

–Continued on page 18–
American Tree Farm System:

- A network of more than 95,000 woodland owners sustainably managing 26 million acres of forestland
- A valuable resource giving forest owners the tools they need to keep their forests healthy and productive
- An internationally-recognized Forest Certification program

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72 Mattson Rd
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360-273-8892
john@wildlogic.com

IDAHO
Idaho Tree Farm System
Jennifer Childers
Idaho SFI Implementation Committee, Inc.
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objectives we’d checked off as “done” now needed to be done again (replace fencing, more salvage logging, barn replacement) and new projects added (reforestation). Our forester and the Conservation District were there for us.

The next round of recertification with the American Tree Farm System in 1995 spoke to restoration of timber and grasses. An unexpected opportunity also resulted from the fire: to provide education. With the visibly-obvious positive effects of taking proactive measures from a private owner perspective, we hosted multiple visits for folks ranging from elected officials, to forestry professionals to the media and presented our story at the 1996 National Tree Farm Convention in Portland, Ore., prior to “Firewise” becoming a colloquial term in this millennium.

Our Washington Farm Forestry Association has been invaluable in providing opportunities for learning both for the benefit of our forest as well as also linking us to ideas from Project Learning Tree, which gave us the knowledge and know-how to host student learning field trips. At WFFA Field Days, we learned about cost-share programs. In 1997, we purchased the only adjoining private property to our 40 acres—72 acres which was heavily burned then logged, thus adding that many more acres requiring reforestation.

We utilized the Forest Incentive Program in 1998 to cost share the planting of 3,000 seedlings on 10 acres. Here’s where our WFFA and Conservation District (CD) connections paid off, too: Helping our family in planting the place was our forester, our FIP advisor, friends from WFFA and SAF, and CD volunteers. In 2005, we were awarded an Environmental Quality Incentives Program contract that Okanogan NRCS assisted us in writing for forest site preparation, stand improvement, and tree establishment over five years. One benefit of a contract is you get the work done in a specific time frame! In 2006, a Forest Land Enhancement Program grant cost-shared our most recent Forest Management Plan, written by consulting forester Loren Hiner (John Malone, who passed away two years ago, was our original forester). This plan is registered with our county as it meets the tax requirement (they are audited by the Department of Revenue to ensure Designated Forest Land properties have an approved forest management plan). The goals of the current plan have now evolved to create and maintain stands of healthy trees, to continue forest fuels management, to maintain and enhance wildlife habitat, and to control noxious weeds. Best of all, replanting trees has become my rou-
This photo was taken facing east on the Murdock Ranch upper property (72 acres purchased in 1997) where the Tyee Creek fire burned harder. Note the old burned trees that survived 1994, and the new growth in the foreground that was both regeneration after the fire and plantings (in stages) completed since 1995. Observing the height of new growth is an indication of the much slower growth in semi-arid eastern foothills.

CHRISTINE MALLON and her husband Mike own and operate Mallons’ Murdock Ranch (and tree farm). They can be reached at crmallon@frontier.com.
The Crystal Lake Tree Farm Program is Alive and Well

By CHUCK HOLLAND

On Saturday, March 3, I was one of a group of volunteers that helped plant 2,400 plug+1 western redcedar seedlings on the Crystal Lake Tree Farm. The Crystal Lake Tree Farm is located on the King County-Snohomish County line about five miles east of Woodinville in Washington State.

The tree farm is unique in that it is owned by 67 families, all living within the Crystal Lake Community, and basically surrounded by the tree farm. Started in 1927 by the Seattle Rod and Gun Club as a place for sportsmen to gather, the original purchase consisted of about 400 acres of recently logged-over, burned-over uplands surrounding a 40-acre lake and a large wetland where waterfowl could be hunted. Throughout the depression era club membership dropped significantly because members could not pay the annual dues of $10 per year, and eventually 160 acres had to be turned back to the State of Washington for lack of ability to pay the $1,200 balance due on the purchased agreement. In 1930 a hunting lodge was constructed on the lake shore, and for many years Rod and Gun Club members used the lodge as a place to stay while they hunted, fished, and raised fingerling trout in some rearing ponds constructed at the outflow of Crystal Lake.

After World War II the area near the lake was restructured into a series of recreational lots, and over a period of time these lots all became places for year-around residences. By the 1960s a natural stand of conifer timber had grown to merchantable size on some of the uplands and some areas were logged, but never replanted. Other areas contained brush and low-value hardwoods, and little serious timber management activity was conducted.

In 1980, Ron Munro and his wife Miriam built a home at Crystal Lake. Ron is a professional forester with a 1961 Bachelor of Science Degree in Forest Management from the University of Washington. At the time Ron and Miriam moved to Crystal Lake they knew nothing of the land ownership held by the Crystal Lake stockholders. However, over the next couple of years Ron became familiar with the community property and then approached the Board of Directors with the concept of establishing a sustained-yield forest management plan for about 200 acres of uplands.

The forest management concept was well received by the membership and in the fall of 1982 approximately...
five acres of area containing low-value hardwoods was cleared and the brush wind-rowed. On February 12, 1983, the 1st Annual Crystal Lake Tree Farm Day was conducted and 45 residents planted 2,000 three-year-old Douglas-fir seedlings.

Every year since 1983 the Crystal Lake Community has conducted a Tree Farm Day and residents and friends show up to help. Sometimes it has been replanting a harvest area, sometimes brushing out around plantation trees, and sometimes pruning trees with hand saws and ladders. The first few years people left during the day to go home for lunch, but sometimes they didn’t come back, so the community started feeding them in the field at lunch time and that has worked out real well.

A few years ago Ron asked the community to form a Forestry Advisory Committee (FAC), and several residents stepped forward and volunteered to help. The FAC currently consists of six residents, including one professional forester, three residents that have completed a Coached Planning Forest Stewardship Class, and one resident that is about to take the class. One FAC member is also on the Crystal Lake Board of Directors, and therefore acts as a liaison between the FAC and the Board. A Forest Stewardship Plan has been written, which calls for a sustained-yield program that results in the harvest of approximately 15 acres of mature timber every five years, and the tree farm is currently 30 years into a 67-year rotation. Some areas within the tree farm are plagued with laminated root rot, and as harvesting takes place in those areas, the stand species is being converted to the more resistant western redcedar. The management plan is also giving more consideration to alder, and in one 15-acre area a combination of Douglas-fir, western redcedar, and alder is being developed.

Over the years the Crystal Lake Community has made the tree farm available for a wide variety of outdoor activities. A number of different school children ranging from third graders to high school classes have toured the tree farm. Several Coached Planning Forest Stewardship workshops have been conducted, the local fire department has used the area to train firefighters in forest fire abatement procedures, and in one case a group of foreign tree farmers visited the tree farm while touring the Pacific Northwest.

So why was I on the tree farm on March 3, 2012? I was there because I have attended several Tree Farm Days in the past, but this year the community was celebrating their 30th Annual Tree Farm Day, and that called for a little celebrating. And what a great celebration it was! The official starting time was supposed to be 9:00 a.m., but by 8:15 a.m. volunteers starting showing up and they just kept coming. A food tent with hot coffee, cocoa, and lots of grub was already set up and staffed by volunteers. A warming fire was putting out lots of heat, a professional tree planter was there with planting shovels and tree bags, and the cedar seedlings were set out in quadrants of the area to be planted.

When 9:00 a.m. rolled around we did a countdown, and there were...
Restoring

BY JANET HEUBACH

I stood on the road looking up at the land I grew up on, the trees I played under as a child, the land my great-grandmother purchased in 1908. I was drawn to it through memories and repulsed by what had happened to it. For 15 years, “renters/squatters” had lived in the two houses on the 20-acre hillside parcel located six miles outside of Carnation, Wash. They left 20 tons of garbage mounded and buried; dead car, truck and motorcycle bodies decorating the driveway; and truck loads of beer bottles and broken glass cached everywhere. They had ripped out water heaters, propane heaters, all light fixtures, and any antique door and window worth selling. Luckily, they did not damage the forest; they may not have even walked in the woods.

A life-altering choice point was offered. Either move back to the farm (not farmed for 40 years) or it would be sold for a song. My father, 70+ at the time, moved off the property and any antique door and window worth selling. Luckily, they did not damage the forest; they may not have even walked in the woods.

A life-altering choice point was offered. Either move back to the farm (not farmed for 40 years) or it would be sold for a song. My father, 70+ at the time, moved off the property and any antique door and window worth selling. Luckily, they did not damage the forest; they may not have even walked in the woods.

Instead, I invested my savings in installing a well and putting a foundation on my 100-year-old house to prevent it from falling down.

Last fall I received a Forest Stewardship Coached Planning class announcement in the mail which changed my life. I know that “changed my life” sounds pretty overstated and dramatic, but for me results from the class have been truly significant. Those changes include:

• An in-depth 20+ year plan for my property to guide my restoration vision (trees, soil, wildlife, streams, etc.).
• A deeper knowledge of my forest from plotting trees in all sections of the 15 wooded acres.
• New places for solitude and places to share with close friends.
• Finding copies of the original 1908 property title, logging records for the area, and dates, photographs, and layouts of the houses and barn.
• A cost-sharing contract to restore flow to a blocked hillside stream, remove noxious weeds, and establish native plants and conifers.
• New friends—we explore in each others’ forests and provide on-the-ground advice.
• An additional tax reduction for the timberland related to the approved Stewardship Plan.
• New leisure activities with the Native Plant Society and Hardy Fern Foundation.
• The hint of a new consulting business.
• Closer connection with my adja-
cent small forest landowner neighbors. As the 40 or so participants reported on why they were there the first night, I felt at home. Even though the class leaders gave us a daunting five-inch think binder jammed with documents, I did not feel overwhelmed. The class leaders made us laugh and assured us that if we came to class and did the weekly homework, we could have a completed forest stewardship plan at the end of the class. The instructors were so clear about that that I believed them. They also gave us electronic files of 10 previously successful stewardship plans that we could use to build our own plans. When I sat down at my computer and opened the files, I knew that I could cut and paste my way to a solid framework for my plan.

Completing the weekly homework was critical. The homework included quite a bit of reading on subjects I had little familiarity with, e.g., silviculture and soils. The homework also required me to walk deeply into my wet forest to count trees, use new equipment to estimate tree heights and diameter, and to examine wildlife habitat. I found old skid trails that are still matted with moss and leaves where I plan to place natural benches on which I can sit and drink in the forest. I found open spaces filled with vine maple and red huckleberry and re-discovered the trilliums I was taught to honor so many years ago.

I discovered open areas where root rot had weakened the Doug-firs sufficiently that they were easily wind-felled. In class, I was alarmed like everybody else with the extensive list of diseases, insects, and animals that could cause my trees to fall down. I am a tree-hugger and want to protect each individual cedar, fir, hemlock, yew, maple, and cottonwood so they can grow hundreds of more years. I learned that I cannot eradicate root rot from my forest. I can, however, re-plant with western redcedar and western hemlock and purposefully leave other areas open to provide habitat and wildlife food.

Not only did the homework lead me deeper into my forest, Kristi and Bill, professional foresters who led the class, made three- to four-hour site visits to each property. Bill taught me a lot about my forest and I started seeing the forest through his expert eyes. I learned that the skinny Doug-fir next to the 36” diameter Doug-fir was the same age and he showed me root rot. We found the wildlife highway that runs north and south (18”-24” wide) that makes it easy for black bear, cougar, deer, coyotes, and raccoons to move through the contiguous forest on adjacent properties. Bill was only the first of a number of experts that came to the farm to see the forest, explore options for stream restoration, and assess the removal of noxious weeds. They told me about NRCS programs and EQIP cost-share opportunities. All of these services were included in the small class registration fee—amazing.

My story would not be complete without talking about two totally unanticipated outcomes from the class. The first is new potential options to supplement my income and even change the direction of my career. Since the class, I have become much more engaged in my community. I have a new dream of assisting other small landowners to develop

—Continued on next page—
their own forest stewardship plans as a consultant. Second, the non-timber forest products presentation opened new doors to thinking about managing our 100-year-old forest to provide shelter to cultivate mushrooms, space for reflection for others, and to engage a few families with small children in activities that build knowledge and respect for nature on a fee basis.

As these new dreams become reality, I will be fulfilling my vision of restoring the farm and creating a restorative environment. I believe I will be honoring nature, my family legacy, and those who came before.

**Janet Heubach** is the owner of 40 acres outside Carnation, Wash. She can be reached at 425-223-7800 or jgheubach@yahoo.com.

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**The Building Blocks of Owl Conservation in Washington State — 12.9 million acres of Federal, State, Tribal and Private Forestland**

1. The Endangered Species Act protects all owls from “harm or harassment.”
2. Federal guidance calls for 2,600-5,900 acres of forestland set-aside per owl pair.
3. State forestry rules add additional owl protection in strategic areas.
4. State and private voluntary conservation plans (CP) contribute to owl protection.

**WA Owl Conservation Lands**

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</table>

Sources: Joint Presentation: Forest Practices Board, 8/05
USFWS: Status of CPs in Washington, 6/10

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Twenty tons of garbage left by non-family occupants—now gone.

The house after the blackberries and cars were cleared away.

**www.northernspottedowl.org**
already more than 85 children and adults in attendance. (By day’s end that count swelled to approximately 120 by the time some of the mothers with small children showed up.) Jeanne Koruga, Forestry Advisory Committee chairperson, introduced the FAC members and Ron Munro pointed out that several of the people in attendance had also participated in the very first Tree Farm Day 30 years ago. Crystal Lake, Inc. President Chris Thompson stated, “I was nine years old when I participated in the first Tree Farm Day, and today my nine-year-old son is here with me to plant trees.”

Washington Farm Forestry Upper Puget Sound Chapter President Mike Blais and I had the privilege of presenting the Crystal Lake Community with a Certificate of Outstanding Tree Farm Achievement for 30 years of continuous dedication to good forest stewardship, and then we regrouped in the planting area where Martin Greenhaw, Timberline Silvics, demonstrated the correct way to plant the seedlings.

By about 1:00 p.m. all the seedlings had been planted, most of the food had been eaten, and people started to drift back home. For me it was a wonderful experience of volunteer help at its finest, and a great day of tree farming.

Upon leaving I had one last look at the planted trees to see what we together had accomplished. A young boy ran through the planted area, enjoying being outdoors among the trees he helped plant. The feeling of legacy came over me. We had indeed planted those cedar trees for his generation and those yet to come. How glad I was to be part of it!

Chuck Holland is a Snohomish County tree farmer and secretary/treasurer of the Upper Puget Sound Chapter of the Washington Farm Forestry Association. He is the special projects manager for Jones Stevedoring Company in Tacoma, Wash., and can be reached at 206-763-1130 or cholland@jonesstevedoring.com.

A Sample of Crystal Lake Tree Farm Community Management Plan Goals

1. Put into action a sustained yield harvest plan that will provide periodic income to the community for present and future improvement purposes. To date approximately $700,000 in net income has been generated for community purposes.
2. Demonstrate to all who live here, or visit here, that it is not “wrong” to harvest trees and grow some more.
3. Demonstrate that it is possible to have a residential setting and an active tree farm all within a single community without one distracting from, or taking value from the other.

John Norman and 11-year-old daughter Sarah plant cedars green side up. The Norman family members are active Crystal Lake residents and strong supporters of the Crystal Lake Forest Management Program.
Charlotte, N.C.—American Forest Management, Inc. (AFM), a timberland management consulting firm with corporate offices in Sumter, South Carolina, and Charlotte, North Carolina, has acquired International Forestry Consultants, Inc. (INFO), headquartered in Kirkland, Wash.

The acquisition will combine the knowledge and expertise of two of the leaders in the field of forest management consulting, providing management activities on over 4.7 million acres of forestland throughout the United States. AFM will have a staff of 250 professionals operating from 41 offices in 15 states.

Tom Hanson and Dennis Dart, principals of INFO, will continue to lead and manage the operations in the Northwest.

“After operating for 41 years in the Pacific Northwest, I am pleased to merge with AFM and expand our services into new geographic areas and be able to provide additional technical services to our clients,” said Hanson. Further, AFM will continue to offer the INFO brand of unique “boutique” management of family-owned forestlands as it has over the last four decades.

AFM’s operations extend throughout the Southeast, Northeast, Gulf, Pacific Northwest and Lake States regions and Hawaii. As a leading timberland manager for the forestry community, AFM offers a broad range of consulting services including land management, investment analysis, timberland sale and acquisition services, appraisals, enhanced decision support, growth and yield modeling, soils mapping, wetland delineation, Phase I environmental assessments, conservation easement appraisals, forest inventory and design, acquisition due diligence, forest resource data management, and harvest scheduling and analysis.

For additional information, contact Tom Hanson at 425-820-3420.

On October 6, 2012, the Washington Tree Farm Program will sponsor a day-long Forestry Educational Seminar at the Veterans Memorial Museum in Chehalis, Wash. This year’s theme is “Logging Your Timber: Options, Opportunities, and Precautions.” A contract logger, a consultant, and a forest landowner will discuss the various steps involved in doing a timber harvest and who can or should do them. Other presentations will cover the legislative situation and elk habitat and health.

Advanced registration by September 28 is required. Registration forms and further information can be obtained at www.watreefarm.org/2012RegForm.pdf or by calling Donna Loucks at 360-736-2147 or the Washington Tree Farm Program at 360-701-7656.

Cost for individual Certified American Tree Farm Members or Tree Farm Inspectors is $70 ($105 with spouse). For other individual adults the cost is $80 ($120 with spouse) Cost for students or children is $50. Price includes coffee, snacks, and a hot lunch.
Forest Stewardship University

Online learning opportunities are now available for Northwest forest owners. Many of WSU Extension's most popular forest stewardship workshops are now available as self-directed online classes. There are over two dozen available classes taught by the state's top experts, and new classes are added regularly. Classes are available on demand at any time and from anywhere. With a guaranteed access time of at least one year, you can work through each class at your leisure and come back for review as necessary.

While these online classes are provided by WSU, they are not limited to Washington owners—anyone can take them. While they are marketed for a Washington-based audience—and some are specifically westside vs. eastside—most are just as applicable in Oregon, Idaho, and Montana (except state regulations and taxes).

These online classes allow you to learn what you want and when you want, while saving time, money, and gas in the process. Topics include tree and plant identification, stand dynamics, silviculture, forest health, forest aesthetics, road building, forest inventory, invasive weed control, and more. There are individual classes available, as well as packaged groups of classes around similar topics.

To see what's available and to access these new online workshops, visit http://extension.wsu.edu/forestry/FSU/.

WOW has Inaugural Website

For the past year, IFOA member Renee D’Aoust has been working with women across the country to establish the Women Owning Woodlands web project. The result of their efforts is the debut of WomenOwningWoodlands.net, a collaborative project of the National Woodland Owners Association (NWOA), of which IFOA, OSWA, WFFA, and MFOA are affiliate members, and the USDA Forest Service, Cooperative Forestry Office.

The Women Owning Woodlands project strives to bring topical, accessible, and current forestry information to woodland owners and forest practitioners through news articles, blogs, events, resources, and personal stories. It supports women in forest leadership and women who manage their own woodlands. WomenOwningWoodlands.net is supported by volunteer regional editors who write content for the site based on their areas of expertise and geographic locations.

For further information on this valuable new resource, please feel free to contact Idaho Master Forest Steward and WOW Regional Editor Renee E. D’Aoust directly at idahobuzzy@yahoo.com. In Oregon, contact regional editor Nicole Strong at nicole.strong@oregonstate.edu and check out the Oregon Women Owning Woodlands Network blog at http://womenowningwoodlands.blogspot.com/.

McNitt Named OFIC’s New President

Oregon Forest Industries Council (OFIC) recently announced their new president, Kristina McNitt, who began work on June 15. She replaces Ray Wilkeson, who retired after 26 years with OFIC.

Kristina is no stranger to family forest owners. She worked for OSWA for many years, lobbying the state legislature on issues important to small woodland owners. Throughout her career she has become very knowledgeable in forestry, agriculture, water, and political issues.

Kristina grew up east of Salem, Ore., in a timber family. She has a degree in economics from the University of Oregon.

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TreeSmarts: Answers to Your Tax Planning Questions

The window of opportunity to take advantage of the favorable estate planning rules and federal tax rates is quickly closing. The Bush-era tax cuts are scheduled to expire at the end of 2012. With the uncertainty of the tax environment, what tax increases await us in 2013? What tax planning should occur prior to the end of 2012?

In 2013, a new additional 3.8 percent Medicare tax on net investment income for high earners and an additional 0.9 percent payroll tax on wages and self-employment earnings that exceed certain thresholds come into effect. The expiration of the Bush-era tax cuts will increase ordinary income tax rates from a current maximum rate of 35 percent to 39.6 percent, long-term capital gains from 15 percent to 20 percent, and estate and gift tax from 35 percent to 55 percent.

Currently the total Medicare tax is 2.9 percent, which is split between the employee and employer at 1.45 percent each. As part of the Health Care Reform Act of 2009, the Medicare tax will be 0.9 percent higher on income for people with combined wages and/or self-employment earnings that exceed $250,000 for married filing joint, $125,000 for married filing separate, and $200,000 for everyone else. So for example, in 2013, a single person making $240,000 will pay 1.45 percent on the first $200,000 in wages, and then 2.35 percent on $40,000. If the single person was self-employed with $240,000 in earnings, a single person will pay 2.90 percent on the first $200,000 of self-employment earnings, and then 3.80 percent on $40,000.

A new Medicare contribution tax on unearned income of 3.8 percent will be imposed on net investment incomes. The new tax will apply according to the same income thresholds as discussed in the previous paragraph. In general, this new Medicare tax will apply to investment income, which includes interest, dividends, annuity payments, royalties, and capital gains, as well as income from a business that’s considered passive (such as real estate), or a business that trades financial instruments and commodities. In terms of tax planning, one strategy to reduce the tax on unearned income is to allocate assets that generate high income into an IRA.

Currently, dividend income is classified as ordinary dividends or as qualified dividends. Ordinary dividends are taxed at ordinary income tax rates and qualified dividends are taxed at a maximum tax rate of 15 percent. Beginning in 2013, the distinction between ordinary dividends and qualified dividends will disappear and all dividends will be taxed at ordinary income tax rates. Since the tax savings related to dividend income will disappear, investing in tax-exempt bonds, low-paying dividend investments in exchange for asset appreciation or REIT will provide a means to lower taxes. Also, C corporations and S corporations (with undistributed C corporation earnings) should consider distributing dividends to shareholders in 2012. These dividends would be considered qualified dividends and subject to 15 percent.

Send calendar items to the editor at rasor@safnet.org.
percent tax rate.

Long-term capital gains tax rate not only increases to 20 percent, but net investment income will be subject to an additional 3.8 percent Medicare tax as discussed above. The net effect of both capital gain tax increases is a new 23.8 percent tax rate for higher earners that exceed certain income thresholds. In order to reduce the impact of the higher capital gains tax rate, consider selling investments at a loss to generate capital loss carry forward in 2012 to offset future capital gains. Also, if you are contemplating an installment sale in which taxes are paid in future years, consider electing out of installment sale treatment to recognize the entire gain in 2012 which would mitigate your tax bill.

Currently, each individual has a taxable gift exemption of $5.12 million. The taxable gift exemption is a cumulative lifetime amount. What does that mean? It means that if an individual wants to make a taxable gift utilizing a maximum lifetime exemption of $5.12 million, total taxable gifts made in 2012 and prior years cannot exceed $5.12 million. The taxable gift exemption reverts back to $1 million on January 1, 2013. In 2013, if an individual wants to make a taxable gift utilizing the maximum lifetime exemption of $1 million, the amount of the taxable gifts made in 2013 and prior years cannot exceed $1 million. However, if the prior taxable gifts exceed $1 million, then the taxable gift exemption has been fully utilized and is not available for 2013.

Finally, generous depreciation provisions have been enacted to promote capital investment for businesses. One opportunity for businesses in 2012 relates to bonus depreciation. Bonus depreciation allows for 100 percent of the cost for qualified assets acquired placed into service to be immediately deducted. For 2012, this immediate deduction declines to 50 percent. This deduction expires at the end of 2012 and will not be available for 2013.

Please see your CPA or tax practitioner for your specific situation implementing any of the above information in compliance with current tax laws.

TreeSmarts: Answers to Your Tax Planning Questions is written by Rosemary Sanchez, a partner and CPA with Bancroft Buckley Johnston & Serres LLP in Seattle, Wash. She is a member of the AICPA and Board of Director of the WSCPA. Questions can be emailed directly to rosemary at rsanchez@bbjsllp.com.

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Members of the Washington Farm Forestry Association

We count trees, not beans.
**Tips From The Treeman**

### DEAR TREEMAN,

We could have done with a little less of your anti-government opinions during your session on managing woodland ponds. —Ted

### DEAR TED,

Thank you for your vociferous missive delivered via manipulation of the metacarpals. Your note pertains to a topic that has long been a bone of contention around here, thus becoming a teachable moment, so we shall expound upon the opportunity. First let me say that I am not "anti-government," although I do ascribe to the sentiments of Thomas Jefferson when he said, “Those are governed best who are governed least.” But I digress.

Treeman is a vehicle for the transfer of knowledge: education, if you will. No dictate exists saying education cannot be both informative and entertaining, though finding the proper balance between the two occasionally proves to be a tenuous undertaking. Gaining the attention of an audience, students, so the message can be delivered and cogitated by those individuals, occasionally requires one be “over-the-top.”

However, hyperbole poses a danger to the messenger and the intended audience: the former actually believing their exaggerations and the audience not recognizing the difference. But if performed successfully, attention can be attained, the message delivered, and the audience left to masticate on the meaning. Too much hyperbole and credibility can be lost; too little, along with a vapid subject, and ennui besets the audience.

All too often, educators err to the side of caution. They temper their delivery and content so as not to offend anyone. But there is almost always an individual, or select few, who will take offense regardless of the message. Attempts to console these entities come in the form of political correctness: the message becomes so attenuated as to lose any enduring educational value.

The phenomenon becomes a “tyranny of the minority.” Individuals become so fearful of offending anyone’s sensibilities, whether sensible or not, that the message becomes benign to the degree that the multiples are offended by the messenger’s overzealous attempts to offend no one! This political correctness run amok is borne of fear from reprisals of supervisors, censure of peers, and too often “comes off” as a tedious pandering to their audience.

So caveat reader: our histrionics of the hyperbole shall continue, as will our fealty for forestry education. If unable to discern between the two, fear not and remember our friend Jefferson: “Happiness is not being pained in body, or troubled in mind.” —Treeman

### DEAR TREEMAN,

I have heard and read several things about how it is necessary to put grass seed on skid roads after using them supposedly to control erosion and sedimentation into streams. I have also seen these roads become full of vegetation after the first time it rains without adding seed. And planting trees guarantees control erosion and sedimentation. Rhizobia results in the formation of root nodules that fix nitrogen for the plant and soil.

The difference between legumes and other plants is legume roots seek specific strains of bacteria in the soil that aid in producing their own nitrogen. There are many strains of bacteria and only certain types can aid in the production of nitrogen. The helpful bacteria may be present in the soil, and in its absence, the clover will not be able to produce its own nitrogen, necessitating synthetic nitrogen for growth at an added expense. The legume would not develop the nodules and therefore would not produce or fix nitrogen into the soil for future crops. To guarantee the correct bacteria is present in the soil, plant seed is mixed with the appropriate bacteria contained in these inoculants. And remember, with the political season thrust upon us and all of the “bacteria” being present, legumes are not the only thing in need of an “inoculate.” —Treeman

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30 . NORTHWEST WOODLANDS . SUMMER 2012
New Classroom Opens

By JIM KADERA

After nearly five years of effort, the new Forest Hall is ready for classes and other meetings at Hopkins Demonstration Forest south of Oregon City, Ore.

Sitting at the highest point on the 140-acre nonprofit tree farm, the 2,400 square feet building welcomes groups of up to 90. Constructed primarily of wood from Clackamas County woodlands and mills, the structure cost about $365,000, excluding landscaping which is not funded and remains undone.

Nonprofit Forests Forever Inc., which owns and manages Hopkins Demonstration Forest, began planning Forest Hall in 2007 with the hope of financing and completing the project in about two years. However, the economic recession slowed fund raising. However, repeated calls for donations brought results, and finishing touches were made on the building interior this spring.

Ken Everett, Forests Forever executive director and one of the founders, said he expects all programs of Oregon State University Extension in the county, including 4-H, “will put the building to good use. When Forest Hall is not used for educational programs, we plan to rent it for short-time use by schools, nonprofit organizations, churches, public agencies, and businesses for meetings, workshops and retreats.”

OSU Extension was among several major Forest Hall donors, giving $40,000 for the project. The Ramsay/Waldorf families of Molalla were the initial donors with $50,000. Other major contributors were M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, $50,000; now-retired woodland owners Clem and Phyllis Hunter, $30,000; Meyer Memorial Trust, $25,000; and The Collins Foundation, $20,000. These were among more than 180 donors.

Forest Hall can seat about 90 and has a catering kitchen, restrooms, multi-media technology, large fireplace, and space to display forestry memorabilia. The building is near a 60-foot-tall historic fire lookout tower obtained from Oregon Department of Forestry. It will open later this year after a cabin is built on top.

Hopkins Forest was logged-over land bought in 1962 by Howard Hopkins, a U.S. Forest Service employee, and his wife Margaret. They gradually reforested the place, which today is stocked with Douglas-fir, redcedar, alder, and several other tree species mostly less than 50 years old.

After her husband died in 1989, Margaret Hopkins decided to donate the forestland for educational and related public use. Her gift led to formation of Forests Forever by Everett and others interested in advancing forestry education at the local level. As support grew into the 21st century, Forests Forever was able to staff Hopkins Forest with a full-time Extension Service educator. Tim DeLano, who holds that position, is the community outreach coordinator.

Several hundred youth from Clackamas County and nearby schools visit Hopkins Forest annually for one or more days to learn about trees, soil, water, wildlife, and other forest resources. Dog walkers and others trek a well-developed trail system covering the sloping land. Hopkins is maintained partly by volunteers who converge once a month to plant seedlings, cut brush from trails, stop road erosion, and tend to other tasks.

A small part of Hopkins operating costs are defrayed through commercial timber thinnings. Margaret Hopkins has died, but her two daughters share in the gross logging income. When they pass away, all of the income after logging costs will go to Forests Forever for use at Hopkins Demonstration Forest.

Besides opening learning opportunities to youth, Hopkins conducts small-scale field demonstrations to show woodland owners the values of different types of sustainable forestry.

JIM KADERA is a board member of Forests Forever Inc. and a retired journalist. He can be reached at jkadera@gmail.com.

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