WORKING COOPERATIVELY WITH PARTNERS

Collaboration is Powerful

Developing Markets for Juniper

In Partnership to Manage Urban Forestland

Oregon Woodland Cooperative Model

Solving Forest Conflicts in Idaho’s Clearwater Basin

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This magazine is a benefit of membership in your family forestry association. Contact the officers listed on page 5 for membership details.
THE POWER OF COLLABORATION WITH FAMILY FOREST OWNERS
The American Forest Foundation has been collaborating with family forest owners for 75 years through adaptive programs like the American Tree Farm System. Take a look at a few current projects in the West.

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NICHE MARKET DEVELOPMENT FOR WESTERN JUNIPER
Juniper’s severe impact on grasslands and high desert watersheds is a growing concern for land managers and ecologists, but decades of collaboration to study ecological impacts and build a niche market for the wood show promise for the environment and local economy.

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THE GREATER FOREST PARK CONSERVATION INITIATIVE
This collaborative effort has developed forest management strategies to protect over 15,000 acres of public and private land near Portland, encompassing one of the nation’s largest city-owned forests.

BY JIM CATHCART AND RENEE MYERS

OREGON WOODLAND COOPERATIVE: 35 YEARS OF COLLABORATION AND COOPERATION
The Oregon Woodland Cooperative serves as a model for other family forestland owner organizations wanting to optimize markets for many types of forest products.

BY NEIL SCHROEDER

THE CLEARWATER BASIN COLLABORATIVE: A CASE STUDY IN COMMITMENT AND RESILIENCY
Collaboratives come in all sizes and with a variety of objectives. The relatively large and diverse Clearwater Basin Collaborative was formed in 2008 by Senator Mike Crapo to address natural resource conflicts in north-central Idaho. The group is focused primarily on federal forestland in the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest, and addresses issues on a watershed scale.

BY ELAYNE MURPHY
When landowners discuss working cooperatively with partners, the first thing that comes to mind is working together to meet mutual needs for access. There can be many reasons why working together is in both parties’ best interest. Some examples include:

• Sharing roads can decrease the need for road construction and reduce the associated environmental impacts. Too often I see two roads built where one road could have met both parties’ needs.

• In some situations, neighbors have existing roads which allow you access to areas on your property that would not otherwise be feasible. For example, you may have a logging unit to cable log but it is too steep for you to stay on your property and get a road to the top of the unit. If a neighbor has a road allowing you to reach the top of your logging unit, this can be a tremendous benefit by having the ability to use the ideal logging system.

Unfortunately, in some cases, people control access as a way of preventing their neighbor from logging. In most cases, the unit gets logged using a logging system that is less than ideal, resulting in undue environmental impact.

• Sharing roads not only reduces environmental impacts but also spreads the road construction and maintenance costs out amongst users.

When working together on access agreements, the first consideration is whether it will be a temporary or a permanent agreement. Following are a few things I think about as I work on access agreements.

Temporary access for harvesting. When using an existing road, it is appropriate to pay a road use fee to compensate the landowner for a portion of the cost of building the road. Road maintenance also needs to be addressed. For example, the agreement may be to maintain the road during use and leave the road in as-good-or-better condition when finished. In some cases, it is appropriate to improve the road in lieu of paying road use fees. When determining the term of the agreement, make sure the agreement allows enough time for the logging to be completed, as well as follow-up management such as planting and vegetation control.

Permanent access. Permanent access is always preferable as it addresses future as well as current needs. It also protects the receiving party if the land sells and you have a different neighbor to deal with. I recommend getting an attorney involved in dealing with permanent access agreements and have the documents recorded.

Sometimes permanent access limits the allowed use. For example, the agreement may only provide access for harvesting and forest management purposes. This is common in situations where the granting party does not want the access to be used for a residence or other non-forestry use.

As with temporary access, it is reasonable to pay a road use fee to compensate the landowner for a portion of the cost of building the road. In addition, it is appropriate to pay the landowner a reasonable fee for granting permanent access. The amount of the fee considers that permanent access encumbers the property in perpetuity.

The access agreement needs to deal with road maintenance. This can be a tricky issue as agreements often use terminology such as, “maintenance is commensurate with use.” It is also common for the landowner to have the option to perform the maintenance for an agreed upon rate or require the using party to conduct the maintenance commensurate with use. If the landowner is going to conduct the maintenance for an agreed upon rate, there should be some sort of inflationary clause so the rate is still fair in the future.

In summary, I urge you to work together with your neighbors on access needs, seeking solutions that are in your best interest and in the interest of all parties involved.

GENETECHS
Howard W. Counter, Professional Forester

1500 NW Skyline Blvd., Portland, Oregon 97229
(503) 297-1660
Every rural community in the West is testament to the declining public opinion around natural resource utilization. In their local newspapers, towns that are in natural resource-dependent areas tell the stories of consolidation (reduced competition), closure (lost jobs), global competition (somebody else can manufacture it for less) and environmental caucuses (lawsuits to stop timber harvest on federal and state lands).

In Washington's timber country, which represents 50 percent of the state, it has been devastating. Milling infrastructure losses have been catastrophic in some communities. Many mills, loggers, log truck drivers and forest landowners have stopped working in the woods. Suddenly, the forest landscape has become a very unhealthy place that even some in the environmental community didn't anticipate.

Out of desperation, comes inspiration. In 2002, a tentative, cautious and sometimes distrusting conversation began in Colville, Washington between mill owners, conservation organizations, loggers, forest landowners (public and private) and outdoor recreational groups; just about every stakeholder that had an interest in the Colville National Forest (CNF) came together to discuss the significance of this forest to our community and environment. And so, the Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition (NEWFC) was born. The group's clashes, collaboration and reconciliation are one of the main reasons that northeast Washington has any active mill infrastructure still in place.

NEWFC stakeholders discovered more about what they share than about what divides them. It has been a great example of what collaboration can do for a community, an industry, an economy and an environment. Through the difficult work of hearing each others’ positions, the understanding of our shared interests can come through.

As Russ Vaagen, vice president and third generation owner of Vaagen Brothers Mill, states in his blog (theforestblog.com), “When parties are trying to solve complex issues, positions can become impediments. When we realize that our interests are much more important to protect than our positions we can find space for a breakthrough.”

However, it isn't all cupids and rose petals. There have been many opponents on all sides of the coalition. Even with the support of U.S. Representative Cathy McMorris-Rodgers and the members of NEWFC promoting a pilot project in the CNF known as the A-Z project, an outside environmental group challenged the project in court, objecting that the environmental assessment wasn’t rigorous enough. This represented a difficult challenge for the collaborators of NEWFC, after they had worked so hard to build internal trust.

Can they hold together for the local interest in a project they had already agreed on or will they splinter apart to unite with their own interests? I am happy to say that the coalition partners have stood together to support the project and each other.

I have not been directly involved in NEWFC’s collaboration, but I am grateful that the local communities that depend on the CNF for economic survival and recreational opportunities, care about conservation practices and continue to benefit from their efforts.
I would like to inform you about two IFOA programs that demonstrate the exceptional outcome that can happen when we work cooperatively with partners on our goals and desires to add value for our members, the public, and the environment.

First, over here in Idaho we are very busy putting together our annual forestry conference. This year our conference, “Family Forest Landowners & Managers Conference & Exposition,” will be held on March 27th and 28th in Moscow, Idaho. This event is managed and coordinated by IFOA but it is the result of a large collaboration between partners. Each partner’s goals are focused on forest stewardship. The partners that work cooperatively to bring you this informative and educational event are: Idaho Forest Owners Association, Idaho Tree Farm Program, U.S. Forest Service State and Private Forestry, Idaho Department of Lands, Inland Empire Society of American Foresters, as well as many local businesses and families that contribute time and assets. For the event agenda and registration, download and print the form at idahoforestowners.org. Come join the fun in Idaho in March!

The IFOA Forest Seedling program provides over 150,000 native conifer tree seedlings to the public each April. Yes, over 150,000 trees every April, and our program is growing! This program is funded, managed, and coordinated by IFOA, but its goals and future planning are guided by a collaboration of IFOA members, four of the northern Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Idaho Department of Lands and private forestry consultants and contractors. It is a very valuable program to our region because our seeds come from seed orchards that are members of the Inland Empire Tree Improvement Cooperative (IETIC). Founded in 1968, the IETIC is a diverse group of 19 private, public, university, state and federal organizations in eastern Washington, northern Idaho and western Montana that have joined together to apply classical plant breeding techniques to important native conifer species to produce genetically improved tree seeds for reforestation and ecosystem restoration. (webpages.uidaho.edu/ietic) Why is this important? It is important because the IETIC incorporates years of knowledge and research into genetically sound trees and cone selections, dedicated tree orchards for producing seeds, and modern advancements in harvest and preservation of seeds. These genetically selected seeds are then made available to IFOA and the other 18 IETIC members who grow them into strong, sound seedlings to be planted in the Inland Northwest. IFOA makes our seedlings available to the public through the four northern Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Districts: Benewah, Bonner, Boundary and Kootenai-Shoshone.

These two cooperative efforts are collaborations between volunteer non-profits, universities, private timber companies, and state and federal government entities.
FEBRUARY
✓ Register for your association’s annual meeting or conference: IFOA, March 27-28; MFOA, April 21; WFFA, May 4-6; and OSWA, June 16-17. They are one of the best benefits of membership—an opportunity to exchange success stories and challenges with your fellow forestland owners.
✓ Clean out and repair your bird boxes and perches; install new ones wherever you’ve seen recent activity. Raptors would appreciate a handy perch adjacent to your mouse, vole or ground squirrel activity!
✓ Assemble pertinent tax records and prepare your return. If you are lucky enough to have an accountant or tax preparer, take your paperwork to them early.
✓ Research integrated pest management options for invasive plants or insect/disease issues on your forestland. Pesticides are sometimes the best solution, but they’re not the only solution. Consult with your tree farm contacts for treatments that have been successful. Whenever possible, practice prevention.
✓ Where there is potential for pine engraver beetles to enter your thinning slash, complete your precommercial thinning early in the year so the slash has time to dry before the first flight.
✓ Tour your proposed logging operation with your forester and logger. Rely on their experience and good reputation to conduct a successful operation. Develop a solid contract and time your operation carefully. Take the responsibility to assure that your logger has all appropriate fire equipment in good working order.

MARCH
✓ Begin tree planting in higher elevation units this month. Avoid planting in frosty soils and protect your bare root seedlings from freezing. Finish well before the moisture is gone from the soil.
✓ Complete fuel reduction projects around your structures and in your forest. Don’t forget the outbuildings, public and private access roads, and that precommercial thinning project you just completed!
✓ Order seedlings for 2018 reforestation projects. Make sure your seedlings match your site.
✓ Install seedling protection measures before the tasty buds have opened.
✓ If you’re pruning to improve aesthetics, log value or to remove ladder fuels, finish before sap begins to flow to minimize bark damage and insect activity.
✓ Take some time to evaluate your riparian buffers and wetlands and how they enhance the local habitat and connectivity. How does your forestland contribute to the larger watershed?

APRIL
✓ Celebrate National Arbor Day on April 28 in Idaho and Montana. Oregon officially celebrates the holiday during the first full week of April, while the Washington celebration falls on the second Wednesday of April. Overall, a good month for trees!
✓ Finish cutting firewood before fuels dry out to minimize the potential for wildfire. Spreading the cut wood on the ground will allow it to dry before collection.
✓ Plan for fire season: meet with neighbors, ask your fire protection agency for a courtesy inspection, prepare equipment, move firewood away from your house and assure adequate access for engines. Make sure your family members know what to do in the event of a fire. You are an important part of the fire prevention solution.
✓ Do your plantations need fertilization or release from competing vegetation? Tending your trees when they’re young will give you a better mature stand.
✓ Monitor your 2016 projects and update your photo points. Plan a tour for fellow forestland owners to share your accomplishments. You deserve a pat on the back from people who know!

Down on the Tree Farm is a compilation of all of the excellent tips contributed to this column by experienced volunteers over the last 15 years. Suggestions are always welcome and may be sent to the editor at: annewithnww@gmail.com.
The Understory

Surveying Portions of Sections

This article was copied with permission from the autumn newsletter of Stuntzner Engineering & Forestry, LLC. Authors are John Hoshall, Survey Tech, and Corey Woodruff, Public Land Surveyor, for Stuntzner in Forest Grove, Oregon.

Stuntzner is often contacted by landowners with requests to survey parcels that are portions of Sections, such as the Southwest 1/4 of the Northeast 1/4. These parcels are controlled by the Public Land Survey System (PLSS).

The PLSS was originally developed in 1785 by the federal government to distribute property and has evolved over time. Based on Oregon statutory requirements, surveyors are required to abide by the guidelines provided in the “United States Manual of Survey Instructions” (currently the 2009 edition) when resurveying.

Landowners are often surprised when they learn of the amount of work required to establish their boundaries in the correct locations, and that the bulk of this labor might not even be performed on their property. Also, we’re frequently asked by property owners why it is necessary for us to enter their property to measure to a monument when the survey we’re performing is one-half mile or more away.

This example is a survey to locate the boundaries of the “Park Tract” shown in Figure 1. Park would like to have property corners established and his property lines marked for a future timber sale. This example assumes a standard section with no previous surveying in the interior of the section.

To survey the boundaries of the Park Tract, which is described in the deed as "the Southwest quarter of the Northeast quarter of Section 9," the following would be required:

The Center 1/4 corner of Section 9 (Park’s southwest corner) will be established at the intersection of lines drawn between the 1/4 corners. To determine this location, it will be necessary to make measurements to all four of the 1/4 corners.

Once we have measured to all the quarter corners and the Center 1/4 position is determined we can also determine where Park’s northwest (Center-North 1/16) and southeast (Center-East 1/16) corners are located. These 1/16 corners will be calculated at the midpoints between the Center 1/4 corner and the 1/4 corners.

We still don’t have the necessary information to set the Park’s northeast corner (Northeast 1/16 corner). The Northeast 1/16 corner is established in much the same process as the Center 1/4. It is located at the intersection of the lines between the 1/16 corners. Our previous work has determined the locations of two of them but we still need to determine the locations of the East 1/16 on the north boundary of the Section and the North 1/16 on the east boundary of the Section. These corners are placed at midpoint between the 1/4 corners and the northeast section corner. Thus, we’ll also need a measurement to the northeast corner.

As you can see, much of the work for this project lies offsite to measure to the corners on the exterior of the section. In this example, the required monuments were found, although should one of the other 1/4 corners be lost, such as the West 1/4 corner, then it would be necessary to also measure to the southwest and northwest section corners to determine the location of the lost West 1/4 corner. Lost monuments can significantly impact the amount of work necessary. Depending on the terrain and groundcover this can be a time-consuming and labor-intensive process—all taking place off the client’s property. Fortunately, GPS technology can sometimes provide us a means to avoid spending time traversing miles through the brush to make these measurements.
By TOM MARTIN

The natural inclination when thinking of forests across the United States is to think of trees, nature and beauty. And that’s right, but incomplete; we must take it one step further and consider the life essentials our forests provide. Hundreds of wildlife species that make up our North American ecosystems depend on forests. The roof over your head and the household goods you use every day were derived from products made from our forests. The water that came from your faucet this morning likely traveled through a forested watershed. And the clean air that you breathe when you walk outside was filtered by forested lands.

If we are to continue to have these essentials, caring for these forests is vital. But doing so isn’t always easy. Threats to our forests are real. Wildfires consume miles of trees and habitat, invasive species come from other parts of our globe and take control of large tracts of woods, and insect epidemics cause our trees to die from the inside out. All these threats need to be managed.

Luckily, there are caretakers of our forests that have continued to ensure that we have our forests for tomorrow: individual and family forest owners. Across the U.S., there are more than 22 million family forest owners. Collectively, they make up the largest ownership group of forests, more than corporations or the government. Even in the West, where much of the land is thought of as national park and federal land, families and individuals still own more than 35 percent of the forests.

Individual and family forest owners are some of the most passionate and conservation-minded stewards of our natural resources. These individuals want to, and do, care for our forests when they have the tools and resources they need to make it happen.

We at the American Forest Foundation (AFF) know this, because we have been helping harness this passion and turn it into forest stewardship for more than 75 years. We focus on building programs and tools that help these landowners overcome obstacles so that they can manage their forests generation-to-generation, and keep them productive for all their benefits. We continue to learn more and more about these owners, and to apply these lessons to the way we support them in stewardship. Because AFF has changed with the times, our organization and our programs have prospered.

Our collaboration with landowners dates to the 1940s. At that time, wildfire was a major threat to our forests and was a prevalent issue across the West. Westward expansion was at its height and major timber companies were divesting their mass land holdings. Individual landowners and families were buying up 40-acre to 100-acre tracts of forestland across the West to settle and raise their families. While these new owners came with a passion for the outdoors, they had little experience or technical knowledge of forest management or the unpredictability of natural fire.

Yet, even then, our forests were essential to the burgeoning society. The forest products industry still counted on landowners and their forests for timber harvests and wood supply to build homes, railroad tracks, home goods and more. Thus, in 1941, to answer the call of landowners and protect the wood supply, the Timber Manufacturers Association created the American Tree Farm System (ATFS). AFF was later formed as an offshoot organization to administer the program. A simple, yet powerful
program, it gave landowners the tools and knowledge they needed to help them mitigate uncontrollable wildfires and protect their woods. The program then recognized the landowners who were using good forest stewardship by giving them a large diamond sign they could display on their land, encouraging their neighbors to do the same.

The concept was a huge success. Within a short time, people were describing the ATFS as the greatest voluntary forest conservation movement in this country’s history. The program harnessed the passion of landowners, and turned it into active management to keep our forests thriving.

Within a few short years, with the program growing rapidly, a handful of individuals could no longer support the tremendous number of Tree Farmers who wanted to do their part to care for our forests, so we created local ATFS committees to run the programs in each state. State foresters, forest products companies, state forestry associations and consulting foresters all came together to work on the committees, to collaborate with landowners and turn their passion into action.

As time progressed, new issues began to surface that made it more challenging for landowners to manage and protect their forestland. In the 1980s, property taxes escalated and tax policy became a major debate in Congress. Landowners still wanted to be able to keep their land and care for it. AFF helped organize ATFS Tree Farmers for the first time to advocate at a national level for policies that support good forestry and stewardship.

Then in the 2000s, global awareness of forests and the need to protect our natural resources became a top public issue. Landowners’ passion did not wane, so AFF evolved the program to meet the needs of the times, and help show the good stewardship of Tree Farmers by adding third-party certification to ATFS. This assurance helped wood from ATFS-certified forests to be sold into “green” markets and to meet the highest international quality standards.

Today, many of the same threats put pressure on our forests: years-long drought and beetle infestations are making catastrophic wildfires more common and uncontrollable. Invasive species are rapidly expanding, taking over large tracts of forests from Maine to California. Our society continues to evolve, with the barriers and obstacles to forest management continuing to grow. Landowners are now much more diverse in their motivations. They own their land for a variety of reasons, which vary from region to region, and even county to county. Some are even considered “absentee landowners,” owning land in rural areas, but living full time in other cities and towns.

Fortunately, we see a common value held by these family forest owners. They still have the same passion and desire to care for their forests. Collaboration with these landowners is still key to having all the benefits we need from our forests: clean water, wildlife habitat, wood supplies, recreation and more.

Today, with landowners motivated by diverse visions for their land, they need an array of tools to help them keep their forests resilient and productive. ATFS remains a strong program, with more than 74,000 Tree Farmers nationwide. But, to reach unengaged landowners we need other tools as well. Because of this, AFF continues to evolve programs like ATFS, and develop new ones that meet these landowners where their vision is. In fact, AFF has seen growing success in helping attract unengaged landowners in collaborative efforts to make a measurable difference on their landscape.

–Continued on next page–
Called our placed-based work, AFF is localizing outreach to help landowners address the most pressing environmental or economic threats to forests in specific regions of the country where there are high concentrations of family forest owners who can make a difference on the entire landscape.

In the West, wildfire, and its impact on the water supply, remains a critical issue. Because of the years-long drought and buildup of fuels and underbrush in our forests, wildfires are burning at higher, catastrophic levels. These high-intensity fires can wipe out forested watersheds, leaving nothing to prevent runoff and debris from filling streams and rivers. As a result, city water supplies could be compromised.

While only 31 percent of the West is forested, 65 percent of the public water supply comes from forests. In fact, nearly 64 million westerners get their clean drinking supply from surface water that comes from these forests. If we are to continue to have clean drinking water, we must protect these forests. Family and private forest owners can help, when they have the tools and resources to help them.

In fact, AFF just last year conducted a new survey and analysis to better understand landowners’ feelings towards wildfire and how, and where, AFF could support them in forest stewardship. The report, “Western Water Threatened by Wildfire: It’s Not Just a Public Lands Issue,” found that 40 percent, or 13.5 million acres, of land in important watersheds for drinking water supplies, that are at high risk of catastrophic wildfire across the West, are private and family-owned, not publicly owned as many believed.

On top of this, the report found that private and family landowners, even those not in ATFS, want to do the right thing and are motivated to act to reduce the threat of wildfire and help protect clean water. However, what prevents most from doing so is the high cost of implementing management actions and the lack of knowledge about how to mitigate wildfire risk.

To help these landowners, AFF has launched several programs across the West to help reach and recruit landowners. We are using modern day social marketing techniques, tapping into data to localize messaging, and communicating with landowners on an ongoing basis to build trust and long-term relationships. Then, with partners, we are helping them overcome barriers so that they can restore health and fire resiliency to their land.

One area of success is in Oregon. The Blue Mountains region of northeastern Oregon, totaling roughly 24,000 square miles, is a key region of forested headwaters, ranges, sagebrush steppes, broad river valleys, pine forests and alpine highlands that provides habitat for abundant wildlife, while providing water to small rural communities that dot the landscape. But like many parts of the rural West, these forests are under pressure. Years-long buildup of underbrush and fuels have caused these forests to be at high risk of severe fire. In addition, timber production on federal land has dropped over the past 20 years, and private land values and property taxes have skyrocketed, causing landowners to have less income to dedicate to the management of their land.

Forest owners in the area want to do the right thing to ensure forest health and lower the risk of catastrophic wildfire in these watersheds, but often lack the funds and assistance to get the job done. AFF is working with national, state and local partners in this landscape to help landowners protect this forested region. The partnership is igniting neighbor-to-neighbor efforts and conducting one-on-one meetings with professionals to educate and assist landowners in management practices that will reduce fire risk and protect the wildlife habitat and water supply of the region. To date, the project is working with 161 landowners, owning 62,000 acres. Workshops and meetings with foresters help landowners understand forest management and wildfire mitigation, and start managing their forests.

Collaboration with landowners is also happening outside of Denver, Colorado. The 885,000-acre Upper South Platte watershed is a principal source of drinking water for the 1.3 million residents of the Denver metro area. It is also highly prone to catastrophic wildfires, with no fewer than six major wildfires affecting the land over the past 20 years. Denver Water, the state’s largest water utility, has spent millions of dollars repairing infrastructure damaged by sediment and debris flows caused by these wildfires. What’s worse, roughly 265,000 acres are still at a very high risk of wildfire. Private and individual landowners collectively own roughly 150,000 acres of land in this watershed.

AFF, along with Denver Water, The Nature Conservancy, the Natural
Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Forest Service and others are partnering together to get landowners the resources and assistance they need to restore health to their forests. Through financial and technical support, landowners are removing underbrush, thinning their forests and reducing fuel loads in overly dense forest stands, which will reduce the risk of high intensity wildfire and protect the larger community’s water resources.

In just a few short months, the partnership has been able to reach and collaborate with 40 landowners, owning 1,300 acres, to help them better understand fire mitigation and get them set up with foresters so they can begin putting their passion into action on their land.

California is another key place. The famed Sierra Nevada range is a critical region for the state’s $46 billion agriculture industry and its metropolitan areas. Sixty percent of the state’s developed water supply is impacted by conditions in the Sierra Nevada range. Due to continuous drought, historically high levels of tree mortality, and widespread, overly dense stands, the risk of catastrophic fire is putting stress on this water supply. Family and private forest owners, who own 54 percent of the forests in this area, are eager to help lower the risk of wildfire, not just for themselves, but for the greater good of the community. But these individuals lack the financial resources, knowledge and support to get their forests back to health. AFF and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL Fire) are working together and in partnership with local, state, and federal agencies and organizations to connect private landowners with the resources they need, including technical and financial assistance for fuels reduction and forest restoration. Nearly 300 landowners, owning 21,000 acres, raised their hands immediately, seeking information on wildfire mitigation and cost-share assistance. The partnership is now working to meet with these landowners and help them overcome their barriers, so that they can restore their forests and protect against wildfire.

These are just snapshots of the projects occurring across the U.S. In total now, AFF has more than a dozen active projects where we are working to address the specific needs of landowners in that area, so that we can help turn their interest in conservation into action. ATFS state Tree Farm committees often play an important role in this work, acting as local ambassadors and mentors, and encouraging their neighbors to get involved in forest management.

Already, we have been able to reach and activate 900 previously unengaged landowners, owning nearly 20,000 acres, who have improved their land; some have even joined ATFS. An additional 4,400 landowners, owning nearly 270,000 acres, are part of these projects, taking the first steps towards active management—meeting with resource professionals to write management plans and conducting their first forest management practices—to better protect and increase the clean water, wildfire habitat and sustainable wood supplies available to Americans.

No matter the message that motivates a landowner, or the tools and programs that ignite them into action, what is most important is that collaboration with landowners happens. That’s always been a strong value in ATFS and still is today. Without the clean water, wildlife habitat, wood supplies, clean air and more benefits that we get from our forests, Americans would be hard-pressed to live the lives they do. Thankfully, the caretakers of forests, the individual and family landowners, have the will and passion to protect these resources. Together we can continue to support them to keep our forests producing, so that ATFS becomes an even greater force of committed landowners.

TOM MARTIN is president and CEO of the American Forest Foundation. Formerly, he served in a variety of positions with the National Parks Conservation Association, Earth Force, Inc., National Audubon Society, Jaffe, Raitt, Heuer & Weiss, P.C., and Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Tom has extensive experience on a variety of boards related to natural resource protection and management with local, regional and international significance. He holds a B.S. from The American University, a Juris Doctor from UCLA and was admitted to the Michigan Bar in 1979. He and his family own an ATFS-certified Tree Farm in Wisconsin. Tom can be reached at tmartin@forestfoundation.org.
By RENEE MAGYAR

In the late 1800s, pioneers who arrived to settle in central and eastern Oregon, southeast Washington, northern California, and southwest Idaho saw a very different landscape than the one we know today. Rolling grasslands and sagebrush steppe provided adequate breeding habitat and forage for wildlife species like mule deer and sage grouse. Only the occasional western juniper tree was visible on the ridgelines.

Following this, a period of overgrazing of domestic livestock compounded by fire suppression policies allowed the tree to thrive. Western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*) is a natural survivor and is well-adapted to the high desert. Wildfire is its only natural control, and without a regular fire cycle to clear out new seedlings, its presence has increased exponentially over the past 150-180 years from its recorded historic range of one million acres to nearly nine million acres today.

New studies of sage grouse are showing the impact of juniper encroachment on nesting behavior when its predators perch on juniper. Led by the University of Idaho and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), researchers from the Sage Grouse Initiative found that hens avoided nesting where conifer cover exceeded three percent within 800 meters of their nests. Due to a significant decrease in habitat, the bird came close to being listed as threatened or endangered in 2015.

Juniper also has a significant impact on soil moisture and groundwater. About 60 miles southeast of Prineville, Oregon, long-term hydrological studies being performed in the Camp Creek Watershed show an average of three to four gallons per minute recovery of spring flow after juniper removal. In a 60-day dry season, that adds up to nearly 260,000 gallons of additional water that is available for livestock, fish, or plant growth along the stream channel.

Western juniper is considered a native invasive plant, and there is widespread agreement that juniper needs to be thinned for grassland and hydrological benefit, wildfire risk reduction, as well as species diversity. However, removal of acres of juniper is a costly endeavor in the absence of a commercial market for the wood.

For decades, there has been interest in developing markets for juniper to help fund landscape restoration work. Landowners recognize that cost-share dollars from state and federal agencies, like Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board or NRCS, that are used to fund juniper removal projects could be at risk of drying up or are generally insufficient to treat significant acres of juniper. The common belief is a robust market could supplement or ultimately replace the need for public funding.

In 2011, the steering committee of Oregon Solutions, a state-backed organization that develops collaborative triple bottom line solutions to community-based problems, sought to reinvigorate interest in a juniper market. They saw the opportunity to educate consumers by rebranding products as sourced from “restoration juniper.”

Discussions kicked off an assessment of the status of juniper in Oregon and the perceived challenges and opportunities to successfully utilize the available resource. The main challenges identified were supply, technical information—specifically,
the inventory of trees across eastern Oregon—and the need for products and market development. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Association of Oregon Counties were involved in the discussions, which culminated in an Oregon Solutions project designation by former Oregon governor John Kitzhaber in August 2012. The Western Juniper Utilization Group (WJUG) was formed—a unique and cohesive partnership of state and federal agencies, academics, wood products businesses, non-profits, landowners, and funders. One year later, the 29 WJUG member groups signed onto a Declaration of Cooperation, agreeing to create a scaled-up juniper restoration economy, and recommend solutions to key technical, social, and policy barriers through this shared commitment.

Sustainable Northwest was selected to house the project and act as the coordinating hub for the group, renamed the Western Juniper Alliance (WJA), as well as take lead on fundraising and policy advocacy for the initiative. To date, nearly two million dollars have been raised for market and supply chain coordination, business development, product promotion, and research and development.

Part of this funding supports a study of lumber grades and engineering design values of western juniper at the OSU Oregon Wood Innovation Center. The lack of published data on these values up to this point has stunted market development efforts, as public and private engineers and architects looking to use the wood for structural applications are often forced to specify other wood species for which technical data are available.

The balance of the funding is going to training programs for workforce development; technical and business assistance; a mapping analysis to identify the supply of juniper and inform future public and private land management needs; a loan and grant program called the Western Juniper Industry Fund that provides investment and working capital for juniper business expansion projects; and ongoing support of the WJA. This project was funded in part through two complementary bills that passed the Oregon state legislature in July 2015, an effort that was highlighted at the 2014 Oregon Business Summit. Because of this funding, two new juniper-milling businesses have started up, with more in development.

In 2014, the primary focus of the WJA was to grow market demand. Sustainable Northwest launched a brand and marketing campaign to build more market awareness and increase demand for juniper products.

—Continued on next page—
The heartwood is valued for its chemical properties that make it highly durable and resistant to rot or insect infestation, and a suitable alternative to cedar, redwood, or pressure-treated wood. Since the wood was primarily being used in outdoor applications, the demand during the rainy winter season slowed. Suppliers and distributors saw the need to expand beyond the Pacific Northwest to markets with year-round application. California was the obvious next step for distribution, and sales there are growing. Sustainable Northwest Wood, a subsidiary wood warehouse business of Sustainable Northwest, has filled an important gap in the demand market by providing distribution and market outreach. By reaching out to new audiences like home and garden landscapers, organic vineyards and wineries, and home furnishing showrooms, they are educating consumers about the benefits of the wood and the benefits of harvest. Sales of juniper have grown 50 percent in the last two years, and that increase is projected to continue.

In 2016, the challenge is consistent supply—a critical issue that has been identified as a factor in juniper market development for decades. The irony is, there are millions of acres of juniper ready to be cut for restoration projects, however, experts estimate only 10 percent of the trees are suitable for milling. Old growth trees are off limits for harvest, and the remaining distribution of suitable trees is widespread across the vast area. Landowners often rely on state and federal funding to manage juniper on their properties, and those who do are not always aware of market opportunities to remove saw logs.

Climate has also played a significant role recently in available supply. Last year, compounded difficulties in eastern Oregon proved to be the final straw for one Oregon juniper miller who went out of business because he couldn’t procure logs. A long fire season and the subsequent pine salvage operations had loggers and trucks tied up in the fall, and a prolonged wet winter prevented trucks from accessing juniper on public and private roads.

The supply shortage affects the logger as well—if he can’t sell logs to a mill, he can’t pay his fuel and equipment bills. This has become a circular problem the WJA is trying hard to address. In fact, the problem has been discussed so much that some WJA members are tired of hearing the “chicken and egg” metaphor used to describe the situation: loggers need a dependable number of millers to sell to before they can grow their numbers, and millers need a dependable number of logs from loggers before they can grow their businesses.

To overcome these barriers, Sustainable Northwest will be hiring a part-time forester to coordinate the supply chain and ensure a consistent flow of material from landowners to the mills. They will identify current and upcoming harvest operations, broker log agreements, and connect all the relevant parties to increase utilization of logs from restoration activities. Doing so will retain and create manufacturing jobs and provide greater confidence to distributors as they seek to grow the market in new states and sectors.

Juniper is a specialty species that defies the conventional lumber manufacturing model used to produce and sell commodity products like fir or pine. The tree grows with gnarled,
twisted trunks and branches, deeply
grooved bark and dense knots, mak-
ing it very difficult to mill, with a lot
of bark-embedded waste material that
is not suitable for common byprod-
ucts like chips for paper or particle
board.

However, for many of the same
reasons the wood is hard to work
with, it makes beautiful products for
those who can successfully tackle the
challenge of milling it. Its warm
tones, alluring scent, and unique
shapes and textures lend itself well to
rustic furniture designs and attractive
features in finer grade lumber. In
addition to exterior landscape and
decking products, builders are finding
new uses, like interior cabinetry, pan-
eling, countertops, and flooring.

Juniper is unlikely to become a
commodity product due to the chal-
lenging nature of the milling and the
low yield from juniper woodlands
compared to traditional forests. To
make a viable juniper market at a
quasi-craftsman-industrial scale that
supports restoration activities will
require a strong business sense on the
manufacturing side. In most cases, the
complexity and challenge of coordi-
nating everything from raw material,
marketing, state and federal regula-
tions, employee relations, state
employment divisions, workforce
compensation, unemployment claims,
and a reliable supply chain, all while
running day-to-day manufacturing
operations, is overwhelming for some
small businesses.

The BLM in Boise, Idaho is also
seeking a local market for early phase
juniper to help incentivize sage grouse
habitat restoration projects, and uti-
lize trees that are currently being
burned in slash piles. They have a
working group in place to look at
potential methods of harvest that
would make it economical for mar-
kets and attractive to potential
juniper business investors. However,
the role the BLM can play is limited.
They need a local champion to drive
the market development, and right
now progress is stalled. The BLM
sees the progress Oregon has made,
and is optimistic that juniper biomass
energy development could work in
Idaho if the processing of feedstock
can happen locally. The study of
engineering design values shows a
promising potential niche market for
them as well; the Idaho Department
of Transportation has expressed
interest in the idea of juniper road
sign posts. If projects pencil out eco-
nomically, the BLM is optimistic that
Owyhee County could get behind a
juniper market.

Despite the variety of challenges to
market growth in Oregon, stakehold-
ers remain persistent in their efforts,
emboldened by progress on the near
horizon. Supply chain coordination is
underway. Biomass energy products
are in development that may broaden
the market for non-millable juniper.
And state procurement of juniper for
roadway signs and guardrail posts are
poised to take off once the engineer-
ing values are published. With these
pieces in place, there is a sound model
for a juniper market that other states
can replicate, for the benefit of the
land, the wildlife, and the people.

RENEE MAGAR serves as Sustainable
Northwest’s communications director.
She is responsible for creating and
managing the organization’s visual
brand, and maintains consistent mes-
saging across the organization’s mar-
keting and communications efforts,
including print and online publications,
and audience and media outreach.
Prior to joining Sustainable
Northwest, Renee spent three years
supporting scientific research at
McMurdo and Amundsen-Scott South
Pole Antarctic research stations, and
was a graphic designer at an award-
winning studio in San Francisco.
Renee is an artist who works primarily
with salvaged textiles. Renee can be
reached at 503-221-6911 ext. 116 or
rmagyar@sustainablenorthwest.org.
woodland owners in the Pacific Northwest are familiar with the rigors and challenges of managing forestland sustainably to meet landowner goals and objectives. The first step is defining the goals and objectives and the forest conditions that achieve them; the second is knowing current conditions and identifying the management actions that will take current conditions to desired conditions. The third step is prioritizing these actions; the fourth step is securing the necessary means to implement priority actions; and the fifth step is to monitor the outcomes to verify that goals and objectives are being met. Once completed, the process is then renewed and repeated.

The process is never as neat and tidy as described above. A pressing action, such as reducing wildfire hazards through thinning and fuels treatment, may be taken first. Landowners may not take the time to figure out goals and objectives; or those who do may not necessarily agree with one another if more than one member of the family is involved. In some cases, opportunity knocks and a landowner responds without a full understanding of the bigger picture. Success rarely occurs without some form of support or assistance.

The challenges you face as a woodland owner are no different than the challenges government agencies, conservation organizations, woodland cooperatives, businesses, municipalities and community groups face when deciding how to sustainably manage a forested landscape consisting of multiple owners, forest types and jurisdictions. Success often cannot occur without some form of coordinated support, collaboration and assistance through partners.

The Greater Forest Park Conservation Initiative (GFPCI)—a 20-year, collaborative strategy to restore and protect over 15,000 acres of public
and private land in and around one of the nation's largest city-owned forests (see Fig. 1)—exemplifies the strength of cooperative partnership in bringing about success. Since 2011, 850 acres of private lands (residential and forest) have been managed under a voluntary conservation plan written to address the landowners' goals and objectives. Restoration activity on both public and private land includes over 27,500 mature native trees freed from invasive canopy weeds, over 1,100 acres of direct habitat restoration, and over 600 acres of non-commercial thinning for improved forest health, resiliency and habitat. This work builds upon direct conservation of important areas through public land acquisition and conservation easements. As the forest landscape benefits, so does the individual woodland owner, in that many of these accomplishments occurred on private land with the aid of financial and technical assistance.

Here is the story. Portland's Forest Park was a vision well before its time. As early as the 1860s, civic leaders sought to create the park as a natural reserve. In 1903, just before the Lewis & Clark Centennial Exposition in 1906, the city created a municipal park commission that hired John Charles Olmsted and Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. to develop a plan for Forest Park. The plan was to acquire land through donations, transfers from Multnomah County and delinquent tax foreclosures. This effort, achieved through the energy of the park's community underwriter—Friends of Forest Park (then called the Committee of Fifty)—led to the adoption of a proposal by the City Club of Portland to combine parcels totaling about 4,000 acres to form Forest Park. Formally dedicated in 1948, the park has grown to 5,170 acres.

In 2008, the Friends of Forest Park became the Forest Park Conservancy; the name change reflected a maturity in the scope and interests of the organization. It was no longer about safeguarding Forest Park within its boundaries. Instead, the name change highlighted that to safeguard Forest Park meant to safeguard the Greater Forest Park Ecosystem (GFPE). To do that required partners working in collaboration. In 2010, the Forest Park Alliance was formed and has grown to 15 different agencies, neighborhood associations, land trusts, conservation groups and other organizations (see sidebar).

Led by the Forest Park Conservancy, in partnership with the City of Portland Parks and Recreation, the Forest Park Alliance developed the GFPCI as the means to address threats to, and take management action to conserve and protect, the GFPE. Three threats were identified: invasive species; habitat loss, degradation, land fragmentation; and climate change. The goals of the GFPCI are to: (1) protect and improve water quality; (2) protect and improve wildlife corridors between Forest Park, the Coast Range, and the Willamette River; (3) maintain and improve the structural diversity and resilience of forests; (4) maintain and improve habitats and (5) build strong community support.

Management action consists of the following conservation activities:

- Protect and Improve Water Quality (Streams)—assess and map habitat conditions, remove invasive plants, increase channel complexity (e.g., large wood placement, creation of side channels), conduct activities designed to eliminate waste and pollutant discharge into streams, control sediment runoff from roads and railroads, and restore native riparian plant communities.

- Protect and Improve Wildlife Corridors (Connectivity)—map and assess location of biodiversity and other wildlife corridors; assess road and trail impacts to corridors, including fish passage barriers, and adopt practices to mitigate negative effects; use land acquisition and conservation

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easements to permanently protect corridors; enhance corridor habitats, including pollinator habitat underneath powerlines; control and remove invasive plants, including canopy weeds such as ivy; monitor wildlife species presence and absence and identify causes of any decline; and minimize disturbances during key life stages, such as during nesting or migration.

- Maintain and Improve Structural Diversity (Forests)—aggressive removal and control of canopy weeds and priority Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) plant species, such as garlic mustard and knotweed; forest thinning operations to improve stand vigor and native plant understory development; creation of snags, down wood and other unique habitat features; native plant restoration along edges, such as the establishment of pollinator hedgerows; and creation of ponds.

- Maintain and Improve Habitats (Habitat Diversity)—assess and map special habitats (e.g., pockets of old growth, mature riparian forest, meadows, oak woodlands, wetland and ponds), and unique habitat features (e.g., individual legacy oak trees, large snags and down wood, and remnant old growth trees); use conservation easements to protect special habitats on private land; develop forest stewardship plans to adopt practices to identify, protect, enhance and restore unique habitat features on private lands; inventory current habitat conditions; and develop desired conditions for expanding habitats, and unique habitat features, on both private and public lands.

Woodland owners within the GFPE can be proud that their lands are the first in the area to demonstrate the tools and practices (including the use of herbicides) necessary to successfully implement conservation activities. Examples are canopy weed removal, eradication of EDRR invasive plant populations, forest thinning and the establishment of pollinator hedgerows along habitat edges. Woodland owner accomplishments play a key role in securing the community license for taking similar action on publicly owned lands. Likewise, the ability of public land managers to implement conservation activities across larger acreages than typically held by the private woodland owner serves as a demonstration and catalyst for conducting complimentary treatments on surrounding private lands.

In summary, large-scale landscape restoration efforts such as the GFPCI cannot succeed when undertaken by one entity alone. Collaboration through partners is a necessary requirement and an underlying value. The future is bright. Through federal State and Private Forestry funding from the U.S. Forest Service, the Oregon Department of Forestry has committed $300,000 in Landscape Scale Restoration grant funding to the Initiative. The NRCS gives priority to woodland owners within the
GFPCI for cost-share assistance under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program through the Lower Willamette Basin/North Coast Basin Structural Diversity in Forests Conservation Implementation Strategy. In addition, partners are seeking funds from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to enable pollinator habitat restoration underneath power lines.

Not only does the GFPCI serve as the tool for prioritizing and coordinating conservation activities; it also serves as the vehicle to tell the larger, more comprehensive story of the significance of the GFPE. In this regard, additional federal funding is being sought to connect the urban populace—especially underserved communities and communities of color—to this important resource. One goal is to engage youth in natural resource conservation disciplines through paying jobs. Woodland owners serve as both contributors to, and beneficiaries of, this larger effort.

Jim Cathcart serves as district manager and chief executive officer for the West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District; a special governmental district providing technical and financial conservation assistance to private landowners, businesses, nongovernmental organizations and educators to ensure healthy soil, clean water and diverse natural habitats within Multnomah County west of the Willamette River, all of Sauvie Island including the Columbia County portion of Sauvie Island and the Bonny Slope region of Washington County. Jim has been in this position since January 2016. He can be reached at 503-238-4775 Ext. 106 or jim@wmswcd.org. Renee Myers has worked in the environmental conservation field for the past 17 years and has been leading the Forest Park Conservancy since 2012. Her background includes extensive experience in watershed management, working on large scale forest, stream, and river restoration initiatives. During the past four years, she has been leading a large-scale collaborative conservation initiative called “The Greater Forest Park Conservation Initiative” to help protect and restore the greater Forest Park ecosystem. She spent many years working and living in Montana before moving to Portland in January 2011. She loves running, hiking, fishing, gardening with her kids and riding her motorcycle. Renee can be reached at 503-223-5449, ext 105 or renee@forestparkconservancy.org.

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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Market conditions for owning small tracts of timberland have never been easy. In the 1970s and 1980s there were many factors that put these owners at a disadvantage. The large commercial companies were growing and flexing their economic muscles, and owners of small tracts often worked at separate jobs and non-forest related occupations. When it came time to sell logs, there were many situations where unfair and sometimes fraudulent actions occurred. Lack of knowledge of the markets, proper management and basic functions of sawmills and logging operations severely impacted the income of many forest landowners. It was not unusual for a landowner to sell timber and later find they could have doubled their money if they had just had a proper cruise or hired a good forester.

Recognizing this need, Barney Doneen and George Schroeder, (Anne Hanschu’s father and my father), gathered a small group of folks to meet and form the Oregon Woodland Cooperative (OWC). By early 1981, the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws were completed and officers and a board of directors were elected. The basis of OWC was to improve market impact at the mills, to educate and protect members from unfair and fraudulent practices and to return maximum earnings to participating patrons. It was decided to engage one forester who would provide management and marketing services to the membership. In return for the assured clientele, the forester would provide services at a reduced rate. The OWC
effectively operated this way until 2006.

As the Oregon Small Woodlands Association began to grow and provide more good education and knowledge, and the Oregon State University Extension Service expanded forestry outreach activities and Tree School, the need for one forester to serve the members diminished. Another factor was the increasing knowledge of non-timber forest products. By 2006, OWC decided to recommend service providers to our members. Now, rather than rely on just one forester, we recommend those who have shown integrity, responsiveness and excellent management skills. In addition, we have decided OWC will recommend service providers in each forestry-related profession, based on positive experience from members. The OWC board also decided to add many products to our market offering.

Three USDA grant applications were approved for funding. The first provided for a basic inventory. Each participating member could have a professional inventory of the timber and non-timber plants and wildlife on their property. The other two grants were termed “value-added” and provided funding to explore and initiate new products, and markets for those products. Three people were hired to help us with this process—a forest products specialist, a marketing specialist and an administrator to oversee the progress of the entire grant. Many members were in the process of thinning young stands, so firewood was a natural product choice. Our marketing person homed in on the bundled firewood market, and soon we were actively selling to a Portland-based upscale grocery chain. That first year we sold about $5,000 in gross receipts. We are now in our seventh year and anticipate sales of about $160,000. Members John and Carol Belton were great experimenters and led us to sell holiday boughs. OWC is now active in the bundled firewood, holiday boughs, essential oils, and arts-and-crafts from the woods markets. Each product has separate administration and accounting. A committee has been formed for each product line. They determine a protocol for quality, price, sales organization, harvest if necessary and distribution.

The goal is to sell high-quality

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**ALDER WANTED**

Also Maple & Ash; Saw Logs, Pulp Logs, & Timber Deeds

**Contact Our Resource Group at These Locations:**

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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coos Bay, OR</td>
<td>Ed G.</td>
<td>(541) 404-3701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eugene, OR</td>
<td>Dick W.</td>
<td>(541) 206-4105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tim T.</td>
<td>(541) 231-4758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garibaldi, OR</td>
<td>Lee A.</td>
<td>(541) 290-9892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longview, WA</td>
<td>John A.</td>
<td>(360) 269-2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centralia, WA</td>
<td>Jeremy M.</td>
<td>(360) 520-5565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bill B.</td>
<td>(360) 520-2287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt. Vernon, WA</td>
<td>Joe M.</td>
<td>(425) 210-5880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mark F.</td>
<td>(360) 202-9141</td>
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products and return a large part of the income to the producing members. With firewood as an example, only 8.5 percent of each sale goes to OWC for accounting, labels, sales and marketing. Other product lines will return different percentages based on how the product is harvested, sold and made ready for the market. And yes, we do sell logs! OWC has at times pre-sold lumber before the tree is harvested. By finding a specialized market, selecting the trees from one or more properties, hiring a mill to produce the required lumber products and completing the delivery, an increase in total return can be realized. We call this our “custom cut” program.

Presently, we are working to add to our product lines. Truffles, mushrooms, biochar and forestland tours are all being considered. OWC has grown from about 12 families with a couple thousand acres in 1981, to over 70 family farms and approximately 36,000 acres of timberland.

My favorite story regarding OWC is quite personal. In 1951, my parents purchased 10 acres of open farm land near Sherwood, Oregon. My brother, sister, dad and I started planting that 10 acres to any seedling father could obtain from the forest experiment stations across the U.S. Redwood, giant sequoia, KMX pine, valley ponderosa, western white pine, western redcedar and, of course, Douglas-fir seedlings were planted in the rocky soil. About six years ago, Lyal Purinton, an OWC member, brought his Wood Mizer sawmill to the property and milled some KMX and valley ponderosa into 4-, 6- and 8-x-1-inch lumber. We stickered the boards in the barn, and then went on to other things. This year our daughter and husband asked if they could make use of that wood. So they took it to Zena Forest and Ben Deumling, an OWC...
member, kiln-dried it and took it to a mill in Hubbard, Oregon, where it was planed and tongue-and-grooved. Lyal then helped haul the boards back to Sherwood. Those trees that my family planted in 1952-56 have been turned into flooring for the bedrooms and upstairs hallway of a third-generation family home. This is truly members helping members.

OWC, to my knowledge, has the record of being the longest continuously operating forest cooperative in the United States. Others have operated in ways that may not have insured survival. Some charged fees for management plans, overseeing a harvest, scarification and other services. Others invested in just one product, which required machinery or marketing on several levels. OWC has tried to keep to the simple ideas that do not require bricks-and-mortar and which rely on the machinery owned by individual members. No large investments in land, buildings, rentals, machinery or even personnel have been made. Our only paid individual is our accountant. All the rest of our work is volunteer, usually by members who benefit from the sale of their forest products.

Income is generated through the sale of timber, firewood, holiday boughs, essential oils, homemade crafts and any product grown or gathered in our woodlands approved by our board and vetting committees. “Quality and service” is our mantra and our focus when producing or considering a product for sale. To maintain that quality and service, periodic meetings are conducted for those who wish to participate in a segment of the business. A firewood producers’ meeting each year, or sometimes more often, ensures that each bundle meets our protocol of moisture content, size, cleanliness and attractiveness. The folks conducting these meetings plan, demonstrate, share facilities and offer refreshments all on a volunteer basis. Again, it is members helping members to succeed in adding value to their properties.

The diverse backgrounds of our members—nurses, engineers, salespeople, artists, foresters, teachers, loggers, and others—add to the success of the organization. Because of our love for the land and the forest, we all manage our lands to be available for the next generations. We believe the forest provides clean water, clean air, new soils and a retreat from the hectic, crazy-busy world. We manage our properties together to provide sustainable income to present owners and future economic benefit to the next generations. OWC will continue to evolve and grow. Perhaps the small woodland owners of Oregon will soon belong to a cooperative that will produce energy through biomass processes, will manufacture and market products in competition with the large corporate timber companies, and sell products that we have not even thought of at this point.

Neil Schroeder is the current president of the Oregon Woodland Cooperative, a growing group of woodland owners dedicated to preserving and enhancing private forests in Oregon, while adding value to those forest properties. He is also co-manager and part owner of Oregon Forest Canopy LLC, a startup company manufacturing and marketing essential oils derived from native Oregon trees. Neil manages Schroeder & O’Neil properties, 300 acres in four counties of northwest Oregon, is active in Oregon Small Woodlands Association, Washington County Chapter, has taught classes in forest products marketing at Clackamas Tree School and several other venues in Oregon and Washington, is a OSU Master Woodland Manager and is retired from Educational Publishing Sales and secondary teaching. Neil can be reached at 503-701-2417 or neilschroeder11@gmail.com.
By ELAYNE MURPHY

estled within the Clearwater Basin of north-central Idaho is a vast expanse of public lands known as the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest. Locally, these lands are strongly linked to the social fabric and economies of rural communities. Regionally and nationally, the forests are valued for large tracts of wild lands and pristine free-flowing rivers.

While there is agreement this forest is a national treasure, there has been no consensus about how it should be managed. This creates a dilemma for the Forest Service, charged with managing the lands to “…sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation’s forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.”

Frustrated by an access decision in 2000, the Missoula-based Great Burn Study Group (GBSG) sued the Clearwater National Forest for allowing all-terrain vehicles on trails accessing Fish Lake in “The Great Burn,” an area recommended for wilderness designation. When the lawsuit was dismissed in 2003, leadership of the GBSG decided to pursue an alternative to litigation: collaboration.

GBSG co-founder Dale Harris reached out to Clearwater National Forest staff and Idaho-based motorized trail users, and found himself sitting across the table from motorized-recreation enthusiast, and Konkolville Lumber Company employee, Alex Irby. The two developed a vision for a new model of resolving natural resource conflict and became friends.

Others joined. The effort, dubbed the Konkolville Consortium, piqued the interest of Idaho Senator Mike Crapo, a strong proponent of collaboration. In May 2008, the Senator convened a diverse group of 22 collaborative-minded opinion leaders and challenged them “…to work together toward a better future for the residents and resources of north-central Idaho.” The Clearwater Basin Collaborative (CBC) was born.

Creating a functional collaborative

The group quickly learned collaboration was a messy business and success could not be achieved without an upfront investment to build an organization and working relationships. With the guidance of a facilitator, the group developed a structure consist-
ing of a 22-person work group, a steering committee for strategic guidance, and subcommittees to perform staff work for the work group. Two co-chairs—Harris representing conservation interests and Irby representing industry interests—were elected to provide overall leadership. A coordinator was hired to keep the group organized and maintain records.

Members learned collaborative behaviors and agreed to a set of operating protocols. Key to the success of CBC is the shared belief that collaborative problem-solving is most successful when all interests are heard and issues are considered in a meaningful way.

The group strives to make consensus recommendations that address the interests of all parties. Members who cannot support a recommendation are asked to craft an acceptable alternative. In rare instances, when consensus is not reached, the level of support is documented and differences characterized.

With an organizational structure and operating protocols in place, the group developed a vision to focus work: “Enhance and protect the ecological and economic health of forests, rivers and communities within the Clearwater Basin by working collaboratively across a diversity of interests.”

Questions about roles remained. What was the appropriate role for the Forest Service? CBC members agreed to speak positively about the agency, embracing it as a partner who informed deliberations, but did not participate in decision-making. Staff members for the Idaho state delegation are currently participating in a similar capacity.

Building a comprehensive program

Meeting all the needs of the CBC’s diverse membership was a daunting task. The group needed a starting point so it began small, collaborating on a handful of forest management and restoration projects. This work served as the foundation for the first Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the CBC and the Forest Service, an agreement that clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and recognized the agency’s processes and decision-making authority. This acknowledgement was important to frame the scope of the CBC’s work and reassure collaborative skeptics that the Forest Service was committed to ongoing public involvement and consultation processes.

As the CBC worked through and refined the process of project-level collaboration for forest management and restoration projects, it concurrently built a work plan documenting the intent of all members to work toward resolution of seven public land management issues: forest management; rural economic needs and county funding; tribal sacred and special places; wilderness, wild and scenic rivers and special management designations; outfitters and guides; wildlife management; and recreation. Work group members signed the “Agreement and Work Plan” in May 2013.

The signing was an important milestone for the CBC, and initiated a flurry of meetings to brainstorm creative administrative and legislative

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solutions necessary to implement all actions identified in the comprehensive Agreement and Work Plan. The optimistic attempt to meet all needs in one fell swoop proved too complex, and late in 2015 CBC members opted to change the course away from a single all-encompassing solution toward a series of less-complex administrative actions that would incrementally address the needs of the membership. While the course correction was frustrating for the CBC work group, it was also a valuable lesson in the heuristic nature of collaborative problem-solving and the need for patience, persistence and resilience.

Accomplishments of Note

Over the span of more than eight years, the CBC has been touted as a model for thoughtful, respectful discussions that lead to durable natural resource solutions. While there have been countless small successes, several major accomplishments are worth noting.

Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program. The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 created a unique opportunity for the National Forests and CBC to collaborate on development of a science-based ecosystem restoration proposal that could be eligible to receive up to $4 million annually for ten years through the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program.

The CBC, National Forest and others collaborated to develop a comprehensive restoration proposal for the 1.4 million-acre Selway-Middle Fork ecosystem. The proposal was deemed one of the top ten in the country, and was selected for funding. From 2010 through 2016, the project netted more than $22 million in appropriated funding and leveraged roughly $16 million in monetary and in-kind contributions to complete priority terrestrial and aquatic restoration work within the Selway-Middle Fork area. Over this timeframe, restoration work has created and maintained hundreds of local jobs and netted approximately $23 million in total labor income.

Clearwater Basin Youth Conservation Corps. In the summer of 2013, the Forest Service, CBC and Idaho Department of Labor formed a partnership with the goal of developing a sustainable training and summer employment program for local youth. Building upon the Department of Agriculture’s popular Youth Conservation Corps, the partners designed what would become known locally as the Clearwater Basin Youth Conservation Corps (CBYCC).

The program kicked off in 2013 with one six-person crew located in Elk City, Idaho. After a successful test run, the program expanded geographically and in number of youth served. Through the 2016 field season, the CBYCC provided training and jobs for a total of 66 youth in six north-central Idaho communities. For many young people the experience has been transformational.

By the close of the 2016 field season, the partnership behind the program had grown to include the Bureau of Land Management, Army Corps of Engineers, National Park Service, Idaho Firewise, Idaho County and Framing Our Community. CBYCC was recognized as the State of Idaho’s “2015 Outstanding Project” by the Idaho Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Association.

Wildlife Habitat Restoration Initiative. Wildlife, particularly elk, are important to the Clearwater Basin ecologically, socially and economically. Over the past three decades there has been a precipitous decline in elk populations, by some estimates up to 93 percent.

With land managers unable to agree on solutions, the CBC convened scientists from state, federal and tribal governments, universities, and private organizations to assess nutritional causes for the decline. The
proposed research generated excitement because insights about vegetative deficiencies could be used by all managers to develop scientifically-sound and effective habitat restoration strategies throughout the Basin.

While the research is not yet complete, preliminary results indicate the need to implement management activities that restore early seral habitat and provide better quality forage on summer habitats. Working relationships developed through the collaborative process are the real success of this effort. Agencies and organizations are emerging from the process with shared knowledge and a shared commitment to implementing agreed-upon solutions. This is the true power of collaboration.

**GEM (Grand Explorations Motorized) Trail.** Several years ago, the CBC had an idea: make north-central Idaho a recreation destination by designating a 240-mile motorized trail from Elk City, north to Avery. The route would use existing road and trail segments linked together, designated, and branded as the GEM Trail, a play on Idaho’s official state nickname, the “Gem State.” While providing obvious recreational opportunities, the route would also afford economic opportunities to the numerous small communities along the route where riders could seek amenities and information about the area.

The concept of the GEM Trail has received strong public support. With the goal of starting small and building the route in four distinct segments, the CBC has initiated discussions with landowners and interested parties between Elk City and Kooskia. Once that section is designated and signed, the CBC will systematically work north, with the goal of completing trail designation sometime in 2018.

**A national award**

With an impressive resume of accomplishments, the CBC was honored to receive the national Abraham Lincoln External Partnership Honor Award (formally known as the USDA Secretary of Agriculture’s Honor Award) in November 2015. The Collaborative was cited for “…thoughtful, deliberative problem solving that resulted in accelerated restoration and ecological, social and economic benefits for the citizens of north-central Idaho.” The award was an important validation of the group’s perseverance and hard work to resolve long-standing natural resource issues.

**2016—A challenging year for the National Forest and CBC**

After a successful eight-year run, when CBC-backed projects were uncontested (the group collaborated on up to ten projects per year), the unexpected happened in 2016 when organizations filed lawsuits on the Johnson Bar Salvage Sale and the Clear Creek Integrated Restoration Project. Litigation related to the Clear Creek project was especially disheartening because it was the first landscape-scale suite of restoration projects analyzed within the Selway-Middle Fork Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration area.

Faced with this new experience and very short timeframes, the CBC issued letters of support for the projects for inclusion in legal proceedings, and a public statement of support for the Clear Creek project.

The CBC is committed to working with the Forest Service to remedy project analyses and is determined to learn from the experience. While disappointed that critical restoration work is delayed, the CBC remains optimistic the projects will be fully implemented in the future.

Realizing collaboration reduces the

---Continued on page 31---
When it comes to establishing and maintaining a team to run a successful tree farm, many small landowners will immediately think of people who will work with them directly on the tree farm—people like the consulting forester or the nurseryman. Maybe a biologist or road-building crew leaps to mind, or even the log marketer. This article is not about those people, indispensable as they may be. Instead, I’m looking at the accountants, bankers, attorneys and others. Yeah, I’m talking about the guys in suits, as it were. Although these guys don’t grow the trees, they are still critical to overall success.

One way of defining who belongs in this group is to segregate it into five categories: accounting, legal, banking, insurance and other. Within accounting you have the internal (e.g., bookkeeping and day-to-day management), as well as the external (i.e., the CPA who handles tax, audits, and special higher level finance projects). You don’t want to confuse these two roles with each other!

Moving on to legal, the general talent sets are operations (e.g., contracts, human relations, compliance, organizational), disputes and estate planning. Again, you want to make sure you have these abilities covered by the right people—one attorney who knows business law may struggle when it comes to estate planning.

Next, we have banking, and again there are a couple of different focuses here: day-to-day banking transactions versus lending. There can easily be two or more different professionals assisting. Insurance can also have multiple disciplines involved. And, finally, there’s the “other” category. I lump things in here that may not always be present; talents such as pension plan administration, investment management, management consulting, and information technology or enterprise resource planning.

Finding your team initially, or updating it as changes occur, can be time-consuming. If done without care it can lead to real trouble. When starting from scratch, you’re pretty much stuck with the traditional means of referral from others you respect. But if you’re just replacing someone, or if you’ve already identified some of your team, I suggest getting additional leads from those current team members. They will likely be professionals who they are already familiar with. However, on the downside, it narrows your population of candidates to just one network.

Irrespective of how you find the candidates, be careful when making a final selection. Beyond just wanting to have a competent advisor, there are some more subtle issues to consider. Hopefully, this will be someone you and the rest of the team will work with for many years to come. Therefore, it is not only important to get the right knowledge base, but the personality and style are important too, both for you and the other professionals. For example, you may find a CPA that has an incredible pedigree, and who person after person says is the most qualified. But if you are annoyed every time you interact with him, or if she has a different ethical temperament than the other advisers, it’s not going to work for the long haul. So, I can’t stress enough the importance of carefully considering the more human aspects of the person’s make-up.

This issue of personality and style is a good segue into some other areas that may not be immediately intuitive. First, it is important to evaluate how this team of professionals is going to be coordinated. You should generally know how you plan to quarterback this group as
different types of projects occur. Sometimes it will be someone internally, such as the owner or key manager. For example, in a land acquisition the head forester may reach out individually to legal for contracts, accounting for tax impacts, insurance for policy revisions, and banking for financing. On the other hand, a project may be largely led by an external team member, such as with an estate planning project. The estate attorney could contact the CPA, other attorneys and the banker directly to coordinate. Either way, all of this will be greatly influenced by how the team interacts in general.

The routine interaction of the various team members can vary dramatically from consistent to almost never. For example, some organizations may be very complex and have a very large team that meets periodically just to review new and ongoing issues. And other very simple outfits may only have the need for very limited interaction. While the former is robust, it can be expensive and time-consuming. And, while the latter can be efficient and cost-effective, you can miss opportunities. The most important thing is that, in almost every instance, if an issue is at hand and you are working with someone on the team, the question should always be posed as to whether others should be consulted, or even just notified. These different advisors are coming from different positions and think about the subject matter differently than the others. Keeping others in the dark is one of the biggest causes I see of projects not going well. And, normally, it’s just because it didn’t occur to anyone that what might not be important to one discipline may be critically important to another.

So, in summary, best practices are to have a team of advisors with whom you have an established positive relationship ready to advise when needed. They should be familiar with each other and empowered for quick and easy cross-communication, as well as possessing an overall expectation on how coordination will occur. Finally, be proactive in making sure notice goes out when noteworthy projects are being worked on.■

**Send in Your Tax Question**

Do you have a question that relates to accounting, business, or tax planning? If so, send it to tax expert John Johnston (jjohnston@bbjsllp.com) and he will answer it in the next scheduled column.

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**Disclaimer:** To ensure compliance with requirements imposed by the IRS, any tax advice contained in this communication was not intended or written to be used, and cannot be used, for the purpose of (i) avoiding tax-related penalties that may be imposed on the taxpayer under the Internal Revenue Code or applicable state or local tax law, or (ii) promoting, marketing or recommending to another party any tax-related matter(s) addressed herein.
**Tips From The Treeman**

▲ **DEAR TREEMAN,** We have a couple ponds that contain bass. We purchased the property several years ago and there were fish in the ponds at that time. Recently, my son was fishing and caught a bass that contained little white worms in it. I have not seen this before so was wondering if it was some sort of disease? Do you have any ideas? —JD

▲ **DEAR JD,** Yes sir, I have a plethora of ideas, but most of them are irrelevant to the current subject and not fit for human consumption. Speaking of consumption—in consideration of the added condiments, do those bass of yours remain a delectable entrée at the dinner table? But first things first. It is our opinion your fish have not contracted a disease and the current phenomenon is not a result of global warming or the carbon cycle—the ubiquitous answer(s) to everything under the ever-warming sun. Seventy years ago, a gentleman named J.N. Shaw wrote about cestodes (tapeworms), trematodes (flukes) ... indeed, one would surmise it somewhat of a “fluke” if a bunch of frogs were crawling around the upper reaches of our forest ... and various other parasites have been in our midst for quite some time.

Parasitic infections are normal among fish populations, and some fish may die as a result; merely one of many ways Mother Nature helps keep population levels in check. That said, rare are severe losses of fish due to parasitic infections. Fish parasites are found within the body (endoparasites), and some attach to the outer body (ectoparasites)—the former being relevant to your situation.

Many parasites require multiple hosts to complete their life cycles and become reproductively mature. A parasite may reside in a fish, but must somehow infiltrate a fish-eating bird to complete its life cycle. In order to increase the chances of the bird eating a host fish, some parasites actually alter fish behavior, causing it to swim awkwardly and nearer the surface, where a bird will more likely take the bait.

Infestations are somewhat greater for fish caught in murky, warm, shallow water where snails and fish-eating birds are more prevalent than in fish caught from cooler, deep water; the former description matches the characteristics of many of our woodland ponds. As with most phenomenon, prevalence of these parasites may be greater in some years and less in others for a variety of reasons—the political season being a likely culprit of our current plethora of parasitic pronouncements.

We cannot positively ascertain the identification of your local parasite, but we can hazard a guess. Nematodes (roundworms) are generally long, tubular worms ranging in size from the diameter of thread to the diameter of pencil lead. Several species infect fish, but the most noticeable examples are large larval forms found within the body of the fish. These worms mature to the adult stage in a suitable fish, bird or mammal host. This one could be the culprit.

Then there is the bass tapeworm, a disgusting parasite found in largemouth and smallmouth bass and particularly gruesome in their method of transmission. The tapeworm larva develops in crustaceans and other fish, but grows into an adult once introduced to a bass. Adult tapeworms will then swell, burst and spew a number of eggs which will be released with the fish’s feces. The parasite causes damage to the fish’s liver, spleen and reproductive organs, sometimes causing the internal organs to appear as a single mass. Not so sure about this one.

The yellow grub is a digenetic trematode (flatworm). These parasites require several hosts to complete their life cycles. In the case of the yellow grub, the adult parasite is found in the throats of fish-eating birds, such as shikepokes. During the feeding process, eggs produced by the adults fall from the bird’s mouth into the water, where they hatch, producing larvae that die within several hours if they cannot locate a snail of the genus *Helisoma* (little snails that look like a curled-up trumpet). After further development within the snail, a free-swimming larva seeks an intermediate fish host. They burrow through the skin of the fish, developing further, and may live several years in the host. If the fish is eaten by the bird, the larvae will develop into adult parasites, completing the life cycle. Oh, what a tangled parasite we weave. This one has our vote.

Regardless of the parasite, experts tell us they are not harmful for human consumption, providing the host fish is cooked properly. Before you judge, remember back in grade school when you were taught the 3 Rs? In Treeman, you’ve learned the 3 Ps: parasites, politicians and pontificators. Actually, we’re being a bit redundant. Regardless of their preparation, we see no aesthetic or empirical value, and accordingly are judged deleterious to your health and well-being. —Treeman
Clearwater Basin Collaborative
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likelihood of litigation, but doesn’t
guarantee it won’t occur, the CBC is
reaching out to other collaboratives
and experts to learn about options
for preventing and responding to any
future legal action.

Building a positive future

American writer Frank A. Clark
wrote: “We find comfort among those
who agree with us—growth among
those who don’t.” Members of the
CBC will agree the experience has
been a growth process. Bringing
divergent viewpoints together to find
solutions is impressive. Staying
together for eight years and remain-
ing committed to finding solutions to
difficult long-term issues in the face
of adversity is even more impressive.

Collaboration is a journey. The
energy ebbs and flows. The issues ebb
and flow. Static groups fall by the
wayside; successful groups evolve and
adapt. The CBC is determined to
build on successes, learn from chal-
lenages and evolve into an even more
effective collaborative that enhances
and protects the ecological and eco-
nomic health of forests, rivers and
communities in north-central Idaho.
For more information visit: clearwa-
terbasincollaborative.org.

ELAYNE MURPHY is a native of Idaho
who graduated from the University of
Idaho with a Bachelor of Science
degree in secondary education with a
major in biological science and a
minor in English. She taught 7th grade
life science for four years before join-
ing the Forest Service in 1983. Over
her 29-year Forest Service career, she
worked her way through the ranks
from a clerk typist to a public affairs
officer, serving as public affairs officer
for the Nez Perce Forest, the
Clearwater Forest and the combined
Nez Perce-Clearwater Forest. She is
semi-retired and currently serves as a
citizen liaison with the Clearwater
Basin Collaborative.
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