Hello from your new Extension Forester!

As this is the first newsletter you are receiving from me, I would like to introduce myself. In April I began work as the OSU Extension Forester for Columbia and Washington Counties. Like many Oregonians, I’m a transplant, having first arrived here in 2000 to begin working on a masters’ degree at the OSU College of Forestry. After that, I headed north to Washington State, where for the past five years I was the WSU Extension Forester serving King County. It is good to be back in Oregon!

I am replacing Chal Landgren who held this position for many, many years before moving on last summer to become the statewide Christmas Tree Specialist. I know that I have some big shoes to fill! Fortunately, we can still access Chal’s expertise with Christmas trees, and in fact he will be contributing to this newsletter from time to time.

My goal is to provide resources and assistance to enable all woodland owners to manage their land productively, sustainably, and according to their objectives. In order for me to be successful, I need your help. I am counting on you to communicate with me about your needs and concerns as a woodland owner, so that I can focus my efforts on what’s important to you. To that end, I’ve developed a survey to help me gather information about woodland owners’ interests and educational preferences. It’s included with this newsletter (the green sheets of paper). Please take a few moments to respond! You can also take the survey online – there is a link on our website, http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia/forestry. Also, please share the survey with others as I am hoping to get as many responses as possible. As a small incentive for participating, three lucky survey respondents will receive a prize!

I will be splitting my time between the Columbia and Washington County Extension offices, and my door is open in either place (though you should probably call first to make sure I am there). Currently I’m working on updating my website and setting up some educational programs for the fall. Details will be forthcoming and announced on the website and my e-mail news list (see page 2). In the meantime, I look forward to working with you!

Amy Grotta, OSU Extension Faculty, Forestry
Want to subscribe by e-mail?
I have set up an e-mail list serve to distribute this newsletter electronically. I’ll also be using the list serve to distribute time-sensitive information between quarterly newsletters. If you would like to subscribe, please call the office (503-397-3462) or send me an email. Also, if you know anyone else who would like to subscribe to either the electronic or print newsletter, please let them know! If you would rather be taken off the print mailing list, let us know that too.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, June 13th, 9:00 am
Oregon Woodland Co-op’s Annual Meeting
Kinton Grange, 19015 SW Scholls Ferry Rd., Beaverton
The Co-op’s annual meeting is open to the public. Find out about some of the Co-op’s new and ongoing projects, meet with Co-op members, professional service providers, and other interested woodland owners, and see product demonstrations including a new firewood processor and essential oil distilling equipment. A potluck will follow the meeting and demonstrations – bring your favorite dish to share. For more information, contact Tom Nygren, tnygren@juno.com or (503) 628-5472. The Oregon Woodland Co-op’s website: http://www.orwoodlandco-op.com/

Saturday, June 27th
Washington County Small Woodlands Association Field Tour
Lone Fir Tree Farm, Gales Creek
This event at Dallas and Sharon Boge’s tree farm is open to the public and will feature forest measurements, on and off the stump. Dallas Boge, OSU Master Woodland Manager and WCSWA president, will lead the tour. For more information, contact Dallas at (503) 357-7688.

Wednesday, July 10th
Measuring Western Forests for Carbon Credits
C & M Tree Farm, Hillsboro
Landowners and consultant foresters are invited to attend this workshop, sponsored by the Woodlands Carbon Company, to learn about carbon inventory guidelines and how they can be applied on the ground. The workshop will cover the differences between various voluntary markets; training upon new standards of carbon inventory needed to sell on to CCX; information about Woodlands Carbon inventory revolving funds; and case study examples of how standards are transferred to the property level.
Pre-registration required. Cost is $35 for OSWA members and $45 for non-members. For more information, contact Mike Gaudern, Woodlands Carbon Company, (503) 588-8356 or woodlandscarbonco@gmail.com.

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More Upcoming Events…

**Saturday, July 18**
**Washington County Small Woodlands Association Field Tour**
**Arbor House Tree Farm, Gales Creek**
This tour is hosted by Scott and Marge Hayes, Washington County Tree Farmers of the Year. For more information, contact Dallas Boge at (503) 357-7688.

**Saturday, July 25**
**Red Alder Management Tour**
This all-day tour is co-sponsored by OSU and the Columbia County Small Woodlands Association. Glenn Ahrens, OSU Extension Forester for Clatsop and Tillamook Counties, and yours truly will lead the tour. We will visit several managed alder plantations as well as some thinning trials and rehabilitation sites. More details will be forthcoming – check our website, or call Paul Nys, (503) 556-8800.

….and stay tuned for details on our fall workshop series!

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Students from two Washington County elementary schools took field trips to Bob and Bonnie Shumaker’s tree farm near Banks last month, where they participated in seven stations to learn about trees and forests. Bob, Bonnie, and numerous other Washington County Master Woodland Managers served as tour guides and station leaders. Way to go!

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**New Web Resource**
The OSU Forestry and Natural Resources Extension program has put together a list of web resources to help landowners, loggers and forest products businesses weather this difficult recession. Visit the Tough Times in the Woods website at [http://owic.oregonstate.edu/tough-times/](http://owic.oregonstate.edu/tough-times/). Resources on the site include:

- Information on how federal stimulus money is being used for forestry-related projects in Oregon, and information for contractors who would like to apply for stimulus projects;
- Information on accessing new markets for forest products;
- Information for individuals and communities suffering economic hardship.
Woodland Management Activities for Tough Times

As we all know, times are tight for many people right now. As financial situations worsen, investments in improving your woodland might take a back burner to other family priorities. Unfortunately, with the dismal state of current log markets (see page 6), now isn’t the best time to be selling timber to increase cash flow back into the property. So, let’s talk about some of the other activities that you might consider undertaking at this point in time, things you can do to improve your woodland that don’t cost much money or involve selling logs. These are important activities at any time – but right now might be the best time.

**Write a management plan.** Did you know that less than 10% of small woodland owners have a written management plan for their property? Developing a written plan has many benefits – it helps you to set goals, assess your resources, and chart a course for accomplishing your objectives efficiently. A management plan is a great tool for communicating your objectives with contractors and other family members. And, you’ll need a management plan if you are contemplating applying for cost-share funds or accessing the emerging carbon market somewhere down the road.

You can write your own plan, and both OSU Extension and the ODF can provide assistance on that front. Let me know if this interests you. You can also hire a professional forester to write a plan. If you want to go that route, consider contacting your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office for details on a federal program called EQIP (the Environmental Quality Improvement Program) which can pay for this service. More details on that in a later newsletter.

**Do a weed inventory.** Noxious and invasive weeds are unfortunately just about everywhere. Educate yourself on how to identify some of the most problematic, and then do a reconnaissance survey around your woodland. Weeds are most easily controlled when populations are small and isolated. One might think that English ivy is mainly a city parks problem, but I have seen it appear in unsuspecting places in the far corners of Washington County. Japanese Knotweed, Garlic Mustard, and gorse are others that can really do a number in forested ecosystems if left unchecked.

If you run across these weeds on your land, you can go a step further and submit a report with their locations on WeedMapper (http://www.weedmapper.org/). This will help weed management agencies get a better handle on the spread of these weeds. OSU Extension has produced some good factsheets on management techniques for individual weeds in forest lands. They can be accessed at http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog (type in “weeds” in the search field) or contact me for a copy.

**Get your family members involved.** School’s out, the weather’s nice and this is a great time to get kids, grandkids, nieces or nephews outdoors and in the woods. Whether you put them to work clearing trails or just walk the trails with them, there’s no better way to instill a lasting sense of appreciation and engagement for your family’s woodlands. Enjoy the summer!
Storm Aftermath Part I:  
2008 Winter Storm Damage – Considering the Options

Last month, the Columbia County Small Woodlands Association hosted an excellent panel discussion on managing storm damage. Following last winter’s ice and snow storms, many woodland owners find themselves in a tough situation in which many of the affected trees were just on the brink of merchantability, and in which markets are poor, making salvage unprofitable. Here are some of the major take-home messages from the panel:

1. Chainsaw work in storm damaged areas is particularly hazardous – especially when dealing with bent over, leaning or hung-up trees, pinned shrubs such as vine maple, and other situations where the material may be unstable (see photo). It is a very good idea to get an experienced contractor to help. If you are unsure about your ability to do the job, don’t risk it!

2. If you have a lot of downed alder and wish to salvage, try to get it to the market sooner rather than later. With the onset of warm weather, exposed alder wood develops red stain quickly, devaluing the log. Contact a log buyer or professional forester to assess the potential value of your trees.

3. The decision about whether to salvage will be different in every situation and will depend on the extent of the damage and the owner’s objectives. Chances are, many salvage operations will pencil out as a net economic loss, given the state of today’s wood market. That said, some owners may wish to salvage anyway, to set the stage for planting a new stand or to reduce the risk of fire and bark beetle infestation.

With respect to that last point, I want to underscore that sometimes leaving damaged trees in the woods is the best choice. The fact that you may not get much money (if any) for your salvaged wood presents a good opportunity to enhance the wildlife habitat attributes of your forest. Consider a tree that has had its top broken off but still has some green crown. If left standing, this tree will probably never end up producing a valuable log. However, as it grows, large lateral limbs and a broken top will make good nesting platforms; exposed wood will invite insects and other decay organisms which in turn attract foraging and cavity nesting birds. Of course, you don’t need an entire stand made up of trees like these, but when developing a salvage plan, consider leaving a few of these “ugly” trees behind.

Bark beetles are a concern mainly if you have ended up with lots of large (over 14” diameter) Douglas-fir trees on the ground. The beetles tend not to attack smaller material. So, given that most of the damage from this winter was to younger trees, we may have been lucky in that regard this year (read on for information about beetles and the 2007 storms...). Even if you have only a few (less than three per acre) large trees that were damaged or blew down, these are unlikely to result in a large enough beetle population to affect the residual stand. You may be better off leaving these few trees in the woods as habitat components.
Storm Aftermath Part II:
2007 Storm Damage and Douglas-fir Beetles

Oregon Dept. of Forestry Entomologist Rob Flowers reports that aerial surveyors have recently detected patches of possible Douglas-fir beetle damage in eastern Columbia County. These possible outbreaks would be a result of damage to trees or blowdown in the 2007 storms, since it takes over a year for beetle populations to build up to a level where they affect standing trees. Flowers notes that landowners in this region wishing to protect high-value, older Douglas-fir stands may wish to consider using MCH packets. MCH is a pheromone which essentially sends a signal to beetles not to congregate in the area (“don’t stop here, keep flying!”). MCH packets can be applied now and will be effective throughout the rest of the beetle flight season (through end of summer). A fact sheet on MCH is included in this newsletter, and a more detailed publication explaining how to use MCH is available – contact me for a copy.

More detailed data on the extent of beetle outbreaks in the area will be available from ODF later this summer, once the aerial surveys are complete. For more information on bark beetle management in blow-down areas, see this fact sheet prepared by ODF entomologist Rob Flowers: http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/PRIVATE_FORESTS/docs/fh/BlowdownWestOR.pdf

Log Price Information
Below are domestic prices for delivered logs in Northwest Oregon as reported by the Oregon Department of Forestry for the past four quarters. All values are reported in $/MBF and are averages of quotes from regional sawmills. Prices for other log sorts and time frames can be found online at: http://egov.oregon.gov/ODF/STATE_FORESTS/TIMBER_SALES/logpage.shtml

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Douglas-fir Beetle & MCH Fact Sheet
Oregon Department of Forestry

Q: Should I consider buying MCH for my property?
A: It depends. Ask yourself these questions first:

1. Do I have large Douglas-fir trees on my property?
The trees most at risk are those that are over 14” diameter, spaced densely, and surrounded by other Douglas-fir trees. Trees in stands with mixed species or with large spacing are not in as much danger.

Hemlock, spruce & true fir species are NOT in danger from Douglas-fir beetle, although different insects do infest these trees. MCH will not help protect these other species.

2. Am I connected to other forested areas?
Douglas-fir beetles move from tree to tree, so if your property is not adjacent or close to large expanses of trees, such as National or State Forest Land, the risk of infestation is relatively low. Areas near large disturbances such as fires are at higher risk because beetle populations build up in stressed trees. Properties in the middle of town for example would have very low risk from Douglas-fir beetle.

3. Am I already seeing Douglas-fir beetle activity or mortality in my trees?
Douglas-fir beetle attacks result in reddish boring dust collecting in the crevices on the bark of the tree, with pitch “streamers” often apparent higher in the tree. Needles will gradually turn yellow, then red and fall off. A tree may still be green but essentially dead if it has a great number of “attacks” as indicated by the reddish dust.

Q: How do I get MCH and how much do I order?
A: Currently 2 companies make MCH:

1. Synergy Semiochemical Corp. – (604) 454-1121, or synergy@semiochemical.com

2. Contech Inc. – 1-800-767-8658 or (250) 413-3250
   http://www.contech-inc.com/products/Forestry

If you want to protect a few individual trees, only 1-2 capsules per tree are needed. If you want to protect a larger area, generally 30 capsules per acre are needed. The companies are reluctant to supply very small quantities, so you may want to consider consolidating and ordering with your neighbors. Prices may vary depending on quantity.

Q: How do I apply MCH?
A: See the USFS Brochure, “Using MCH to Protect Trees and Stands from Douglas-fir Beetle Infestation, 2006”

Q: What if I don’t have Douglas-fir beetle but have other problems with my trees?
A: Consider consulting with your local Department of Forestry or OSU county extension office for site visits and advice on your trees.
Tall Timber Topics

A newsletter for those interested in Forestry, Woodland Management and Christmas Trees in Northwest Oregon

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