Hello!

Well, the log market is not looking so hot. Nonetheless, forests are more than a bunch of logs standing on end with some green stuff still attached. Currently, your forest is producing: clean air, clean water, wildlife habitat, mushrooms, floral greens, and a multitude of other things, some commercially valuable and some that are just nice to have. Also, even though your standing timber isn’t worth much right now, it will be when the economy rebounds and no matter what the economy does, your trees just keep on growing.

Just because the economy is slow, there’s no reason to slow down your forest management. In this edition of Woods News, I discuss several forest management activities that don’t rely on selling timber. No matter what your management objectives, there is likely something that can be done today that will pay dividends in the future. If you are interested in making money from selling timber, you might consider pruning trees to increase their potential value. If you want to increase the value of your property for wildlife, you might think about creating some snags. Some of these activities might even qualify you for state or federal assistance.

So, I hope you all find something in this newsletter than can be put to use this spring as you manage your forest. As always, please feel free to get ahold of me if you have any questions about your woods.

Thanks!

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**Weed Wrenches Available for Loan**

Weed wrenches are simple, yet powerful tools that make quick and easy work of tough woody shrubs. A long lever arm is hooked to a vice-like jaw that clamps down on the stem or root collar of shrubs or small trees. Pulling back on the arm simultaneously tightens the jaw and pulls up on the weed, uprooting it. This results in more permanent control than simply cutting the plants down to the ground.

I’ve tried the weed wrench myself and it works very well on holly, rose bushes and scotch broom. It does fairly well with briars as well. The effort required is much less than grubbing out roots with a Pulaski or other tool plus it leaves the soil intact.

Use of a weed wrench is free, with a $25 deposit. Call or stop by any of the locations below to reserve or pick up a weed wrench.

**Coos County OSU Extension**
631 Alder, Myrtle Point
572-5263

**Bandon City Hall**
555 Hwy 101, Bandon
347-2437

**USDA Service Center**
382 North Central, Coquille
396-2841

**Curry County OSU Extension**
29390 Ellensburg, Gold Beach
247-6672
Log Prices

Below are recent and past domestic prices for delivered logs in Coos/Curry Counties. All values are averages of quotes from sawmills and are reported in $/MBF (thousand board feet). Keep in mind that each mill will have a different price and different grading practices. These values, however, are good measures of general price trends. Last year’s values are not adjusted for inflation. Prices are reported by Oregon Department of Forestry and can be found online at:


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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Douglas-fir</td>
<td>2S</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>420</td>
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<td>3S</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>310</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hemlock/white fir</td>
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<td>390</td>
<td>420</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3S</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>395</td>
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<tr>
<td>Redcedar</td>
<td>2S/3S</td>
<td>1035</td>
<td>955</td>
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<tr>
<td>Red alder</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>420</td>
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All values reported are in $/MBF (thousand board feet)

2S = No. 2 Sawmill (Logs suitable for the manufacture of Construction & Better lumber grades - 65%)
3S = No. 3 Sawmill (Logs suitable for the manufacture of Standard & Better lumber grades- 33%)
CR = Camp Run (Log production from the forest of the species or group of species being logged, that are better than Cull grade)

Log Markets Still Bleak

There is still no end in sight for the currently dismal timber market. Until new house construction picks up nationwide, the demand for timber products can be expected to remain low. Luckily, there are lots of things besides timber harvests to keep small woodland owners busy. Now is a good time to work on improving your timber stands so that when the market rebounds, you will be well positioned to profit from your hard work. To the right is a short list of general stand improvement activities that can be carried out without selling timber.

- Thin overly dense, young stands with trees too small to pay their way to the mill. Be careful not to thin too heavily or you trees may fall over. (See OSU Extension publication EC 1189 for guidance)
- Prune trees to increase timber value down the road. (See OSU Extension publication EC 1457)
- Clear brushy areas and establish trees. (See EC 1133 and EC 1498)
- Thin hardwood clumps to improve timber quality and firewood production. (See article on page 5)

Buyer Seeking Cascara (chittum) Bark and Moss

A buyer from the Willamette Valley is interested in establishing a local route to pick up forest products. Currently there is interest in clean and dry cascara (chittum) bark and moss. Contact Pat Mooney at 541-517-4083 for more information.
Increase Wildlife Habitat by Creating Snags

Many small landowners are interested in providing wildlife habitat on their property. Creating snags in your forest, when done in a safe and thoughtful way, is an excellent way to increase the wildlife diversity on your property.

Snags (standing dead trees) are important for a wide range of animals including woodpeckers, wood ducks, owls, raptors, swifts, bats, martens and many others. Usually, there aren’t very many snags on private forest land because dying trees are removed before they have a chance to become snags. Also, loggers will usually cut down snags because they can be a serious safety hazard. While snag removal is probably a good idea when timber production is your only management objective, folks with a desire to diversify the wildlife habitat on their property might consider actually creating snags.

Creating Snags

Snags can be created from living trees in a variety of ways but the two most common methods are girdling and topping. Girdling is accomplished by cutting a groove into the trunk of a tree in order to interrupt the flow of sap between the crown and the roots. This can be done with an ax or chainsaw as long as you are sure to cut an inch or so into the wood all the way around the tree. Topping is accomplished by climbing a tree and cutting the top of the tree out where the live crown begins. Due to the danger involved with this method, topping is best left to a professional logger or arborist.

While girdling is safer and less difficult than topping a tree, there are advantages to having a tree topped. First, when a tree is girdled, fungus and insects are allowed to enter into the stem where you create the wound. This will eventually create a weak, rotten spot that will make the snag more likely to break and fall over in a short amount of time. Furthermore, when a tree is girdled, the top of the tree with all its branches is retained; the skinny dead top isn’t very useful to wildlife and it acts like a sail in the wind which make the snag much more likely to blow over during a winter storm. If the snag doesn’t blow over, the top will eventually break out creating a very dangerous situation if someone happened to be nearby. Snags created by topping will last longer and are safer to be around while still offering most of the same benefits to wildlife as a natural snag.

Other less commonly used snag creation methods include herbicide injection, inoculation with fungus and even blowing the tops out of trees using dynamite!

(Continued on next page)
Snags (Continued from page 3)

Selecting Trees to Convert to Snags

Both hardwoods such as maple and alder and softwoods such as Douglas-fir and hemlock can be converted to snags that are useful to wildlife. Hardwoods can develop large natural cavities that are very useful for birds and mammal nesting and denning but they usually decay much faster than conifers giving them a shorter useful lifespan. Cedars and Douglas-fir make very long-lasting snags due to their decay resistance. Hemlock and white fir trees don’t stand quite as long but are still useful to wildlife while they last. Generally, the larger the diameter of the tree, the longer it will remain standing as a snag and the more useful it will be to wildlife but any tree over about 14 inches diameter breast height will be useful to cavity nesters. A larger Douglas-fir (around 30 inches DBH) that has been topped can be expected to last well over thirty years.

If your management goals include financial benefits, snags should be created from lower value trees with defects such as large limbs, crooked trunks, multiple tops or heart rot. For safety considerations snags should be located in out-of-the-way places, especially if you use the girdling method.

How many snags are needed?

Basically, the more snags you create the better (from a wildlife perspective). If you create too many snags at the same time, insect populations might become large enough to harm your remaining live trees; however, as long as your forest is fairly healthy and vigorous, bugs are very unlikely to become an issue.

Remember that snags don’t last forever so it may be a good idea to stagger your snag creation. For example, instead of creating 80 snags in one year, you might create 20 snags every five years for the next 20 years. This will help ensure a steady supply of wildlife habitat over time.

Coppice This!
Stephen A. Fitzgerald, OSU Extension Service, Deschutes County

Coppice is the culturing of stump sprouts that develop on hardwood stumps (and some conifers) after cutting. Coppice management of hardwoods is a silvicultural system that is seldom used by family forest owners, but it has great potential for those interested in promoting hardwoods in their forest for diversity or to use for firewood or sawtimber, depending on species and its marketability. Coppice is one of the oldest methods for regenerating forests. Species that coppice well include aspen, bigleaf maple, alder, oaks, myrtle, cottonwood and Pacific madrone. Redwood is an important commercial conifer that coppices well. In fact, most of the second growth redwood trees that are harvested today developed from sprouts from the old-growth stumps.
Coppice (Continued from page 4)

Once hardwoods are cut, the stump erupts with a profusion of sprouts that arise from dormant buds on the top, side and root collar of the stump. The sprouts grow rapidly because they have the advantage of using the parent root system and carbohydrate stores. The benefits of culturing trees from sprouts is that you don’t have to spend money planting them, and sprout growth is often faster than the same species planted as a bare-root or plug seedling.

Typically, hardwoods are killed to favor more desirable conifers, such as Douglas fir. However, you may want to consider promoting hardwoods in areas lacking conifers or in areas not capable of supporting conifers.

How to cultivate and manage sprouts

If you are already conducting a timber harvest in an area, here is a rundown of how to coppice (propagate) hardwood trees from stump sprouts:

- Cut down hardwood tree, creating a low stump.

- Let stump sprout. Hundreds of sprouts will erupt depending on tree species and size of stump. Let the sprouts compete with each other for several years (five years or so). Most hardwoods needed this kind of “training” to help produce straight stems. Let them compete and grow tall enough so that you get at least an 18- to 20-foot straight stem on the best sprouts within the clump.

- After five years or when they reach 18 to 20 feet, select one to three of the straightest stems to leave and flag them. Cut away all the other sprouts. Sprouts to leave should be selected from the lower portion of the stump or from sprouts that originate from roots. The reason for this is that if you select sprouts from the top of the stump, the stump eventually rots and the sprout can break out as they mature.

- The one to three remaining sprouts can be thinned again, if needed, a few years later, leaving the best sprout.

- The remaining sprouts can be pruned to produce clear wood.

- Allow sprouts to grow to the desired diameter, then cut, harvest and start over.
Forestry Short Course Series

The Basic Forestry Short Course will start you down the path to successful forest management and stewardship. Classroom settings and field exercises introduce you to key concepts and proven techniques for small woodland management.

Registration: Call the Coos County OSU Extension Office at 541-572-5263 or email tristan.huff@oregonstate.edu at least 48 hours in advance of the class.

Tree Biology and Silviculture
Myrtle Point: May 6th, 2:30-4:30
Gold Beach: May 7th, 2:30-4:30

How trees work and how to make them work for you. We’ll discuss what you want your forest to look like in the future and how to get it there. Common treatments including thinnings, prunings, and brush control will be described.

Logging, Roads, Marketing
Myrtle Point: May 20th, 2:30-4:30
Gold Beach: May 21st, 2:30-4:30

Have you been thinking about selling timber from your land but don’t know where to start? Logging guru Steve Bowers, Forestry Agent for Douglas County, will explain how to go about selling standing timber and logs, hiring a logger, and building and maintaining roads.

Field Trip 1: Management on the Ground
Myrtle Point: June 3rd, Time TBA
Gold Beach: June 4th, Time TBA

Need some ideas on what to do with your woods? Join us as we visit local sites to see what silvicultural techniques other landowners are using to improve their forests.

Watersheds and Wildlife
Myrtle Point: June 10th, 2:30-4:30
Gold Beach: June 11th, 2:30-4:30

Come hear how you can improve wildlife habitat and stream conditions through your forest management actions. Also, learn more about the financial and technical assistance available for landowners working to improve environmental conditions.

Forest Health
Myrtle Point: June 24th, 2:30-4:30
Gold Beach: June 25th, 2:30-4:30

Forest disease expert Dave Shaw talks about all the bugs and crud that are out in the woods and how to identify and deal with them.

Reforestation
Myrtle Point: July 8th, 2:30-4:30
Gold Beach: July 16th, 2:30-4:30

Do you have a piece of land that is not growing trees to its full potential? Is an area of your property too overgrown with brush to get seedlings to grow? If so, come learn how to get trees growing again.

Maps and Measurements
Myrtle Point: July 22nd, 2:30-4:30
Gold Beach: July 23rd, 2:30-4:30

Want to know what a timber cruise is exactly? Come learn how to acquire and read aerial photos, topographic maps as well as how to make simple tree measurements such as high, diameter, and age.

Field Trip 2: Fish and Wildlife
Myrtle Point: August 5th, Time TBA
Gold Beach: July 30th, TBA

See how local forest owners are taking steps small and large to help out fish and wildlife. We’ll visit stream improvement projects, as well as habitat improvement projects in upland areas.
Interesting Forestry Publications

The following publications and many more are available at your local Extension office and can be found online at:

http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/

EC 1201  Understanding and Controlling Deer Damage in Young Plantations
EC 1512  Ecology, Identification, and Management of Forest Root Diseases in Oregon
EC 1128  Estimating Site Productivity on Your Woodland
EC 1139  Maintaining Woodland Roads
EM 8894  Managing Himalayan Blackberry in Western Oregon Riparian Areas
EC 1467  Special Forest Products: Harvesting and Marketing Scotch Broom
EC 1131  Managing Woodlands in the Coastal Fog Belt
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Coos and Curry Woods News

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