

# SW Oregon Woodland News

A joint newsletter of the OSU Extension Service and  
Jackson/Josephine Small Woodlands Association



Winter 2009

Jackson/Josephine Small Woodlands Association

## ANNUAL MEETING

*Visit with friends, new and old; enjoy a hearty meal, and hear a great program*

**WHEN:** Tuesday, January 20, 2009

**TIME:** 5:30 pm check-in time and social, 6:00 dinner, 6:30 program

**WHERE:** OSU Extension Auditorium, 569 Hanley Rd, Central Point

**WHO:** Open to the public. Non-small woodlands Association members are welcome!

### SPEAKERS

**David Ford, Executive Director, Oregon Small Woodlands Association**

**Ken Faulk, President, Oregon Small Woodlands Association**

David and Ken will update us on some exciting new developments within the Oregon Small Woodlands Association, including the formation of the Woodland Carbon Company, which aims to help Association members obtain revenue from the carbon stored by growing trees!

**George McKinley, landowner.** George will talk about a pilot project he's initiated to document and register carbon storage on a portion of property on the Greensprings.

**Matt Delaney, Delaney Forestry Services, Lebanon, OR (invited).** Matt is a consulting forester specializing in the design and development of carbon offset projects. He has 13 years of experience with carbon projects from Brazil to Alaska to Mississippi. He will address some of the promises and pitfalls of this emerging market. For more information about carbon markets for forest landowners, see the article "Forest and Carbon Storage: A New Opportunity for Landowners?"



**Dinner reservation form on page 2. If you want to eat, you must RSVP by Friday, January 16<sup>th</sup> Call: 776-7371, OSU Extension.**

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### GREETINGS FROM MAX

Max Bennett, Area Extension Agent  
Forestry



This year promises to be a busy and exciting one, as we host Rogue Tree School in Ashland and the OSWA annual meeting. Stay tuned for details.

I hope to see you at our annual dinner and meeting on January 20th.

Max

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/sorec/forestry/>

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## UPCOMING PROGRAMS



### **ROGUE TREE SCHOOL 2009** **Saturday, June 6, 2009** **SOU campus, Ashland**

Save the date! Rogue Tree School will be held Saturday, June 6, 2009 on the campus of Southern Oregon University in Ashland, in conjunction with the Oregon Small Woodlands Association's Annual Meeting. Stay tuned for details.

### **Jackson/Josephine** **SMALL WOODLANDS TO HOST** **2009 OSWA ANNUAL MEETING**

**FRIDAY, June 4 through Sunday June 7,**

Our local small woodland chapter will be hosting the Oregon Small Woodlands Association's annual meeting on Friday, June 4 through Sunday June 7, 2009, in Ashland. The annual meeting will incorporate Rogue Tree School, a Howdy Neighbor tour, banquet and more. This will be a great opportunity to meet with forest landowners from all over Oregon, and to share some of what makes our area so special.

## FORESTS and CARBON STORAGE: A New Opportunity for Landowners

According to many scientists, the buildup of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in the atmosphere from burning of fossil fuels, deforestation, and other factors is causing global temperatures to increase. Some of this buildup could be offset by increasing the amount of carbon stored in forests. This idea is the basis for the development of new markets for forestry carbon "offsets", which could provide revenues to forest landowners. What is a carbon "offset?" We'll answer that question shortly. But first, let's take a look at how forests gain and lose carbon, and how forest carbon storage can be increased.

Forests absorb carbon dioxide during the process of photosynthesis and store carbon in the form of wood. The forest carbon "pool" consists not only of trees and other live vegetation but also snags, logs, litter, and carbon in soil organic matter. In some temperate forests, half or more of the carbon is found in these non-living sources.

Forests gain carbon as trees grow. They lose carbon in three main ways: through plant respiration, through decomposition of organic matter, and through combustion (fire). The balance of carbon uptake through tree growth and loss through these other factors determines the size of the carbon pool.

In general, forests accumulate carbon slowly as they grow, and lose carbon rapidly when they

are harvested or burn in a wildfire. The *rate* of carbon storage is highest in young forests, since they are fast growing. The total *amount* of carbon storage is greatest in older forests, since they have the largest total amount of biomass.

How much carbon do trees store? A rule of thumb is that the carbon content of vegetation is about 50% of its dry weight. Each ton of carbon represents 3.67 tons of potential CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

What happens to carbon storage when a forest is thinned or harvested? If slash and other non-merchantable material is piled and burned or broadcast burned, CO<sub>2</sub> is released. If the slash is left to decay, CO<sub>2</sub> is released more gradually. However, if the slash ("biomass") is removed from the site and used to generate power that substitutes for fossil fuels, it is regarded as "carbon neutral" – that is, there is no net increase in atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>. The amount and timing of CO<sub>2</sub> released also depends on the fate of the logs removed from the site. If the logs are converted to long-lived products such as lumber, carbon storage is long term, but if they are converted to toilet paper, carbon release occurs more rapidly. If sawmill residues such as sawdust are burned and used to generate power (co-generation) that substitutes for fossil fuels, they are also carbon neutral. Obviously, tracking carbon flows can become very complicated, very quickly.

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How can the amount of carbon stored in forests be increased?

- Reduce deforestation. Keep forest lands in forest use. Globally, deforestation is a major contributor to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. It's estimated that about ¼ of all human-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions since 1850 resulted from permanent clearing of forests for residential developments, farms, and other uses.
- Reduce severe wildfires that release large amounts of CO<sub>2</sub>. For example, the 2003 B&B Complex fire near Sisters emitted six times as much CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere as all other sources in Oregon that year, combined!
- Plant trees in areas currently not occupied by forest. This includes abandoned pastures, brushfields, and other areas that are capable of supporting forests but do not currently have forest cover. This is one of the main ways that global forest carbon storage is being increased.
- Use wood products instead of concrete and steel, which require large amounts of fossil fuel-derived energy to manufacture. Also, use energy from wood in lieu of energy generated from fossil fuels.
- Defer harvesting, allowing trees to grow larger. This is often thought of in terms of rotation length, the time from planting to harvest. For example, all other things equal, a forest that is grown for 80 years and then harvested will produce more biomass, and store more carbon, than a forest that is grown for two 40-year rotations.

Back to "carbon offsets." The basic concept of a forestry carbon offset is that an entity which emits CO<sub>2</sub> pays a landowner to plant and grow trees to store carbon that compensates for, or offsets, some or all of the



**Planting trees on abandoned pastureland and other non-forested sites is one way to store additional carbon.**



**Carbon is stored in living vegetation, and in woody debris and in the soil itself.**

entity's CO<sub>2</sub> emission.

In Oregon, an example of this is the Oregon Department of Forestry's Forest Resource Trust (FRT) program, which provides financial assistance to landowners to establish forests on lands capable of supporting a forest where none currently exists.

The FRT program is funded by the Klamath Co-Generation Project, a

public-private partnership producing steam and electricity from natural gas. The Project's financial contribution to the FRT is intended to offset greenhouse gas emissions from the co-generation plant.

To date, regional carbon offset programs include the FRT, the Climate Trust, based in Portland, Oregon, and the California Climate Action Registry, all of which are based on voluntary participation. The Chicago Climate Change (CCX) is the only current U.S. market where carbon credits are actively traded. Purchasers of the credits include entities who wish to offset their carbon emissions. CCX currently accepts two main types of forestry projects: 1) project involving afforestation, i.e., planting trees on non-forested land with a 15-year no cut guarantee, and 2) 15-year contracts to grow trees on land certified by the American Tree Farm program. Some landowners, primarily in the southern U.S., have recently begun to participate in the CCX through intermediaries, known as "aggregators." With current annual returns of \$5-\$10 per acre for forestry-related projects, the CCX is no gold mine, but future increases in the price of CO<sub>2</sub> credits could substantially increase returns. This would be likely to happen if, for example, Congress legislated a cap and trade system that regulated carbon emissions. In Europe, where such a system is in place, carbon credits have traded for up to \$40 per ton, versus \$1.70 - \$7.40/ton on the CCX.

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**Slash left to decay or that is piled and burned releases carbon dioxide back into the atmosphere. However, if it is turned into chips and burned to generate electricity, substituting for coal or natural gas, it considered “carbon neutral” – little or no additional carbon has been released.**

Forestry carbon offset programs are less well developed in Oregon, but things are changing. For example, the Oregon Small Woodlands Association has recently launched the Woodlands Carbon Company. You’ll be hearing more about the Carbon Company in the coming months.

While carbon offsets represent a potential income opportunity for forest landowners, the devil is in the details. Among the many challenges in developing carbon markets are: the concept of “additionality;” making accurate measurements of carbon storage; participation costs for individual landowners; and issues surrounding carbon storage in fire-prone forests.

**Additionality.** Under current U.S. practice, carbon offsets are only considered when forestry activities go beyond “business as usual” or provide carbon storage that otherwise would not have occurred. For example, reforestation after timber harvest is required by law in Oregon, so it is not considered to provide additional carbon storage. On the other hand, planting trees in brushfields or old pastures is an example of an activity that would meet the additionality test since it is voluntary. The question then becomes, what is “business as usual?” Some argue that landowners face pressures to sell their land for development, so simply maintaining forest cover provides additional carbon storage compared to the business as usual scenario.

- **Measuring carbon storage.** If carbon offsets are to become tradable commodities, it will be essential to accurately measure the amount of carbon stored in a given forest over time. That’s theoretically possible, but difficult in practice. Consider a typical southern Oregon mixed species forest, with patches of varying species composition and density. Carbon storage would be different

in each patch, and would have to be accounted for separately to have an accurate picture for the entire ownership. Also, carbon is stored not only in live trees, which are relatively easy to measure, but also understory vegetation, snags, downed logs, forest litter, and soil, which are much more difficult to measure.

- **Participation costs.** Additionality, carbon storage measurements, and other aspects of carbon accounting make the process of participating in carbon offset markets pretty daunting for the average forestland owner. Outside expertise will be needed in most cases, and that will cost. With fairly minimal returns at present, will the expense be justified? Most owners will probably participate in carbon markets not as individuals but through organizations that aggregate multiple owners, reducing expenses for the individual owner.
- **Storage of carbon in fire-prone forests.** Carbon storage is maximized when tree growth and density are maximized, but in fire-prone forests this conflicts directly with efforts to reduce stand densities to reduce fire risk and improve forest health. Thinning reduces carbon storage compared to not thinning, but it also reduces the risk of a stand-consuming wildfire that would release large quantities of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere. This tradeoff is not adequately accounted for under current carbon accounting standards.

One thing seems clear: to participate in carbon markets it will be helpful and perhaps essential for owners to be able to demonstrate a commitment to long term forest management. This could be through a certification program such as the American Tree Farm System’s, or even a conservation easement, as is currently required under California’s Climate Action Registry forestry protocols.

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This article has briefly touched on several aspects of carbon storage and markets issues. There's lots of information out there for those who are interested in learning more. A couple of the most helpful websites:

Carbon Trading: A Primer for Forest Landowners. <http://www.carbon.sref.info/>

Oregon Department of Forestry: Forests & Global Climate Change [http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/PRIVATE\\_FORESTS/carbon.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/PRIVATE_FORESTS/carbon.shtml)

## REDUCING THE COST OF FORESTRY WORK THROUGH COST-SHARE

Stand improvement and other forestry work is expensive. Participation in cost-share programs can reduce the cost and provide technical assistance at the same time. Interested? Read on...

Through a grant to the Oregon Department of Forestry, cost share assistance is also available for **pre-commercial thinning and slash treatment designed to mitigate insect and disease problems**. There is a five-acre minimum project size and the cost share rate is 50%/\$290 per acre. (\*Contact)

Funds are often available through the Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP) for up to 75% of the cost of a consultant-written **management plan**. The typical out-of-pocket cost to the owner is \$250. Management plans are extremely useful and are required for some other cost share programs, such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). (\*Contact)

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Cost share funding is available for a variety of practices including thinning, pruning, slash treatment, fire breaks, and fuelbreaks. A management plan is required to participate in this program. For more information, **call NRCS at 776-4267**.

For those interested in **streamside plantings and filter strips**, the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) may be the ticket. For eligible properties, the program covers 75% of the cost of the planting as well as a rental payment. For more information, contact the **Farm Service Agency at 776-4270**.

Landowners seeking financial assistance for fu-

**els reduction** and creating defensible space around their homesites may be eligible for a rebate of \$400 per acre through the Oregon Department of Forestry (Jackson County call **664-3328**; Josephine County call **474-3152** or their local rural fire district. Generally, funds are available for the 1-acre homesite; in some cases, funds may be provided for non-commercial thinning and slash reduction beyond the 1-acre homesite. Those interested should contact the Department of Forestry prior to beginning work to arrange for a site visit. Availability of funds depends on the status of grants and may vary from area to area.

For **conversion of under-producing forestlands or brushfields to conifer forests**, consider the **Forest Resource Trust Program**. To qualify you must have at least ten acres of under-producing forestlands - lands capable of growing forests but currently in brush, cropland, pasture or very poorly stocked and not subject to a reforestation requirement of the Oregon Forest Practices Act. Land must also be zoned forest or farm use land, and must be part of a private forestland ownership of no more than 5,000 acres. The landowner commits to establishing a healthy "free-to-grow" forest stand and takes responsibility for seeing that the reforestation gets done. If timber is harvested from the forests created with trust monies, participating landowners must repay the trust (up to set amounts) with a portion of the profits. Owners may receive up to 100% of the reforestation cost up to a cap of \$100,000 every two years. (\*Contact)

There is also a **tax credit** available for reforestation of **under-producing forestlands**, including brush fields and pastureland capable of growing a commercial forest. Eligible costs include: site preparation, trees and planting, release from competing vegetation, conservation of soil moisture, animal damage, employed labor and supervision, and equipment operating costs. Personal labor is not an eligible expense. Reasonable costs are determined by the state forester.

\*For more information, **contact Stewardship Forester, Steve Wetmore at 664-3328 (Medford) or 474-3152 (Grants Pass)**.



## SEEDLING AVAILABILITY

With the demise of Phipps Nursery, forest tree seedlings are in short supply this year. Below is a list of available stock of ponderosa pine, incense cedar, and Douglas-fir for local seed zones, as of late November. Other potential sources of seedlings are listed below.



Species	Seed zone	Elevation	Age/stocktype	Price	Quantity	Nursery
Ponderosa pine	14	1500'-2500'	1/0 Container	\$200/thousand	4500	Weyerhaeuser
Ponderosa pine	14	2500'-3500'	1/0 Container	\$200/thousand	4500	Weyerhaeuser
Ponderosa pine	15	1500'-2500'	1/0 Container	\$200/thousand	4500	Weyerhaeuser
Ponderosa pine	501	2500'-3500'	1/0 Container	\$200/thousand	4500	Weyerhaeuser
Incense cedar	3	0'-2000'	Styro15 Container	\$350/thousand	5000	Weyerhaeuser
Douglas-fir (imp.)	511	1500'-2500'	SuperCell	\$330/1K, \$55/100	4000	Kintigh
Douglas-fir	270	500'-2500'	1-1 bareroot	\$355/thousand	18,000	Weyerhaeuser
Douglas-fir	local	<2000'	Super-cell plugs		5000	Kintigh

### Contacts:

Weyerhaeuser, 541-917-3652

Kintigh Nursery, 541-746-1842

### Althouse Nursery

5410 Dick George Rd  
Cave Junction, OR 97523

**(541) 592-2395**

Sells native trees and shrubs grown from seed collected in SW Oregon, mostly from Illinois valley (new seed zone 5), 1,200-1,500 elevation. All container stock ranging from small plugs to one gallon tree pots and larger.

### J. Herbert Stone Nursery

2606 Old Stage Road  
Central Point, OR 97502

**(541) 858-6100**

Surplus conifers only. Stone will not know what surplus stock is available for sale until after the first of the year; call them after Jan 1 for info. Minimum order: One box/bag.

### Plant Oregon

8651 Wagner Creek Road  
Talent, OR 97540

**(541) 535-3531**

Sells native trees and shrubs grown from seed collected in SW Oregon and elsewhere. Wide range of species. Mostly container stock, some bare root.

### Sources of Native Forest Nursery Seedlings

Lists most nurseries that grow reforestation seedlings for Oregon, and many would be willing to grow for the SW on contract, or may have grown seedlings for SW Oregon seed zones on speculation. Also has seed zone maps. Available at your local ODF office or online.

[http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/PRIVATE\\_FORESTS/docs/](http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/PRIVATE_FORESTS/docs/)

### Jackson/Josephine Small Woodlands Association Board:

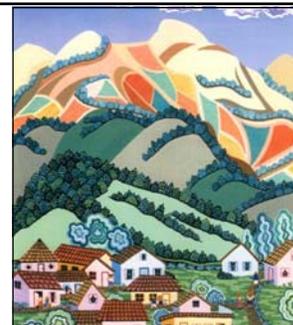
Bill Potterf, President.....(476-0868)  
 Victoria Morgan,VP .....(582-2334)  
 Max Bennett, Secretary .....(776-7371)  
 Art McKee, Treasurer .....(560-3512)

Lee Frakes .....(582-3614)  
 Marty Main.....(552-1479)  
 Vicki Belknap .....(830-4064)  
 Howard Wagner .....(471-2724)



### WOODLAND MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP SERIES

This workshop series provides an overview of concepts and practices for family forest owners and others who own small tracts of forest land. Learn skills, get practical advice, and meet other experienced forest owners. This class is a great starting point for improving your woodland stewardship skills, whether you are a new owner, one who has not been actively managing your woodland, or are just interested in the topics. Offered in both Jackson and Josephine County areas and nearby field sites. Options to attend weeknights and one Saturday, or during weekdays.



**DATES & TIMES:** Starts in March. Contact Forestry Agent, Max Bennett, for more information .

**COST:** \$10.00/session

**LOCATIONS:** OSU Extension Auditorium, 569 Hanley Rd; Central Point, OR (776-7371); Jackson County, or Josephine County;215 Ringuette St.; Grants Pass, OR (476-6613)



### January 20 JackSWA Dinner Reservation Form

Dinner selection :

- Chicken Parmesan \_\_\_x \$13 = \$\_\_\_\_\_
- Vegetarian lasagna \_\_\_x \$13 = \$\_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

***“Please bring your own table settings to cut down on waste. Thanks!”***

Make check payable to “JackSWA”

I’ve enclosed a check for

**DEADLINE: January 16, 2009**

**Mail to:**

**Jackson County Extension Office  
 569 Hanley Rd  
 Central Point, OR 97502**

**Oregon State University  
Southern Oregon Research & Extension Center  
569 Hanley Road  
Central Point, OR 97502**

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## **SW OREGON WOODLAND NEWS**

**OSU Extension Service**

**Jackson/Josephine Small Woodland Association**

**NEWSLETTER, Winter 2009**

**ANNUAL DINNER & MEETING in this issue**