

# SW Oregon Woodland News

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



WINTER 2008

## Jackson Small Woodlands Association

# Annual Meeting and Dinner

**Date:** Thursday, January 17, 2008

**Time:** 6:00 pm check in & social time

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

**Who:** Open to the public

(non-Jackson Small Woodlands Association members are welcomed!)

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

**PROGRAM:** Reflections on the “social side” of forestry

Vicki Sturtevant, Southern Oregon University

**Dinner:** Catered by Rosario’s Deli and our own Vicki Belknap



**RESERVATION FORM ON PAGE 7**

**RSVP REQUIRED 776-7371**

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### Jackson Small Woodlands Association Board:

Lee Frakes, President (582-3614)  
Victoria Morgan, VP (582-2334)  
Ed Reilly, Treasurer (899-8987)  
Max Bennett, Sec. (776-7371)  
Bill Potterf, President (476-0868)  
Vicki Belknap (830-4064)  
Art McKee (560-3512)  
Howard Wagner (471-2724)

#### Program committee:

Marty Main, Ed Reilly, Max Bennett



**OSU**  
Oregon State  
UNIVERSITY



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Area Extension Agent  
Forestry

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## WINTER PROGRAM CALENDAR

### Jackson Small Woodlands Association Annual Meeting & Dinner

In addition to the program, the evening includes the Jackson County Tree Farmer of the Year Award, other awards, and election of two new board members (there will be no "mail" election this year. If you cannot attend, please designate a proxy to vote for you, and notify JackSWA president Lee Frakes at 582-3614.)

#### Program: REFLECTIONS ON THE "SOCIAL SIDE" OF FORESTRY

We often focus on the technical side of forestry, but it's the social dimensions of forestry that pose some of our biggest challenges. Consider, for example, all of the debate and divisiveness surrounding management of federal forestlands (Forest Service and BLM) over the past two decades.

Vicki Sturtevant has been an integral part of bringing people together around contentious forestry issues in southern Oregon and beyond the region for more than 20 years. A rural sociologist by trade, she brings a unique perspective to discussions about forests and forestry, having studied and participated in many collaborative stewardship groups since the mid-1980s, both locally and nationally. Vicki teaches sociology and environmental studies classes at SOU, but works mostly as a researcher of forest communities and social dimensions of resource management. Currently, she focuses on assessing community wildfire planning efforts around the nation.

Vicki will share her observations about the social side of forestry in general, public interactions within the field, and the roles of private, non-industrial forestland owners here in southern Oregon and around the country.

 JackSWA programs and tours for winter 2008 are currently being developed. Tentative dates are February 21 and March 20. Stay tuned for details!

### Basic 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 Central Point and Grants Pass areas and nearby field sites. Central Point location: 569 Hanley Road, Central Point. Grants Pass location: 215 Ringuette. Options to attend weeknights and one Saturday, or during weekdays. Begins late January, runs through early March. Specific dates and times TBA, available after January 7, 2008. Cost is \$10 per session. Visit <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/sorec/Forestry/> for current information.

**Session #1. Getting to Know Your Forest**

**Session #2 Maintaining a Healthy Forest**

**Session #3. Protecting Your Home and Property from Wildfire**

**Session #4. Planting & Establishing Trees**

**Session #5. Putting it All Together**

### Global Positioning System (GPS) Skills

Learn to navigate using a GPS receiver. Field exercises will focus on basic navigation, recording and finding waypoints, and using tracks to measure distance and area. Offered in both Grants Pass and Central Point.

OSU Extension office, 569 Hanley Road, Central Point, Friday, March 14, 9 am-Noon

OSU Extension office, 215 Ringuette, Grants Pass, Friday, March 7, 1 – 4pm

Cost: \$10

 Master Woodland Manager Training will be offered for Jackson and Josephine County woodland owners starting in spring 2008. More details to come soon in a special mailing.



## Tree Species Selection

Correctly matching tree species to site conditions is a critical but often over-looked step in the reforestation process. Different species have different responses to environmental stresses such as drought, heat, frost, wet soils, shade, and animal damage. A species that thrives on one site may do poorly or even die on another. And here in southern Oregon, site conditions can vary dramatically over short distances, due to changes in aspect, slope, soils, and microclimate. That makes choices about what to plant where very important!

Here are some key things to consider when making decisions about what species to plant:

What's growing there now, or nearby? This is often your most direct clue about the suitability of a particular species for a site. If the species is present now, and appears to be vigorous and healthy, it is probably a good choice for planting on the site. If the species is present, but appears to be growing slowly or is in poor condition, this is a warning sign. For example, Douglas-fir, because it is moderately shade-tolerant, will often grow in the understory of pine or oak stands. It may appear healthy as a seedling or sapling, but larger trees often have poor vigor and are killed by insects. If this is the case, the site is probably too hot and dry to sustain Douglas-fir over the long run.

Aspect. South and southwest-facing slopes tend to get brutally hot and dry during our long summers. West and southeast aspects are intermediate. North and northeast aspects are the shadiest, coolest, and hold the most moisture. Steepness of slopes accentuates the effects of aspect. For example, a steep southwest facing slope is the hottest and driest of all, because it gets the most direct solar radiation. For those harsh aspects, choose a drought and heat-tolerant species.

Shade. Often overlooked! Species vary greatly in their shade tolerance. Ponderosa pine, for example, needs full sunlight for optimum growth and will not grow in a dense un-

derstory, even if other aspects of the site are favorable.

Soils. Heavy clay soils with poor drainage are tough on many species, including Douglas-fir, incense cedar, and white fir. Ponderosa pine and Oregon ash tolerate these conditions well. The presence of large amounts of Oregon white oak (aka scrub oak) is often an indicator of clay soils, shallow or rocky soils, or all of the above. These are poor sites for anything but white oak and perhaps ponderosa pine.

Frost. At higher elevations (>4,000'), spring frost can be an issue. Open areas on flat ground are often "frost pockets." Douglas-fir and to a lesser extent white fir are prone to frost damage. Pines are more frost tolerant.

With these factors in mind, what species are good to plant in this area? Douglas-fir has fast growth on good sites and consistently good market values, making it the timber tree of choice for many. However, it does poorly on hot, dry sites and poorly drained soils. It's best suited for north slopes and higher precipitation zones (>35" annually). For hot, droughty sites, ponderosa pine is a reliable choice. Incense cedar is also fairly drought and heat tolerant, though not as much as the ponderosa or Jeffrey pine. In recent years it has had a good market value, higher than that of pine. Sugar pine does well moderate sites and on granitic and other coarse textured soils, where it can outperform all other species. White fir is well-suited for high elevation areas such as the Greensprings and Dead Indian plateau. Use with caution elsewhere. For streamside areas, alder, cottonwood, ash, and maple are good choices. Note that alder and cottonwood are not at all shade tolerant, so make sure they have plenty of sun. What about mixing species? Absolutely, and that's what occurs naturally in our mixed conifer forests. But don't just throw in all the species you can think with the idea that more is better – make sure each individual species is well suited to conditions on the site, over the long term. And remember that species are tested not in average conditions, but during extremes, such as long droughts.

## NURSERY UPDATE: PHIPPS NURSERY TO CLOSE

DL Phipps Nursery, the biggest single source of forest tree seedlings for woodland owners in southern Oregon for many years, is slated to close after this winter.

Phipps grew seedlings primarily for non-industrial private woodland owners, as well as state forest lands. Much of the stock was grown on speculation, that is, trees were grown based on anticipated demand for a given species, seed zone, and elevation. That made it possible for landowners to call at the last minute (by reforestation planning standards) and still have a reasonable chance of getting what they needed. However, Phipps was often left with unsold seedlings. By contrast, most private nurseries grow tree seedlings on contract. Contract growing generally requires a minimum order of 5,000 seedlings and contracts must be made at least two years in advance of planting to grow a standard two-year old seedling.

The assumption in closing Phipps is that other nurseries would take up the slack in growing speculative seedlings. That's likely to happen for many areas of Oregon, but not in Jackson and Josephine County, for several reasons. The total demand for reforestation seedlings in our area is relatively small, so by the time even one species is divided up into multiple elevations and seed zones, only a few thousand of each seedling lot is usually needed. Growing small lots is inefficient and much more expensive than growing in larger amounts, and combined with the fact that those trees may not even be sold, makes growing speculative stock for SW Oregon unprofitable for many nurseries.

So where will we get our seedlings in the future? Some surplus stock will likely continue to be available, but surplus seedlings are frequently not available for the lower elevations where most small woodland owners reside. For larger projects (thousands of seedlings), landowners will probably have to rely more on contract-grown seedlings, requiring advance planning. For others, the outcome is less clear. Recognizing the probable shortfall of

seedlings for southern Oregon following the closure of Phipps, the Oregon Department of Forestry convened a group of local nurserymen and forestry folks to come up with potential solutions. One option being considered is a contract seedling trust fund. Because this would take some time to set up, there may be a short term contract with a local nursery to grow minimal amounts of speculative stock for the 2009 planting season. The local ODF office may also serve as a clearinghouse for seedling orders and availability. Many details remain to be worked out.

What does all this mean for local woodland owners? Don't expect small quantities of seedlings to be as readily available as in the past, and at the last minute. Plan ahead. Try to anticipate your seedling needs two or more years down the road. Consider contract growing if you have a large enough project. Consider joining with other woodland owners to contract grow seedlings. And get involved with JackSWA to help develop long term solutions in partnership with ODF.

### MAKE GOOD WEED CONTROL PART OF YOUR TREE PLANTING EFFORTS!

Effective control of grass and brush around newly planted seedlings often spells the difference between survival and mortality during the first summer after planting, and in growth over the next few years. A little effort pays big dividends! Weed control can be accomplished through mulching, weed fabric, spot spraying, and other methods. Strive for a minimum of a 3' foot weed-free area around each planted seedling.



▲ Ponderosa pine seedlings six years after planting, no grass control.



▲ Ponderosa pine seedling, same site, after six years, with large spot application of herbicide.



## SOURCES FOR NATIVE FOREST TREE SEEDLINGS

Tree planting season is almost upon us. Looking for some last minutes sources of tree seedlings for your reforestation project? Here are several possible sources.

### 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. Conifers include Douglas-fir, ponderosa and Jeffrey pine, Pacific yew, incense cedar and Port Orford cedar. Hardwoods include vine maple, bigleaf maple, red alder, madrone, redbud, dogwood, Oregon ash, and black cottonwood.

### D.L. Phipps Nursery

2424 Wells Rd., Hwy 138  
Elkton, OR 97436

**(541) 584-2214**

Low elevation Douglas-fir, Zones 502 and 511, Jeffrey pine Zone 502, ponderosa pine Zones 502 and 511, sugar pine Zone 501. Phytopthera-resistant Port Orford cedar is sold out.

NOTE:Phipps Nursery is going out of business after this year. *See article on page 4*

### Indian Hill

200 Corporate Way  
Grants Pass, OR 97526

**(541) 476-7525**

A variety of surplus seedling lots are available for various elevations in Zones 501, 502, and 512. Douglas-fir are 2-0, cost \$248/1,000, ponderosa pine are 1-0 or 2-0, cost \$135 and \$185/1,000 respectively.

Call Max for a detailed list or call the Indian Hill office directly.

### 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.

### Lava Nursery Inc.

Jeff Snyder  
Parkdale, OR

**(541) 352-7303**

Conifers only. They have Douglas-fir for seed zone 502, 4,000' elevation, stock type 1+1; \$280/1,000. Douglas-fir for seed zone 511, 4,500' elevation, stock type 1+1: \$280/1,000. Ponderosa Pine for seed zone 502, 4,000' elevation, stock type 1+1: \$280/1,000. Incense Cedar zone 511, 3,500' elevation, \$325/1,000. All trees \$60/100.

### 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.

### Weyerhaeuser

Central Point Seed Orchard/Nursery  
Sue Woodall (orders)

**(541) 917-3652**

Ken Monroe (availability info) **(541) 899-7714**

1-0 ponderosa pine will be available for zones 501 (elevation 3,000) and 511 (elevation 3,000). 1-0 giant sequoia also available.

### "Sources of Native Forest Nursery Seedlings"

This publication lists contact information and seedling availability as of early fall 2007 for all nurseries that grow reforestation seedlings for Oregon. Included are many nurseries that would be willing to grow for the SW on contract. The publication is available at your local ODF office or online at: [http://egov.oregon.gov/ODF/PRIVATE\\_FORESTS/docs/2006seedlings.pdf](http://egov.oregon.gov/ODF/PRIVATE_FORESTS/docs/2006seedlings.pdf)

### Website: Forest Seedling Network-

FSN is an interactive website that connects forest landowners with growers who have surplus seedlings. FSN currently serves Oregon and SW Washington with plans to service all Pacific Northwest forest landowners. As of this writing, the website lists a variety of seedling lots for Jackson and Josephine County seed zones.

[www.forestseedlingnetwork.com](http://www.forestseedlingnetwork.com)

## THIN FOR QUALITY, NOT SPACING

Your chainsaw is revved up and you're about to sink the bar into a nearby Douglas-fir sapling. But which one? You're surrounded by hundreds of them, some smaller, some larger, all pretty close together, but not uniformly spaced. There are some madrone trees too, and cedar, and a few spindly pine. You heard somewhere that trees should be ten feet apart. Or was it twelve feet? Or fifteen feet? You can't quite remember. What to do?

Many landowners ask about proper spacing in thinning operations. I'd suggest not getting too hung up on spacing, but instead focus, at least initially, on tree quality. If you leave primarily high quality trees and take out mostly low quality trees, it's hard to go wrong. You're likely to have a healthier, more vigorous, more fire-resistant, and more valuable stand in the long run.

**GUIDELINES:** So what makes a high quality tree? Following are some guidelines for "leave" and "cut" trees that relate to tree quality. These are all characteristics you can "eyeball" out in the woods.

### Characteristics of "leave" trees:

- Good live crown ratio (30% or greater)
- Good height growth for species and age
- Symmetrical crown with "pointy top"
- Abundant foliage with good color
- Good form (straight, without sweeps, crooks, forks, etc.)
- Species is well suited to the site over the long term

### Characteristics of "cut trees"

- Poor crown ratio (<30%)
- Poor height growth and crown form (flat or rounded top, lopsided)
- Foliage is sparse or off-color
- Poor form
- Species not well suited to the site

### Crown ratio

Crown ratio is the percentage of the total height of the tree that is occupied by the live green crown. For example, a tree that is 75 ft tall and has crown on the upper 25 feet of the tree has a live crown ratio of 1/3

or 33%. Crown ratio is important because the bigger the crown (the tree's "factory"), the better the tree's growth. The rate of tree growth slows down in most species when the live crown ratio drops below 40%. Trees with crown ratios of 30% and greater often respond well to release (removal of surrounding competing trees), while trees with crown ratios below 30% often respond poorly. These trees may experience thinning shock or sunscald, or grow very slowly. Trees with very small crown ratios may simply die after thinning. This often happens after diameter limit thinning (removal of all trees above a certain diameter limit) or high grading. Gradual, light thinnings are recommended for very dense stands where few if any leave trees have desirable crown ratios.

### Height growth

Height growth can be determined by examining the length of the leader, if visible, or, on some species, the length of internodes (the distance between branch layers or whorls).

### Crown shape/form

Pointy-topped crowns indicate rapid height growth. Rounded tops mean height growth is slow. Good height growth is a sign of good vigor. However, as trees age, height growth slows, and the tree tends to develop a round or flat top. Full, symmetrical crowns are preferred over ragged or lopsided crowns. Lopsided crowns develop when a tree is crowded on one or more sides. Trees with lopsided crowns are more vulnerable to blowdown and breakage in snow and ice storms.



This sugar pine has a pointy crown, indicating rapid height growth and good vigor.

### Crown color/needle density

A dark green color indicates good vigor. Light green or greenish yellow foliage ("chlorotic foliage") is a sign of stress. This may be due to nitrogen deficiency, root disease, bark beetle attacks, or simply moisture stress.

Crown thinning or sparseness

A sparse or thinning crown, resulting from needle loss or a lower density of needles, is another sign of stress. This can often be best determined by comparing a thin or sparse crown with a denser crown on a nearby tree. An abundant crop of undersized cones (“distress crop”) is sometimes an indication that the tree is severely stressed and on its way out.



Douglas-fir with thinning crown and distress cone crop. It died within the year.

Stem form

The form of the tree trunk (stem) is an important consideration in thinning. All other things equal, trees with straight trunks and little taper are most desirable as leave trees. However, trees that are very tall for their diameter tend to be unstable and easily bent by the wind or snow, so some taper is important. Unde-

sirable stem features include cat faces, sweep, pistol butts, crooks, and forked tops or other defects. Defective trees may also make good wildlife trees, so having a few around is probably a good thing.

From a log value standpoint, trees that have large limbs (sometimes from being open-grown), many limbs, and sharp-angled branches are less desirable as leave trees than trees with fewer and smaller branches.

In a nutshell, these guidelines follow the old adage, “cut the sick, lame, and lazy, and leave the better ones.” It may not be too scientific, but after all forestry is a science *and* an art.

**SUPPLIES YOU MAY NEED**

**VEXAR TUBES AVAILABLE**

Looking for tree protection tubes for deer and other critters? The Jackson Small Woodlands Association still has vexar tubes available! Cost is \$0.20/ea, with a minimum order of 10, for non-members, and \$0.10 each for dues-paying members.



Vexar tubes

**TOOLS AND SUPPLIES**

Looking for tree planting tools, pre-cut weed mats, and other reforestation supplies? Try Terra Tech, <http://www.terratech.net/>, 1-800-321-1037

**JANUARY 17 JACKSWA DINNER RESERVATION FORM**

Dinner selection :

Chicken Parmesan \_\_\_ x \$15 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Vegetarian lasagna \_\_\_ x \$15 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to “JackSWA”

I’ve enclosed a check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(\$15.00 per dinner entrée)

**DEADLINE: January 14**

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

**Attn: Sheila Lee**

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

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***2008 Annual  
Meeting & Dinner***

**Date: Thursday, January 17**

**Time: 6—6:30 social; 6:30 dinner  
7 pm Program**