Large trees are perhaps the most obvious, and are certainly among the most important attributes of older forest ecosystems. Many groups and individuals place a high priority on protecting and retaining large trees for ecological, social, and other reasons. However, the issue may be far more complicated than strictly preventing removal of these older “legacy” trees. Recent inventory work suggests that large trees are dying at significant rates in southern Oregon in the absence of any harvest activities. Although large dead trees retain many important ecological functions and have inherent value, their increasing abundance in southern Oregon forests probably greatly exceeds historical levels. Most importantly, the rapidly decreasing number of remaining large live conifers has potentially significant impacts on important ecological and late-successional values in older forests. This presentation will review recent data on large tree mortality in the Ashland watershed and elsewhere in region, discuss the underlying threats to tree health, and review what can be done to improve the health and resiliency of these “legacy trees” and the older forests ecosystems of which they are part.

Speaker: Dr. Don Goheen, an entomologist and forest pathologist at the Southwest Oregon Forest Insect and Disease Service Center, has worked in the forests of southern Oregon since 1976.

Please RSVP to OSU Extension: 776-7371