



# The Quarterly Bark

Volume 31 | Issue 2

April 2024

## Editorial

### A response to the State Forest HCP

*In the last issue of The Quarterly Bark, a notice was posted about upcoming "Listening Sessions" being hosted by State Forester Cal Mukumoto on behalf of the Board of Forestry, a last chance to gather Oregonians' thoughts and feelings about an upcoming Board vote on whether or not to move forward with the controversial Habitat Conservation Plan for Oregon State Forests. Although the still-in-the-throes-of-the-ice-storm timing was unfortunate, several Lane county OSWA members spoke. OSWA President-elect, Gordon Culbertson, was one of the early speakers. Although the State Forester ultimately green lighted the Board's not surprising decision to go ahead with the HCP, Gordon's words struck me that night and strike me again upon re-reading. No matter your opinion about the HCP, truly listening to one another matters. Thank you, Gordon, for your candor, your willingness to speak from your heart and your experience—and for allowing me to share your words.*

*Kate McMichael | Editor*

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Dear State Forester Mukumoto,

Our family owns three parcels of forestland in Oregon's Coast Range. Each is certified by the Oregon and American Tree Farm system. In 2019 we were recognized as Oregon Tree Farmers of the year for our sustainable forest practices. We care deeply about forests and my comments represent three generations of our family. Our forests are in the vicinity of ODF managed lands and we are deeply concerned about their viability under the proposed HCP.

Across the valley from our Penn Road tree farm in Lane County is a mosaic of varying age State Forest lands. In the summer of 1973, I was employed harvesting a portion of this forest. The harvest paid me a family wage, funded county services and created environmentally friendly building products. Fifty years have passed since; a new mature forest has grown up, nearby early seral conditions provide big-game habitat, clean water, recreation, and a variety of public values including potential for future harvest are present. This is a success story for the Oregon Department of Forestry demonstrating the benefits of active management on public lands.

In the 1990s the Federal government adopted a scheme not unlike the State HCP proposal to place habitat goals above all else. Under the so-called "Northwest

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## In this Issue

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### General News

- Editorial
- NLC reflection
- OSU & FNR opportunities
- *Entangled Life* review
- OFRI offerings
- CFF | ODF

### Benton County

### Lane County

### Lincoln County

### Linn County



Published quarterly, in January, April, July, and October, *The Quarterly Bark* is a joint venture of the Benton, Lane, Lincoln and Linn County Chapters of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association.

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Editor: Kate McMichael

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To offer contributions to an upcoming edition, please contact: [quarterly.bark.23@gmail.com](mailto:quarterly.bark.23@gmail.com)

Forest Plan” harvest levels were drastically reduced, mills closed and thousands of forestry jobs were lost, shared revenue with counties was dramatically cut harming rural communities.

Today these neglected lands ruled by the Northwest Forest Plan are in great peril. We sacrificed so much to protect the Spotted owl and now wildfire is burning these forests at an alarming rate. Little pro-active management is allowed; dead and down trees proliferate on the landscape awaiting lightning strikes to ignite a conflagration.

A 2023 study conducted by the US Forest Service cites the greatest threat to older forests is loss from insects, disease, and fire! History shows the Coast Range is at risk from wildfire, during the summer of 2023 wildfire killed a large area of mature older trees in the Siuslaw National Forest.

Active forest management is the solution for healthy forests and simply pretending set-asides of land will forever protect habitat is a fool’s errand.

The HCP proposal relies too heavily on the questionable strategy of habitat preservation and largely ignores the economic and societal responsibilities for the citizens of ODF forested counties. We strongly oppose the goals of the Oregon HCP; this plan to eliminate pro-active forestry on the landscape is a risky venture for the forest, the community, the economy, and our families forest heritage.

Sincerely,  
Gordon Culbertson | Whitewater Forests LLC  
Springfield, OR

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**Have you marked your calendar  
for the 2024 Family Forest Convention?  
Keeping Family Forests Healthy  
June 13 - 14 - 15**

Home base will be the Boulder Falls Inn  
in Lebanon.

Various tours and panels are set for the three days.  
Bus transportation will be available.

Saturday’s TFOY Tour will be at  
Jim & Ed Merzenich’s  
Oak Basin Tree Farm.



Go to the [OSWA website](#) for more information. Links on the homepage will take you to the FFC Event page (where more information is being added as it becomes available) or you can go directly to the Registration page to buy your tickets.

# Do you know what NLC stands for?

Wylda Cafferata & Kate McMichael

All of us know what the letters OSWA stand for. Most of us know that OTFS stands for Oregon Tree Farm System, and some of us know that ATFS is the American Tree Farm System. But what about NLC? NLC stands for ATFS National Leadership Conference, an annual three-day event that brings together small woodland owners from all over the United States for extensive networking (this year conference in Vancouver, Washington on March 12-14). Where else could one have had the pleasure of breakfasting with tree farmers from Maine, shared break-out sessions with Georgians, Texans, and folks from Vermont, enjoyed a fabulous lunch with South Carolinians, South Dakota and Ohio folk, and dined with representatives from the OTFS and WTFS boards?



Nine representatives of the Oregon Tree Farm System attended the 2024 NLC. As we focused on our take-home lessons, one presentation in particular struck us as powerfully relevant.

“Communicating Forestry” was a session presented by Ethan Tapper, the Chittenden County Forester for the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. (He was also recognized at NLC as National Tree Farm Inspector of the Year.) Ethan is young, charismatic and exudes an unmistakable love of forests and forestry. He is convinced that most people believe in the value of forest management—they just don’t know it yet. And it’s up to us to reframe the forest management conversation in a way that both allows and inspires authentic listening and engagement. Top on his how-to-do-this list: CELEBRATE rather than DEFEND what we do. What it means to love a forest can be complicated and counter-intuitive things: we cut down trees, we kill competing vegetation. And we need to embrace the complication.

An example of this reframed conversation: It’s not that we’re managing against, say scotch broom; we’re creating a healthier forest space for other things to grow in its place. Forest management isn’t about mitigating the damage we’ve done to forests; instead, we’re allowing for something new and revitalized to come to birth through our efforts. At the outset of a Community Forest



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- ✓ *Repels by scent and taste*
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management project, he starts with guided walks through the forest focused on ecology or birds or wildlife. Rather than starting with the log landing, he ends there: all this revitalization of the forest AND the opportunity to provide a sustainable, renewable resource our community needs. What could possibly be better?

Partnerships and coalitions are key among his strategies for both the celebration and the reframing—although he is quick to point out that we need to think outside the usual boxes: certainly partner with natural resource professionals and conservation agencies, but also with local bird watching groups, hiking or gardening groups. Among his most interesting were a cooking club and a local LGBT group: he invited, they said yes, and the celebration was on. Building relationships leads to trust—and a “contagion of trust” leads to people engaging and listening—assuming the best rather than the worst and therefore being open to discovering an unforeseen appreciation for forest management along the way.

Social media, video, story maps, QR codes, articles in local papers, a YouTube channel—Ethan and his celebration of forest management are hard to ignore—and demand a lot of time and energy and digital expertise that many of us lack. Nevertheless, his enthusiasm is contagious—and his key message is one we can all embrace: we need to reframe the conversation and that starts with shifting the focus of

our interactions with people who don't yet know they are actually our allies, from defending to celebrating.

Let the celebration begin!

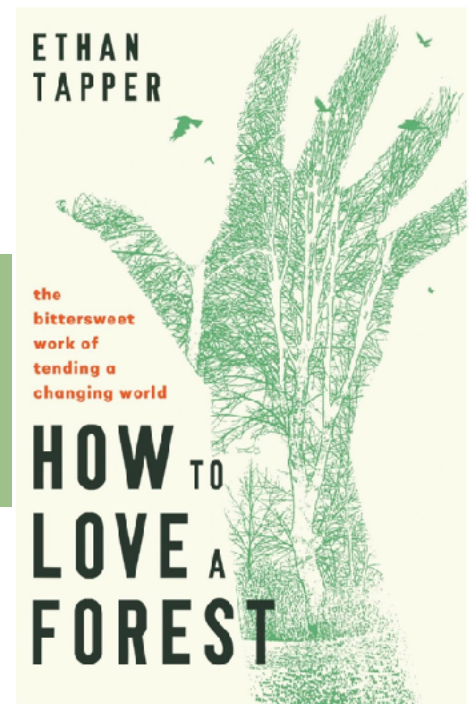


Attending the NLC brought to mind the collaborative partnership OSWA and OTFS share. OSWA represents small woodland owners at the Oregon legislature, and OTFS, through its ATFS affiliation, represents small woodland owners at the

national level. Both OSWA and OTFS share and celebrate active and sustainable management of our forests. Many Oregon small woodland owners are proud members of both organizations.



Check out Ethan Tapper's [website](#) and YouTube [channel](#). And he even has a book coming out in September!



# Landowner Experiences After Fire study (LEAF study)



<https://beav.es/q2m>

## Have you had wildfire onto your property within the last 10 years?

OSU wants to know about your experiences as part of the Landowner Experiences After Fire Study (LEAF Study).

OSU Extension is surveying landowners who are in the process of restoring their woodlands following wildfire. This information will be used to help OSU Extension improve our programming and publications covering post-wildfire recovery and woodland restoration.

To participate in this study, please visit: <https://beav.es/q2m>

The survey is open until May 2024. Paper copies of the survey can be provided on request.

## Do you have a Management Plan—or wish you did?

This three session webinar series is ideal for anyone interested in starting a woodland management plan.

Learn how to assess your site, integrate existing maps and resource data, collect field information, schedule management activities and how to get additional help.

During an optional field day, learn from a woodland owner who is experienced in writing management plans.

### REGISTER HERE:

<https://beav.es/ckC>  
or scan the QR code



# Introduction to Forest Management Plans Webinar Series + Field Day

RSVP Here:

<https://beav.es/ckC>



**Webinar Dates:**  
April 8th, 15th, 22nd

**Time:** 10am - 11:30pm

**Location:** Online  
**Cost:** Free

**Field Day:**  
April 19th 1pm-3pm

**Field Day Location -**  
Polk County

Questions? Contact Crystal Kelso at [crystal.kelso@oregonstate.edu](mailto:crystal.kelso@oregonstate.edu) or 541-730-3539. This is a free series brought to you by the Oregon State University Extension Service.



## 2024 STARKER LECTURE SERIES forest conservation: then & now



As part of celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Sand County Almanac, the first lecture will focus on Aldo Leopold and his role in forestry conservation. Leopold noted that a land ethic expands the definition of community to include not only humans, but all the other parts of the Earth, as well: soils, waters, plants and animals- “the land.” We must engage in thoughtful dialog with each other, inviting a diversity of perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds, as we explore the intertwined relationships between people and land.

A resilient forest is one that can absorb, rebound, and adapt to disturbances. How do we measure, research, and monitor the conservation, resiliency, and biodiversity of a forest? It’s important to understand biodiversity, especially what occurs in the soil and what may not be easily recognized without digging in further, as we will do in the second lecture.

The Starker Lectures Series is sponsored by the Starker Family in honor of TJ and Bruce Starker, the Oregon Forest Resources Institute and the Oregon State University College of Forestry.

**April 3, 2024**

**3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

**Starker Forests Classroom PFSC 117**

**Lecture: Land Ethic: A Sand County Almanac 75th Anniversary**

**Speaker: Buddy Haffaker, President of the Aldo Leopold Foundation**

[Register for the Zoom webinar](#) (registration not required for in-person attendance)

**April 10, 2024**

**Lecture and Open House at Peavy Lodge**

**5:00-5:30 p.m. – food + drinks**

**5:30-6:30 p.m. – lecture**

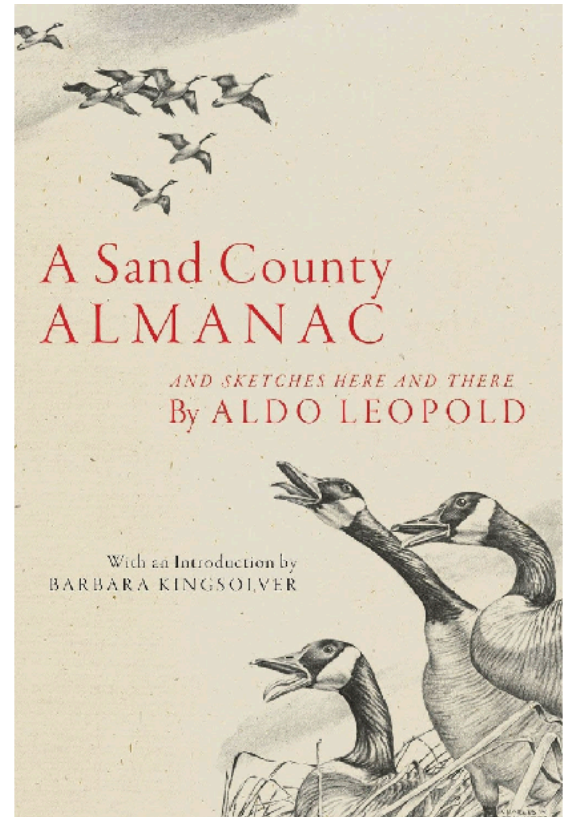
**6:30-8:00 p.m. – open house**

**Peavy Lodge, 8392 NW Peavy Arboretum Rd.**

**Lecture: Digging into Forest Soils**

**Speaker: Dean Tom DeLuca**

[Register for the Zoom webinar](#) (registration not required for in-person attendance)



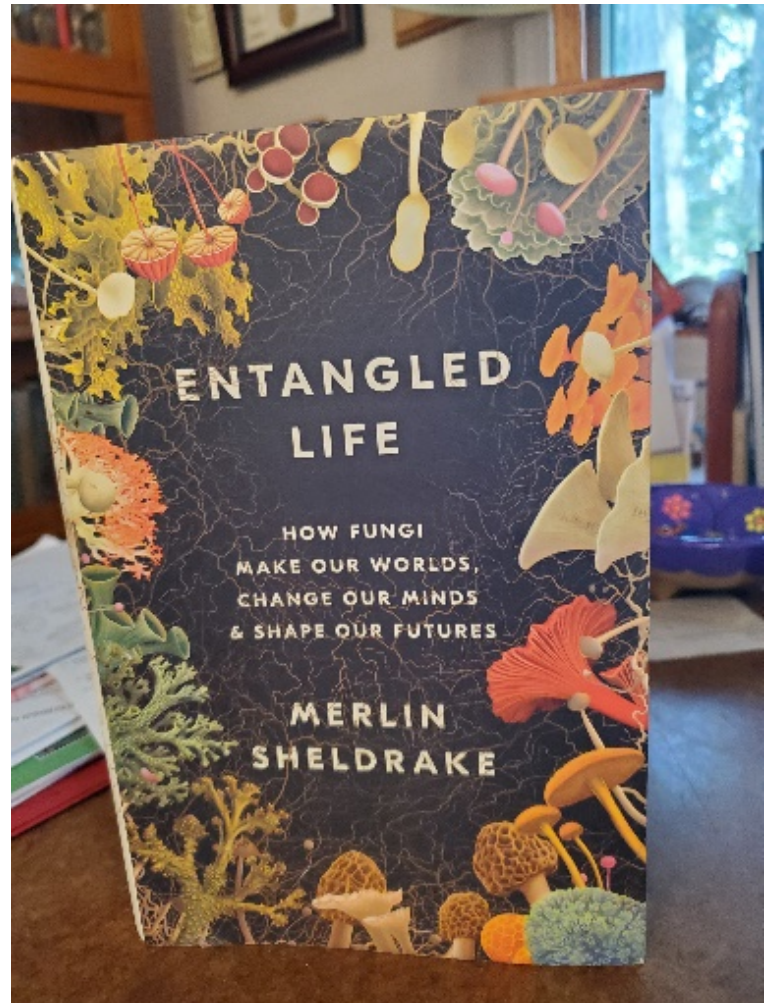
# Entangled Life: How Fungi Make our Worlds, Change our Minds, & Shape our Futures

Book by Merlin Sheldrake | Reviewed by Wylda Cafferata

Many of us pay little attention to that we cannot see. Merlin Sheldrake helps remedy that omission with his multi-pronged exploration of the fungal world. In eight enticing chapters, he introduces readers to a range of explanations of a world that both parallels and interacts with our own. First, though, there is an enchanting introduction titled, "What it's like to be a fungus." When I was small, my brother and I used to chant, giggling, "There's a fungus among-us." Little did we know that was literally true.

Fungi, Sheldrake explains, are "metabolic wizards." They have been on earth over 400 million years, twenty times longer than Homo sapiens. As Sheldrake writes, "we all live and breathe fungi." They cause our bread to rise, ferment our alcohol, transform our landscapes, cause and prevent disease, break down pollutants, through mycorrhizae enable plants to thrive, and much more. Fungi have no central nervous system, yet make and act on decisions; they solve problems, communicate with each other, learn and remember. To be a fungus, Sheldrake tells us, is to be "underground, surrounded by growing tips surging across one another, to be one of countless threads leading through labyrinths, entangled."

Chapter 1 is mostly about truffles, the underground fruiting bodies of several types of mycorrhizal fungi. These fungi use smell to enhance the dispersal of their spores. Once eaten, a truffle's job is done. Fungi's abilities to detect and respond to chemicals is a primordial sensory ability. Fungi live their lives bathed in a rich field of chemical information, and truffle fungi use chemicals to communicate to animals that they are ready to be eaten. The chapter goes on to detail the exhilarating experience of accompanying truffle dogs in the Italian countryside, "up and down, through bushes, through mud, and through streams." The smell of a truffle is made up of a flock of molecules drifting in formation—more than a hundred in white truffles and fifty in most other popular species. Complicated though they are, truffles are the parent fungus's least complicated channel of communication. Fungi grow and mature in mycelial networks through a process of branching and



fusing, but before they can fuse, they must find other hyphae (fungal extensions) that are chemically and sexually compatible. This is not a binary world—the Split-gill fungus, for example, has more than 23,000 mating types. "Fungi don't have brains," Sheldrake writes, "but their many options require decisions." Sheldrake concludes the chapter by reflecting, while truffle hunting in Oregon, that scientists need to realize that just because an organism is not human, it is not an object. That realization will help deepen our understanding of the complex world around us.

In Chapter 2: Living Labyrinths, Sheldrake attempts to explain how fungi function, and indeed he provides some information, but concludes that science is just at the entrance to one of life's oldest puzzles. He explains that whereas plants photosynthesize to get energy to grow, and animals put food into their bodies for the same

purpose, fungi put themselves into food, changing shape as necessary. They spread hyphae in multiple directions to search for food to enter, and when encountered, cut off the searches in non-productive directions. Unlike animals, who grow by laying new layers of cells, fungi grow by longer and longer hyphae, with growth usually occurring at the forward tips. Those branch and fuse and branch and fuse, creating an ever-growing underground maze, growing so fast that they can be observed doing so in real time. The chapter provides multiple examples of this phenomena, including how it can be harnessed to solve human problems.

Chapter 3, *The Intimacy of Strangers*, explains some of the mystery presented by lichens. These strange organisms, half fungi and half algae, erode the belief that all life forms exist in a state of competition to survive. Symbiosis is widespread, Sheldrake claims. Lichens cover as much as 1/8th of the world's surface, larger than an area covered by tropical rain forests. Sheldrake enumerates several amazing features of lichens: they mine minerals from rocks; they can survive journeys through space; they can put themselves into suspended animation for years, they produce sun-screening chemicals. They form relationships with humans involving medicines, dyes, perfumes, and food. They can live as long as 9,000 years. Sheldrake goes on to define such tongue-twisting terms as eukaryotes, endosymbiosis, photobiont, polyextremophile, and holobiont. He explains that not just any fungus can partner with any algae—each partner must be able to do something the other cannot do. This union, Sheldrake insists, forces us to question what it means to be an individual, particularly since recent research has shown that lichens do not contain a single fungus and algae, but rather are packed with bacteria as well, in a blend of competition and cooperation. The chapter concludes with the reflection that, given the bacterial inhabitants of human guts, we are all lichens.

Chapter 4, *Mycelial Minds*, recounts how many species of fungi are capable of creating chemicals that enter the brains of host creatures and rearrange them to suit fungal purposes. The first part of the chapter relates a gruesome account of a fungus, *Ophiocordyceps*, that enters the brains of carpenter ants, forces them to climb to a high spot on a plant and grip it, whereupon mycelium grow from the ants' feet and stitch them to the plant. *Ophiocordyceps* then digests the ants' bodies and

sprouts stalks out the ants' heads which, in turn, showers down spores on more ants passing below. The chapter goes on to relate more stories of "zombi fungi" and outlines criteria to be met for fungal brain transformations. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to the effects of LSD and psilocybin (the active ingredient in "magic mushrooms") on the human brain. In controlled experiments, humans relate experiences of bliss, oneness with the universe, and loss of a sense of self. Sheldrake quotes scientists who speculate that fungi make these experiences enjoyable so that more humans will search them out, thus enabling the fungi to spread their spores more widely.

Chapter 5, *Before Roots*. "The earliest plants were little more than puddles of green tissue with no roots or other specialized features." So begins Sheldrake's account of how green plants evolved with fungi in symbiotic relationships over 400 million years. This is a now well-known story of mycorrhizal fungi, with the fungi predating their plant partners by 100 million years. The mycorrhizal fungi provide plants with phosphorus and other essential nutrients, and the plants provide the fungi with sugars and lipids produced through photosynthesis. Mycorrhizal fungi are so prolific that they make up a third to a half of the living mass of the earth's soil. Including quotes from J.R.R. Tolkien, the Biblical Book of Isaiah, as well as from a bevy of scientists, Sheldrake presents a series of hypotheses of how these relationships came to be and flourish.

Chapter 6, *Wood Wide Webs*. Sheldrake begins this chapter with an explanation of monotrops, green plants that are not green. Instead of photosynthesis, they receive both their carbon and nutrients from their fungal partners, who, in turn, get their life necessities from truly green plants through a series of fungal connections. Furthermore, fairly recent discoveries have shown that monotrops are not unique. Since 1980, it has been known that most plants are promiscuous, engaging with many fungal partners. Soil contains a vast network of shared mycorrhizal networks, and at least 10% of plants are what are known as mycoheterotrops, getting all their energy from fungal networks. Sheldrake catalogs a host of scientific studies, many of which establish that plants cannot transfer carbon plant-to-plant, but can do so through connecting mycorrhizal. Additionally, more than carbon and nutrients follow these pathways. Fungi provide "fungal fast lanes" for the transfer of poisons,



hormones, genetic material and more not yet explored. The wood-wide web also allows bacteria to navigate around obstacles, to hunt prey, and even partner with fungi in symbiotic relationships. Finally, this web allows what are known as “infochemicals” to pass from plant to plant, so that plants can warn surrounding plants of attacking pests. How this process works is still under investigations as scientists strive to avoid anthropomorphism while still understanding the phenomena. The study of the wood-wide web, Sheldrake concludes, is a work in progress.

Chapter 7, Radical Mycology. Intriguingly, this chapter begins with Sheldrake buried up to his neck in a “fermentation bath”, a large wooden tub filled with moist rotting wood shavings. He muses that perhaps we cannot adjust to life on a damaged planet without cultivating new fungal relationships. “Radical Mycology” is part of a do-it-yourself mycology movement that seeks fungal solutions to many technological and ecological problems humans face. For example, in Mexico City, used diapers make up to 15% of the city’s solid waste, and researchers have found that the omnivorous pleurotus mycelium grows happily on a diet of diapers. They also consume cigarette butts. By extension, fungi may be recruited in many environmental clean-up operations. Sheldrake explains that this potential is spreading world-wide and cites examples from Africa, India, Canada, among others. He concludes that while many of these fungal solutions are still unclear, the possibility to use fungi for mutual survival is one we should not choose to ignore.

Chapter 8, Making Sense of Fungi begins with yeasts, specialized fungi that “live on our skin, in our lungs, in our gastrointestinal tracts, and line our orifices.” More than a quarter of Nobel Prizes for Physiology or Medicine have been awarded for work on yeasts. Prehistorically and throughout history, yeasts have been used to create alcohol, convert fruit to wine, grain to beer, and nectar to mead. In modern times, yeasts have become biotechnological tools that produce therapeutic drugs from insulin to vaccines. Yeasts, Sheldrake emphasizes, are emblematic of the relevance of fungi to the human world, relationships fraught with cultural and political biases. How these relationships are described, Sheldrake insists, depends on the person doing the describing. With quotes from Aristotle up through centuries of philosophers and scientists, Sheldrake examines ways of making sense of the fungal world, a world that exists in symbiosis with our own.

Epilogue. In this final summing up, Sheldrake reminds us that fungi both compose and decompose. Fungi are a compost heap of fascinations that generate many questions and few definite answers. Merlin Sheldrake has begun to dispel this fungal ambiguity with his book, but more importantly, he has invited us to embrace the complexity of the world around us and to consider anew our own interactions within it.

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Learn more about Merlin Sheldrake: [www.merlinsheldrake.com/about](http://www.merlinsheldrake.com/about)



# Winter Storm Damage and Habitat Piles for Wildlife

Fran Cafferata and Julie Woodward

The winter storms in early January brought varying levels of destruction to the woods throughout Oregon. Ice and snow caused some trees to fall or snap, and now landowners have a lot of downed wood to deal with. We know there's quite a bit of clean-up happening out there, and we can't help but think about putting all those logs and branches to good use in habitat piles! Woodland Fish and Wildlife's new publication, **Habitat Piles: Tools for Family Forestland Owners**, offers plenty of tips for getting started.

## What is a habitat pile?

In forested habitats, cover (or shelter) for wildlife is present in many forms. Woody material on the ground is a special and valuable form of cover essential for a wide range of species, especially invertebrates, small mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles. The ecological value of retaining down wood — or “coarse woody debris,” as it's often called in scientific literature — is supported by a growing wealth of research findings.



Fortunately for both wildlife and landowners, assembling woody material into a long-lasting “habitat pile” is a simple yet effective management tool to supplement natural habitat and promote healthy wildlife communities. A winter storm offers a great opportunity for landowners to build habitat piles that make good use of all the woody debris on their forestland brought down by wind, ice or snow.

Habitat piles are structures deliberately constructed from logs, limbs and other natural materials piled on top of each other and left in the forest for wildlife to use. These structures can be designed in various sizes and configurations to provide places for wildlife to rest, roost, nest, perch, feed, stay cool (or warm), stay dry, hunt or evade predators. The logs and sticks that make up a habitat pile also provide nutrients and a foundation for plants and fungi as the wood decomposes.

Habitat piles are typically made with on-site materials created naturally or by forest management activity. Habitat piles are not a perfect replacement for legacy structures — the large logs, stumps and trees naturally left over from older generations of forest — but they can serve as surrogates in their absence. Ideally, retaining larger trees, which leads to the natural recruiting of large, dead wood, is part of managing forests for wildlife habitat. Constructed wood piles can help bridge the gap as trees grow, and they serve as effective habitat enhancements in any managed forest.

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The Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) supports the forest sector and the stewardship of natural resources by advancing Oregonians' understanding of the social, environmental and economic benefits of our forests. Learn more about OFRI and order or download its free educational publications at the Institute's website, [OregonForests.org](http://OregonForests.org).



Julie Woodward, OFRI, director of forestry, [woodward@ofri.org](mailto:woodward@ofri.org)  
and Fran Cafferata, Cafferata Consulting,  
owner and certified wildlife biologist,  
[fran@cafferataconsulting.org](mailto:fran@cafferataconsulting.org)

Habitat piles benefit many members of the forest wildlife community in one way or another. Mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, plants and fungi will make use of them right away, and into the future.

### Habitat piles vs. brush, burn and slash piles

Habitat piles, also called “bio-dens,” are different from other piled forest debris. “Brush piles” are sometimes considered synonymous, but they’re not quite the same thing since not all brush piles are specifically designed and left for wildlife use.

Habitat piles are also different from burn or slash piles. The purpose of habitat piles is to provide essential cover for wildlife. Slash piles are often used to create planting spots and to reduce fire risk. Landowners can do both: pile and burn slash, and also specifically create habitat piles that will not be burned. A rule of thumb is anything the size of a dinner plate or bigger should be in the habitat pile and not burned. (You can learn more about slash piles and safely burning slash in the Oregon Forest Resources Institute publication [Managing Logging Slash Piles in Northwest Oregon.](#))



Along with logs and branches downed by winter storms, habitat piles can be made with woody debris from thinning and fuels reduction projects. Building a habitat pile can be a valuable alternative, or addition, to chipping and slash burning treatments. Over time, the piles will decay and cycle nutrients back into the ecosystem.

### Resourceful — and rewarding

Lastly, but importantly, providing habitat piles on your forestland is a fun and rewarding experience — especially when you can observe the wild inhabitants of the piles you created in a clandestine way, such as with trail cameras. Piles are hubs of wildlife activity that will draw in many species and act as focal points for wildlife happenings and interactions on your forest.

To learn more about techniques for constructing habitat piles and the benefits of these structures for wildlife, check out the Woodland Fish and Wildlife’s habitat pile publication, which is available for free [online](#).



### Red tree vole update

On February 6, 2024, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service determined that the red tree vole (*Arborimus longicaudus*) is not warranted for protection under the Endangered Species Act. Learn more about the red tree vole in the Oregon Forest Resources Institute’s fact sheet: [Red Tree Voles and Forestry](#). More information on the findings can be found at: [2024-02287.pdf \(govinfo.gov\)](#)



The Woodland Fish and Wildlife Group is a consortium of public agencies, universities and private organizations, which collaborate to produce educational publications about fish and wildlife species and habitat management, for use by family forest owners in the Pacific Northwest. Currently available publications can be viewed and downloaded free of charge at the organization’s website, [woodlandfishandwildlife.com](#).

# Branch Out With New Growth Opportunities in Forestry Education

**Margaret Miller, CF**

Forest Landowner Education Manager | OFRI

As buds begin to break and the first signs of spring appear among us, it's the perfect time to plant seeds of knowledge and watch your forest management skills blossom. I'm excited to share with you an array of educational opportunities designed to deepen your roots in forest stewardship and help your understanding flourish. Okay, enough with the spring puns. Let's dive into some great educational resources available to Oregon forest landowners like you.

I'd like to first highlight the "Forest Health in Oregon: State of the State 2024" webinar series, which took place in late February and brought together experts to discuss Oregon's pressing forest health challenges, including invasive species, forest diseases and fire management topics. Presentations during the webinar series included updates on the emerald ash borer, the Mediterranean oak borer, invasive tree pathogens and forest health across different regions of Oregon. Other topics included the importance of fire for ecosystem health and strategies for reducing wildfire severity.

The series aimed to provide a comprehensive overview of the current condition of Oregon's forests and research trends, along with practical solutions for managing healthy forests. The webinars were targeted to foresters, land managers, woodland owners and anyone interested in forest health. Webinar recordings are now available on the KnowYourForest.org website, ready for you to explore at your leisure.

Another great resource for landowners is the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) YouTube channel, @OregonDepartmentofForestry. There you'll find a plethora of training videos, including a comprehensive playlist on the Private Forest Accord and the latest forest protection laws. These resources are crafted to enhance your knowledge and equip you with the tools necessary for effective forest management. For instance, if you're a small forest landowner thinking about conducting a harvest, it's important to work on your road conditions assessment. Learn more about how to complete the assessment by watching ODF's [Streams and Roads Training](#).

The Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) has also been working diligently with our partners and subject matter experts to bring to you the fourth edition of *Oregon Forest Protection Laws: An Illustrated Manual*. This manual is designed to assist forest landowners and managers in following and understanding the Oregon Forest Practices Act and other laws and regulations aimed at protecting Oregon's forests and natural resources. An electronic version of this invaluable guide is going to be available soon on the [forest protection laws tab of KnowYourForest.org](#).

But that's not all. In addition to the *Illustrated Manual*, training videos and other educational materials, OFRI and our partners are here to support you. Discover experts in your area by visiting the assistance map on KnowYourForest.org. Through our landowner education program and the Partnership for Forestry Education, we're committed to assisting you in navigating the complexities of forest management, ensuring your land thrives for generations to come.

Feel free to reach out to me directly with any questions or for additional information. Also, stay tuned for our Quarterly Bark updates, which will continue to bring you the latest in educational opportunities and resources designed to assist you with your forest management goals.

Here's to growing our knowledge as we grow our forests!



Contact Margaret Miller at [miller@ofri.org](mailto:miller@ofri.org).

# The Committee for Family Forestlands



OSWA members serving on the CFF:

**Dave Bugni**

NW Oregon

**Gary Jensen**

SW Oregon

**Maurizio Valerio**

Eastern Oregon

**Kate McMichael**

at large

Remaining meetings for 2024:

June 26 &

September 11

from 9am-2pm

The in-person meeting takes place at ODF in Salem, but a virtual option is available as well.

Sign up to be notified of meetings and how to attend on the [CFF webpage](#)



## SMALL FORESTLAND OWNER NOTIFICATIONS SIGN UP



**SIGN UP!** Scan QR or visit [tiny.cc/sfo-email](https://tiny.cc/sfo-email)

Oregon Department of Forestry's (ODF's) Small Forestland Owner (SFO) Office assists landowners in reaching their economic, ecological, and stewardship goals. The SFO Office prioritizes connecting SFOs to resources and supports compliance through education, local field support, and timely assistance.

### ✓ SIGN UP TO RECEIVE EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS RELATED TO:

- » Small Forestland Investment in Stream Habitat (SFISH) Projects
- » Grants and Incentive Opportunities
- » Invasive Species Alerts and Mitigation
- » SFO Program and Forest Practices FAQs
- » Wildfire Risk Mitigation and Forest Resiliency
- » Replanting and Seedling Information
- » Success Stories from SFO Foresters & Stewardship Foresters
- » Upcoming Training Opportunities & Public Events
- » Voluntary Submission Options

### ✓ To qualify as a SFO, a landowner must certify that they:

- » Own less than 5,000 acres of forestland in Oregon;
- » Have harvested an average of less than 2 million board feet of timber from their Oregon forestland per year during the past 3 years; and
- » Do not expect to harvest more than an average of 2 million board feet of timber from their Oregon forestland per year during the next 10 years\*

*\*Consult your local SFO Forester for possible exceptions.*

# Benton County Chapter News

## An Annual Meeting and a New President

Diana Blakney | March 2024

I admit to having mixed feelings as the date for Benton Small Woodlands' Annual Meeting came near. First, because the venue we secured months in advance of our January 20 meeting date became unavailable mere days before the 20th. Second, because shortly after we lost our venue, our caterer was forced to cancel due to ice and water damage caused by January's ice storm. Third, because I was to be anointed the new president at said meeting, and I was scared.

Racing against the clock and the weather, hard-working board members scrambled to locate a replacement venue, and, against the odds, snagged an available caterer. However, no sooner had we found another venue, our beloved Marys River Grange Hall, it suffered a lengthy power outage that lasted up until two days before our scheduled meeting. Predictably, this latest development presented additional challenges and a lot of insecurity. Nevertheless, I admit that I began to see a silver lining to the chaos – my induction into the presidency might be mercifully delayed!

Despite everything, there was no “silver lining” delay. Our chapter's annual meeting took place as scheduled.

It was a grand affair. Well attended by approximately 70 members, there were prizes, a tasty lunch prepared by Homegrown Oregon Foods, and an excellent speech by Steve Fitzgerald, Professor Emeritus, OSU College of Forestry. His presentation, based on a recently published research paper on the same subject, can be accessed as follows: Carlisle, C., Fitzgerald, T. Hailemariam. 2023. Modeling above-ground carbon dynamics under different silvicultural treatments on the McDonald-Dunn Research Forest. *Forests*, 14, 2090. Online at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/f1402090>.

Van Decker, Benton's 2023 Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year, shared his vast knowledge of the current log market in a presentation on the subject.



### 2024 Benton Small Woodlands Association Board Members

President: **Diana Blakney**  
Treasurer: **Jane Brandenburg**  
Membership &  
Program Director: **Sarah Edwardsson**  
Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year  
Coordinator: **Dena Oakes**  
Education **Rita Adams**  
OSWA Liaison &  
OTFS/OSWA Ambassador: **Nancy Hathaway**  
Media Coordinator: **Sarah Johnson**  
At Large: **Dave Ehlers**  
**Ed Easterling**  
**Darrell Oakes**  
**Pat Boren**

Our board treasurer reported that our finances were stable. Our board membership chair reported the 2023 membership total as 190, 159 of whom had Benton County as their primary chapter.

The board announced past president David Ehlers as our 2024 Outstanding Volunteer of the Year, and Rich Clark as our 2024 Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year. Both deserve more recognition than I have room for in this article. More to follow on why these two were easy selections.

The board recognized and introduced Lorelle Sherman, Forestry and Natural Resources Extension Forester for Benton, Linn & Polk Counties. It also introduced Crystal

Kelso, Education Program Assistant for the Small Farms & Forestry department of OSU Extension Service. Both extended a warm invitation to contact them, even if just to introduce yourself and your tree farm.

And yes, I was voted in as president. And yes, I follow Dave Ehler's 4 years of outstanding leadership at both the local and state level. I am humbled and energized, well-supported and completely intimidated.

I end this, my first of many Quarterly Bark articles, with a promise that I will do my best to lead in a way that enhances our talented board, and to stay out of their way when I fall short.



Top left: Education chair Rita Adams, President emeritus Dave Ehlers, Program and membership chair Sarah Edwardsson, and BSWA's 2023 OTFY and Oregon regional tree farmer of the year Ed Easterling are thrilled with the fact we were able to pull off the Annual Meeting despite the challenges.

Top right: Greg Peterson and Board members Pat Boren, Darrell Oakes, Nancy Hathaway, and Sarah Johnson compare tree farm notes while warming by the fire.

Bottom: Before and after the crowds arrived.





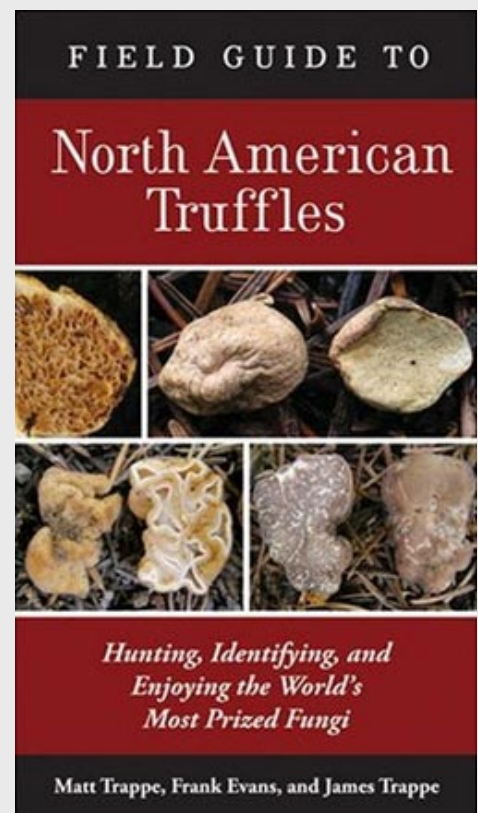
## Talk about a beneficial symbiosis . . .

By Dave Ehlers

Perhaps you haven't heard about the North American Truffling Society, but I'm sure as a small woodland owner you are aware of the important symbioses between trees and mycorrhizal fungi. Many of the forest mushrooms in the Pacific Northwest have a beneficial relationship with their host trees, often to the point where our trees can not successfully grow without their fungal partners. As an added benefit to people, most of our good edible mushrooms are mycorrhizal fungi. Did you know that almost all truffles are also "good" fungi that help your trees to grow?

Truffles are the reproductive bodies (fruits) of certain species of mycorrhizal fungi which mature in the soil. They are fleshy structures, shaped like small potatoes, and contain spores. The spores germinate to form hyphae, and when they encounter plant rootlets they form mycorrhizae—beneficial root associations with host plants to exchange nutrients. Truffles are evolved from mushrooms by adapting to a specialized habit. By forming in the soil, truffles are more protected from frost and drying than above-ground mushrooms. At the same time, they require animals for spore dispersal, whereas mushroom spores may be carried away by the wind. Truffles are an integral part of the forest food web and are a major food source for small mammals such as the northern flying squirrel—a primary prey of the northern spotted owl. Humans also love to eat some of these truffles, and hunting for them is fun and challenging.

Founded in 1978, the North American Truffling Society (NATS) is a small non-profit organization based in Corvallis, Oregon, that brings together amateurs and professionals who are interested



The only field guide for truffles, written by NATS's own Matt Trappe, Frank Evans, and Jim Trappe.



NATS' members also know how to have fun!



in hypogeous (below ground) fungi. Our goal is to enhance the scientific knowledge of North American truffles and truffle-like fungi via the promotion of educational activities. Such activities include monthly meetings featuring presentations by truffle experts and amateurs alike; guided mushroom forays throughout the fruiting season; maintaining a project on iNaturalist (<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/truffles-of-north-america>); fundraising dedicated to scholarships for mycology student applicants; as well as fostering a network of shared information from some of the most well-respected investigators of the truffle world in the US and abroad.

Over the years, NATS has cultivated a unique group of enthusiasts including mycophiles, poets, mycology professors, housewives, artists, graduate students, gourmands, truffle dogs, nerds, oenophiles, forest lovers, and dentists - all are welcome! NATS has occasionally been contacted by forest land owners curious to know whether their property harbors, or could potentially harbor, truffles, as well as how to go about broadening their contribution to the public's understanding and appreciation of truffles. Recently, such interest has increased to the extent that NATS is pleased to partner the with the Benton Small Woodlands Association with the hope of working together to advance our respective organizations' goals.

Specifically, if you are a small woodland owner pondering truffles, we would be interested in teaming up to see which truffle species might be present on your property. NATS can bring a group of truffle hunters, some with trained truffle dogs, to search for truffles in your woodlands. Even if your property is devoid of culinary truffles, you may be interested in helping us understand the diversity and distribution of these fascinating organisms - learning more about your woodland property is infinitely valuable even if culinary truffles take a back seat.

We are planning on a small inaugural foray combining members of the North American Truffling Society and the Benton Small Woodlands Association, hopefully with many shared forays in our futures!

You can read more about NATS's 40+ year heritage by visiting our website: <https://www.natruffling.org/>. Interested in becoming a member? It's easy- join online or download a membership form. Questions? Feel free to contact us at: [natrufflingsociety@gmail.com](mailto:natrufflingsociety@gmail.com).

We look forward to a fruitful partnership!



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Above:  
Rye, the amazing truffle dog, who has found an amazing diversity of truffles.  
Photo: D. Pilz

Below:  
Snapshot of a foray in 1988

Top of next page:  
Snapshot of a recent foray

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## A Truffle Vacation

J2E Tree Farm | January 28, 2024

By Dave Hibbs

Late January, the temperature in the 60's, and the humidity dripping off the trees. Doesn't that sound like a perfect day for a Fungal Foray? We were in the Ehlers' woods to learn if the fungi agreed.

"We" were about 20 folks from the BSWA and the North American Truffling Society (NATS). Leading us for the NATS were Joyce Eberhart and Dan Luoma. The weapon of choice was a 4-pronged garden cultivator, also know as a "truffle fork". The rule of the day was to put the moss and duff back in place when done.



Truffles are the underground fruiting body of a fungus. There are hundreds of species of truffles, but only some of them are sought after for human consumption. Younger Douglas-fir forests are the ideal hunting place for the Oregon white truffle. Just gently rake aside the moss and duff, loosen the top inch or so of soil, and look carefully for solid, lumpy things smaller than a ping-pong ball. We found only white truffles, most unripe and pea-size. Their light color made them easy to spot. Sliced open, they look like white marble.

January through March is truffle season, so I will be looking in my woods the next time I am there. One other lesson was patience: we found maybe 10 truffles collectively in 2 hours. There is so much else to enjoy in such a close look at a small area that the time goes quickly: the cone bracts buried in the duff, the cat's tongue fungus, the bird-nest fungus, the wild ginger. So go out there with your own rake and see what you can find.



photo credit (this page): Crystal Kelso | OSU Extension



## Benton Small Woodlands Association Hosts Another Successful Woodland Information Night

By Lorelle Sherman

Over 30 small woodland owners and forestry enthusiasts gathered on March 6<sup>th</sup> at Oregon State University's (OSU) Peavy Forest Science Center to hear three presentations on forestry topics. The presentation topics included the small tract forest tax option, truffles in the forest, and financial assistance from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Joyce Eberhart of the North American Truffling Society (NATS; <https://www.natruffling.org/>) kicked off the event with a compelling presentation on the role of "fungi in the forest", with a focus on native species of truffles that form mycorrhizal relationships with our native tree species. Eberhart studied forest mushrooms and truffles at OSU for 38 years and the intimate relationship she has formed with our forest ecosystems was evident in her

presentation.

The mission of NATS is to enhance the scientific knowledge of North American truffles and truffle-like fungi, and promote related educational activities. Eberhart is fulfilling this mission by teaming up with Oregon Small Woodlands Association members to survey small woodland owner's forestlands while educating the public in the process.

Terry Lamers, the Marion-Polk Small Woodlands president, spoke on different Oregon taxes that may be triggered upon the harvest of timber. Lamers discussed whether it is advantageous for small woodland owners to be in the Small Tract Forestland program or to pay 100% of their land taxes yearly with no severance tax upon harvest. While this is a nuanced topic, there were some

generalized guidelines depending on the volume a landowner intends to harvest, the district tax rates, and landowner goals and objectives.

The workshop's final speaker, Stephanie Rice, came as a representative of NRCS to discuss the process of working with NRCS to acquire financial assistance for making improvements on your land. This talk was catered toward local small woodland owners, as Rice highlighted two cost share programs available in Benton County, the

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

EQIP assists landowners in forest management planning and projects that improve forest resistance and resilience, as well as oak woodland and prairie restoration. CSP helps landowners build on their existing conservation efforts and offers additional assistance to improvements already underway.

## **BSWA Recognizes Rich Clark as Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year 2024**

**By Dena Oakes, OTFY Coordinator**

Benton Small Woodlands Association proudly announces Rich Clark as Benton County's Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year 2024.

Many within the woodland community are familiar with Rich, a Woodland Owner for over 30 years, active member, and editor of *The Quarterly Bark* from 2017 to 2022.

Rich's journey to becoming a Woodland Owner began long ago. Raised on a Pennsylvania dairy farm, he later completed medical school and residency on the East Coast. In the late 1980s, Rich relocated to Oregon to practice at Lebanon Community Hospital.

The adage "you can take the boy out of the farm, but you can't take the farm out of the boy" rings true for Rich. Within a few years in Oregon, his farming instincts

led him to forestry.

Rich's first Tree Farm, purchased in 1992, was located in Alsea and managed for nearly 25 years. He now owns two Tree Farms; one near Silver Falls and another in Alsea acquired in 2023.

Rich's distinction as Benton County's 2024 Outstanding Tree Farmer is due to his multi-decade commitment to diligent, detailed, and hands-on management of his Tree Farms. His active involvement in the Benton County Small Woodlands Association and generous contributions through his tenure at *The Quarterly Bark* exemplify his dedication to the woodland community.

A tour of Rich's Alsea Tree Farm is scheduled for this fall. Stay tuned for dates and details. We hope to see you there!

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## **Benton Chapter Upcoming Events**

### **May 4**

The Benton chapter will again be hosting our spring wildflower walk, led by Mike Albrecht and Jody Einerson, on Saturday morning, May 4th. The location will be determined a little later, but hold the date and plan to join us if you love seeing these beauties as much as they do!

### **May 11**

If you enjoy seeing birds in your forest and edge habitat, mark your calendar for Saturday morning, May 11th. Dave Hibbs and Sarah Karr will be hosting us at their approachable and diverse woodland near Airlie. Guest expert and details to follow in *The Needle* and other communications.

# Lane County Chapter News

## Change, connection, attention

Kate McMichael

Everything changes.  
Everything is connected.  
Pay attention.

As another spring begins to creep across our Cascade foothills landscape, I find myself mulling over the words, quoted above, by poet Jane Hirshfield. Our lives have certainly changed: from teaching to tree farming. Certainly our property has changed, in its journey back from the damage wrought by the Holiday Farm Fire. Yet even as we continue to grieve “what’s missing” we are, daily, grateful for what remains—and what emerges to surprise and delight us, like the bleeding heart pushing through where blackberries were pulled (and cut and pulled again) last year and the buds beginning to swell on our baby trees. But even with so much change there are also myriad points of connection, multiple threads of what has been inextricably woven into what is: education (although now we’re more often the students than the teachers); advocacy (although now it’s through our participation on the GAT, offering testimony on behalf of small woodland owners, OFRI, OTFS or serving on committees rather than our years of work in inner city San Francisco with folks who were marginalized by their ethnicity, their poverty, their lack of housing); service (although now through forestry related organizations rather than social service agencies); relationships (although some of the faces have changed, still the strongest bonds are forged by shared commitment and shared work).

We woodland owners see these interwoven changes and connections all around us in our forests: from mycorrhizal networks to resprouting hardwoods to the growth of seedlings our hands planted to the seemingly eternal return of blackberry and scotch broom. Some changes are welcome; others, like the



## Lane County Board of Directors

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Rick Olson | Vice President  
Gordon Culbertson | Treasurer  
Wylda Cafferata | Secretary  
Gary Jensen | Past President  
Tom Bauman  
Dan Kintigh  
Tim Gurton  
Dan Menk | ODF  
Lauren Grand | Extension



## We would love to have YOU join our Board!

We are seeking a new Board member and a new Treasurer. Our much loved Chuck Volz is planning to retire from the Board this year—and Gordon, who is statewide OSWA President Elect, is ready to hand over the books. If you (or someone you’d like to volunteer :) is interested, please reach out to any current Board member!



tangle of fire-killed but standing 18-year-olds in our west unit that are now falling, dropped by decay, rain, wind, are more of a reminder of the trade-offs that are part and parcel of every management decision, some of them less pleasant in the “now” than anticipated. And yet for every tree that falls, for all the “mess” on the ground, there is a corresponding openness in the space where the tree and all its limbs had stood, a new “view” if you will. But the new vista is only visible if you look up and see it; otherwise, the tangled mess on the ground takes up all the “viewing space.” We must choose to “tune in,” to pay attention: to what is, but also to what connects it to what was. Only then do we see the glistening threads, like raindrops on a spiderweb, that call and coax us to realize that nothing was (or ever really is) lost, that we, our lives, are the accumulation of all our changes and connections as surely as our trees are the accumulation of their own connected chain of seed and wind and soil and sunlight and growing space.

As we move into spring, I hope we—T and I, all of us—can find the moments, the discipline, to really pay attention, to truly see the connections, to rejoice in them, and to embrace the changes—even the difficult ones—not only because they are inevitable, but because they are what make us—and our woodlands—who and what we are.

Everything changes. Everything is connected. Pay attention.



## Upcoming Events

Our next **Board meeting** is April 3, at the Veneta ODF office, beginning at 1:30.

### Annual Members Meeting

April 20 at HJ Andrews Experimental Forest, 10am-2pm

Business meeting | How to engage the next generation? What about succession planning?

Time to hear from HJ Andrews staff | Meet our new Starker Chair!

Spend time socializing | Share lunch | Take a walk (or a hike :)

Enjoy a day up the McKenzie!

Bring the whole family: kids and grandkids are more than welcome!

Registration will be open April 5-15 on our website - more precise details about cost (for lunch) will be available then, but we're aiming to keep it reasonable for a family day in the woods.

A **spring wildflower walk** in May—stay tuned for more details!

## Staying in the Loop

### A few great ways to know what's happening:

- follow us on Social Media: we're on both Facebook & Instagram (links are on our website)
- check out our [website](#)—upcoming events are listed on the first page (just scroll down!) or under Experience | Mark Your Calendar
- subscribe to OSU Extension [Lane County Forestry Newsletter](#)

# NW Hardwoods Mill Tour

On January 25, NW Hardwoods opened their doors for a mill tour. Many thanks to our own Gordon Culbertson and Caity Wind (Log Procurement) for doing all the behind-the-scenes work to make it happen! Gratitude also goes out to Ed McGehee (Mill Manager), Jeremy Long (QC), Caleb Forcum (Safety), & Dan Fults (Scaler) for welcoming us and leading us on a great tour.



# Seedling & Native Plant Sale

On February 3, our annual Seedling Sale took place at Alton Baker Park in Eugene. Dan Menk, ODF Stewardship Forester, and Lauren Grand, OSU Extension Forester, were on hand to answer questions while folks waited in line to peruse a selection of native bare root plants—from Red Twig Dogwood to Red Flowering Currant—and seedlings—from Douglas-Fir to Redwood and Giant Sequoia.

Post-ice storm damage was evident throughout the park, but Board members and other volunteers, ably guided by Seedling Sale Co-ordinator Lindsay Reaves, were on site in the before-dawn cold to help unload seedlings. Attendance at the sale itself was strong and steady and lots of plants went to good homes by the end of the sale at 11am. Interest in native plants has grown over the past few years, inspiring not only sales but lots of good conversations with Eugene-Springfield residents attending the sale.

The Seedling & Native Plant Sale takes place on the first Saturday of February, so mark your calendar for 2025!



# Sharing the (Seedling) Love

In a gesture of support for both a local non-profit, Friends of Trees, and those who lost trees to the ice storm, our chapter donated some residual seedlings to the Friends of Trees tree give-away on February 17 at the International Paper facility in Springfield. The gift of seedlings—and a flyer with information about the small woodland owners who donated them—was greeted with excitement and gratitude. Thanks, Lindsay, for doing the legwork to make this goodwill gesture happen!





# Dad's Hard Hat

Dan Kintigh

Kintigh's Mountain Home Ranch  
Springfield



Recently I came across my father's hard hat in my shop and it still had the toilet paper in a plastic bag tucked in the liner and this brought back memories. My mother used to save the last part of the toilet paper rolls so they could be flattened to fit into the hat.

I must have been around fourteen when I graduated from helping my mother with canning and things in the house to helping dad. My father bought me my own small power saw which was a green Poland. My job was to limb the trees after dad cut them down. I was not more than ninety pounds and cutting all those limbs were like cutting through a jungle. It was hard work but I was in heaven because I was a logger and proud of it. I even had the pin striped shirt with the half zipper. I remember asking mom to get me the red suspenders and the pants with buttons on the waist to fasten them to which she did for me even though it wasn't needed.

I remember trying to carry the saw like the cutters do by placing the bar on my shoulder but only got scratches because I did not have the leather shoulder patch. I eventually learned to set choker and drive the cat in the summer. If I wasn't trimming Christmas trees, I logged with my dad or brother Mark.

I find it sad that teenagers don't go to work with their fathers anymore. In the summer when I was in high school, that was what you did. You washed log trucks, helped with construction, farmed, went to the mill or the shop and did some kind of entry work. We learned real skill on how to be a man.

## A new MWM cohort begins their training

By the time the next *Quarterly Bark* comes out in July, there will be a new group of Master Woodland Managers ready to volunteer! Lauren Grand and Dan Stark are teaming up with MWM Coordinator Erin Giebner, current MWMs and OSU faculty to offer the training.

The first class was March 19, starting at the Veneta Community Center before caravanning to Gary Jensen's near-by tree farm for a day on hands-on learning. April 2nd's class will take place at Steve and Wylda Cafferata's Penn Road property and provide the new cohort the opportunity to meet and be taught by the new OSU Starker Chair, Mark Swanson.

Classes are being taught in a "flipped classroom" style, with fairly extensive pre-field class homework being made available on-line, followed by post-field class homework and then a new round of pre-work. Field tour classes will take place on different tree farm properties between Lincoln City and Eugene every two weeks through the end of June.



# Lincoln County Chapter News

## Annual Native Tree Seedling Sale Report

Judy Pelletier | Secretary

On Saturday, February 24th, 2024, the Lincoln County Small Woodlands Association hosted our annual native tree seedling sale at Table Mountain Forestry on Business HWY 20 in Toledo, OR. The Table Mountain Forestry site is the perfect location for our seedling sale.

We thank all who helped and everyone who attended our sale on this beautiful day in central Lincoln County. It was so good to see and visit with members and folks who attended. We want to express a special thanks to Waldport High School Forestry Program students Wyatt Naylor, Carlos Hernandez, Josh Angelo along with Lincoln County OSWA Volunteers for their enthusiastic help in setting up tables and seedling selections, manning stations, filling and tallying orders, as well as cleaning up afterwards.

This annual event is designed to provide the public with affordable native tree seedlings to promote natural resource conservation awareness and to increase forest owners' knowledge and abilities as stewards of their land. The event is especially timely and beneficial after many trees were damaged in this year's ice storm and by the heat wave two years ago. Native tree and shrub seedlings as well as a few nonnatives were available.



Morning sales were very intense, and a few purchases were large. Awesome prices of \$2ea make this seedling sale event a fantastic opportunity thanks to Chapter President Joe Steere who led the operation with orders, inventory organization & sales. Chapter Treasurer Jan Steenkolk, Secretary Judy Pelletier, and members Cathy Steere and daughter Kari, Reece Dobmeier, Scott Steenkolk, Rex Capri, Jim Holt, Tim Miller, Steve & Susan Allen, Peter Bregman and his son Mark Bregman, Austin and Corinne Finster pitched in to see that the sale ran smoothly. Not only did Jan Steenkolk provide us with coffee and delicious chili and doughnuts but she also reported that we made more than \$3300 before expenses.

All in all, it was a very rewarding day. If you couldn't make it this year, by all means, come next year!

# Linn County Chapter News

## Still Seeking Consensus on "Fairness Issue"

How much should forestry be taxed remains a central question

By Mike Barsotti | LCSWA president

The 2024 Legislature has gone home and the bills that will become law did not damage the forest sector. One bill that attempted to add a severance tax on forestry did not receive much support. It died after one hearing. Bills to increase taxes on the forest sector have come up in the past and are sure to come up again.

For me, the issue to address is not should there be a severance tax on timber harvests but what is a fair amount forest landowners should be taxed?

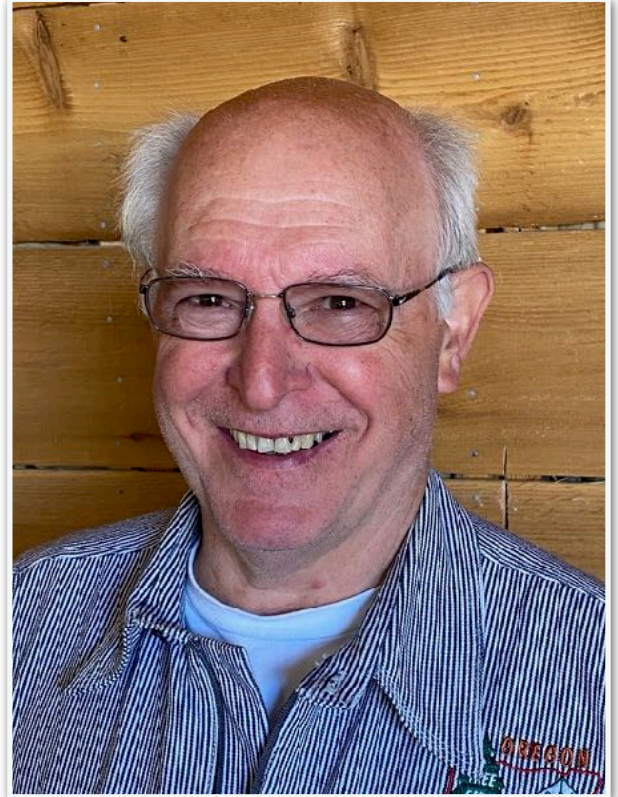
There are so many news articles on how unjust the loss of the severance tax in the 1990s and early 2000s was that I don't think the issue will go away until there is consensus on how much forestry should be taxed. These news articles have a common theme — that it's not fair that the severance tax was eliminated.

Fairness is not just a moral or economic issue, equity of a tax burden is a constitutionally sanctioned right of the equal protection clause of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment. It mandates that individuals in similar situations be treated similarly.

In working to define what is fair, it might first be well to address why we pay taxes. I can think of a few. Individuals and businesses receive benefits from services provided such as roads and utilities, and both individuals and businesses can only function if there is a stable, healthy society. So again, what is the fair amount forest landowners should pay to cover the services they receive and support a stable healthy society?

Looking back on how forest lands have been taxed in the past does not seem to help. Forestry and forest taxes have evolved since Oregon's statehood in 1859. This evolution has been in both the land and the trees. Initially, timber harvest was considered an extraction like rock and other minerals. Replanting was rarely done as it seemed too risky with wildfires. Also, so little was known about forest management.

As the timber that came with the land was harvested, tax values for the land and timber were considered separated. In 1929, the Legislature passed the Forest Fee and Yield tax



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## LCSWA standing committees

**Activities:** Lee Peterman 541-223-3935  
**4-H education:** Fay Sallee 541-451-5322  
**Membership:** Jim Merzenich 541-466-5005  
**Publicity, website:** Larry Mauter 805-400-8552  
**Scholarships:** Katie Kohl 541-405-2564  
**Seedling sale:** Lena Tucker 541-570-5250  
**TFOY selection:** Joe Holmberg 541-259-3963  
**Bob Mealey education project:** Jim Cota, Larry Mauter and Joe Holmberg

program in recognition that the land had little value after the old growth timber was harvested. In 1977 the tax on timber in Western Oregon moved from being collected annually to a severance tax paid at harvest when there was income to pay the tax. In 1990 the passage of Ballot Measure 5 put limits on property tax rates and it was unclear if the severance tax on harvested timber was an ad valorem tax and therefore subject to BM 5. The 1991 Legislature clarified it by defining the severance tax a privilege tax.

As timber harvest evolved from extracting a product from the land to a crop produced through management, a type of farming, timber harvesting became comparable to crops harvested in agriculture.

It seems to me that a severance tax can be challenged through the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment — individuals in similar situations require that they be treated similarly. Farmers are not taxed on the products they produce; and therefore, forest managers should not be taxed on the products they produce.

Arguing that there should not be a severance tax on forest products does not answer the question “what is a fair tax forest landowner should pay.”

While I have no idea what the amount should be, I can think of several factors to consider. For example, the Oregon Legislature has recognized that a prosperous computer chip industry is good for all Oregonians; and therefore, has worked to assist it in multiple ways. A prosperous forest industry is also economically beneficial for all Oregonians; and therefore, it seems that the Legislature should consider this in searching for the fair tax forest landowners should pay.

To have a prosperous forest industry, our Legislature should consider what other states which are our competitors are taxing their forest industry.

Looking at what other business sectors pay for services and in support of our society, but it should be factored in that the forest sector is unique in that revenues are not annual but only come a couple of times during the life of a timber stand.

And finally but not least to consider, a healthy forest sector benefits our environment with wildlife and fish habitat, clean water, clean air and carbon sequestration. Forest taxation should not weaken but strengthen these benefits.

Power moves by a group will not solve this complex question of what is fair, and there is not a simple answer. Oregon has addressed complex issues in the past such as land use planning, and I’m sure we have leaders that can guide us again in finding consensus on what is fair.

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## Linn County upcoming events

### **LCSWA board meeting**

Thursday June 6, 5 - 7 p.m.

Fun Forest barn, off Upper Berlin Drive, west of Waterloo.

Jim Cota hosting.

### **2024 Family Forest Convention**

June 13-15

Theme is “Keeping family forests healthy.”

Various tours and panels set for three days.

Bus transportation will be available.

Oak Basin Tree Farm tour will be Saturday, June 15.

Hospitality and panel discussions planned for

Boulder Falls Inn, Lebanon.



# Seedling sale reaches new heights

29th annual LCSWA fundraiser overcomes January ice storm issues

By Larry Mauter  
LCSWA member

The 29th annual Linn County Small Woodlands Association seedling sale is in the books.

Another record-breaking year was notched — with 246 pre-orders tallied, up from 238 last year. A total of 10,011 tree and native plant seedlings were packed for the pre-orders.

Another 827 plants were sold Saturday, Feb. 17.

The sale raised approximately \$13,000 for scholarships for Linn County residents in forestry or natural resources majors, as well as 4-H forestry students.

Blue elderberry was the most popular native shrub sold, followed by Red-flowering currant. Douglas-fir and Willamette Valley Ponderosa pine were the most popular conifer seedlings sold, said first-year chair Lena Tucker.

Despite a couple curve balls, Tucker reported the Feb. 17 delivery date went well.

“It all worked out. We sold almost everything we had,” she said.

The January ice storm forced the sale to be moved back a couple weeks. That led organizers to find a new pick-up location — Sweet Home instead of the Linn County Expo Center.

“With a lot of creativity we made a smaller space work,” said LCSWA President Mike Barsotti.



Fay Sallee, left, and Lance Marshall packed seedlings under the protection of an OSU-themed tent.

Photo by Steve Kendall, Oregon Department of Forestry

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Prepping pre-orders was a two-day process this year. More than 50 volunteers logged 500 hours of work over three days. Photo by Steve Kendall, Oregon Department of Forestry

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Volunteer efforts again saved the day as packaging for orders was done Feb. 15 and 16 in the vehicle bays at the Oregon Department of Forestry property in Sweet Home.

“The volunteers really make it happen,” Tucker said. “Everyone worked hard with lots of smiles. They were troopers, despite the chilly weather.”

Fay Sallee coordinates the volunteer brigades. A change this year included packing pre-orders in sawdust and newspaper during two days, instead of one.

“We had to deal with the wind and the rain but had tarps and tents for shelters,” she said.

Just over 500 volunteer hours were logged by the 52 workers, said Sallee. About half of the crew were 4-Hers and their parents.

“We had a really good turnout on Saturday,” she added.

Mark your calendars for the 2025 sale. It will be back at the Linn County Fairgrounds and Event Center on Feb. 15.

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## Three LCSWA Members Honored by Linn Conservation Agency

Merzenich brothers earn golden shovels; Fay Sallee takes home educator plaque

**By Larry Mauter**  
**LCSWA member**

Two brothers who manage Oak Basin Tree Farm and a long-time 4-H educator have been honored by a local conservation agency.

Fay Sallee along with Jim and Ed Merzenich were recently acknowledged by the Linn Soil and Water Conservation District.

All three are members of the Linn County Small Woodlands Association.

The trio was honored during the 77th annual meeting of the district held Feb. 13.

The awards “honored Linn County citizens who have contributed vast amounts of time, energy and resources to enhance conservation efforts in our district,” according to a press release from the agency.

“Our board was very proud to recognize these folks this year for so many years of good work,” said Debra Paul, district office manager.

Fay Sallee was selected as the 2022 educator of the year. She and her late husband Sherm were inducted into the



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Fay Sallee, shown here at the recent LCSWA seedling sale, was named educator of the year.

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2020 National 4-H Hall of Fame for their lifetime achievements and contributions to 4-H.

They were recognized for their passion, dedication, and vision shown to thousands of young people during their combined 85 years of leadership.

The Sallees have been strong supporters of international programs and hosted numerous delegates from around the world. Members of the Oregon 4-H Natural Science Committee for more than 20 years, they helped build a strong natural resources program, one that has been shared regionally and nationally.

For decades Fay has also been involved in the Oregon Small Woodlands Association, with their conservation practices on Happy Valley Tree Farm, first begun by Fay's folks, Bert and Betty Udell.

Fay and Sherm published The Quarterly Bark newsletter for OSWA for nearly 20 years.

The couple envisioned and launched the annual seedling sale 30 years ago. Their vision for the seedling sale united volunteers from the two organizations they loved and served, 4-H and OSWA, in an effort to promote public awareness, encourage member involvement, provide service opportunities for 4-H youth and raise funds for youth education.

The 2022 cooperators of the year are brothers Jim and Ed Merzenich.

The Merzeniches have been working for many years to promote responsible forest management. The families of Ed and Jim have collaborated in the management of Oak Basin Tree Farm for more than a quarter century.

In 2022, Oak Basin Tree Farm, a 956-acre family enterprise located south of Brownsville in the Coburg

Hills was chosen as Linn County's Outstanding Tree Farm of the Year by the LCSWA, recognizing their achievements and activities relating to forestry in Linn County. Oak Basin was named state tree farm of 2023, and will be open to tours during the statewide OSWA conference in June.

The family has collaborated with National Resource Conservation Service in the restoration of Oregon white oak habitat and developing wetlands. They are using agroforestry in conjunction with habitat restoration. They have vast experience in managing Willamette Valley Ponderosa Pine, cultivating markets for non-



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Brothers Jim, left, and Ed Merzenich were honored for their efforts at Oak Basin.

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timber forest products and restoring native habitats.

The mission of the Linn County district is to promote and facilitate the wise use of all natural resources, according to the district web site.

It is operated by a board of elected directors who are local landowners and citizens with a commitment to local natural resources.

# Next Generation Steps Up

Lauren Parks joins LCSWA board at annual meeting

By Christy Tye  
LCSWA Secretary

Better late than never! The LCSWA held its rescheduled annual meeting Saturday, March 16 in Scio after winter storms postponed the January meeting.

About 100 members, family and guests enjoyed the potluck dinner, business meeting and program. Our newest board member, Lauren Parks, was approved. Parks is the daughter of active board member Jim Cota. Lauren enjoys supporting the Fun Forest Tree Farm as a family effort and is excited about her new role on the board. Other board members approved by the membership for an additional term are Shirley Holmberg, treasurer, and Jim Cota, director.

Other business meeting action items included a review of the board's amendments to our by-laws. The amended by-laws passed by consensus.

Highlights of the gathering included updates from scholarship recipients of our active programs for college students and 4-H forestry members. Both programs encourage youth to take an active role in OSWA and develop their interest in Oregon's rich natural resources.



Prior to the business section of the annual meeting, the potluck dinner chow line offers a multitude of options  
Photo credit Tim Otis, LCSWA board member



Lena Tucker, left, and Bonnie Marshall were recognized for their efforts with the annual seedling sale. Photo credit Tim Otis, LCSWA board member

Outstanding achievements by long-time members were also celebrated. Jim and Ed Merzenich and Fay Sallee recently received recognition from the Linn Soil and Water Conservation District — Sallee as their Educator of the Year, and the Merzenich brothers as Cooperators of the Year.

Rod Bardell, who heads the team that inspects and certifies tree farms in Linn County for the Oregon Tree Farm System, was selected as Inspector of the Year and then American Tree Farm System's Western Region Inspector of the Year.





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Valarie and Neil Bell were honored as outstanding tree farmers for the second time during the annual meeting. Mike Barsotti, left, presented the Bells with a commemorative sign after the meeting.

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Neal and Valerie Bell's 2023 Tree Farmer of the Year video was played and is on the Oregon Tree Farm System's YouTube channel, along with the other nominees.

Bonnie Marshall and Lena Tucker were both presented with tree farm signs for their outstanding efforts with the county tree seedling sales.

Lorella Sherman, OSU Extension Agent for Linn, Benton and Polk Counties, spoke about her areas of expertise, including forest ecology, non-timber forest products, invasive species and fungal ecology, and how they contribute to her overall mission of helping woodland owners.

Sherman introduced Crystal Kelso, program assistant with Small Farms and Forestry, who continued their shared theme of connection and communication; Connections among farmers, woodland owners and other supporting organizations were highlighted and emphasized.

Ty Siefert, NRCS Oregon, reiterated that the organization has funding for assisting small woodland owners with both new and continuous conservation and management projects on their properties. Contact him and he's happy to visit member properties, take a look and advise.

Door prizes and a live auction were also part of the evening. Proceeds from the auction will go toward renovation efforts at the Z Hall in Scio, long-time location of the annual meetings.

Membership in the LCSWA is currently 140 members, with another 20 subscription members.