



Stewardship in Forestry

2006 District Report

Astoria District – Oregon Department of Forestry

District Forester's Comments

The mission of the Department of Forestry is to serve the people of Oregon by protecting, managing and promoting stewardship of Oregon's forests to enhance environmental, economic and community sustainability.

This annual report highlights the Astoria District's efforts to accomplish ODF's mission in 2006. I hope that it provides insight into the work that the District does and some of the important contributions of our employees.

I would like to recognize our District managers, who continue to help me administer our Programs effectively and efficiently. Their commitment to planning using stakeholder input, working collaboratively with our many cooperators and their leadership and investment in developing their employees continues to make us successful.

I would also like to recognize a number of District employees who took on new responsibilities in 2006. Ron Zilli, Dan Goody, Ty Williams, Cullen Bangs, Jon Long, John Tillotson and Macy Yates all served in developmental assignments or limited duration positions to help meet Department leadership needs.

All of the District's 45 permanent and 15 seasonal employees, listed on the Organization chart at the end of the report, deserve recognition for all of their efforts. Each one is doing their part to meet our mission on the District as well as participate in managing large fires around the state when fire emergencies occur.

I hope you enjoy our report; the following sections will describe the mission for each Program the District administers and some of the key activities that our employees were engaged in over the past year.

This report will be featured on the District's new website, which is located at <http://egov.oregon.gov/ODF/FIELD/ASTORIA/aboutastoria.shtml> along with additional District information and links to the Department's website.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DISTRICT FORESTER'S COMMENTS	1
PROTECTION FROM FIRE	2
STATE FOREST MANAGEMENT	3
PRIVATE FORESTS	5
DISTRICT ORGANIZATION CHART	7

Tom Savage

Protection from Fire

Steve Wilson, the Protection Unit Forester and his Assistant Unit Forester, Neal Laugle provided leadership for this program. The program's mission is to safely prevent and suppress fires on forestland in a manner which minimizes costs and resource losses.

Steve and Neal meet regularly with local members of the Northwest Oregon Forest Protective Association, which includes Association members Phil Penttila, Weyerhaeuser, Bud Henderson, Hampton Affiliates and Jay Holland, Longview Fibre Company. They also meet regularly with the Clatsop County Fire Defense Board, the Coast Guard and members of the military at Camp Rilea to develop fire prevention and suppression plans and ensure cooperative assistance on mutual response fires. In addition, Neal Laugle serves as a member of the Clatsop County Emergency Preparedness Committee; representing the Astoria District in all risk preparedness.

A big part of preparation for each fire season involves training for Department employees and our cooperators. The Wildfire 2006 Exercise was held on July 15-16 at Camp



USCG demonstrating a medi-vac hoist at the NWOA Fire School

Rilea in Warrenton Oregon. Local Fire Departments along with Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue, participated in a two day event with a live fire exercise on day two. This year's Operations Section Chief was Ron Tyson from Ft. Clatsop National Park. Not only does the exercise provide a great opportunity for training it allows us to reduce large fuel loads that accumulate in the firing ranges.

Steve Wilson continues to serve as an active member in the Keep Oregon Green Junior Ranger Program, and provides valuable insight and assistance into the development of the program; making sure that it can be applied to the youth of Clatsop County for fire prevention. The Protection crews continued to make frequent stops at the campgrounds to promote fire prevention and safety. In addition they issued 200 Burn Permits and 42 Regulated Use Waivers for campfires. Since 2004 the Astoria District has placed a ban on open burn piles starting July 1st and since then we have seen a drop in burn pile related fires.

Fire season began on the 29 of June and remained relatively uneventful until the 18th of August. The Indian Beach fire occurred on the South West Cliff of Ecola State Park at approximately 4:00 P.M. The fire quickly ran up the cliff into the timber. If it were not for the quick response of ODF and Cannon Beach Fire, the fire would have quickly become a type 3 incident. In addition South Fork crews did an excellent Job in trailing and mopping up the fire in some of Clatsop County's most difficult terrain.



South Fork Crew Members mopping up on the Indian Beach Fire.

As the summer progressed and things heated up around the state, the District employees found themselves busy helping the Department fight large project fires in Central and Eastern Oregon. The Protection Unit spent 169 man days on out-of-district fires and the State Forest Program provided 205 man days on out-of-district fire assignments.

In the Astoria District, despite some hot, dry conditions, the District was able to limit the number of acres burned for the year to 11.4 acres on 19 statistical fires, which is under the five year average. We continue to be successful because of the relationships with our cooperators. Without their help we would have difficult time keeping fires small to meet our goals.

The following is a good example. On the night of Oct. 23rd a UH-60 Jayhawk Helicopter from the United States Coast Guard reported an escaped slash burn to 911 and assisted by illuminating the route into the fire with their spotlight. Every year the relationship with the USCG proves to be beneficial in detection and prevention of wildfires.

As the Astoria District prepares for the 2007 Fire Season, we would like to take this opportunity to thank Phil Penttila, retiring Weyerhaeuser manager, for his many years of service as an active member of the Northwest Oregon Forest Protective Association.

State Forest Management

State Forest lands are managed to provide healthy, productive and sustainable forest ecosystems that, over time and across the landscape, provide a full range of social, economic and environmental benefits to the people of Oregon. Plans for management are done on a fiscal year basis, so this report will describe Fiscal Year 2006 accomplishments.

The Astoria District manages the majority of the Clatsop State Forest with minor portions managed by the Forest Grove and Tillamook Districts. The Astoria District continues to implement the goals, objectives, and strategies of the Northwest Oregon State Forests Management Plan adopted in 2001 and our District Implementation Plan, which was approved in March 2003, on approximately 137,000 acres. Board of Forestry accounts for slightly over 98 percent of the ownership of the Forest; the remaining portion is Common School land.

Timber harvesting operations including thinning, regeneration harvests, and patch cuts continued as the primary tools used to actively achieve stand structure targets set out in the Forest Management Plan. Timber harvest volumes for the Fiscal Year 2006 included 82,894 MBF generating just over \$30 million in timber revenue, with \$19 million distributed to Clatsop County.

In the past fiscal year, the District was able to complete all of the fieldwork and contract

preparation for all planned Fiscal Year 2006 timber sales; using an integrated forest management approach involving inputs from the District's Forest Management, Reforestation, Engineering and Support Units

Following harvesting, the land is prepared for replanting, according to a prescription



Military Green Timber Sale

which involves machine piling of slash and burning of the piles in late fall. Land is planted with a combination of tree species best suited to each site according to a stand pathway developed during the sale planning process.

The District reforested 468 acres with initial planting, 183 acres of interplanting and 795 acres of under planting. The primary species planted are Douglas-fir, western hemlock and western red cedar, in addition to minor amounts of grand fir, noble fir, and red alder.

The Engineering Unit works collaboratively with district and department staff to provide recommendations and support on forest

transportation planning, rock quarry management, fish passage upgrades, forest road infrastructure maintenance, land survey needs, district easements, special use permits and timber sale project plans.

As part of the Engineering Unit, the district road crew performed a wide range of projects, including road construction, road maintenance activities and recreation facility improvements.

The District continues to experience a high demand for special forest products. Twenty five commercial permits were issued generating \$6,255 of revenue. Special forest products included Boughs, Ferns, Moss, Mushrooms, Rock, Salal, Vinemapple, Alder, Pulp Decks, and miscellaneous plants.

The grand opening of Northrup Creek Horse Camp was celebrated in May of 2006. The facility adds 11 new campsites to the districts growing recreation program.



Northrup Creek Horse Camp

The district is considering development of recreation facilities at Lost Lake. A recreation user survey was developed with Oregon State University to measure public perceptions about development and current use. Surveys responses are currently being evaluated.

The Clatsop expanded its trail network by adding almost two miles of hiking trail near

Gnat Creek Fish Hatchery. The equestrian trails near Northrup Creek were expanded by another mile, for a total of seven miles, as well as improvements to the existing trails. Efforts have focused on reducing the conflict between vehicle traffic and horse use on the roads. Planning efforts are underway to prioritize OHV trail development in Nicolai Mountain. Better coordination between timber harvest activities and new OHV trail development will be a priority in the upcoming sale year.

The District's has continued its law enforcement agreement with the Clatsop County Sheriff's Department. Their accomplishments contributed to safety of the public, identification of individuals illegally dumping trash, individuals abandoning vehicles, and checking vehicles and individuals for compliance with fire season restrictions and requirements.

Surveys for threatened and endangered species continued on the district. No new activity centers were established for northern spotted owls (NSO) during the 2006 survey season. Three established home ranges were determined to be vacant based on three years of no responses. The district now has five protected NSO home ranges.

Work was completed on the Upper Nehalem Watershed analysis in the spring of 2006. This project was done in conjunction with the Astoria and Forest Grove Districts, and encompasses approximately 106,709 acres, the bulk of which is within Clatsop County. This project collected needed information at both watershed and site-specific levels and then provided an analysis on that information. The findings resulted in only one known Type F stream crossing within the Upper Nehalem Watershed managed by the Astoria District that blocked passage of juvenile fish. Many of the other limiting conditions identified are being addressed

within current plans or had been addressed by the time the report was finalized.

As an example of on-going watershed improvement in the Upper Nehalem Watershed, the District installed crossing structures on two fish bearing streams this year using relatively recent advancements in technology. An open bottom slab culvert with a 10 foot span was installed on an unnamed tributary of Rock Creek to replace an undersized, deteriorating culvert which blocked passage to fish. The elevation of the road to the stream was not high enough to meet the fill requirements for a conventional arch culvert. In addition, a two piece modular steel bridge with a 50 foot span was installed on Walker Creek to replace an existing pipe arch culvert that was deteriorating and in need of replacement.



Sterling Ranch Road, open bottom, slab culvert

Private Forests Program

Steve Wilson, Protection Unit Forester, provides leadership to this program and the two Stewardship Foresters.

The mission of this program encompasses various aspects of promoting forest stewardship and supporting forest landowners. Stewardship Foresters

administer the Forest Practices Act to ensure operators and landowners use the best management practices on forest operations. They also provide assistance on improving forest health, timber, fish and wildlife habitat, soil and water quality, recreation opportunities and aesthetics of private and community forests through information, technical assistance, financial incentives and regulation.

In 2006, Kevin Berry was selected to fill our vacant Stewardship Forester position. He and Ashley Lertora perform the forest practices, landowner assistance and smoke management duties for the district.



Ashley Lertora on the West Fork of Ecola Creek.

One of the big challenges for the Stewardship Foresters continues to be the administration of the Forest Practices Act in and around the Wildland Urban Interface. With more forest operations located in or adjacent to Urban Growth Boundaries, the number of complaints has risen sharply in the last year. The Stewardship Foresters investigate each complaint and follow up with the concerned party. Ashley and Kevin are to be commended for their efforts, while working with cooperating agencies to define the roles of each agency and assist the landowner through the development process. They have worked with county and city planning departments, the Department of Environmental Quality, Division of State

Lands, the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The Stewardship Foresters were involved in many community outreach programs with the citizens of Clatsop County. These include educational programs involving OSU Extension, 6th grade forestry day, ODF's Clatsop County fair booth, Smokey Bear kindergarten fire prevention and Tree City USA in Seaside.

The district processed 586 Notifications of Operations and administered smoke management regulations on approximately 58 units covering approximately 512 acres that were slashburned.

Year	Notice of Operations	Units	Complaints	Citations
2002	552	858	2	0
2003	505	778	1	2
2004	498	727	7	1
2005	455	763	5	0
2006	586	974	29	0

Table 1: Five-year summary of Astoria District Forest Operation

Astoria District
Organization
2006

