



"STEWARDSHIP IN FORESTRY"

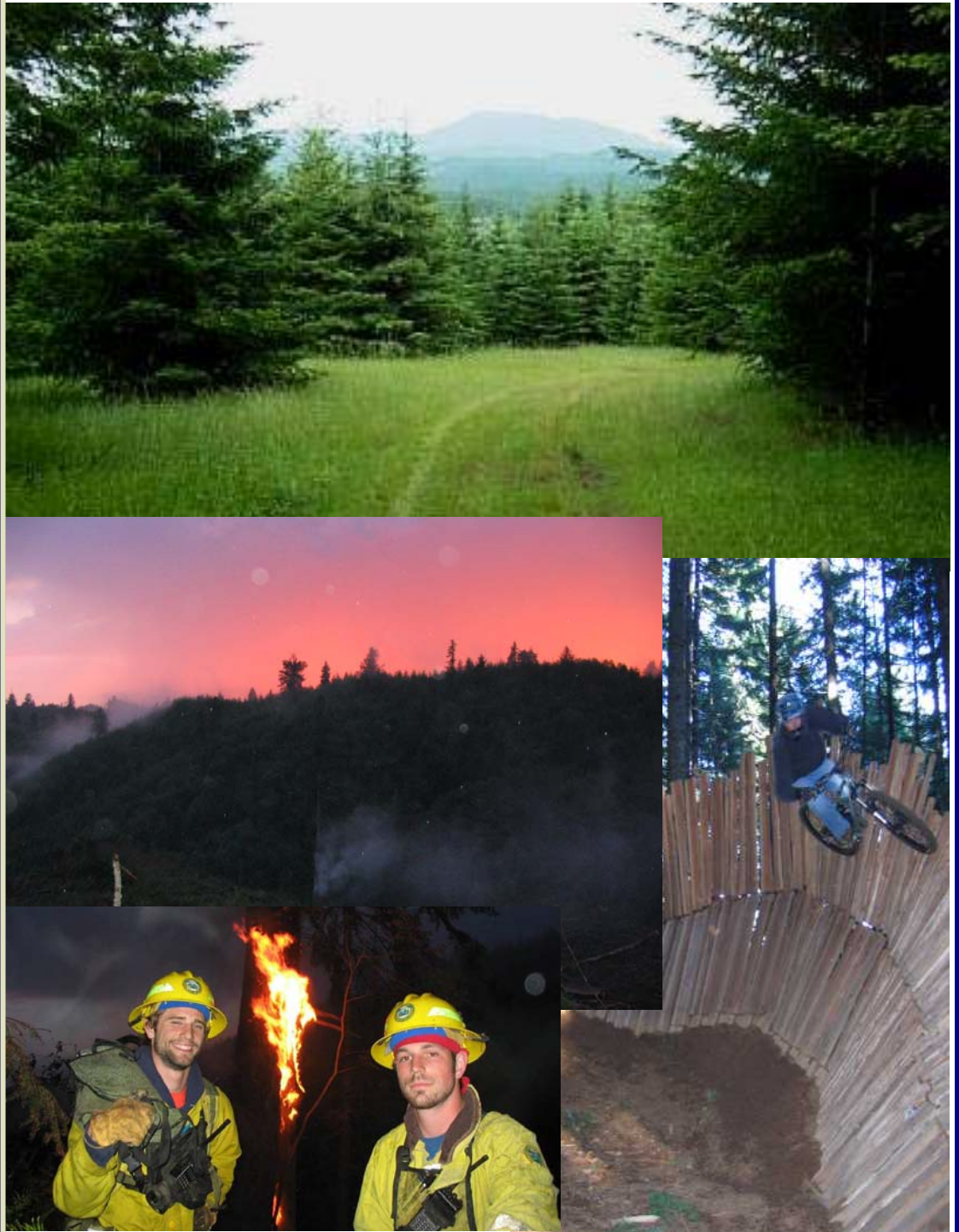
# West Oregon District 2005 Annual Report

West Oregon District

April 2006

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Clockwise from top: Mary's Peak from south trail of Beazell Memorial Forest, Benton County Park. Biker rides the wall at Black Rock recreation area near Falls City. Scott Lemmon and Chad Hanson, Toledo fire crew. Neal Loop near Newport in Lincoln County.

## From the District Forester

This report highlights and summarizes the District's activities and accomplishments during the past year. Our priorities continue to be to accomplish our objectives, provide strong customer service, make strong partnerships and develop relationships with those we serve and work with, and do this safely.

Fire season began on July 13<sup>th</sup> and ended on October 4<sup>th</sup>. Although it was a shorter than normal season, we experienced near record level fire danger indices. Fire danger and outcomes within the District are strongly influenced by summer precipitation, east wind events, and man-caused fire starts. A very dry summer continued the drought and produced critical fuel moistures. Alternatively, east winds events were mild and human fire starts were less than normal. For the second year, there were no industrial equipment related fires. All in all, it was a very successful fire season....low number of fires, minimal fire suppression costs and less than average resource losses.

Looking back at notable fire events, several escaped prescribed burns that occurred during a freezing and drying period at the end of November stand out. It serves well as a teaching moment as to how quickly fire situations can change with a few days of drying.

At the statewide level, there were four incident management team activations. The district actively contributed to these fire mobilization efforts in both team member and supplemental personnel resources. Not wishing large fires on anyone, but when they do occur, these off-district opportunities are important experiences to building and maintaining fire skills within the district. These experiences greatly enhance our ability to manage and support fire efforts on and off the district.

Dwindling State General Fund support and on-going efforts to reduce the number of state employees continue to strongly influence district operations. We are adjusting to personnel losses within the State Forests Program and Private Lands Program. The magnitude of these reductions is challenging and I appreciate the district staff and our customers support and patience as we work through these changes.

It is important to note the significant role of the West Oregon Forest Protective Association, forest industry, operators, and landowners in the successes of the District. As issues and choices get more complex, our strong partnership is the cornerstone critical to meet these difficult challenges. I would also recognize and extend sincere thanks to the District employees. Their commitment and dedication to meeting objectives and good customer service continue to make us successful. Finally, thanks to the many other agencies and private organizations that contribute and support the outcomes we strive for.

*Steve Laam*

*District Forester*



# Private and Community Forests

## Current Staffing

Dallas      Jeff Classen,  
                 Dave Thompson

Philomath    Russ Anderson,  
                 Terry Orton

Toledo        Doug Grafe



One trend Stewardship Foresters are seeing on harvesting operations is an increase in the amount of mechanical harvesting and shovel logging. Operators are increasing the use of feller bunchers and shovel logging than in the past. With more machinery working around draws, seeps, small wetlands, and along ditches flowing with water, stewardship foresters are spending more time inspecting operations as there is more opportunity to impact forest resources. This increase in mechanical harvesting is also resulting in more road construction on many logging units than in the past.

## Changes in the Forest Practices Rules in 2005

The major change in the Forest Practice Act was the removal of the written plan approval process. Written plans are now “reviewed” but not “approved”. There has also been an expansion of the “plan for an alternate practice” process which does have provisions for an “approval” process.



# State Forests Program

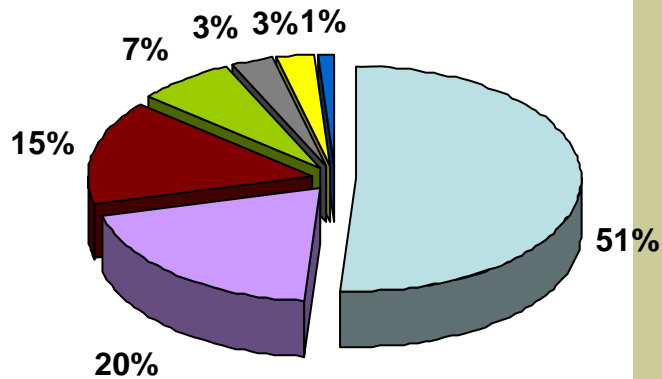









Logs being loaded on the Thin Steere timber sale in southwest Polk County.

State Forests personnel in the district manage approximately 38,000 acres of forestland in Lincoln, Benton, and Polk counties.

These lands are managed in accordance with the Northwest Oregon Forest Management Plan 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.

## Seedlings planted in West Oregon District—2005



 Western Hemlock	 Douglas Fir	 Western Red Cedar
 Red Alder	 Sitka Spruce	 Grand Fir
 Western White Pine		

Workers are tubing newly planted western red cedar seedlings to protect them from animal browse. Cedar are being planted in an area to provide for tree species diversity.





## State Forests Program



At left— Photo of a bridge installed in 2005 on Sam's Creek in the Black Rock parcel, west of Falls City. It replaced a deteriorated steel culvert impeding fish passage. It is a 45' long bridge composed of three prestressed concrete slabs set on steel H piles. It was installed with the Black Rock Thin timber sale in Polk County.

### 2005 State Forest Management Accomplishments for West Oregon District

<b>Timber Volume Sold</b>	<b>13.2 MMBF</b>
<b>Associated Timber Value</b>	<b>\$4,614,000</b>
<b>Tree Planting Completed</b>	<b>317 acres</b>
<b>Number of Trees Planted</b>	<b>107,000</b>
<b>Timber Volume Harvested</b>	<b>15.5 MMBF</b>
<b>Timber Harvest Value</b>	<b>\$5,304,000</b>
<b>Fish Passage Culverts Replaced</b>	<b>2</b>

### *“The Art of Forestry”*

“People often ask me, “Why aren't our forests sustainable? Aren't we replanting after we cut?” My response is that a forest is not a plantation. A forest is a mosaic, including ancient trees, venerable giants providing shelter for wildlife. A forest is clear, pure water, rivers alive with trout and salmon. A forest is wildness, silence. A forest is tall, straight trees for house beams and logs. A forest is a wellspring of value for rural people. A forest is the deep, rich, soil soaking and storing water and nutrients.”

“The fact that we can grow young trees where all this once stood does not mean we have perpetuated the forest. The task of protecting and restoring the forest is more complex. It demands all the skill, imagination, and dedication of foresters. This is the art of forestry.”

By Henry H. Carey, "Forest Trust: Two-Year Report, 1987-1988"

Reprinted in the April, 1990 "Journal of Forestry"

# Protection From Fire

## West Oregon Forest Protective Association holds

### summer tour in Lincoln County

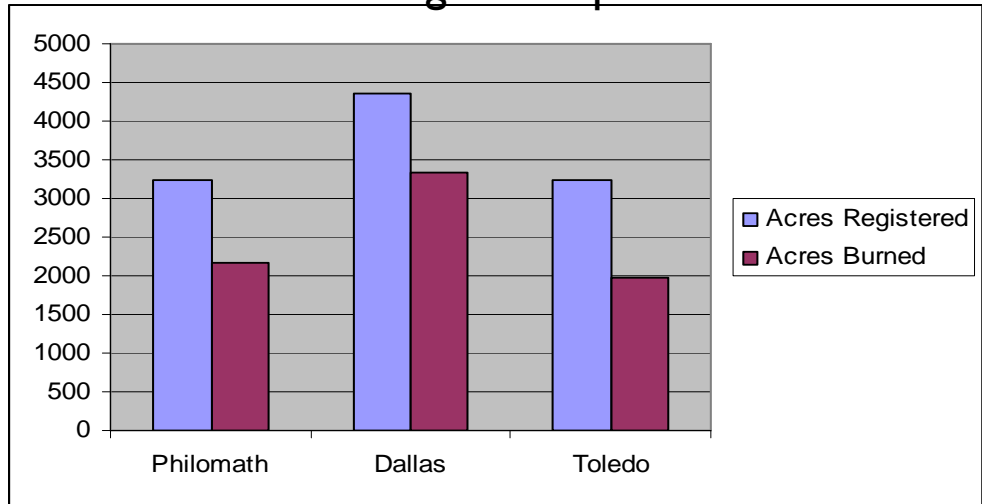
The WOFPA held its summer tour in northern Lincoln County in July 2005. The tour began in Lincoln City with an interactive forum between city leaders, local landowners, and ODF personnel discussing smoke management, slash burning, and its impact on the environment and tourism. Also included was a presentation by Jack Dunaway on the Ocean Shores Agreement.. The tour continued with a visit to an active operation on Green Diamond property near Kernville.

After a lunch tour of the Gleneden Beach Fire Department, the tour continued with a stop at Seagrove, a coastal housing development with urban interface issues related to slash piles very near residential areas. Interestingly, this area was the site of a small escaped slash burn later in the year. The tour concluded with a look at the Rocky Creek fire near Newport.



Toledo Protection Supervisor, Ted Erdmann, stands amidst large slash piles in far western Lincoln County. Large unburned slash loads continue to be a challenge for the district.

## District Slash Burning Accomplishments for 2005



**Operator Training**—ODF in cooperation with Miami Corporation held a hose lay competition as part of its annual operator training day. The event allowed area cooperators to show how effectively they can deploy and operate their firefighting equipment. The event also allowed attendees to try out several types of fire extinguishers. Similar training was presented by Starker Forests.



## Fire Training



### Mid Valley Fire Crews Attend Training in Sweet Home

The 2005 Mid-Willamette Valley fire school took place in June 20-24, 2005 at Foster Elementary School in Sweet Home. Sixteen West Oregon Seasonal firefighters attended along with a number of district ODF staff that served as instructors.

The inter-agency school included participants from ODF units in Sweet Home, East Lane, Western Lane and West Oregon. USFS crews from Willamette, Siuslaw, and Umpqua forests attended. BIA participants from the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and BLM crews from Salem and Eugene were included as well.

### Training Burns Continue to Provide Excellent Live Fire Experience for Crews

The District conducted three training burns in 2005 to give firefighter crews additional experience with live fire exercises. Seasonal crew members conducted a daytime practice burn of the Norton Hill area on State Forest Land in northeast Lincoln County.

The crews participated in a night burn on private landowner property in late July. Assisting jointing with rural fire departments, West Oregon crews also conducted a broadcast burn around the Fort Hoskins State Park area in northeast Benton County.



Clockwise from top: 1) Broadcast burn at Fort Hoskins State Park. 2) Scott Lemmon and Doug Grafe participate in a night burn on private landowner property in the district. 3) Live fire training on State Forest land around Norton Hill.

# Fire Suppression and Prevention

Following most areas of the state, the West Oregon district had a high potential for fire in 2005. The fire season began on July 13 and continued until October 4. Even with the extremely high fire indices, fire occurrences were down in the district.

The district fire crews responded to 36 statistical fires for 2005. Those statistical fires burned 159 total acres and resulted in suppression costs of \$40,239. Interestingly, the largest fire in the district was an escaped slash burn in December 2005. This fire burned 150 acres (95%) of the total acres burned for the entire fire season, reminded all that the potential for large fires does not completely fade with wetter, cooler weather.

The district experienced 5 lightning fires in 2005, which proved to be the costliest suppression efforts for the year at \$15,244. Thanks to the efforts of seasonal crews and protection supervisors and dispatchers, the district continued provide quick response to fire incidents and managed to keep damage and costs low. The district also continues to have an excellent relationship with landowners and co-operators, enforcing regulated use restrictions and great flexibility in responding to IFPL changes.

## District Efforts in Fire Prevention Education

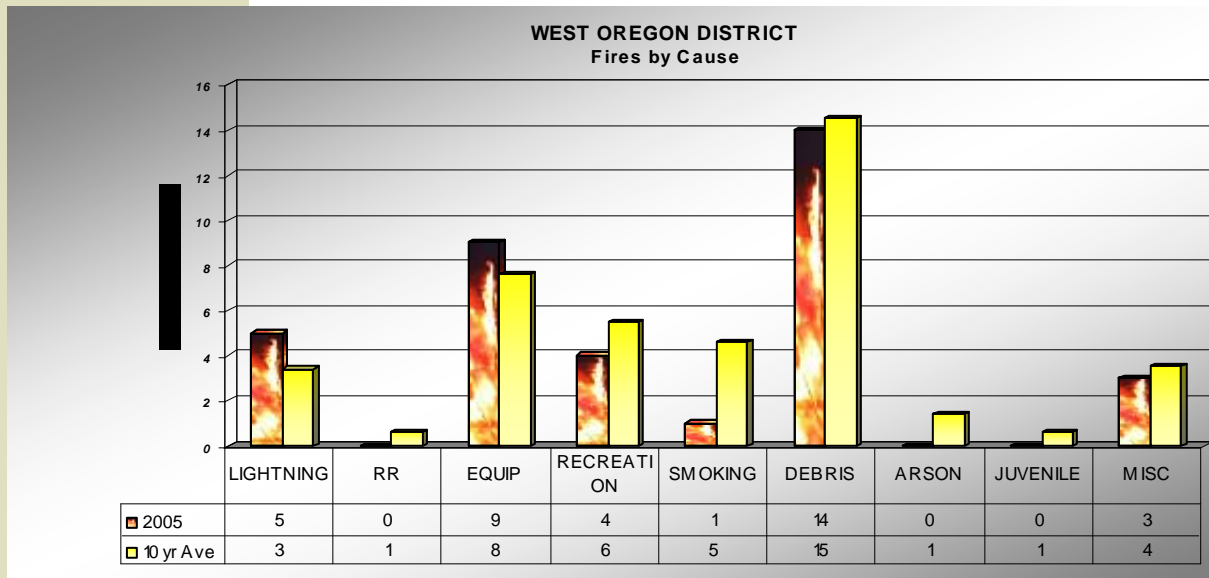
Burn bans in Benton and Polk counties continued to play a major role in keeping debris burn numbers low in the district. Cooperative efforts between ODF and landowners with operator meetings also provide essential preparedness training in safety and first response action to industrial fires.



The Toledo Unit's 1000 gallon engine got a much needed replacement in 2005

The district continues its efforts with fire prevention education efforts by participating in Kid's Day for Conservation in Benton County, Smokey Bear programs in local schools, as well as assisting with outdoor school programs in Benton and Polk Counties. Seasonal crews also assisted Keep Oregon Green with their booth and education efforts and the State Fair.

Looking to the future, with ever increasing un-burned slash loads growing in the district, West Oregon ODF management along with Salem protection personnel will be focusing the 2006 WOFPA summer tour in Polk County with special emphasis on managing fire potential and smoke intrusions with more and more debris piles and fewer burning opportunities







**Oregon Department of Forestry**

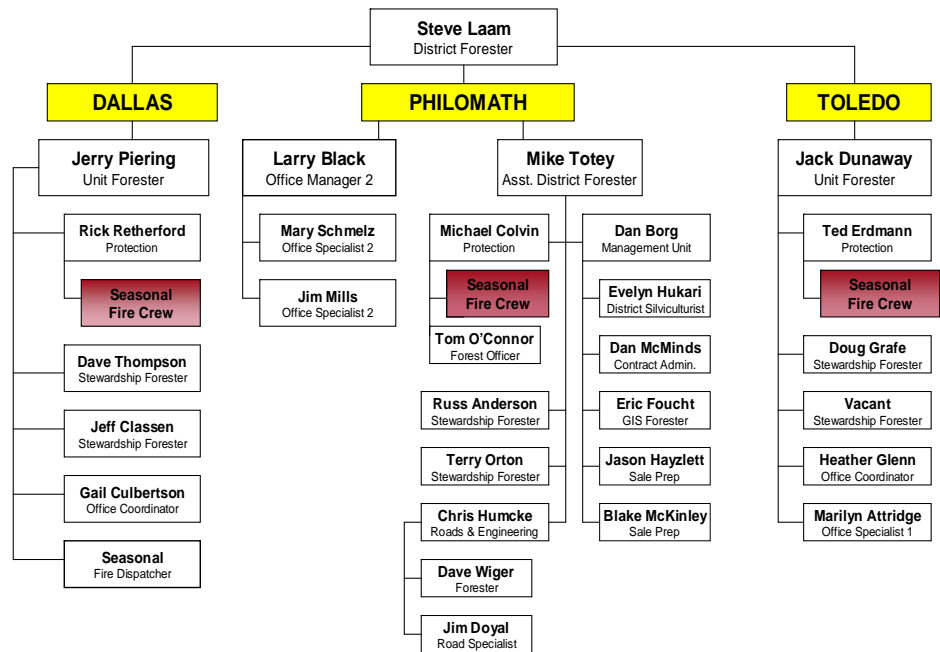
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Philomath, OR 97370  
(541) 929-3266 Fax (541) 929-5549

West Oregon District—Dallas Unit  
825 Oak Villa Road  
Dallas, OR 97338  
(503) 623-8146 Fax (503) 623-9034

West Oregon District—Toledo Unit  
763 Forestry Road  
Toledo, OR 97391  
(541) 336-2273 Fax (541) 336-5261

# Administration

**West Oregon District  
December 2005**



**West Oregon Fire Protection  
Association 2005 Board Members**

- President**  
Barte Starker—Starker Forests
- Vice President**  
Tim Tompkins—Weyerhaeuser
- Secretary**  
Larry Black—ODF Philomath
- Treasurer**  
Britt Madison—Stimson Lumber
- Directors**  
Jerry Anderson—Forest Capital Partners  
Donald Carr—Carr Family Forests  
Dana Clay—Green Diamond Resources  
David Hampton—Hampton Affiliates  
Dave Hiatt—Wakefield Farm  
Matt Higgins—Plum Creek Timberlands  
Sara Leiman—Coast Range Conifers  
Lee Miller—T&M Miller Family Trust  
Joe Steere—Miami Corporation

## Personnel Changes Continue in 2005

As with many districts within the agency, West Oregon continued to see personnel changes throughout the year as new opportunities continue to arise as a result of retirements and career advancement.

Rick Ground, Stewardship forester in Philomath, retired after 26 years of service to ODF. He was succeeded by Terry Orton from the Roseburg unit. Terry brings significant experience to the position and district.

Long-time Stewardship Forester Grant "Link" Smith promoted to the Protection Unit Supervisor position for the Western Lane District in Veneta. The district hopes to fill Link's position soon to assist Doug Grafe.

The State Forest unit in Philomath welcomed Blake McKinley as a new sale prep forester. Blake is a recent OSU graduate working in a limited duration position providing valuable assistance for West Oregon state forests management.



**Rick Ground, Stewardship Forester, retired in 2005 after 26 years of service to ODF in Coos Bay and West Oregon Districts.**