

# Oregon Department of Forestry



## 2007 Astoria District Report

### District Forester's Comments—Tom Savage

This annual report highlights the Astoria District's accomplishments in 2007. I hope that it provides insight into the good work that the District does and some of the important contributions of our employees.

2007 brought both familiar and new challenges to the District. It started with District employees dealing with the aftermath of a strong wind storm in December 2006. The year continued with the need to balance heavy regular duties in the District as well as assist in managing large wildfires in Eastern Oregon during the fire season. It wrapped up with responding and recovering from an even stronger wind storm in December, 2007.

I am proud of the hard work and dedication of all of the District employees during the past year. The Admin Unit provided excellent customer service to the public that visited or called the office. They also provided support to our employees. The Protection Unit not only met our fire protection goals, but served our private landowners as well, especially following the December, 2007 windstorm when so many were

impacted. The State Forest Units rose to the occasion by meeting our annual objectives as well as their quick response time in preparing the salvage operations following the wind storms. Their timely response allowed the District to achieve the most financial value of the fallen timber, while also clearing roadways and helping restore the forest to a more healthy condition.

I would also 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 continuing to improve through adaptive management makes us successful.

I hope you enjoy this report. It is also available on ODF's website at <http://egov.oregon.gov/ODF/FIELD/ASTORIA/aboutastoria.shtml>

*Tom Savage,  
Astoria District Forester*

### Mission Statement

*To serve the people of Oregon by protecting, managing, and promoting stewardship of Oregon's forests to enhance environmental, economic, and community sustainability.*

### Table of Contents

DISTRICT FORESTER'S COMMENTS	1
PROTECTION FROM FIRE	2-3
STATE FOREST MANAGEMENT	3-6
PRIVATE FORESTS PROGRAM	6-7
DISTRICT ORGANIZATION CHART	8



## Protection From Fire

**FIRE SEASON  
BEGAN ON  
THE 5<sup>TH</sup>, OF  
JULY AND  
ALL  
INDICATIONS  
WERE THAT  
IT WAS  
GOING TO BE  
A BUSY ONE.**

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 Steve Loyd, Weyerhaeuser, Bud Henderson, Hampton Affiliates and Jay Holland, Longview Timber 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. The program continues to be successful because of this important communication, cooperation and collaboration with all of these stakeholders. 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 Wild-fire 2007 Exercise was held on July 7-8 at Camp Rilea in Warrenton Oregon. Local Fire Departments participated in a two day event with a live fire exercise on day two. This year Camp Rilea provided a D-8 for local operator's to gain experience in operating a dozer in the fire environment. 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 and Neal Laugle were presented with a plaque from Keep Oregon Green for their continued efforts in Fire Prevention and the Keep Oregon Green

Junior Ranger Program. The seasonal crews spent time at the State Fair and Lloyd Center assisting Keep Oregon Green in their fire prevention efforts. In addition, they issued 214 burn permits and 51 regulated use waivers for campfires. Since 2004 the Astoria District has placed a ban on open burn piles starting July 1<sup>st</sup> and since then we continue to see a drop in burn pile related fires.



**Junior Ranger Program, Warrenton, 4<sup>th</sup> of July**

Fire season began on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July and all indications were that it was going to be a busy one. Around mid July the rains returned and Mother Nature did her part. The crews turned their focus towards the support of multiple move-ups for lightning busts and large fire support, east of the Cascades.

The Protection Crew spent 300 man days on off-district fires, and the State Forest Program contributed 311 man days to off-district fires.

In the Astoria District, the protection crew responded to 12 statistical fires for a total of 72 acres burned. Of these 72 acres, 68 acres were the result of two escaped slash burns after fire season ended.



## Protection From Fire - Continued



**Crusher Fire Day 2 Cannon Beach**

On October 26, the Astoria District responded to an escaped slash burn behind Cannon Beach. Upon arrival, the Crane Fire was spreading towards a reproduction unit. The fire was contained at eight acres at about midnight, just in time to see the glow in the sky to the south as the Crusher Fire began to build in intensity.

The fire was contained at 60 acres by mid afternoon on the October 28. Weyerhaeuser and the logging companies employed by them should be commended on their commitment to fire suppression. The hard work and quick response from the forest industry kept the fire from growing into a large extended attack incident.

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 2007 included 68.4 MMBF generating approximately \$28 million in timber revenue, with just under \$19 million distributed to Clatsop County.

## State Forest Management

**THE  
ASTORIA  
DISTRICT  
CONTINUES  
TO  
IMPLEMENT  
THE GOALS,  
OBJECTIVES,  
AND  
STRATEGIES  
OF THE  
NORTHWEST  
OREGON  
STATE  
FORESTS**

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 2007 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, under the leadership of Assistant District Forester Ron Zilli, 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



**Logs preparing to be yarded for stream structure placement.**

In the past fiscal year, the District's two management units, led by Dan Goody and Ty Williams, were able to complete all of the fieldwork and contract preparation for all planned Fiscal Year 2007 timber sales, using an integrated forest management approach involving input from the District's Forest Management, Reforestation, Engineering and Support Units.

In December 2006, a strong windstorm occurred that resulted in significant wind throw across the district. As a result, during 2007 the District began preparing and conducting salvage activities removing numerous wind thrown trees from damaged



### State Forest Management - Continued

stand types and salvaging scattered trees along many miles of road. Seven salvage operations were prepared, yielding an estimated 17.1 MMBF from 367 acres of regeneration harvest and 1,299 acres of scattered salvage harvest, with a planned revenue of \$3.3 million. These seven sales were added into the FY08 Annual Operations Plan which began in July of 2007. Additionally, roadside salvage and salvaging within operating timber sales began immediately in January 2007.

The District is proud of the hard work of the employees and the quick response time in preparing the salvage operations. The timely response was conducive to achieving the most financial value of the fallen timber while also clearing roadways and restoring the forest to a safe condition.

Upon completion of harvesting, the Reforestation Unit, led by David Kaspar, is responsible for preparing the land for replanting, according to a prescription 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 982 acres with initial planting, 171 acres of interplanting and 15 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, led by Frank Lertora, 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. In addition, the unit oversees the District road crew who performs general road maintenance activities and recreation facility improvements throughout the year.

The District continues to experience a high demand for special forest products. Moss and salal are the two forest products that generate the most commercial interest from the public. Fifty one commercial permits were issued generating \$18,900 of revenue during 2007. Other special forest products include boughs, ferns, mushrooms, vine-maple, alder, pulp decks, and miscellaneous plants.



West Creek Debris Flow - December Storm



### State Forest Management - Continued



Lost Lake

The Support Unit, led by Larry Sprouse, oversees the Recreation program on the Clatsop. Currently, the District is considering improvement 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. Survey responses are currently being evaluated.

The Clatsop expanded its trail network by adding almost two miles of hiking trails near Gnat Creek Fish Hatchery. The equestrian trails near Northrup Creek were expanded by another mile, for a total of eight miles, as well as making 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 on Nicolai Mountain. Better coordination between timber harvest activities and new OHV trail development will be a priority in the upcoming sale year.

The District 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. Marbled Murrelet and Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) surveys are done for a minimum of two years prior to any forest management activity that might affect the habitat of the birds. No new activity centers for Northern Spotted Owls or Marbled Murrelet Management Areas were established during the 2007 survey season. One established home range was determined to be vacant based on three years of no responses. The District now has four protected NSO home ranges. Additionally, fish presence surveys were conducted in 2007 to determine fish presence and protection measures for streams within or adjacent to planned harvest areas.

As an example of on-going watershed improvement in the Upper Nehalem Watershed, Nygaard Logging completed a stream



Watershed Enhancement

enhancement project in Walker Creek and an unnamed tributary of Walker Creek. This work involved the placement of logs to create structures which will enhance salmonid spawning and rearing areas, and increase riparian diversity and

future large wood recruitment. Six structures were created at a total cost of approximately \$14,000. The need for this type of work was identified in the Upper Nehalem Watershed Analysis and confirmed with site reviews by ODFW Habitat Biologists. This work was done in conjunction with adjacent cable logging on the Goose Pit Combination timber sale.



## State Forest Management - Continued

There were several additional examples of stream enhancement projects completed on the District. An undersized culvert that was blocking fish passage on Northrup Creek Road was replaced with a fish passable pipe arch; and three culverts partially blocking fish were replaced with fish passable structures on three Sweethome Creek drainages. Two of the three structures were open bottom slab culverts.



## Private Forest 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.

Kevin Berry and Ashley Lertora perform the forest practices, landowner assistance and smoke management duties for the district.

The catastrophic December 2007 storm damaged approximately 14,000 acres mostly located within seven miles of the coastline in the western portion of Clatsop

County. The storm created acres of down and broken timber and left timber owners wondering what to do. Immediately following the storm, the stewardship foresters created a packet of information that would assist landowners in how to proceed with salvage logging. By year's end the stewardship foresters had given out 85 packets, answered 190 phone calls, and approximately 85 on site meetings with local landowners assisting them in evaluating their options and helping them with the Notification of Operation process.



Timber stand damaged by Dec. 2007 wind storm.

**THE MISSION OF THIS PROGRAM ENCOMPASSES VARIOUS ASPECTS OF PROMOTING FOREST STEWARDSHIP AND SUPPORTING FOREST LANDOWNERS.**



## Private Forest Program - Continued

Much of this outreach was being done in partnership with Glen Ahrens, Clatsop County Extension Forester. Two weeks after the storm, Kevin, Ashley and Glen held a public meeting for landowners to be able to ask questions and meet local consulting foresters and operators. Both Glen and Ashley did local radio interviews during the first week after the storm as well as local newspaper articles. Kevin and Ashley have continued to meet with landowners well into the next year.

On industrial forestlands, ODF Private Forest staff along with ODF&W met on site to create site specific written plans to address vegetation retention along fish bearing streams during salvage logging while providing for the loggers' safety. These site specific plans were field reviewed during the logging operations to ensure that the requirements of the Forest Practices Act were met.

The Stewardship Foresters are involved in many community outreach programs with the citizens of Clatsop County. These include educational programs involving OSU Extension, 6<sup>th</sup> grade forestry day, ODF's Clatsop County fair booth, Smokey Bear for 1st grade fire prevention and Tree City USA in Seaside.

The district processed 688 Notifications of Operations and administered smoke management regulations on approximately 150 units that were slash burned.



Ashley Lertora talks about salvage options.

**Steve Morisse Logging Inc.  
received ODF's  
2007 Northwest Operator  
of the Year Award.**

Year	Notice of Operations	Units	Complaints	Citations
2003	505	778	1	2
2004	498	727	7	1
2005	455	763	5	0
2006	586	974	29	0
2007	688	991	7	2

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



# ASTORIA DISTRICT ORGANIZATION FY 2007

