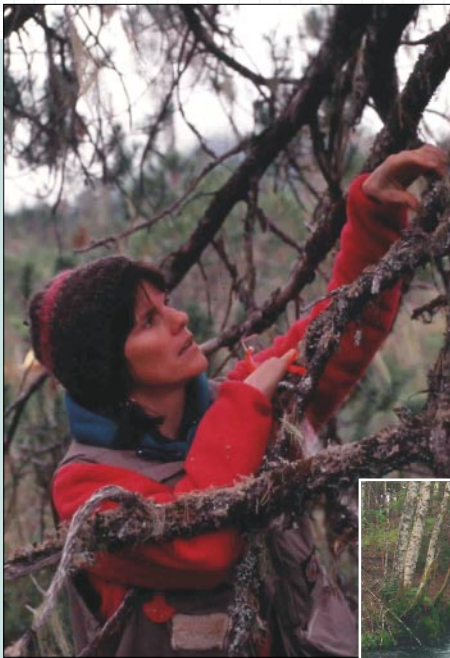


Northwest Forest Plan Accomplishment Report



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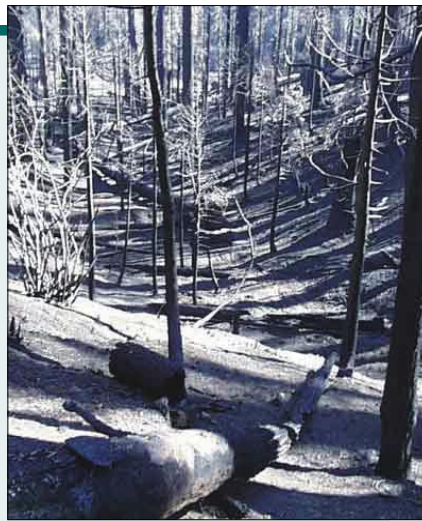
The
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Stories

Megrum Fire

Six Rivers National Forest, California
February 1996

A gale blew through the north coast of California. It left behind thousands of acres of dead and damaged old-growth trees. Forest experts knew millions of tons of new fuel would be added to that already accumulated in the forest understory through decades of fire suppression, and in the event of a wildfire, foresters knew those fuels could spell big trouble.

Responding to the threat in 1998, the Forest Service undertook the first of several fuel reduction projects in the Six Rivers National Forest. By the following year a significant number of acres had been successfully treated. A good beginning, but too late to save the Six Rivers.



Landscape altered by fire.

Blowdown Sets Stage for Firestorm

In 1999, wildfire started by lightning exploded into a firestorm. Fed in part by the blowdown, the fire raged through Six Rivers' watersheds for the next 75 days. Before it was over, 30,000 acres of old-growth forest were gone.

But some areas were spared from destruction. Experts determined that areas treated in the fuel reduction project of 1998 suffered far less damage than other areas.

In fact, only three percent of the forest in the treated areas suffered severe damage compared to 30 percent of the untreated areas.

The Megrum Fire changed more than a landscape. To everyone concerned with the health of forest ecosystems, the tragedy etched a lasting memory of the negative results of generations of fire suppression.

But the fire also provided an opportunity to test new fuel reduction projects mandated by the Northwest Forest Plan. Today, the USDA Forest Service and its partners in federal, state and tribal governments, continue to reduce forest fuels. Their efforts will help preserve our region's forests for future generations.

Way Cool Heroes

The Northwest Forest Plan is a breeding ground for heroes. One such hero is Johan Hogervorst, a hydrologist on the Siuslaw National Forest whom local citizens credit with restoring a meadow vital to their community.

Enchanted Valley was a lowland wet meadow suffering from a host of ills. Water quality was so poor it no longer provided habitat to fish and mammals. A disintegrated portion of Baily Creek that once drained the pastures of a dairy farm no longer supported fish and was causing water quality problems downstream at Lake Mercer.

Amid skepticism on the part of local residents and landowners, Hogervorst implemented a plan to reroute the creek through the center of Enchanted Valley and restore the riparian habitat that had once flourished. To the amazement of his critics, the plan worked; Hogersvorsts succeeded in transforming the old farm pasture into a new home for coho salmon, waterfowl and elk.

Today, school children come to the valley to plant willows and count spawning salmon as part of their outdoor education. Local landowners write letters of appreciation for improvements to the water quality of Lake Mercer.

The Northwest Forest Plan provides a framework for restoration, but its success depends on the vision and skills of people like Johan Hogervorst.



Improved water quality transforms habitat for fish and mammals.

Hornworts, Liverworts, Mosses, OH MY!

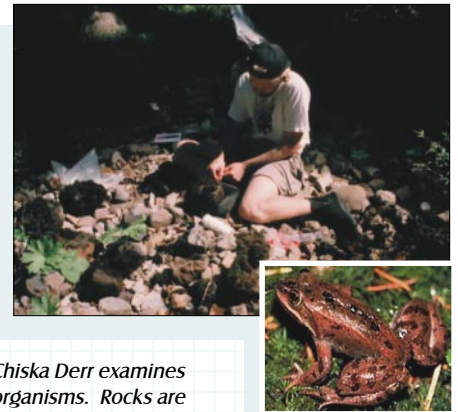
Chiska Derr has spent her career working with complex organisms called lichens. What makes a lichen complex? "...Lichens are actually two or three organisms working together," she explains. "Each is made up of a fungus that provides body structure and an algae that produces food through photosynthesis." The strange creatures are among the thousands of life forms in old-growth ecosystems being surveyed under protocols of the Northwest Forest Plan.

Last winter, Derr and members of her survey team studied a particular lichen to learn how best to protect it from

sedimentation and other disturbances in its natural stream habitat.

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When Derr found lichen growing near a culvert scheduled for removal, the problem of how to transplant the sensitive creatures required both ingenuity and painstaking labor. Derr proved herself equal to the task. First, Derr measured the surface area of the rocks covered by the lichen – then she bundled batches of rocks and moved them upstream – thirteen months later, she measured again – the amount of the rocks' surface area covered by lichens had more than doubled.



Chiska Derr examines organisms. Rocks are bundled and moved upstream. Thirteen months later the rock's surface area covered by lichens has more than doubled.

Lichens play small but vital roles in the complex web of relationships that comprise a rainforest ecosystem. The survey in which Derr participated was similar to many others completed throughout the region for species ranging from the tiny spotted frog to the Giant Sequoias.

At last count, there were nearly 12,500 lichens and bryophytes -- hornworts, liverworts and mosses -- growing in the Pacific Northwest Region. Chiska Derr is still counting.

Of Cutthroats and Culverts

In the summer of 2000, soil and water engineer Rob Piehl began a project to replace an old culvert which had been completely blocking the fish passage up the Little Zigzag River in the Mt. Hood National Forest. Water cascading at 30 cubic feet per second from the small culvert made fish passage to upstream habitat impossible.

Before work could begin, Piehl had to figure out ways to deal with a multitude of problems, both technical and human. Among the issues facing him:

- How to divert water out of the riverbed to gain access to the culvert.
- How to reassure citizens inconvenienced by the restoration project.
- How to set in place a new 142-foot long concrete culvert.

Piehl's ingenuity saved the day. First, a trench was dug through the highway parallel to the channel to reroute the river through a diversion pipe. Once the channel was dry, Piehl removed the old culvert and restored the river bottom to its natural condition.



Next, foundations for the new culvert were poured. This had to be deep enough to handle floodwaters that might someday scour the channel.

Culvert restores vital fish habitat.



Fish-friendly structures open waterways.

Finally, the new fish-friendly, 16-foot-wide, open-bottom culvert sections were set in place with a crane.

Will the fish return: Soon after the project's completion, citizens celebrated the return of winter steelhead and native cutthroat trout and the new structure easily handled the torrent of water coursing its way down from Zigzag Glacier. Today, the inconvenience of the project has been all but forgotten as residents enjoy a restored, vital fishery.

Ecosystem Restoration Accomplishments

This table reflects improvements made to roads that reduce and prevent erosion damage to water quality, riparian ecosystems and fish habitat.

	Culverts & Bridges (Sites)	Road Stabilization (Miles)	Road Surface (Miles)	Road Reveg. (Acres)	Road Decom'd (Miles)	Riparian/Structural Mechanical Improv. (Acres)	Riparian Veg. Thinning, etc. (Acres)	Nonfish Streams (Miles)	Fish Streams (Miles)
California	51	520	34	95	185	92	0	45	46
Oregon	0	10	6	29	11	0	150	0	0
Washington	4	31	8	0	27	0	0	0	6
Total	55	561	48	124	223	92	150	45	52

Ecosystem Benefits and Analysis Accomplishments

This table reflects the amount of timber offered for sale, as well as values of special forest products, from lands managed by the Forest Service under the Northwest Forest Plan.

	Timber Offered (MMBF)	Christmas Trees (\$ Thousands)	Firewood (\$ Thousands)	Other (\$ Thousands)	Watershed Analysis Completed	Acres
California	25	124	398	37	6	605,697
Oregon	15	112	135	272	2	123,896
Washington	47	106	73	231	1	0
Total	87	342	606	540	9	729,593

Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative

This table reflects how millions of dollars have been directed as grants to watershed restoration (Jobs In The Woods), rural community assistance and economic revitalization. The grants are administered by federal agencies in cooperation with Province Advisory Committees and local watershed councils that help land managers meet the goals of the Northwest Forest Plan.

Year	Rural Community/Assistance (\$Millions)	Jobs In The Woods (\$Millions)	Old Growth Diversification (\$Millions)
1994	9.6	20.0	6.3
1995	9.3	12.1	4.8
1996	10.0	13.5	2.9
1997	11.4	14.3	2.9
1998	9.3	11.3	3.4
1999	4.1	*	4.5
2000	4.2	*	1.5
Total	57.9	71.2	26.3

Oregon	50
Washington	46
California	25

* 1998 was the last year for the Jobs In The Woods Program.

Information

For additional information about the Northwest Forest Plan or more copies of this report, please contact either Public Affairs Office or the web sites listed below.

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