

# Forests FOR OREGON

NEWS FROM THE OREGON  
DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY

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## Private Forests Division gets a boost from State Legislature

Kevin Weeks, ODF Public Affairs Specialist

The 2011 - 2013 budget for ODF approved by the Oregon Legislature brought good news to the agency's Private Forests Division as well as landowners who count on ODF for services on private forestlands.

The Ways and Means Committee approved ODF's budget proposal, adding funding to restore up to 27 stewardship forester positions within the Private Forests Division, and returning staffing to a level that approaches 2007's resources. These positions - providing valued services on private forestlands across the state - fell victim to the economic downturns of 2008 - 2009.

The Legislature expresses specific direction to state agencies through "budget notes" that provide guidance on which activities the agency's budget should fund.

The Ways and Means Committee specifically directed ODF to use the additional funding to accomplish two budget note goals during 2011-13: performance of an audit to determine compliance with the Forest Practices Act throughout the state, and, assessing how the Forest Practices Act is administered by ODF, with an eye towards system improvements, program efficiency and cost savings.

Efforts are underway to hire 12 stewardship forester positions right away, including welcoming back eight former stewardship foresters laid off during 2009-2010 budget reductions but still retained within ODF in other roles due to agency seniority.

"Our employees are our most valuable asset," said Peter Daugherty, chief of ODF's Private Forests Division. "I am really pleased that ODF was able to maintain the collective experience and skill of this group of dedicated employees through the economic downturn."

### What's next

The Private Forests Division will begin outreach efforts soon with forest landowners from across the state, to work together towards building an updated Private Forests program that meets the current needs of the state. 🌲



Photo by Kevin Weeks, ODF

ODF stewardship forester Ashley Lertora, above, center, confers with a forest landowner about storm damage and blowdown. Efforts are underway to hire 12 stewardship forester positions, including some cut during 2009-2010 budget reductions.

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# Southern Oregon survey shows residents are aware - and prepare - for wildfire

**Cynthia Orlando, Public Affairs Specialist**

A wildfire survey conducted in Southern Oregon this year found that area residents are aware of the risk of wildfire and are taking actions to reduce fire hazards on their lands.

The mail-in survey, spearheaded by the Rogue Valley Fire Prevention Cooperative (RVFPC), was conducted in February and March in the communities of Greensprings, the Seven Basins area, Applegate Valley, and Ashland's city-designated wildfire hazard zone. Survey response was high, ranging from 32 percent to 59 percent across the four communities.

The western US – including Southwest Oregon – has been hard hit by wildfires over the past decade.

A rapid increase in the numbers of people living in the so-called wildland urban interface (WUI) has led to increasing costs of firefighting efforts. To lessen the cost of these oftentimes reactive firefighting efforts in wildland areas, a more proactive approach is being sought through public outreach and education of property owners in the wildland urban interface. The wildfire survey, contracted by RVFPC to Southern Oregon University Research Center (SOURCE) to administer, is a part of those efforts.

## Survey results

The majority of survey respondents indicate they've lived in the Southern Oregon area for more than 20 years. Between 51 and 74 percent believe their homes are at risk from wildfire, and the majority of respondents agree that private landowners have a responsibility to reduce fire hazards on their own land.

Have they done so? Overwhelmingly, yes. More than 93 percent of respondents indicate that they have created defensible space around their homes, and 88 percent



Captain Erin Sawall with the city of Medford works to protect a home during the Oak Knoll Fire in August, 2010.

Photo by Brian Ballou, ODF

state they are actively maintaining their defensible space. Needless to say, local fire agencies are pleased with the findings.

“We’re especially happy to see that so many people are taking an active role in creating and maintaining defensible space,” says Project Coordinator Sandy Shaffer.

Responses did indicate, however, a need for more households within the four communities to have evacuation plans on-hand in the event of future wildland fires or other disasters. 🐾

Complete results of the survey are available online, at: [www.rvfpc.com](http://www.rvfpc.com)

## featured tree Cynthia Orlando, Public Affairs Specialist

The tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), named for its flowers and leaves that resemble tulips, is an eye-catching ornamental shade tree that produces yellow foliage in the fall. Although commonly called tulip poplar, it's actually part of the Magnolia family. It features very unique, bright green leaves that resemble a tulip shape, and 2-3" long green and orange flowers, also shaped like a tulip.

Tulip trees make great shade trees, growing tall and fairly quickly. When planting, make sure you pick a location that



can accommodate a tree of this size. They can grow 80-100' tall, and prefer full or part-sun. This tree blooms in May and June, though it may require 15 years or more before its first flowers appear. Although it can have problems with aphids and scale, it's fairly disease and pest-resistant. Fall foliage color is a brilliant yellow.



Photos by Cynthia Orlando, ODF

Tulip trees are lovely, and also fairly pest-resistant. (Leaves, left)

## news briefs

### Landowners advised to wait for natural cycles to control Tansy

Just like a year ago, ranchers, farmers and forestland owners in western Oregon this summer noticed patches of the telltale bright yellow flowers of tansy ragwort – a noxious weed once the scourge of the 1970s. “The cool wet spring and early summer was good for tansy, not so good for our bio-controls,” says Tim Butler, supervisor of the Oregon Department of Agriculture’s Noxious Weed Control Program. “However,” says Butler, “it’s all part of a natural cycle.”

As the tansy ragwort population grows, so do populations of flea beetles and cinnabar moths that feed on the weed. What to do meanwhile? Logging equipment and other vehicles should be thoroughly cleaned of soil with a high-volume hose before moving from infested to noninfested areas; where practical, introduction of competitive vegetation may also help. In the end, ODA believes the good insects will always maintain the upper hand.

For more information:

[www.oregon.gov/ODA/PLANT/WEEDS/profile\\_tansyragwort.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/PLANT/WEEDS/profile_tansyragwort.shtml)



Photo by Eric Coombs, ODA

Cinnabar moths like this one eventually get the upper hand with Tansy ragwort.

### New “Forests as Habitat” publication available

A new book by the Oregon Forests Resources Institute (OFRI) called “Oregon Forests as Habitat” offers forest landowners effective ways to improve wildlife habitat for targeted species. Using forestry techniques, landowners can enhance and even create wildlife habitat for birds, mammals and amphibians while managing lands for timber production.

For more info: [www.Oregonforests.org](http://www.Oregonforests.org) / 971.673.2948

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## ODF helps host two fire trainings

For the 15th consecutive year, ODF teamed up with the US Forest Service, BLM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde to host a week-long interagency Fire School in Sweet Home in June. Some 200 trainees learned the basics of fire behavior, safety, communications and leadership.

In July, “Wildfire 2011” was held at Clatsop County’s Camp Rilea. Some 85 firefighters received training to further their skills in wildland firefighting using the Incident Command System.



## From the State Forester



Doug Decker, State Forester

Public outreach is an important part of our job, and we’re stepping up our outreach efforts on a number of fronts.

Beginning later this year, we’ll reinstate a long-time agency tradition: the community leader visit. As the calendar allows, I’ll be making visits around the state,

speaking with legislators, county commissioners, the media, ODF employees, and others.

In recent months, I’ve spent a good deal of time on the road and in conversation with our stakeholders. A circuit of community visits will help cement our commitment to ongoing outreach.

Members of the Board of Forestry are also interested in reaching out, in conjunction with the community leader visits or in other forums. The Board’s recent update of

the Forestry Program for Oregon, our state’s overarching strategy for achieving sustainable forests, provides the perfect occasion.

We’re also stepping out in other ways. The Tillamook Forest Center is now on Facebook, at [www.facebook.com/tillamookforestcenteroregon](http://www.facebook.com/tillamookforestcenteroregon) and we’re looking to further expand our use of social media.

Oregon’s forests are a great story, and an enormous asset in many ways. The ongoing responsibility and challenge for all of us engaged in forest stewardship is to keep our forests healthy by investing in their management and by finding that right balance of social, economic and environmental values.

That requires keeping the communication lines open, and we’re committed to doing just that.

All the best,