

Forests

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Habitat project serves as dry run for ecosystem credits market

Kevin Weeks, ODF public affairs specialist

The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) recently concluded a pilot project to test the feasibility of having state-managed lands participate in the rapidly emerging ecosystem services credit trading market. This type of trading market compensates landowners through the “pricing” of natural assets (the benefits that people get from nature) as a commodity that can be bought, banked, traded, or otherwise accounted for.

During summer 2010, ODF partnered with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Tualatin River Watershed Council to place large wood into a one-mile reach of upper Gales Creek in Washington County. Thanks to an Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board grant, project partners were able to place approximately 100 logs within the stream channel and floodplain, as a part of planned thinning and timber sale activities on the ODF-managed land.

The pilot created two benefits — a “dry run” accounting model for how to promote potential new revenue opportunities for conserving forests, and improved stream habitat for fish.

Under Oregon law public agencies are not currently authorized to deal in ecosystem service credits, however, the project was carried through the full ecosystem credit estimation, verification, and registration cycle without the credits being purchased.

The stream improvement project costs for ODF were about \$90,000. Had the credits been openly traded as an ecosystem market security, the credits could have been purchased by the public for an estimated \$1.4 million. While no funds changed hands for the ecosystem credits in this test, ODF will continue to explore the potential for stream enhancement credits to generate revenue. 🌲



ODF received these certificates from Markit Environmental Registry declaring the credits out of market circulation.

Photo, top right: Logs in a Gales Creek stream channel are part of a fish habitat improvement project.

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Winter time means reforestation time

Kevin Weeks, ODF public affairs specialist

Replanting trees has been Oregon law since the 1971 Forest Practices Act required landowners to complete replanting of forests within two years following harvest.

Numbers of trees replanted depend on site characteristics, ODF-required density levels and the landowner's forest management plans; some Oregon forest owners opt to plant between 300 to 400 tree seedlings per acre, expecting to thin less productive trees a few years later.

Planting pointers

- Choose the appropriate site preparation method(s) for your land. Carefully plan ahead regarding soil type, slope direction, vegetation, wildlife and any pests.
- Plant conifer seedlings in western Oregon from January through March. In eastern Oregon, plant trees as soon as possible after snow melts and the ground thaws. Keep your seedlings cool and moist at all times.
- Site conditions will dictate the spacing between trees. In western Oregon, plan on spacing seedlings generally about ten feet apart; for central and eastern Oregon, trees are generally spaced about twelve feet apart. Be sure to think a few decades down the road when the crowns of trees will reach out several feet.
- Most gardeners will tell you plants require maintenance. Tree seedlings require enough water to thrive, as well as protection from grazing wildlife and from weeds seeking to compete for water, space and nutrients.
- Not every tree can grow anywhere in Oregon. Select the proper species and seedling stock-type for your area. Lastly, remember healthy trees will need the right mix of water, sunlight, temperature and nutrients.


ODF has additional information about seedlings, seed zones and locating nurseries at: www.oregon.gov/ODF/privateforests/ 

Photo by Bob Johnson, ODF



Photo courtesy OFRI

Replanting trees has been Oregon law since 1971. Not every tree can grow anywhere in Oregon so remember to select the proper species and stock for your area.



Norway spruce cones are the largest of any spruce.

Norway Spruce

(*Picea abies*)

Norway Spruce is widely planted in North America, especially in the northwestern, Pacific Coast, and Rocky Mountain states. Under good conditions, this large and popular conifer can grow 2-3 feet per year its first 25 years, and reach 115 - 180 feet in height. It makes a fine ornamental tree in parks and gardens but is not a tree for a small yard.

A native of Europe, Norway Spruce is sometimes called mountain spruce. On larger trees, foliage commonly hangs down from the main branches and cones are 4-8 inches long, the longest of any spruce. Needles are quadrangular, and dark green on all four sides. Norway spruce prefers moist, cool climates, requires little pruning, is not prone to breakage and makes an ideal windbreak. It's also the most disease-resistant spruce and is affected by few insects.

The Norwegian capital city of Oslo provides the cities of New York, Washington D.C., Edinburgh and London (Trafalgar Square) with a Norway Spruce each Christmas, mainly as a show of gratitude for the aid these countries provided during the Second World War. 🌲

Norway spruce is not suitable for a small yard but makes a fine ornamental tree in parks and large gardens.

news briefs



Tillamook Forest Center Update

The Tillamook Forest Center is currently closed for the winter season but reopens March 1. During this three-month closure, Center employees bring forest education programs to schoolchildren, particularly in Washington and Tillamook counties, perform much-needed building and grounds maintenance, and plan and prepare for the upcoming season's interpretive programs and events.

Although the Center is closed to visitors, like and follow the TFC on Facebook at:

www.facebook.com#!tillamookforestcenteroregon. 🌲

WOW Network sponsors workshop

Google Earth, Oregon Explorer, and a web soil survey were among the topics discussed at a Women Owning Woodlands (WOW) Network-sponsored



workshop held in Oregon City in December. About thirty women were in attendance. The WOW network was formed by OSU Extension Service and women woodland owners seeking to support the growing numbers of women taking on active woodland management roles.

For more info: womenowningwoodlands.blogspot.com 🌲



Find more articles and news at www.oregon.gov/odf



New Webcam

The Tillamook Forest Center has a new webcam that views the Wilson River, the center's suspension bridge and King's Mountain. Enjoy viewing the weather and seasons near the Center by visiting the new river cam at www.tillamookforestcenter.org.

From the State Forester



Doug Decker
State Forester

It's the turning of the year – a fitting occasion for reflection.

Despite these challenging economic times, 2011 will be remembered as a year when people from across the forestry community and beyond voiced support for our agency's work.

The Legislature validated that support, providing funds to rebuild and modernize our Private Forests Program; maintain our historical sharing of fire protection costs with landowners; and add some lands to the new Gilchrist State Forest, maintaining them as working forests.

At the end of the year, Governor Kitzhaber addressed the Board of Forestry, highlighting the need to view Oregon's diverse forests as a unified whole, and urging us to make Oregon's state forests a model for successful management of the much larger federal forests in the state.

The Governor's guidance does much to help define our way forward. Having updated its overarching strategic document, the Forestry Program for Oregon, the Board is poised to refresh its work plans, including its approach to oversight of our state forests.

The new year will most certainly bring challenges, particularly on the economic front. We will continue to reach out to our stakeholders, bring new voices into the forestry conversation, and seek improvements in all we do to keep forests healthy and working.

I invite you to join us in these endeavors, and wish you the best in the coming year.