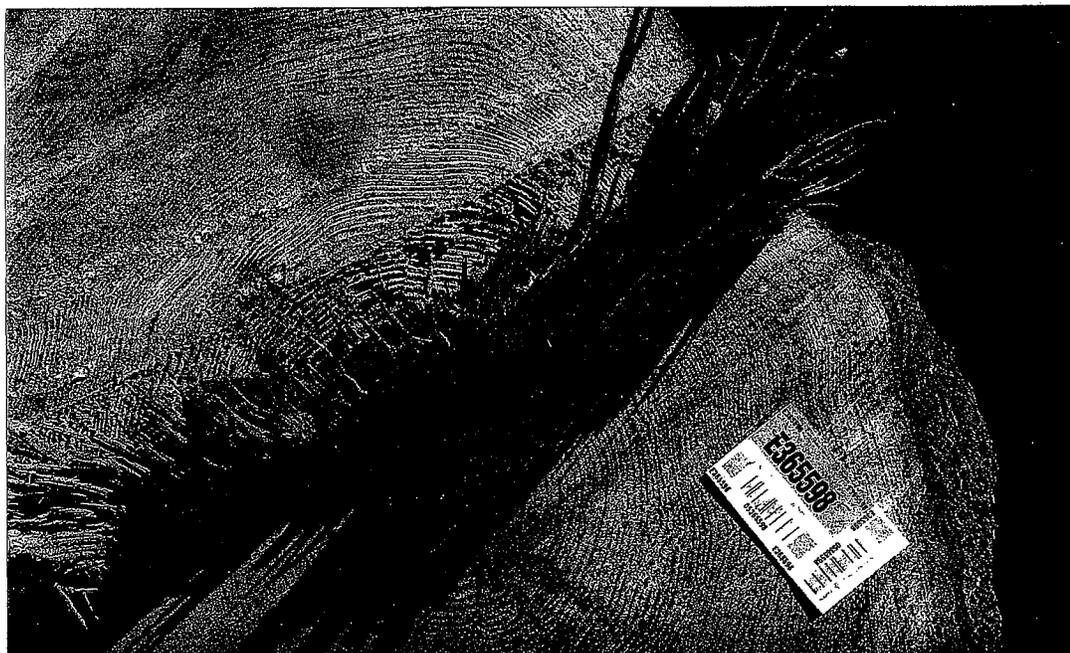


YOUR JOB. YOUR HOME. YOUR MONEY.



BENJAMIN BRINK/THE OREGONIAN

The green dot and tags indicate this log is part of a shipment of sustainably grown timber recently harvested for four Portland-area landowners. Managers for the owners of the sustainably managed forests consolidated logs into a single shipment that could be tracked more easily.

ECO-FRIENDLY TIMBER MAKES MORE GREEN

Milling changes make it easier for builders to be sure their products match their ethics, and for growers to cash in on the trend

By DYLAN RIVERA
THE OREGONIAN

Owners of some timberlands surrounding the Portland area have done their best to go green: They've nearly eliminated clear-cutting and herbicide use, and stopped cutting old-growth trees altogether.

But until this year, most of those timber owners couldn't leverage their ethic into more profit from the booming public demand for certified environmentally friendly building materials. They lacked an outlet to consumers willing to spend more for wood harvested under strict environmental standards.

So the timber owners have had to sell 80- to 100-year-old sustainably grown Douglas fir to sawmills that dumped them into the same pile as conventional logs from 40-year-old trees grown in industrial tree farms. The certified finished products were then lost in stacks of ordinary studs.

To advocates of sustainable forestry, mixing the certified and conventional lumber was like throwing organic pears into the same bin with nonorganic counterparts. The distinct origins of the certified wood got lost in the process.

"For it to lose its identity is just heartbreaking," said Scott Zimmerman, who is marketing environmental lumber for four Portland-area timberland owners.

To keep the local certified lumber from being lost again in stacks of conventional two-by-fours, Zimmerman recently arranged to

Please see **GREEN**, Page D3

SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY: FROM TREES TO LUMBER Certification of sustainably harvested lumber requires more than the usual inventory tracking. Here's how the supply chain works and how it's affected by the Forest Stewardship Council's program:



DOUG BEGHTEL/THE OREGONIAN

Timberland owners

Landowners have to meet strict growing guidelines, which include biodiversity, low pesticide use and harvest of trees when they're about 80 years old, rather than the industry standard 40 to 50 years.



SOL NEELMAN/THE OREGONIAN

Sawmills

Mills typically pile together logs from various sellers. Certification requires tracking of logs from certified forests and a separation of lumber into certified and noncertified inventories for sale to lumberyards.



ROGER JENSEN/THE OREGONIAN

Lumberyards

Certification requires lumberyards to segregate certified lumber from noncertified lumber.



ROSS D. FRANKLIN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Developer/homeowner

Builders using FSC-certified lumber can earn credits in green building certification programs. Homeowners can feel good about their commitment to the environment. The same is true of developers, who also can market houses or commercial buildings as "green" buildings under those standards.

Green: Some say trend could boost sagging market

Continued from Page D1

package logs from those landowners into a single 61-truckload shipment that he is shepherding from forest to finished product. The innovative arrangement calls for landowners to retain ownership of the logs through the milling process and sale of the finished product — mostly four-by-four and larger beams — as environmentally certified.

The struggle to build a connection between supply and demand for environmental lumber is emblematic of the obstacles facing the green building industry.

Energy-saving compact fluorescent light bulbs used to be rare but can now be found at many grocery stores. Wheatboard, a component of eco-friendly cabinetry with few suppliers, was in short supply after a key mill was knocked out by Hurricane Katrina, said Scott Lewis, principal of Brightworks, a Portland-based green building consultancy. Developers were left to scramble for a more distant replacement until another mill stepped in. "You really are watching market transformation right before your eyes, and it doesn't happen overnight," Lewis said.

Green gains steam

The move to devise standards for environmentally sensitive building practices is more than a decade in the making.

The Forest Stewardship Council, a nonprofit based in Bonn, Germany, that was an outgrowth of the 1992 World Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, developed the main environmental certification program for forest products. It sets regional standards for forest management in more than 40 countries based on environmental, economic and social values. Timberland managed using the system, which is certified by third-party inspectors annually, has reached 22.7 million acres in the United States.

Other rival certification programs have followed: The U.S. timber industry formed the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, a certification program that now encompasses 150 million acres. But Zimmerman's effort is focused on meeting the more challenging Forest Stewardship Council standards, which are favored by environmentalists and large home improvement retailers.

The FSC-certified lumber market has had a boost from national and regional green-building programs, such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design and Earth Advantage, that give developers points for using FSC-certified products.

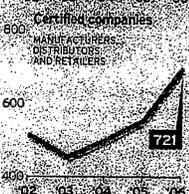
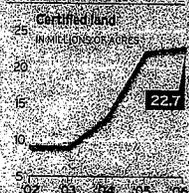
A high ranking brings environmental bragging rights to building tenants and homeowners, even if the certified lumber costs more and is of the same structural quality as noncertified lumber. Developers can hope those bragging rights will turn into higher financial returns.

The transformation of trees from eco-friendly forests into eco-friendly home-improvement products requires extensive tracking and participation from every element of the lumber supply chain to meet the stewardship council standards. Timberland owners, sawmills, lumberyards and builder-developers must all be involved. Closing gaps in the system is the key to



Clayton Day, a rough grader, decides whether a beam needs to be trimmed of flaws as it moves down a conveyor belt at Hambleton Lumber Co. in Washougal, Wash. Landowners who harvested older, sustainably grown trees asked Hambleton to cut as many thicker beams as possible, which are more scarce and valuable than two-by-fours. BENJAMIN BRINK THE OREGONIAN

U.S. eco-friendly Wood growing



Sources: Forest Stewardship Council
TED MITCHNER/THE OREGONIAN

"We didn't have a choice"

The change begins with the raw material of a forest — even one that generations of Portlanders assumed had been protected from logging.

Camp Namanu, a historical Camp Fire retreat near Sandy, is one showcase for the new environmentally sensitive approach to converting trees to wood products. For years, the Portland Camp Fire chapter cut logs on its 552-acre camp mainly in response to financial crises. Loggers made small clear cuts, with no replanting. The cuts were in areas hidden from public view to avoid the embarrassment of defacing a camp where children have played since the early 20th century.

To put an end to criticism from the camp's alumni and to get on more stable footing, Camp Namanu several years ago hired Barry Sims, an environmental forester who helped get the land certified in the FSC program.

"I was looking for a pragmatic middle ground that was sustainable," said Keith Thomajan, chief executive officer of the Camp Fire USA Portland Metro Council. "It would have a light environmental touch on the site and generate some revenue for the council on an ongoing basis."

That helped the environment, but not the burgeoning demand for eco-friendly lumber. The logs were sold into the commodity market, blended in with non-FSC-certified lumber.

That was because the nearest sawmill, certified to handle FSC logs, is about 100 miles away, on the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs reservation. The cost of trucking logs that distance would cut into profits for

Where to buy certified lumber

Availability of FSC-certified lumber for homeowners varies by location. Some flooring products might be easier to find than lumber and plywood.

Homeowners hiring a contractor to build a home should speak with the builder about FSC-certified products. To confirm a business is FSC certified or to request FSC building materials, see www.fscus.org and click on "Product Search" or "Certificates in U.S." For more local contacts see www.buildlocal.org and www.hfcp.org.

Several retailers in the Portland area sell the products, including some locations of Parr Lumber, Withers Lumber, Endura Wood Products, Environmental Building Supplies and Keith-Brown Building Materials. Some carry FSC products in stock, and others require special orders. Price differences can vary, but prepare to spend 5 percent to 20 percent more for FSC certified two-by-fours compared with conventional alternatives. Sources: EcoTrust, Forest Stewardship Council.

the Warm Springs mill, which makes lumber for use only as studs hidden behind walls, would also yield lower prices.

"We didn't have a choice," said Sims, with Trout Mountain Forestry, which manages the Camp Namanu and other sustainable timberlands. The mills are the backbone of the forest products industry, and if they're not participating then you don't have a choice.

A new way

Enter Zimmerman, a veteran forest products marketer who knew of Sims' frustration and proposed a short-term solution: change the business relationship between the timber owner and the sawmill.

The conventional supply chain calls for timberland owners to sell their logs to mills, where they're all piled together. Some mills might segregate Douglas fir from hemlock. But they wouldn't separate one landowner's logs from another's — because the mill owns them at that point.

FSC-certified sawmills segregate certified, environmentally grown logs and lumber from those that aren't. Without a nearby certified mill, Zimmerman hired Hambleton Lumber Co. of Washougal, Wash., to custom-cut the 61-truckload shipment, essentially taking over the mill's business for five days

Information about Sustainable Forestry

The Forest Stewardship Council, which runs the FSC certification program, www.fscus.org.

EcoTrust, a Portland environmental group that helps link timberland owners and others in the industry, www.ecotrust.org/forestry.

Sustainable Forestry Initiative, the U.S. forest products industry's standard for timberland management practices, www.sfi-program.org.

in late February. That way, no noncertified product would be in the mill to corrupt the shipment.

He sold the idea to Camp Fire and three other local timber owners, including the Oregon Parks Foundation and the Portland-area Renzema and Belton families.

"It's never been done in this manner, which empowers the landowner," said Kent Goodyear, director of forestry market connections for EcoTrust, the Portland-based conservation group that has lent its support to the arrangement.

Prompted by the shipment Zimmerman organized, Hambleton Lumber has decided to pursue FSC certification to handle future shipments of eco-friendly logs on its own. Owners believe it would bring more business at a time when lumber markets are depressed.

"We think that's where the market's going," said fake Hambleton, a vice president at the company started by his grandfather. "We're just going to jump out ahead of it."

Getting to market

But Zimmerman's job wasn't done — he had to get the finished product to buyers. Before the wood was milled, he contacted lumberyards and contractors to gauge their interest in the certified lumber. Knowing the timber could fetch a premium price, Zimmerman directed Hambleton to make as many thicker, more valuable beams as

possible instead of two-by-fours.

Those products will be welcome by the green-oriented remodeling do-it-yourselfers and custom home builders who have had to use conventionally grown lumber for large beams, said Augie Venezia, president of Fairfax Lumber and Hardware Co. in Fairfax, Calif.

"There are people out there who haven't built 100 percent FSC because not everything was readily available at the time they were building," said Venezia, who is buying some of the certified lumber. "But we're slowly getting there."

Renaissance Homes, one of the biggest Portland-area home builders and one of the largest developers of eco-friendly homes in the Earth Advantage "green building" program, has never used FSC-certified lumber.

While Renaissance's houses include an array of energy-saving features and indoor air quality improvements that exceed industry standard practice, the company said, eco-friendly lumber has been both scarce and expensive.

The company's outlook could change with this new shipment. Voss Framing, which frames houses for Renaissance, has ordered some of the lumber in the shipment, Zimmerman said. And Renaissance, which builds about 350 homes a year, is rewriting engineering plans for its home designs to make it feasible to build homes entirely with FSC-certified lumber, said Karl Lange, manager of building science for Renaissance.

To offset for the higher-priced certified lumber, new plans will reduce waste, require fewer studs per house, and use web-like joists that use less lumber while generating identical or better performance, Lange said.

When he's done, Lange envisions taking buyers to houses under construction and showing them a stamp that indicates the studs and other parts are made of FSC-certified lumber. Though the studs and most other wood parts may be invisible in the end, their origins matter to consumers, he said.

What it all means, Zimmerman says, is that the market is doing its job — he's just the guy that brought supply and demand together.

"How many times in life do you get to do the right thing for the right reasons and make money doing it?"

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January 8, 2008

Members of the Board of Forestry:

Steven Hobbs, Chairman
Barbara Craig
Larry Guistina
Peter Hayes
William Hutchison
Calvin Mukumoto
Jennifer Phillippi

Dear Chairman and Members of the Board of Forestry,

The Cascadia Region Green Building Council is a bioregional and cross-disciplinary organization that advocates for the widespread adoption of sustainable building practices. We are pleased to say that Oregon is an international leader in sustainable building. At last count, Oregon ranked 4th in the nation in the number of LEED certified green buildings, Portland ranked 1st among cities in the number of LEED certified buildings, and Oregon is home to over 1,100 LEED Accredited Professionals, demonstrating deep expertise in sustainable building principles. This is in a time when the number of LEED certified buildings is growing exponentially every year. Now well over 1,000 buildings are certified with about 8,000 registered. As you likely know, the LEED rating system recognizes the highest levels of performance in building systems and materials, thus recognizes Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood and wood products.

The burgeoning green building market is fueling a growing demand not only for increased quantity of sustainably harvested and manufactured materials, but also for higher quality and heightened responsibility in areas of social and environmental concern. As an example, Oregon may very well become home to the first Living Building, a building that produces more energy than it consumes and contains no toxic materials. In the coming year, a new material rating protocol named Pharos will be released, which will revolutionize the way consumers make purchasing decisions by providing quantitative information about such things as a product's carbon footprint, consumer safety, ecological responsibility, and community stewardship.

Oregon is well positioned to demonstrate leadership in the management of its key natural resource and capitalize upon that leadership in a time of rising consumer awareness. Therefore, we encourage the Board of Forestry to pursue FSC certification of state-owned forestlands. We believe FSC certification of state-owned forestlands will seize an economic opportunity in providing a more valuable product to the green building community. It is an effort that will support current FSC certified forestlands by demonstrating commitment to FSC to the entire forest products supply chain. Finally, we believe FSC certification provides a clear path to balance environmental stewardship, with responsibility to communities, and economic prosperity.

We appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this topic that is of great importance to the people, ecology, and economy in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Gina L. Franzosa
Oregon State Director

A CHAPTER OF THE US & CANADA
GREEN BUILDING COUNCILS

