Message from the District Forester

I am pleased to bring you the 2021 annual report for the West Oregon District. Before I get started with the summary of the year’s activities, I want to say thank you to the district staff who helped compile this report as well as Debbi Weiler for putting the final package together.

Staff changes continue to be inevitable. 2021 was no different as the district experienced the retirement of long-time employee, Ted Erdmann. Ted had over 30 years of service with ODF with all of that on the West Oregon District. He dedicated his career to public service and was instrumental to the agency amongst all aspects of the business we conduct. Ted retired as the Philomath Protection Unit Forester and left big shoes to fill. In addition to Ted, both Jennifer Logsdon and Elise Loewen left to pursue other endeavors. Both worked in our AS1 positions in Philomath and supported our district dispatch and provided administrative support amongst the field programs. Debbi Weiler was hired on in September to replace Elise. Trask Hodgson was also hired on in November to replace Eric Jacobs as the Community Wildfire Forester in Dallas. Eric promoted to a Stewardship Forester out of Forest Grove. Both Debbi and Trask will be valuable additions in their new roles.

We saw the global pandemic continue through 2021 and the concept of social distancing, use of facemasks, and virtual meetings have become the norm. At the same time, we are looking forward to offices reopening to the public and getting back to “normal”, whatever that may look like sometime in 2022.

The 2021 fire season had lots of potential due to an unusually dry spring, a historic heat dome event which saw temperatures climb to 115 degrees in the early part of the summer, and minimal rain until fall arrived. The 1000-hour fuels were at or below the historical average low for the duration of the season. With all of this though, we still had our lowest acres burned and lowest cost for fire suppression in our 10-year average. Unfortunately, statewide was a different story and as always, we provided numerous staff with over 700 days spent off-district to contribute to the complete and coordinated effort.

The State Forest program continued with its work as outlined in the district’s current Implementation Plan. Management for, and around some of the T&E species, continued to be a challenge for the district. And the Forest Resources program (formerly Private Forests) saw activity pick-up across the district in 2021 for much of the year.

I would like to commend the staff for all the hard work they have put in during 2021 to ensure daily business was getting completed while still dealing with the unknowns the pandemic has provided us in our everyday lives. I also want to say thank you to their families for the support they give especially through the challenging fire season statewide.

Finally, the district would not be successful without the strong partnerships we have with the West Oregon Forest Protective Association, forest landowners, operators, and our many other partners and cooperators. I would like to thank each of them for their continued dedication and professionalism.

Thank you all - Michael Curran
Personnel Updates

This year the West Oregon State Forest team welcomed two new FMT’s while saying goodbye to two old ones. Elliot Lowry has been a seasonal FMT for the last 3 years but has taken the extended Forest Officer position in Philomath. Michael Loewen has been a seasonal FMT for the last 3 years and will be taking the extended Forest Officer position in Dallas. Jacob Ruhl and Jessica Westcott both began their first season as seasonal FMT’s on November 1. Jacob is a familiar face in Philomath where he has spent the 20 and 21 fire seasons as one of our Forest Officers and as the Philomath Community Wildfire Forester for the 2020 winter season. Jacob also spent a few years as a fire suppression specialist on the Philomath crew. Jessica Westcott comes to us from the Tillamook district where she was a Recreation Specialist for the last 3 summer seasons.

Cody Valencia received his 5 year service award.

Evelyn was recognized for Outstanding Public Service

She was recently nominated by ET to be recognized by the Governor for her outstanding work during public service appreciation week in May. The qualities this year they were looking at to determine who would be nominated was a true Ambassador of Public Service and who has persevered in the face of adversity and exemplified resilience in service to Oregon this past year. Evelyn is well deserving of this from her daily work within State Forests as well her going above and beyond this past fire season with all of the time spent away from home while going from fire to fire to fire.

Special Forest Products

Due to a limited number of available units, personal firewood permit sales were again low with a total of 49 sold permits. Along with personal firewood permits, the District sold 60,000 pounds of Salal, 250 pounds of edible fungi and 10 cords of commercial firewood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Number of Permits Issued</th>
<th>Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salal</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Use Firewood</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>$980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon Grape</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mushrooms</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Firewood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>81</strong></td>
<td><strong>$4,280</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Evelyn was recognized for Outstanding Public Service
Timber Sales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timber Sales</th>
<th>2021 Timber Sales Sold *</th>
<th>Estimated Net Revenue</th>
<th>Timber Sales Harvested</th>
<th>Volume (MMBF) *</th>
<th>Net Revenue during 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clearcut</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>$ 4,829,994</td>
<td>Clearcut</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinning</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>$ 0</td>
<td>Thinning</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combo (CC/Thin)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>$ 1,190,378</td>
<td>Combo (CC/Thin)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Storm Cleanup</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>$ 93,491</td>
<td>Post Storm Cleanup</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>$ 6,113,863</td>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Portions of these sales were harvested during 2020 or were continued into 2022.

**Green Acres**

**Planting**

The district continues to work efficiently with the Western Lane District in a joint tree planting contract. This joint venture has provided many advantages to both districts and the contractor, which include optimal planting acreage and operational flexibility. West Oregon District initial-planted 324 acres (129,000 seedlings), and 6 acres (600 seedlings) were interplanted by the Mill Creek AIC crew.

Reforestation and Young Stand Management

### Number of Seedlings planted in 2021

- **Douglas-fir**
- **Western redcedar**
- **Western hemlock**

**Recreation**

The Black Rock Mountain Bike Association (BRMBA) and the Mt. Baber ATV Club continue to hold organized events this year. There were no additions to either trail systems however, due to winter storm events, the Black Rock trail system was closed for several months while debris made trails unsafe and as operations were conducted to remove fallen and broken trees.
Mill Creek Crew

In addition to interplanting, the crew completed 62 acres of Mountain Beaver trapping, cleared 7 miles of roadway from storm damage, conducted tube maintenance on 17 acres worth of Western Redcedar, bud capped a 9 acre unit, and covered slash piles on 30 acres. They also performed facility maintenance for 3 days at the Mount Baber ATV staging area. The Mill Creek facility was closed in 2021, and operations have moved to Santiam Correctional Institution.

Road Maintenance Contract

$34,565 were used for a road maintenance contract to improve and maintain approximately 12.4 miles of road in the Cline Creek Basin. Work done includes, adding rock to road surfaces, roadside brushing, waterbar construction, reopening roads and sod removal.

Timber Harvest

Timber prices were lower early in the year then came back strong and remained high despite the influx of timber harvested from wildfire areas hitting the market. Operations ramped up quickly on quite a few timber sales to capture the high pond values.

2021 Wind and Ice Storms

Winter weather had been pretty ornery this last year resulting in windthrow and ice damage across the district including the Black Rock block, home to the world renowned Black Rock Mountain Biking Trails. The trails were closed for several months until a post storm safety cleanup timber sale could be organized and conducted. Along with the Black Rock post storm safety cleanup, one more post storm safety cleanup sale was prepared and sold. In areas where the size of windthrow was bigger than 10 inches, MCH pods were set up to deter bark beetles from aggregating to these areas and causing a localized outbreak. These pods release an anti-aggregation pheromone that the beetles read as “No Vacancy” for the area causing them to continue in their search for downed wood.

Fire

The 2021 fire season was almost as harsh as the last adding the Bootleg fire as the third largest wildfire in Oregon’s history. Other fires like the Fox Complex, Cutoff, Skyline Ridge Complex and Elbow Creek kept ODF IMTs on their toes as the coronavirus pandemic continued. All together, State Forest personnel logged 124 days of off district assignments. On district, State Forest staff helped fill-in for the local IA fire crew for 2 days.
On the heels of the 2020 Labor Day fire event and an ice storm in early 2021, the Private Forests program (now known as the Forest Resources Division) in the district had a busy year. The Toledo Unit had continued clean up activities from the Echo Mtn Complex, the Dallas Unit bared the brunt of the ice storm damage and its subsequent cleanup, and the Philomath unit was heavily involved with federal assistance programs. A large land sale between two of our main industrial customers shifted harvest plans and brought some new faces to the area. With 2021 being yet another busy fire season, the District Stewardship Foresters also chipped in to help with both the local and statewide fire suppression effort.

The West Oregon District had 1,632 new notifications for the 2021 calendar year, which was a slight increase from 2020 (1583 new NOAPs). In general, we saw salvage operations from industrial landowners in the Cascades begin to move back to the coast range into green wood.

**Toledo Unit**

Until April of 2021, Leo Williamson continued lending his help to the North Cascade District assisting with Labor Day salvage operations. After arriving back in the West Oregon District full time, his stewardship activities on the coast were in full swing with folks planning harvests, gearing up for the in-water work season, helping a few local water planning groups, and chipping in on the statewide fire effort. Joe Koch covered Leo's area in his absence to help keep things running smoothly, while still helping landowners in the Otis area with fire recovery. A deep-seated and ongoing landslide in the Fall Creek drainage in South Lincoln County held stable though the year after a major failure in late 2020.

**Philomath Unit**

Bill Mahr had another successful year in the Philomath Unit. In addition to core duties as a Stewardship Forester, Bill was involved in fire investigation and several NRCS/CREP projects. One complex logging operation earmarked the year with challenges related to high landslide risk above Hwy 34. Bill was able to successfully work with the landowner, logger, and ODF geologist to come up with a harvest plan that would minimize downslope public safety risk while still facilitating management of the property.
Dallas Unit

As mentioned above, the Dallas Unit with Dave Thompson and Jennifer Erdmann endured the worst of the ice storm damage for the district. There were many landowners who had to deal with stand level damage and challenging harvest logistics. Dave and Jennifer were able to help many of the affected landowners work through the notification process and successfully manage their damaged stands. Continuing the spirit of supporting our private landowners, Dave successfully administered several NRCS funded rehabilitation projects.
Currently, the District manages five fuels reduction grant programs. These programs have enabled us to provide wildfire and defensible space education as well as offer financial assistance to landowners for fuels reduction treatments throughout Lincoln, Benton, Polk and Yamhill Counties.

At the beginning of the year, Eric Jacobs began his transition from Community Wildfire Forester to Stewardship Forester in Forest Grove. During this the focus was primarily on E-board money that was aimed at cleaning up ice storm damage. In November Trask Hodgson was hired to fill the CWF position behind Eric Jacobs, also working out of the West Oregon Dallas office. His starting focus was on closing out the soon to expire Soap Creek/Gooseneck project, as well as assisting Landowners & Firewise communities with SB762 proposals.

Current projects being administered are as follows:

**E-Board:** The West Oregon District oversaw two E-Board projects throughout the first half of 2021. This included the Gooseneck/Soap Creek Extension and the Greater Polk County Wildfire Resilient Forests projects. In completing these projects, the District oversaw a combined 137 acres of fuels reduction and forest health improvement projects. This was an accomplishment of 122% of the original projected goal that was aimed at treating 111 acres. With these funds, the District was able to continue providing capacity to its fuels reduction program, assist with fire prevention and education, and directly assist 15 new landowners with implementing fuels reduction projects through cost-share and rebate projects.
Senate Bill 762: Applications went live early December 2021, proposals due on the 14th & 21st of January 2022. We had two Small Forestland grants totaling 154.5 acres of treatment approved in Polk County. We also had two Small Forestland Firewise grants for the Chinook and Ridge-wood Estates communities approved in Benton County. These will be finalized and ready to start work in second half of February.

Panther Creek / Eckman: Active as of 08/25/2021 - 12/31/24 with the goal of completing 150 acres of fuels reduction and defensible space treatment on private forestlands in Lincoln County. No active projects.

Soap Creek / Gooseneck: This project began October 2017 with the goal of completing 165 acres of fuels reduction and defensible space treatment on private forestlands in Benton and Polk Counties. At year end, this project has accomplished 93% (154 acres) of that goal through the completion of 66 projects.

Wren / Grand Ronde: This project began October 2018 with the goal of completing 165 acres of fuels reduction treatment on private forestlands in Benton, Polk and Yamhill Counties. At year end, this project has accomplished 63% (104) of that goal through the completion of 38 projects.

Monroe / Fishback: This project began October 2019 with the goal of completing 165 acres of fuels reduction treatment on private forestlands in Benton and Polk Counties. At year end, this project has accomplished 34% (55.5 acres) of that goal through the completion of 26 projects.

Currently, the Philomath Wildfire Forester position remains vacant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant</th>
<th>Fuels Reduction Acres</th>
<th>Defensible Space Acres</th>
<th>Total Acres</th>
<th>Landowner Investment Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-Board</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>1105.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soap Creek / Gooseneck</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>296.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wren / Grand Ronde</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monroe / Fishback</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>2,166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Totals</td>
<td>161.5</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>195.5</td>
<td>4476.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OSU Peavy Hall visit
2021 started out with a wet winter in West Oregon but when March and April rolled around the sun came out and the rain was minimal. With a few escaped debris burns during this time, fire departments put in local burn bans to help moderate the potential fire runs. Even with the burn bans, district staff responded to 25+ fires during April thru June. On June 13th the fire crews started, with nine new crew members, six of those were at the Philomath office. With the covid-19 pandemic still a major concern for getting together, the Mid-Willamette Valley Fire school was cancelled once again. We opted to conduct all the training at the district level to have the crew members get to know everyone. West Oregon started Fire Season/Public Use restrictions on June 16th. With the crews participating in training the fire activity began to pickup statewide and we sent our first engine rotation to the Cutoff fire in Klamath-Lake District on June 19th along with members from ODF Team 1. The end of June brought a heat dome with record breaking temperatures and low humidity, even with those values we responded to a half dozen fires that ranged from debris burning to downed powerlines. On July 4th at around 330 in the afternoon 10 miles West of Alsea, the Maple fire started from what is most likely fireworks launched from a passing car, engines from all three units responded to the fire to help with suppression. Though not very big (.65 acres) the fire was very visible from Hwy 34 and very steep, crews were engaged for 2-3 days in the mop-up effort. The rest of July and August was near normal for fire runs in the district, and for the most part we had 2-3 engines off district at any one time helping with the overall statewide effort. September started warm and dry, on the 3rd the Toledo unit responded to a fire out Hwy 229 near Ojalla Rd and while responding to that fire another fire started roughly 7 miles north on Hwy 229. With our engine move-up already started, the engines from Dallas and Philomath that
were already in route to help with the first fire were diverted to the second fire. The Ojalla Rd. fire was caught quickly at .50 acres, the Hwy 229 fire grew to almost 3 acres before crews were able to get a trail around it. The middle of September brought some minor relief in the form of rain but was very short lived with Corvallis Fire Dept. requesting our help with an escaped debris pile at Country Club Dr and Hwy 20/34, with the threat to homes and other structures and the fire dept requesting a crew or dozer and a helicopter, we sent engines from Philomath and Dallas along with a supervisor to help with any ordering needs. The fire was stopped at nearly 5 acres with no homes or structures lost. The end of September started to rain and Fire season/Regulated Use was terminated October 5th. Overall Fire Season was 111 days with 37 Stat fires, 10 Non-Stat, and 83 NFCA’s.

We completed 2 District projects in 2021. We are proud to announce the final stage of installation and testing of our new Chandler weather station is complete. We are also thrilled to announce our new radio relay station is up and has passed testing on Laurel Mtn.
Training Local Operators on Fire Shelter Deployment

Cause

Effect

Hwy 34 Cop Car Fire
As part of Oregon Department of Forestry’s complete and coordinated system, the West Oregon District supports the Fire Protection Program by sending resources off district. This is a good way to gain valuable experience and knowledge from others within our organization. During these times that our staff are off district, their co-workers step up and help keep things running smoothly in their absence. It truly takes a wonderful team to be able to support one another in such a strong way.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days Spent Off District</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff</strong></td>
<td>Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Staff</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasonal Firefighters</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>704</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, the 2021 smoke management numbers show a decrease in acreage/tonnage accomplished when compared to 2020, with the exception of the Toledo unit. A combination of post-fire cleanup in the Toledo unit, and landowners changing harvest plans likely explains this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2021 Slash Burning &amp; Smoke Management</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>District Smoke Stats</strong></td>
<td>Registered Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philomath</td>
<td>1,939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>4,143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toledo</td>
<td>4,408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>District Totals</strong></td>
<td>10,490</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jenifer Logsdon left ODF to be a stay-at-home mom and have more time with her family.
Elise Loewen left ODF to go work for a school district and have more summer time with her family.
Steph Vallancey was hired as a temp to cover dispatch.
Debbi Weiler was hired in September to replace Elise.

Recognized Service Awards in 2021

Cody Valencia — 5 Years
Trask Hodgson — 10 Years
Michael Curran — 10 Years (Really it’s like 16, but he left for 2 years)
Bryce Rennie — 10 Years
Joe Koch — 15 Years
Mike Loewen — 15 Years
Ted Erdmann — 35 Years (Then he retires and leaves us!)

Just in 2021, we recognized a combined total of 100 years of service, that is an outstanding number. Congrats to all listed above.

Ted Erdmann has decided to hang up his hat and retire!
He retired on December 31st, 2021 after completing 35 years with the agency!
We all wish Ted a wonderful retirement and hope he stops by during fire season to be our backup dispatcher!

Been training for this day!
Lighter Side of 2021

Do it like this!

No worries! I’ll just sleep here tonight ;)}
NEW Chandler Weather Station

**Installed**

**October 2021**

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**Board of Directors**

Jeff DeRoss, Hancock Forest Mgmt., President
Dale Claassen, Hampton Lumber, Vice President
Luke Bergey, Miami Corporation, Treasurer
Jenifer Logsdon, Secretary

**Directors**

Lee Miller, Miller Land and Timber
Nic Dahl, Nicholas & Megan Dahl LLC
Tim Tompkins, Weyerhaeuser
Randy Hereford, Starker Forests, Inc.
Ed Easterling, Crestmont Farm
Mari Kramer, Confederated Tribes of Siletz

**District Forester**

Michael Curran

**Advisory Director**

Andy White, ODF

**Unit Forester**

Kyle Williams, OFIC

**Unit Forester**

Ted Erdmann, Philomath

**Unit Forester**

Kristin Babbs, KOG

**Unit Forester**

Matt Thomas, Toledo

**Unit Forester**

Nancy Taylor, ODFW

**Unit Forester**

Jeff Classen, Dallas

**Unit Forester**

Dan Eddy, USFS/BLM

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**WOFPA Members**

Barclay Family Trust
BLM
Carr Forest Resources
Cafferata Family Forest, LLC
Chinquapin Point Tree Farm
Coast Range Conifers, LLC
Conf. Tribes of Grand Ronde
Conf. Tribes of Siletz
Crestmont Farm
Freres Lumber Co. Inc.
Georgia-Pacific West
Giustina Resources
Hampton Lumber
Hancock Forest Mgmt.
Hukari Family Forests
Hull-Oakes Lumber Co.
Miami Corp.
Miller Land and Timber
Nicholas & Megan Dahl LLC
Jeralyn N’brien Living Trust
OSU Research Forests
Rose Esbenshade
Shroeder and O’Neill
Smith Hill Properties, Inc.
Springer Tree Farm
Starker Forests, Inc.
Stimson Lumber Company
Dian and Lance Stein
Pacific West Timber Company LLC c/o Campbell Global
Thompson Tree Farm
Wakefield Farms, LLC
Weyerhaeuser Company
Widow Creek Tree Farm
Van Eck Forest Foundation