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FOREST RESTORATION NEWS

Periodic and brief updates on federal forest restoration from an Oregon perspective.



Restoration gains momentum, starts to show results

The Oregon legislature's \$2.88 million package to help ramp up eastside federal forest restoration is one sign of momentum toward this important goal, and the U.S. Forest Service has committed additional resources. Community leaders and non-profit groups are also hard at work, and we're seeing results. From projects on the ground to commitments for investments in mills and much-needed boosts for rural communities, things are happening for healthier eastside national forests.

Seasonal firefighters, state-federal partnerships get restoration projects moving

Seasonal firefighters employed by the Oregon Department of Forestry started immediately on restoration projects in the Malheur and Ochoco National Forests, once off the firefighting front lines. Funds from ODF's Federal Forest Health package are being used to keep these boots on the ground for another couple of months before snow arrives later this fall. Prior to the start of fire season, ODF was able to bring these seasonal positions on one month earlier than normal, and is currently exploring the potential for other state employee contributions under a Good Neighbor Authority passed as part of the 2014 Farm Bill.



LIDAR provides data for large forest health projects

As the Forest Service plans for large-scale forest health projects, a broader view of the landscape is necessary. Oregon Departments of Forestry and Geology and Mineral Industries staff took to the air, contracting a flight to scan 460,000 acres of forestland in the Blue Mountain region with this imaging technology. This scan will test new methods for acquiring stand-level and tree data, and demonstrates efficient planning projects already underway. To date, very little Forest Service land in the Blue Mountains has LIDAR coverage, while others like the Deschutes National Forest have been fully scanned.



Partnering for more investment in forest health

Responding to the Oregon legislature's recent investment in national forests, the Forest Service's Regional Office committed \$8.8 million on top of current annual budgets in the Blue Mountain region to accelerate implementation of forest health work. The Forest Service committed to a three-year period, and shares Oregon's commitment to innovative planning.

The Department of Forestry is also advancing a

budget package for the 2015-17 biennium to amplify partnerships with the Forest Service and local collaborative groups.

Restoring Oregon's national forests together

Commitment to partnership and a spirit of collaboration have steered the success of these projects, and on-the-ground work is both taking shape and producing results. Collaborative groups are key to this success, and the state's investment includes \$600,000 to support these groups in eastern Oregon. These groups are taking on the tough task of finding common ground on work that makes these real results possible.

Others can also receive these updates by e-mailing Tony Andersen at tandersen@odf.state.or.us

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