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Bluesletter

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE BLUES NETWORK

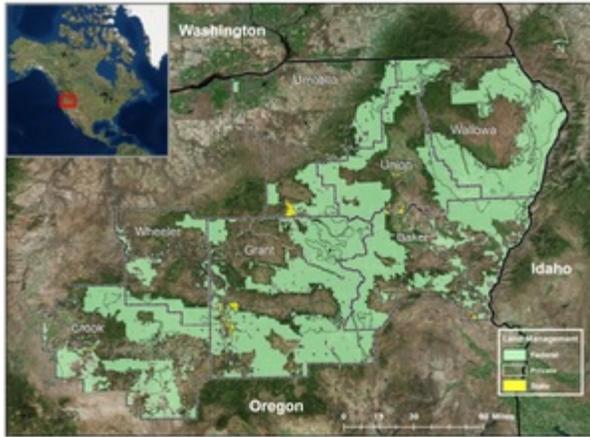
The Blues Network shares science innovations, policy updates, and opportunities for peer-to-peer learning that enhance collaborative forest restoration work in eastern Oregon.

Features in Forest Innovations

New in research: "Drier Conditions, More Wildfire, and Heightened Concerns about Forest Management in Eastern Oregon"

Forests in Eastern Oregon were recently the focus of an exciting research study led by the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire.

FIGURE 1. STUDY REGION—SEVEN COUNTIES IN THE BLUE MOUNTAIN PROVINCE IN EASTERN OREGON



Source: ESRI, U.S. Forest Service

The researchers found that forests in Northeast Oregon are experiencing warmer, drier, conditions that coincide with higher severity forest fires. Rising summer temperatures in eastern Oregon have recently been accompanied by increasing dryness and drought, which is likely to significantly affect the forests and communities of the Blue Mountains.

In addition to the climate patterns in the Blue Mountains, researchers gathered data about perceptions of forest health and climate change among communities in

Eastern Oregon. A survey of the general public showed that more than half of the respondents felt that forests are less healthy now than 20 years ago.

However, researchers also found that public opinion about climate change, similar to elsewhere in the United States, is still deeply divided along partisan lines.

When asked about what implications this has on forest collaborative work, Nils Christofferson, Executive Director of Wallowa Resources and collaborator on the project, suggested that forest collaboratives should focus on how they connect with people.

"The underlying message is nothing new," says Nils. "The climate records for northeast Oregon distinctly show that both summer and annual temperatures have been increasing since 1895. The rise in temperature is not steady – it oscillates between hot and cold years, but the average annual and average summer temperatures are clearly increasing over time. High summer temperatures generally correspond with bigger fire seasons."

Nils goes on to state, "The challenge and opportunity for forest collaboratives is to consider what we can do to mitigate the effects of these regional trends, improve forest health and protect our communities. That

KEY FINDINGS



Eastern Oregon is experiencing warmer, drier conditions and increased numbers of wildfires.



Surveys of the Oregon public find that forest health and wildfire threats are widely shared concerns.



The more knowledgeable residents say they are about forest management, the more likely they are to say that forests are becoming less healthy.



Majorities support active forest management (forest thinning, surface fuel reduction) and restoration to reduce the likelihood of high-severity wildfires that would damage forest resources and threaten local communities.

focus is more constructive than debating whether global climate change is occurring or its causes. These are the social and political science issues worth exploring.”

The research, funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, was conducted by a team from UNH, Oregon State University, University of Colorado, Boulder, University of Louisville and Wallowa Resources led by Joel Hartter, a faculty fellow at the Carsey School. The Carsey School of Public Policy conducts research, leadership development, and engaged scholarship relevant to public policy. They address pressing challenges, striving for innovative, responsive, and equitable solutions at all levels of government and in the for-profit and nonprofit sectors.

The authors are Joel Hartter, Lawrence Hamilton, Mark Ducey, Angela E. Boag, Nils D. Christoffersen, Ethan P. Belair , Paul T. Oester, Michael W. Palace, and Forrest Stevens.

[Click here for a debrief of the paper](#)

[Click here for the full paper](#)

Policy Corner

Good Neighbor Authority / Upcoming Information Session

Overview

The Good Neighbor Authority allows the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to enter into cooperative agreements or contracts with states to allow the states to perform watershed restoration and forest management services on designated federal lands.

The Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management retain review and decision-making authority, but state agencies can provide additional capacity for project contracting and implementation. Both federal and state funds can be used for project implementation, expanding both the human and financial resources available to increase management and stewardship activity on federal lands.

Link to Forest Collaboratives

Through the Good Neighbor Authority, states have the opportunity to help advance collaborative work on federal public lands, and the Forest Service can benefit from increased public partnerships and capacity.



With regards to forest collaboratives in Oregon, Good Neighbor Authority is a tool that can achieve the following outcomes:

- Efficiencies in contracting and project implementation.
- Investment of project receipts to accomplish service work, increase commercial product outputs, and contribute to future project development and analysis.
- Additional sources of revenue for project development and management activities.

There are 3 current Supplemental Project Agreements for Good Neighbor Authority in Oregon, and the Federal Forest Restoration Program provides agency staffing and funding to develop future projects.

If you would like to learn more, please consider attending or calling in to the next Federal Forest Working Group meeting, which will focus on Good Neighbor Authority.

The meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 9, 2017, from 12:30 – 4:00 pm. Please email Pete Dalke at dalke@pdx.edu for more information about the meeting.

Events

December 5–7, 2017 / RVCC Annual Meeting / Troutdale, Oregon (Opportunity for participants to connect, engage, inspire, and develop solutions with partners working on community-based conservation and rural economic development across the West) [Click here for more information.](#)

April 5–6, 2018 / Pacific Northwest Forest Collaboratives Workshop / Hood River, Oregon (Save the Date!)

News

[Oregon Forest Thinning Project Saved Homes but Highlights Obstacles](#)

[Click here to check out Northwest Fire Science Consortium's amazing story map](#)

Research News

[Comparison of USDA Forest Service and Stakeholder Motivations and Experiences in Collaborative Federal Forest Governance in the Western United States](#) by Emily Jane Davis, Eric White, Lee Cerveney, David Seescholtz, Meagan Nuss and Donald Ulrich

[Historical perspective on the influence of wildfire policy, law, and informal institutions on management and forest resilience in a multiownership, frequent-fire, coupled human and natural system in Oregon, USA.](#) by Steen-Adams, M. M., S. Charnley, and M. D. Adams. 2017.

[Cover of tall trees best predicts California spotted owl habitat](#) by Malcom North.

Collaboratives Information

Wallowa Whitman Forest Collaborative – Meets fourth Wednesday of each month in La Grande
Contact: jeff@wallowaresources.org

Umatilla Forest Collaborative Group – Meets fourth Thursday of each month in Pendleton
Contact: jeff@wallowaresources.org

Harney County Restoration Collaborative – Meets fourth Tuesday of each month in Burns
Contact: jksouthw@centurytel.net

Blue Mountains Forest Partners – Meets third Wednesday–Friday of each month John
Day Contact: bmfp06@gmail.com

Ochoco Forest Restoration Collaborative – Meets third Tuesday of each month in Prineville
Contact: vediger@coic.org

If you would like to get involved with the Blues Network or have questions, please contact Kendal Martel at [\(936\) 671-3523](tel:936-671-3523) or kmartel@sustainablenorthwest.org