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## **Washington, D.C./Congressional Updates**

*Brink Testifies before House Committee.* California Forestry Association’s Steve Brink testified at a May 17 House Natural Resources Federal Lands Subcommittee oversight hearing entitled “Seeking Better Management of America’s Overgrown and Fire-Prone National Forests.” As usual, Steve provided a wealth of information outlining how a lack of active forest management has contributed to the massive forest health crisis threatening federal – and by extension private – forests in California. He testified about the need to significantly increase federal forest management activities to improve forest resiliency, reduce the spread of insect infestations, and minimize the threat of catastrophic wildfires.

Other witnesses at the hearing included professors from South Dakota State University and the University of Colorado Boulder, as well as the Executive Director of a Mississippi wildlife organization. A consistent theme of the hearing was support for increased forest management and thinning, although the University of Colorado professor believed efforts should be limited to reducing fire risk near communities. The archived webcast of the hearing, the full witness list, and written testimony can be found at the Committee’s [website](#).

*AFRC’s Lawson Fite Set to Testify Next.* On June 8, the Federal Lands Subcommittee will hold a second oversight hearing to explore how obstructionist litigation and burdensome regulations stymie efforts to manage overgrown, fire-prone federal forests. Lawson Fite, AFRC’s General Counsel, has been invited to provide testimony before the Committee. Lawson’s extensive litigation experience – ranging from the U.S. Department of Justice to defending federal forest management projects on behalf of AFRC members – allows him to provide a unique overview of the problem and potential legislative solutions. The Minority witness will be Susan Jane Brown, an environmental attorney with the Western Environmental Law Center in Oregon. The hearing will be held at 2:00 p.m. Eastern/11:00 a.m. Pacific and can be streamed live via the Committee’s [website](#).

Following the June 8 hearing, we expect the House Natural Resources Committee to begin moving comprehensive federal forest reform legislation. The legislation will likely contain some of the provisions that were included in the Resilient Federal Forests Act (HR 2647 – Rep. Westerman), which passed the U.S House on a bipartisan vote in the previous Congress.

*Congress begins to Review FY18 Forest Service Budget Request.* On May 25, Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue joined Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell before the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee to discuss the Forest Service’s FY18 budget request. Subcommittee Chairman Ken Calvert (R-CA) spoke to the continued need for a solution to

increased fire suppression costs and a renewed focus on the health and productivity of the National Forest System.

Secretary Perdue pledged to be an advocate within the Administration for a fire borrowing fix, but also highlighted the impact of litigation and specifically requested a legislative solution to the *Cottonwood* decision. The Secretary expressed his support for active forest management and the need for the Federal Government to be better neighbors to other landowners and communities. Congressman Mike Simpson (R-ID), a veteran member of the Subcommittee and a former Chairman, commented that this was the first time he could remember a Secretary of Agriculture appearing at a Forest Service budget hearing.

Overall, the President's FY18 Forest Service budget request proposes significant reductions to many agency line items, including hazardous fuels reduction activities and the roads budget. The proposed budget would zero out the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration program, which doesn't have any associated timber target, but does enjoy support on some forests. The budget proposes to largely maintain the Forest Products line item, which is directly tied to the timber targets assigned to the forests. The Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee will also hold a hearing on the Forest Service's FY18 budget request on June 7.

*Trump Transition Update.* The Administration has not made any new personal announcements at USDA, including the Undersecretary of Natural Resources and the Environment. AFRC continues to advocate for the nomination of Erica Rhoad to serve in this key position overseeing the U.S. Forest Service. Erica is the current Staff Director of the House Natural Resources Federal Lands Subcommittee and has extensive experience on federal forest management issues. The Undersecretary position is subject to Senate confirmation.

In other news, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has scheduled a June 6 vote on the nomination of David Bernhardt to serve as Deputy Secretary of the Interior. David served as Interior Solicitor during the George W. Bush Administration, where he gained exposure to some of the key issues impacting the management of federal forests in the Northwest, including the statutorily-unique BLM O&C lands in Western Oregon. When confirmed, we believe he will provide valuable expertise and counsel to Secretary Zinke.

*O&C Budget Update.* Earlier this month, President Trump released his FY18 budget blueprint for the entire Federal Government. Trump's budget requests \$89.9 million to support BLM's management of 2.4 million acres of O&C lands, Coos Bay Wagon Road lands, and intermingled public domain lands in Western Oregon. The budget document includes language that "prioritizes support for local communities through employment opportunities by offering 205 million board feet of timber annually..."

While the FY18 budget request represents a \$18.4 million reduction to the overall Western Oregon program, the request would hold the Forest Management line item stable while proposing significant cuts to other budget line items. Under the Trump budget, the following Western Oregon BLM budget accounts would be reduced (compared to the FY17 budget allocation): Transportation and Facilities Maintenance (-\$3.5 million); Species Management and Recreation (-\$8.2 million); and National Monuments (-\$70,000).

To put these numbers into national context, Trump’s overall budget request for the BLM totals \$1.1 billion and includes 8,349 full-time equivalents (FTEs). The request represents a \$162.7 million reduction from FY17 levels and would reduce the BLM workforce by more than 1,000 FTEs. While President Trump’s budget will not be implemented, it provides a blueprint for the Administration’s priorities and highlights accounts the Administration believes needs additional scrutiny and justification. /Heath Heikkila and Travis Joseph

## **National Monument/Antiquities Act Review**

On April 26, President Trump issued Executive Order 13792 directing Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke to review certain National Monuments that were designated or expanded using the Antiquities Act since January 1, 1996 and when the designation or expansion covers more than 100,000 acres.

On May 5, the Department of the Interior announced the [list](#) of National Monuments to be reviewed, which includes the controversial Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument (CSNM) in Southwest Oregon and Northern California. The CSNM designation faces legal challenges from AFRC, the Association of O&C Counties, and a private landowner. AFRC has weighed in extensively on the public process with a [letter](#) to the Oregon Delegation and Obama Administration, [testimony](#) to the House Natural Resources Committee, [op-eds](#), a [letter](#) to Secretary Zinke requesting that the CSNM be included in the review, and a [Myths/Facts page](#) to help provide more information to the public.

Beginning on May 12, the Department of the Interior started collecting public comments on the National Monument reviews. The public comment period will run for 60 days. Comments may be submitted online at <http://www.regulations.gov> by entering “DOI-2017-0002” in the Search bar and clicking “Search.” AFRC strongly encourages its members to engage in the public process since the review process marks the first ever formal public comment period for members of the public to weigh in on monument designations under the Antiquities Act.

Executive Order 13792 directs the Secretary to submit a final report to President Trump within 120 days (August) that will include any recommendations or proposed changes to the listed National Monuments. /Travis Joseph

## **Ninth Circuit Denies White Castle Appeal**

With a three-page unpublished [order](#), the Ninth Circuit ended for now the seven-year effort to implement Drs. Norm Johnson and Jerry Franklin’s principles of ecological forestry in Western Oregon, dismissing AFRC’s appeal of an adverse ruling on the White Castle Timber Sale. The BLM had not appealed and the Court found that Scott Timber, the purchaser, could not appeal a remand order on its own.

White Castle is a 187-acre variable-retention harvest on the BLM Roseburg District. In late 2010, then-Secretary Ken Salazar directed BLM to develop Secretarial Demonstration Pilot Projects showing the potential use of Johnson and Franklin ecological principles (“Norm & Jerry” forestry) to provide sustainable timber harvest compatible with ecologically-sound land management. Drs. Johnson and Franklin held a two-day introduction in Canyonville in February

2011, followed by several public meetings in Roseburg and multiple field trips. The White Castle Project was initiated in March 2011, with a decision signed in August 2012.

The project has been in litigation for nearly five years and no work has been attempted or completed. Oregon Wild and Cascadia Wildlands protested, appealed to IBLA, and then [brought suit](#) in federal court. Extremist “direct action” groups put tree sitters in the woods. Although the plaintiffs brought NEPA claims, their real objection was to harvest at the stand age of [108 years](#). [Media reports](#) stated the project was in line with Senator Wyden’s proposals for the O&C lands.

In 2015, U.S. District Court Judge Ann Aiken [found](#) the project required an Environmental Impact Statement due to effects on spotted owls, despite the project not taking any owls, as well as the “controversy” of the Johnson/Franklin principles. AFRC filed an appeal on behalf of Scott Timber and defeated preliminary attempts to dismiss the appeal. Ultimately, those effects were not successful.

Although AFRC may petition the Ninth Circuit for a rehearing, it is unclear whether White Castle will ever be harvested. The cautionary note about these “Demonstration Projects” from AFRC’s [December 2012](#) newsletter rings true: “To date, the only thing that has been demonstrated is how opponents of timber harvesting can successfully delay a project through extensive protests and appeals.” */Lawson Fite*

## **Singletary Auctioned, Litigation Follows**

On May 24, the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) at long last auctioned the Singletary Timber Sale. The sale has had an off-again-on-again history since it was first proposed in 2014. As sold, it covers 166 acres and 5.7 million board feet (mmbf) of timber. This is down from the 187 acres and 7.4 mmbf authorized for sale by the Board of Natural Resources in January 2017.

The reduction in acres and volume results from a request by Snohomish County for reconveyance of county land deeded in trust to the State of Washington for timber management. Although the sale area was reduced by only 12%, because the high operational and infrastructure costs of the sale, the value of the sale was reduced by 53%.

Comparing minimum bid prices for the larger January offering and what was sold last week, the County gave up \$59,500 in timber sale revenues that would have benefited its general fund. That is a mere fraction of the \$661,650 in timber revenues lost to the county and its junior taxing districts: Fire District 26 (\$33,100), Evergreen Health Monroe (\$21,200), Sno-Isle Library (\$29,100), county roads (\$101,200), county conservation futures (\$2,700), Sultan School District (\$273,300) and state schools (\$141,600).

From the outset, the sale has been in full compliance with the 2010 [Reiter Foothills Forest Recreation Plan](#), which was itself the result of many hours of negotiation among DNR staff, county recreation staff and local recreational interests. The county’s request for reconveyance causes grave concern over whether the time and effort put into such negotiations is fruitful for DNR as a land manager.

Not satisfied with either the recreation plan or the parameters of the reconveyance request by local elected officials, three environmental organizations filed suit in Snohomish County Superior Court on May 23 seeking to block timber harvesting for alleged failures to follow the State Environmental Policy Act.

The story of the Singletary Timber Sale highlights the need for industry and trust beneficiaries to stand up for effective management of DNR lands. */Ann Forest Burns*

## **District Court Rejects Injunctive Relief for Tower/Grizzly Projects**

On May 1, Judge Lynn Winmill of the U.S. District Court, District of Idaho, rejected Alliance for the Wild Rockies' motion for injunctive relief against the Tower Fire Salvage Project and Grizzly Fire Salvage Restoration Project on the Idaho Panhandle National Forests (IPNF). The Forest Service brought these two projects to implementation within nine months after wildfires burned 47,500 acres in the IPNF, using Emergency Situation Determinations (ESDs).

AFRC submitted an amicus brief on behalf of the Panhandle Forest Collaborative, Bonner County (ID), Mineral County (MT), and AFRC. The projects are designed to produce up to 55 mmbf in ten timber sales, which were purchased by AFRC members Idaho Forest Group, Tricon Timber, and Vaagen Bros. Lumber. The amicus brief highlighted collaborative support and strong public interest in the project, as the timber volume is essential to AFRC member operations and to support the economies of northwest Montana, northern Idaho, and northeast Washington. The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho also filed an amicus brief in support of the Forest Service.

The Alliance for the Wild Rockies claimed that the Forest Service violated NEPA, the Appeals Reform Act, and the Administrative Procedure Act by failing to allow a public comment period for the project's Environmental Assessments (EAs), unlawfully issuing ESDs for the projects, failing to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement, failing to address the projects' impacts on the black-backed woodpecker, and arriving at a decision even before conducting the EAs.

After rejecting all of the Alliance's claims, Judge Winmill's opinion ended with the following noteworthy conclusion:

“In the West, fuel and climate are combining to create intense wildfires. Fuels are increasing at an alarming rate as invasive plant species spread across the landscape, while at the same time climate change is lengthening the fire season. This means burnt timber is becoming a major feature of our National Forests. If trees can be logged simply because they burned, we will reap massive clear-cuts. But small projects, fully vetted and properly designed to mitigate impacts, may be valuable in reducing hazards and funding reforestation efforts. The Tower and Grizzly Projects fit that mold. Under the facts of this case, the Court cannot find that Alliance has raised the serious questions necessary to obtain injunctive relief.” */Sara Ghafouri*

## **AFRC Supports ESDs for North and South Pioneer Fire Projects**

The Boise National Forest has requested Emergency Situation Determinations (ESDs) for the North and South Pioneer Fire Salvage and Restoration Projects located on the Lowman and Idaho City Ranger Districts. The Pioneer Fire started on July 18, 2016 and was officially

declared out six months later on January 24, 2017. The fire burned a total of 190,000 acres, 47% of which burned at high severity.

On May 22, AFRC wrote [two letters](#) to Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell to support the issuance of the ESDs for both the North and South Pioneer fire projects because immediate implementation of the projects is critical to mitigate the risk of hazard trees along roads and trails that are open to the public and within developed sites. Within a 200-foot safety buffer along both sides of the 211 miles of open National Forest System (NFS) roads and 79 miles of open motorized and non-motorized NFS trails, the projects propose to harvest 5,213 acres (North Pioneer) and 11,818 acres (South Pioneer) of hazard trees. If an ESD is not issued, the Forest Service would have to close those roads and trails because it does not have the funds or resources set aside to remove the hazard trees. In addition, the ESDs are vital for the Forest Service to remove the hazard trees and recover enough commodity value to market the trees. Through salvage treatment, the net recovery is expected to be 32.4 mmbf (North Pioneer) and 36.9 mmbf (South Pioneer) of sawtimber and net positive receipts to the government of an estimated \$2,731,853 (North Pioneer) and \$3,800,521 (South Pioneer), which could fund restoration activities and generate a total of 1,614 jobs.

AFRC member companies count on the Boise National Forest to provide a steady supply of wood to keep their mills running and workers employed. The three proposed post-fire sales significantly contribute to Region 4's timber program for FY17. Approximately 68% of the Region's program will be offered in 4th quarter of FY17, with a majority of that volume associated with the twelve post-fire sales for the Pioneer Project. Without the Pioneer Project, there would be a significant gap in the wood market for this region.

Other interested parties are providing support for the issuance of ESDs for the Pioneer Project, including BlueRibbon Coalition/Sharetrails.org. Additional letters from the public in support of ESDs are expected. /Sara Ghafouri

## **FTPC Spring Meeting**

AFRC staff (Travis Joseph, Ross Mickey, and Sara Ghafouri) attended the Federal Timber Purchasers Committee (FTPC) spring meeting from May 9-11 in Spokane, Washington. The FTPC meeting brings together public timber purchasers from across the country and Forest Service and BLM directors and leadership from Washington, D.C.

The first day was spent touring the Vaagen Brother's mill in Colville, Washington and discussing the A to Z project. The second day of the meeting (industry only) provides FTPC members with an opportunity to discuss and prioritize issues impacting their businesses. The third day of the meeting is where the Forest Service and BLM directors and leadership from Washington, D.C. meet with the industry representatives, review the regional and federal timber sale programs, and discuss potential resolutions to the purchasers' concerns. The 2017 spring meeting focused on the following issues: 2014 Farm Bill Implementation (e.g., Good Neighbor Authority); stewardship contracting; stewardship agreements; Knutson-Vandenberg (K-V) authority; NEPA streamlining (e.g., objection resolution process); timber sale efficiencies, and other topics. The State of Idaho gave a presentation on GNA implementation, highlighting how Idaho has been successful in establishing a financially self-sustaining GNA program to

accelerate the pace and scale of federal forest management. In addition, the agency-industry meeting included a “Regional Breakout” to allow purchasers and regional agency directors a chance to discuss region-specific issues. There was some candid discussion about the industry’s concerns regarding the Forest Service’s and BLM’s ability to meet 2017 timber targets and the obstacles the agencies face in achieving their goals.

The spring meeting was the last meeting with Paul McKenzie as chair of FTPC. Thank you, Paul, for all your hard work and dedication to the Committee. AFRC welcomes Jim Parma, Bell Timber/Bell Lumber & Pole, as the new chair of FTPC.

AFRC strongly encourages its members and other public timber purchasers to attend these valuable, biannual meetings. The fall meeting will be held in Duluth, Minnesota from October 17-19. For more information, please contact Tom Troxel with the Intermountain Forest Association ([t\\_troxel@hills.net](mailto:t_troxel@hills.net)). /Sara Ghafouri

## **BLM Timber Sale Generates Impressive Value**

Over the past twenty years the BLM has attempted to meet its timber output targets primarily through the thinning of young forest stands. This one-dimensional management paradigm has been criticized by several stakeholders for various reasons. Professional foresters have questioned the validity of a “thinning-only” regime given the fact that such a practice is unsustainable. Sustainable forestry can only occur in this region through the harvest of mature timber followed by replanting of a new stand.

The forest products industry has consistently questioned the thinning-only regime as young stand thinnings only supply a single type of raw material that can only be processed into a narrow range of final products. County governments, who receive 50% of the value generated by timber sales on O&C lands, have raised concerns about the financial value of a thinning-only management paradigm as the value of these offerings is lower than those from sustainably managing mature stands. However, in recent months the BLM across all Western Oregon has started to progress beyond the status-quo of the past 20 years by offering timber sales that regenerate appropriate stands of timber. This progression addresses all three of these concerns as regeneration harvest of mature stands provides sustainability, a variety of forest products, and a monetary value that is significant enough to provide stable county budgets.

The latest such timber sale, Fawn Two, was sold by the Salem Sustained Yield Unit (SYU) of the Northwest Oregon District north of Mill City for over \$2 million. The stands in Fawn Two are at a seral stage where thinning is no longer effective and regeneration harvest is the only remaining management option. The sale consists primarily of Douglas-fir, and sold at a rate of \$615 per thousand board feet (mbf). To put this in proper context, the other five sales that the Salem SYU offered this fiscal year were sold at an average rate of \$282/mbf for Douglas-fir (the highest rate was \$347/mbf). This means the Fawn Two timber sale exceeded the average value per board foot of Douglas-fir of all the other Salem SYU timber sales this year by nearly 120%!

As mentioned earlier, the total value of the Fawn Two timber sale was approximately \$2 million. To put *that* number into context, the average value of the previously cited five timber sales was \$1.2 million. The distinction between those two numbers may not seem significant; but consider

that the average size of those five timber sales was 228 acres and that Fawn Two was a mere 60 acres! The Counties will receive \$16,666 an acre from the Fawn Two sale and only \$2,632 an acre from the other sales.

If nothing else, the results of the Fawn Two timber sale should force critics and naysayers of active management to reevaluate their often-repeated claims that the BLM's timber outputs do not provide significant money to rural counties and the American taxpayer. /*Andy Geissler*

### **New 5-Year Review of Marbled Murrelet**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (the Service) has [announced](#) its latest “5-Year Review” of the west coast distinct population segment of the marbled murrelet, covering birds in Washington, Oregon, and California. Such reviews are required by [section 4\(c\)\(2\)](#) of the Endangered Species Act. At the conclusion of the review, the Service will determine whether to uplist the bird from threatened to endangered, de-list the bird, or maintain its status as a threatened species. The Service requests comments and information by June 19.

The [previous](#) five-year review, issued in 2009, kept the murrelet in its threatened status. That review was in response to a [petition to de-list](#) the murrelet filed by AFRC and allies.

Any party with new information on the murrelet is encouraged to submit it to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. /*Lawson Fite*

### **New Marten Finding Due in October 2018**

As reported in AFRC's [March 2017](#) newsletter, Judge Jon Tigar of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California determined that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (the Service) should revisit its finding that the coastal population of Pacific marten (known as “coastal marten”) does not warrant listing under the Endangered Species Act. Judge Tigar agreed with the Service that the evidence did not show the Oregon populations of the marten were small or decreasing. The judge, however, found the Service did not properly evaluate the California population's status or relation to the coastal marten overall.

At a hearing on April 26, the court adopted the Service's proposed timeline of October 1, 2018 for a new 12-month finding, and rejected the plaintiffs' proposal that a new finding be completed within nine months. The Service proposed the timeline based on competing listing priorities, court orders, and budget restrictions. AFRC's attorney urged the court to adopt a reasonable timeline to make sure that the Service has adequate time to consider all the relevant information and make a supportable finding.

Although a formal status review has not yet been announced, interested parties should provide relevant information to the Service at the earliest opportunity. /*Lawson Fite*

### **Upper Wenatchee Pilot Project**

Earlier this year, the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest was awarded \$1.6 million from the Washington DC office in the form of Supplemental Hazardous Fuels Funding from the Wildfire Hazardous Fuels Program. The funds will be used to implement the Pilot Proposal for Fire



Resiliency in Chelan County, which includes the Upper Wenatchee Pilot Project. A breakdown of the funding includes:

- Upper Wenatchee Pilot - \$1,045,000
- Stemilt (Chelan County land) and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife lands to do commercial thinning and prescribed fire implementation - \$385,000
- TREX Program for training prescribed fire personnel - \$50,000
- Lake Wenatchee Fire Adapted Community work - \$50,000
- Mission Creek prescribed fire implemented by Forest Service - \$70,000

The Okanogan-Wenatchee is currently analyzing two subwatersheds in the Lake Wenatchee area for treatment—the Lower Chiwawa and Big Meadow areas which total 36,000 acres. The additional Upper Wenatchee Pilot dollars will allow the Forest Service to add two subwatersheds to the project area—Lake Wenatchee and Beaver Creek which total 40,000 acres. The four drainages total 76,000 acres and make up the Upper Wenatchee Pilot. By combining all four subwatersheds it is believed that the Forest will be able to initiate implementation of ecological restoration projects within two to three years, instead of the several years it would have taken to analyze and issue a decision for treatments within the 76,000-acre landscape.

The fiscal sponsor for the project is the Washington Resource Conservation & Development Council (WRC&D). The WRC&D has a legal responsibility to oversee the financial aspect of the project and ensure deliverables are met for project implementation. The Forest is currently receiving \$140,000 to do landscape development work. The WRC&D will have the authority to contract out the other necessary NEPA work for project completion. The Forest is planning to complete the Environmental Assessment for the Upper Wenatchee Pilot by the summer of 2019 with projects coming out in Fiscal Year 2020.

The Pilot Project was developed following a series of devastating wildfires on the Forest in the summers of 2014-15. At a *Wildfires and Us Legislative Summit* in November 2015, then Washington Commissioner of Public Lands Peter Goldmark suggested developing the pilot project to continue the local, state, federal and tribal partnership to address forest health issues in the region. In January 2016, numerous organizations and agencies including the North Central Washington Forest Health Collaborative (NCWFHC), Chelan PUD, and the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust submitted to the Forest Service the “Fire-Resilient Communities and Landscapes in Chelan County” proposal. Eighty percent of Chelan County is owned by the National Forest and has been ground zero for many of the past devastating wildfires. The proposal sought federal funding for restoration planning and project implementation on the Okanogan-Wenatchee to help alleviate wildfire threats near communities and at-risk landscapes in Chelan County. The proposed pilot area had extensive development in the wildland-urban interface, a high need for fuel reduction work on Forest Service managed lands, and several high-priority streams present containing ESA listed salmonids.

Other partners helped bring resources to the planning area. The Nature Conservancy invested \$22,000 in photo interpretation contracting for Big Meadow and Lower Chiwawa watersheds, and about 500 volunteer-hours in planning and advocating for project funding for the Chelan Pilot. The Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board invested in related aquatic projects and

many volunteer-hours advocating for the Chelan Pilot funding. Chelan County Natural Resource Department invested in aquatics projects, and Sustainable Northwest also invested staff time and expertise. AFRC staff and members invested hundreds of hours supporting treatments in the Upper Wenatchee basin by participating in both NCWFHC and conducting quarterly monitoring meetings with the Forest Service supporting management in these areas.

AFRC anticipates that this 76,000-acre planning area that focuses on reducing fuel loads in the Lake Wenatchee area will yield several projects that will help provide the needed raw material for our members. The Okanogan-Wenatchee has struggled to meet its assigned timber targets in recent years, and AFRC hopes this big project will help bolster and grow the Forest's timber program in future years. */Tom Partin*