

December 19, 2014

Congress Passes Key Bills - Exits DC

A series of must pass bills including appropriations to fund the Government through the remainder of FY15, authorizations for national defense programs, and a package of short term tax extenders passed both the House and Senate in the waning days of the 113th Congress, allowing the House to adjourn on December 11 and the Senate on December 17.

NDAA

On December 4, the House of Representatives passed the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) by a bipartisan vote of 300-119. In addition to authorizing spending and priorities for national defense programs, the NDAA also contained the largest package of public lands bills since the 2009 omnibus Public Lands Management Act. The bill passed the Senate on December 11, by a vote of 84-15. The public lands package had the support of key environmental groups and many western Republicans. Leaders from the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and House Natural Resources Committee worked to keep the package as narrow as possible to avoid major political pitfalls. On the environmental side, the bill designated nearly 250,000 acres of new wilderness, added additional miles of wild and scenic rivers, and expanded the national parks system.

To help gain support from western Republicans, the bill included several pro-development provisions, including a proposal to expedite oil and gas permitting and extend expired grazing permits under their current terms and conditions until a new NEPA review is made. The bill also included a land exchange to promote a copper mine in Arizona and conveyed 70,000 acres of the Tongass National Forest to Sealaska, an Alaska Native-owned corporation.

Wilderness areas added in the West included 22,000 acres to the Alpine Lakes wilderness in Washington State; expansion of the Oregon Caves National Monument by over 4,000 acres; the 45,000 Columbine-Hondo wilderness in New Mexico; the 71,000 acre Hermosa Creek Special Management Area and the 38,000 acre Hermosa Creek wilderness in Colorado; the 48,000 acre Wovoka wilderness and Pine Forest Range wildernesses in Nevada; and the Rocky Mountain Front Conservation Management Area and wilderness and North Fork Watershed mineral withdrawal in Montana. The bill also protects 140 additional miles of wild and scenic rivers.

Noticeably absent were a number of federal forest management reform proposals for National Forests and O&C BLM lands, including H.R.1526, "Restoring Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act" sponsored by outgoing House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (R-WA); S.1966, "National Forest Management and Jobs Act of 2014" sponsored by Senator John Barrasso (R-WY); S.1784, "Oregon and California Land Grant Act of 2014" sponsored by Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR); and S.37 the "Forest Jobs and Recreation Act of 2013" sponsored by Senator John Tester (D-MT).

Senator Wyden made a strong push to have his O&C proposal included in the package, but the House did not agree citing strong opposition to the legislation among the affected constituencies in Oregon.

With forest health and catastrophic wildfire remaining high priority issues on our public forests along with needing revenues for payments back to timbered counties, we are hopeful these bills will be revisited when the 114th Congress convenes.

CRomnibus

Meanwhile, passage of legislation to fund the federal government was still up in the air hours before the government was set to shut down. The so-called “CRomnibus” was designed to provide long term FY15 funding for every federal agency except the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which will be funded with a continuing resolution through February 27, 2015. Republican leaders offered this approach to maintain an opportunity to challenge President Obama’s immigration executive orders in the next Congress through DHS’ budget.

On December 11, the CRomnibus narrowly cleared a key procedural vote in the House by 214-212. The vote on final passage was delayed over nine hours as Republican leadership, several key Democrats, and President Obama frantically searched for votes. The legislation finally passed by a vote of 219-206, with 57 Democrats joining 162 Republicans in backing the measure. The Senate approved the legislation two days later by a vote of 56-40.

The CRomnibus includes a one-year provision blocking the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) from listing the greater sage grouse under the Endangered Species Act. It also includes provisions to roll back Dodd-Frank restrictions on banks and significantly increase the amount of money individuals can give to major political parties. One key program that didn’t make the cut was an extension of the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) timber payments. Counties are becoming increasingly nervous as SRS expired at the end of 2013 and they received their last SRS payment in early 2014. Senator Wyden blamed the House Republican leadership for the failure to fund the \$325 million program, but it is not clear if Wyden had a viable offset to reauthorize the program. Congressman Greg Walden (R-OR) announced that he had received a commitment from House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) to take up a SRS extension during the first three months of the new Congress.

On the federal forest management front, the CRomnibus provided \$339 million for the Forest Service’s Forest Products line item, which is even with FY14. The legislation did increase hazardous fuels reduction funding by over \$55 million to nearly \$362 million. The BLM was provided \$113.8 million for the management of the O&C lands, which is slightly down from FY14 but over \$10 million above the Administration’s request level. Another key provision absent was a legislative solution to prevent fire borrowing, but it does provide over \$1.75 billion for Forest Service suppression and preparedness activities, which is \$115 million above FY14 levels. The Forest Service was not forced to institute fire borrowing this year due to a milder fire season, however it is hard to imagine that becoming a trend in light of the continued accumulation of fuels on the national forests.

Tax Extenders

In its last major item of business for the 113th Congress, the Senate passed by a vote of 76-16 a two-week tax bill that retroactively extends a \$42 billion package of tax breaks for 2014. The bill only

extends the provisions for this tax year, meaning they are only good through December, and Congress must go back to work when they return in January to forge a new plan for 2015.

Senate Democratic Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) and House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dave Camp (R-MI) had crafted a longer term plan that drew the ire of President Barack Obama and several leading Democratic Senators including Ron Wyden because it would have made permanent several tax breaks for businesses. A subsequent veto threat from the Administration scuttled the deal and precipitated the largely retroactive patch.

Congress' failure to adopt a longer term tax extender package will likely only increase the pressure next year to tackle more fundamental tax reform. More to come next year! / *Tom Partin and Heath Heikkila*

Region 6 Timber Purchasers Meeting

AFRC's annual Region 6 timber purchasers meeting took place on December 12 in Portland. Approximately 75 people attended including AFRC members, AFRC staff, Regional Forester Jim Pena, Deputy Regional Forester Becki Heath, newly appointed Natural Resources Director M. L. Smith, and Forest Supervisors and timber staff from both the forests and the regional office.

Discussion topics included administrative issues affecting timber availability; operational issues affecting contract compliance and profitability; stewardship contracting improvements and innovations; increasing pace and scale through innovation; a legislative report from AFRC's lobbyist Heath Heikkila; a litigation report from AFRC attorney Rob Molinelli; an update on the objection process by Region 6 appeals coordinator Debbie Anderson; and a report on the Federal Timber Purchasers Committee's work by AFRC Federal Timber Manager Ross Mickey and Siuslaw National Forest Supervisor Jerry Ingersoll. Aly Piwowar, then-acting Region Timber Program Manager, presented the Region's accomplishments and 2015 outlook.

The meeting built on the success of past years, utilizing an open discussion format to identify areas where industry and the agency can work together to improve timber supply and forest resiliency. AFRC looks forward to next year's meeting which will take place December 10, 2015. / *Ann Forest Burns*

Forest Service Objection Process

Following the AFRC Region 6 timber purchasers meeting, several members asked for more information on the Forest Service objection process, also known as the Project-Level Predecisional Administrative Review Process. The objection process was adopted in March, 2013 to replace the appeals process that was a means to challenge agency decisions after they had become final. (See, [AFRC Newsletter April 26, 2013](#).)

Under the Forest Service's rule ([36 CFR Part 218](#)), only those who have made "substantive comments" at one or more of the public comment opportunities (e.g., scoping, draft environmental impact statement) have standing to object when the draft decision is issued. Only objectors have standing to challenge a final decision in court.

The rule applies to projects subject to NEPA review; that is, projects that have an EIS or EA. It does not apply to projects done under a Categorical Exclusion (CE), which cannot be challenged at the agency level.

The deadline for filing an objection under the new rule, which does not apply to Healthy Forest Restoration Act Projects, is 45 days after the draft decision is issued. The agency publishes notices in the local newspaper, but the best way to assure that you receive notice of a draft decision is to request the Forest provide it directly to you.

Objections are filed with the “Reviewing Officer.” Generally, this is the line officer above the decision maker (“the Responsible Official”) - the Forest Supervisor if the decision maker is the district ranger; or the Regional Forester if the decision maker is the Forest Supervisor. Generally, the Reviewing Officer has 45 days after the end of the objection period (90 days from the draft decision) to make their decision; this can be extended for up to 30 days (120 days after the draft decision).

One of the key issues surrounding the objection process is the resolution meeting between the Reviewing Officer and the objectors. This meeting is optional and at the discretion of the Reviewing Officer. These meetings are open to the public, but it is up to the Reviewing Officer whether anyone other than the objectors are permitted to participate in the discussions. Whether or not a local collaborative which worked to formulate a project would be invited to participate in the resolution meeting has been a matter of controversy in some recent decisions.

AFRC is currently working on assuring that the process of resolving disputes is open, transparent and timely. We welcome your suggestions as we work with the Forest Service on this issue. */Ann Forest Burns*

Ninth Circuit Upholds Beaverslide Project

On December 16, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the Beaverslide Project on the Six Rivers National Forest. The Beaverslide Project involves commercial thinning and fuels reduction on a 13,000 acre project area. The District Court for the Northern District of California previously granted the agencies’ and intervenor’s motions for summary judgment, and the Ninth Circuit ruling affirms the district court’s decision.

Plaintiff, Conservation Congress, brought suit against the Forest Service and the FWS, arguing that the agencies violated the Endangered Species Act and NEPA in failing to consider new information in the 2011 Northern Spotted Owl Recovery Plan, as well as studies related to barred owl interactions and high value habitat. Conservation Congress also argued the agencies failed to use the best available science and that the EIS was deficient.

AFRC, representing Trinity River Lumber, intervened in support of the project. The Ninth Circuit upheld the agencies’ informal consultation and the FWS’s letter of concurrence stating that the project would not adversely affect the northern spotted owl. The Court found the consultation was sufficient because the agencies had considered all of the information in the 2011 Recovery Plan. For the same reason the Court determined the agency had analyzed the best available science, it also reasoned that the Forest Service had taken a hard look at the project’s effects on the owl.

The victory allows the project to go forward, and is the latest in a string of defeats for Conservation Congress in Northern California. */Rob Molinelli*

Concerning Verdict on Snow Basin

On December 9, Judge Hernandez of the District Court for the District of Oregon delivered a mixed verdict on the Snow Basin project on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. The project, which was challenged by the League of Wilderness Defenders/Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project and the Hells Canyon Preservation Council, is now on hold as the parties discuss potential resolution. While the district court granted the Forest Service and intervenors Baker County, Union County, Boise Cascade, AFRC, Chary Mires and the Oregon Small Woodlands Association relief on some of the plaintiffs' claims, it sided with plaintiffs on a number of issues. Intervenors were represented by AFRC and the Western Resources Legal Center.

The Court held that the Forest Service violated NEPA when it failed to justify its choice of watershed scale for its cumulative impacts analysis and failed to disclose specialist reports in its possession during the comment period for the draft EIS. Most troubling, however, was the Court's decision that the agency failed to justify its use of a site-specific amendment to the 21" diameter limit in the eastside screens to remove overcrowded fir trees in the project. The Court reasoned that a site-specific amendment was inappropriate and suggested a forest plan amendment for the Snow Basin project, because the conditions in the project were not site-specific, but were rather common across the entire forest.

The Court's decision casts doubt on the ability of the Forest Service to use site-specific amendments to the eastside screens in the future. AFRC is considering appealing the decision. */Rob Molinelli*

Plaintiff Assessed Costs in Algoma Case

On November 20, Judge Nunley, of the District Court for the Eastern District of California awarded over \$9,500 in costs to the Forest Service in a case brought by Conservation Congress.

Conservation Congress challenged the Forest Service's implementation of the Algoma Project on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. On May 19, the district court found for intervenors and the Forest Service on all of plaintiff's claims and dismissed the case. Because it was victorious, the Forest Service sought, and was awarded costs from Conservation Congress to the tune of \$9,502.15. The costs are related to the agency's work to prepare the administrative record for the case.

Conservation Congress has since appealed the district court's decision on the merits to the Ninth Circuit, and is now appealing the award of costs, but, inexplicably, failed to pay the required filing fee for that separate appeal. Late last week, the Ninth Circuit "reminded" the plaintiff that it must either pay its filing fee to carry its appeal forward, or pay the costs in full. Conservation Congress has until December 30 to pay the filing fee. The case has been fully briefed to the Ninth Circuit. */Rob Molinelli*

Senate Announces Committee Assignments

The Senate leadership has made their assignments to the various Committees and appointed the Chairs and Ranking Members. With the Republican's controlling the Senate all of the Chairs will be replaced with Republicans and Democrats will assume Ranking Member positions. Key Natural Resource Committees assignments include:

Energy and Natural Resources

Chair - Lisa Murkowski (R-AK)
Ranking Member - Maria Cantwell (D-WA)

Appropriations

Chair - Thad Cochran (R-MS)
Ranking Member - Barbara Mikulski (D-MD)

Agriculture and Nutrition

Chair - Pat Roberts (R-KA)
Ranking Member - Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)

Judiciary

Chair- Chuck Grassley (R-IA)
Ranking Member - Pat Leahy (D-VT)

Those of us in the West look forward to working with Senators Lisa Murkowski and Maria Cantwell on federal forest legislation and issues. Both of their respective states have large federal forest ownerships and have been greatly impacted by reduced harvests over the past two decades accompanied by high unemployment in rural communities. The Energy and Natural Resources Committee will be joined by a cadre of new Republican Senators, including Westerners Steve Daines (R-MT) and Cory Gardner (R-CO).

Hopefully meaningful legislation can be passed to break the gridlock on federal land management and the catastrophic wildfire situation that has been so prevalent in recent years. /Tom Partin

Erica Rhoad Takes Staff Director Job

AFRC learned earlier this week that Erica Rhoad has been selected to be the Staff Director for the Public Lands Subcommittee of the House Natural Resources Committee. Erica brings with her a wealth of experience having previously worked on the Natural Resources Committee, the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, as a lobbyist on federal timber issues for Ball Janik, and most recently for the National Rifle Association. As reported last month she will join Jason Knox who will serve as the full committee Staff Director and Todd Ungerecht will be Deputy Staff Director. We welcome Erica into her new position and look forward to working with her as AFRC and our allies work to improve the health of our federal forests and rural communities. / Tom Partin

DNR State Aquatic Lands HCP

A Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for DNR Aquatic State Lands has been in the works since 2007. The HCP would cover 2.6 million acres of state owned aquatic lands for 50 years. These lands include the marine bed lands in Puget Sound, the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the Pacific coast, including 30 percent of their related tidelands, the freshwater bed lands, and about 70 percent of the shore lands of the navigable lakes and rivers, within the State of Washington. Conservation measures would be developed to protect at risk native species found within the area covered under the HCP. These conservation measures would guide DNR in its permitting and authorization of both public and private uses of these lands. Examples of these uses, include aquaculture (including shellfish), docks and marinas, and log booming and storage activities.

In September, the FWS and National Marine Fisheries Service released a [Draft Environment Impact Statement \(DEIS\)](#) along with the [Draft HCP and Implementation Agreement](#) seeking comments from the public and other stakeholders. The DEIS contained three alternatives, No Action, Alternative 1-both marine and freshwater aquatic lands, and Alternative 2 – marine waters only. Alternatives 1 and 2 are relatively similar with the primary difference being the lands included in each one. In each case there was the appearance of a significant emphasis for moving currently permitted and authorized uses from

the near shore or littoral areas to deeper water, where harbor lines and navigation would allow. This area, littoral, is aquatic land where sunlight can reach the bed lands, roughly out to a depth of 66 feet. AFRC provided feedback to DNR in 2007 and again in 2011 regarding log booming and storage activities and its importance to the forest products industry. In addition to volume boomed and rafted on Puget Sound, comparisons of fuel consumption and impacts to truck traffic between towing and trucking this volume, and an estimate on impacts to stumpage rates for DNR timber sales on the north Olympic Peninsula were included.

After review of the DEIS and Draft HCP, AFRC was unable to support either of the proposed Action Alternatives. We based our position on two primary concerns. The documents unfortunately failed to provide any substantial maps which showed the specific areas impacted by the conservation measures. In the case of log booming and storage, the current or anticipated authorized uses totaled 29 locations, a relatively small number of locations to identify graphically and analyze in our opinion. This lack of maps created a significant challenge to fully evaluate the potential impacts of the HCP on this historic and water dependent use.

Our other major concern was the apparent lack of a rigorous economic impact of the HCP on the various permitted uses of aquatic lands. The DEIS used the length of time before re-authorization of the aggregated uses as a surrogate for economic impact. With the broad range of uses and the financial realities of each use and the HCP impacts for each specific use type, AFRC felt this method was flawed. An analysis of each specific type of use, coupled with both graphical and tabular data of the areas and uses impacted, would have provided a means to provide more substantive input. In summary the lack of qualitative analysis of impacts on uses and the use of subjective assumptions for some decision points, brought AFRC to the position of only being able to support the No Action Alternative.

As we stated in our comments “We generally are in support of a well-constructed Aquatic Lands HCP which protects traditional water uses, including log booming and storage.....AFRC stands ready to work with DNR and the Services in the preparation of a sound HCP which protects both the environment and the economy of the State of Washington.” /*Matt Comisky*

Umpqua Road Rules

The Umpqua National Forest has developed a draft set of “Road Rules” that describe the requirements that must be followed by purchasers if they wish to operate on Forest Service contracts outside of the normal operating season (typically November through May). The rules are focused on resource protection during log-hauling and outline several parameters and guidelines that must be followed for such operations to occur. For example: haul may be suspended when there is a forecast of more than ½ inch of rain in a 24 hour period; and, haul will be suspended when drainage features are not functioning as designed. Although AFRC prefers the use of guidelines based on desired outcomes rather than descriptive parameters such as rainfall amounts, these new road rules are a step in the right direction of a more flexible operating season on the Umpqua.

However, this flexibility ultimately hinges on the environmental assessments (EA’s) prepared by Forest Service staff. Presently many timber sales on the Umpqua are products of EA’s that prohibit operations during the “closed season” regardless of weather conditions. Therefore, these new road rules will only be relevant if the Umpqua chooses to develop EA’s that allow flexibility in regards to operating seasons. For example, if a line officer signs a decision document for a timber sale based on an EA that assumed

no log-haul would occur between November 1 and May 31, then the road rules are essentially moot; the EA supersedes the road rules by eliminating the possibility of any operations to occur between November and May. AFRC's expectation is that these updated rules will provide the assurance to the line officers that the resources will be protected throughout the calendar year, and that they will in turn develop EA's that reflect this. /*Andy Geissler*

Report Criticizes ESA Listing Process

On December 15, the House Natural Resources Committee majority staff released a 38 page [report](#) entitled, "*Under the Microscope: An examination of the questionable science and lack of independent peer review in Endangered Species Act listing decisions.*" After detailing the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requirements for scientific peer review within government agencies and the FWS's own Information Quality Act guidelines, the report details 13 recent listings decisions, including the Oregon spotted frog and the Gunnison sage grouse.

The report concludes that FWS's procedures diverge wildly from both OMB's requirements and the agency's own standards. It "calls into question the independence, transparency, and accountability of the FWS' peer review process in recent ESA listing decisions." Key findings include:

- The FWS does not have clear or consistent policies and procedures in place across all Regions to ensure that peer reviewers with potential conflicts of interest are identified and screened;
- The FWS generally seeks peer review of its proposed listing decisions at the same time they are made available for public comment, rather than earlier in the process when the peer reviewers may have more meaningful input;
- The FWS regularly recruits the same scientists on whose work a listing decision is based to serve as peer reviewers, rather than truly independent scientists without any obvious connection to the species under review;
- The FWS uses scientists as peer reviewers who have received grants or other financial assistance from the Department of the Interior and its bureaus and other agencies and who have known policy positions or affiliations with advocacy groups that support the listing decision; and
- The FWS routinely withholds from the public the identities of peer reviewers, qualifications of peer reviewers, instructions, and details about their comments.

Outgoing House Natural Resources Committee Chair Doc Hastings, who has had ESA reform as one of his top priorities over the past few years, said "With hundreds of ESA listings driven by this Administration's closed-door settlements with litigious groups, discovery of any potential bias about how ESA data and science are reviewed casts serious doubt on the credibility of these decisions, and provides more evidence that the ESA needs continued oversight and updating."

Even though Hastings has retired from Congress, the new Chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee Rob Bishop (R-UT) will not let the issue lay idle, and more action will come from this report in the next Congress. /*Ann Forest Burns*

New NEPA Guidance

On December 18, the White House Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) proposed a new guidance addressing how federal agencies should consider greenhouse gas emissions in relation to their impacts to climate change when conducting reviews under NEPA. The new guidance will for the first time address land and resource management actions.

The agency will be looking at impacts from mechanical harvesting compared to wildfire or prescribed fire. CEQ's focus will be on plants and actions that release more than 25,000 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent emissions. The draft guidance will be available for a 60 day public comment period. AFRC and other forest products associations will review the new guidance and provide comments. / *Tom Partin*

Fisher Listing Comment Period Extended

On December 16, the FWS extended its deadline for comments on the proposed listing of the west coast distinct population segment of the Fisher to *February 4, 2015*.* The original deadline was January 5.

According to FWS, Fishers are forest-dwelling mammals in a family that includes weasels, mink, martens, and otters. The agency is proposing to list the West Coast distinct population segment as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. In its notice of proposed listing the agency identified habitat loss from wildfire, vegetation treatments, rodenticides, and the "cumulative and synergistic effects of these and other stressors" as the main threats to the species.

AFRC, along with other groups requested an extension of the comment period because of the potential impact of the listing. More information about the fisher, and on how to comment on the proposed listing can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/cno/es/fisher/>. AFRC and other associations will be submitting comments. / *Rob Molinelli*

** This is a correction from the previously published edition.*

AFRC Staff Awarded Patriotic Employer Awards

On December 8, the Office of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, an agency in the Department of Defense, awarded Tom Partin, Ann Forest Burns, Scott Horngren, and Cindi Kaneshige Patriot Awards for their support of staff attorney Rob Molinelli.

In a brief ceremony at the AFRC office, a retired Army Colonel from Camp Withycombe in Clackamas presented framed certificates to the staff, and thanked them for their support of the military and the Reserve mission. The award citations specifically thank AFRC for "contributing to national security and protecting liberty and freedom by supporting employee participation in America's National Guard and Reserve force."

According to its website, the "ESGR, a Department of Defense office, was established in 1972 to promote cooperation and understanding between Reserve Component Service members and their civilian employers," among other purposes. AFRC staff members were nominated by Rob, for their support during his recent mobilization, and their continued support of his service in the Army Reserve.

I would personally like to thank Rob for applying for this prestigious award presented to our staff, and we are proud to have Rob on our team not only serving AFRC, but also our nation. /Tom Partin

Milt Herbert

Milton Herbert passed away December 10, after a long battle with Parkinson's. He was 86.

Milt and his wife Arlene founded Herbert Lumber as a portable operation outside of Lowell, Oregon in 1947. A year later operations moved to the site east of Canyonville, Oregon that is now Herbert Pond County Park. The mill was moved to its current location in Riddle in 1962. From 1947 until Milt and Arlene retired and passed their ownership to their son Lynn in 2011, they operated the mill continuously without ever laying off their employees, not matter the economy. This "if one of us works, we all work" philosophy is a tremendous source of pride and an enduring legacy for the employees of Herbert Lumber.

This remarkable man always had a long range vision for his company and his community; he wanted to create things that would have a long-lasting impact. Among his many achievements was borne from the most modest of desires: he wanted his employees and his community of Canyonville to have access to a bank. He wanted his employees and his neighbors to be able cash a check somewhere besides the local tavern or store, to be able to save money and to buy homes. So in 1953 he and his neighbors started a bank that would one day grow to be the largest bank based in the State of Oregon. It might have started in the back of the Masonic Temple in Canyonville but it now has branches throughout the West: Umpqua Bank.

Milt believed in the stewardship of our public lands by trained professionals and worked toward that end. Herbert Lumber was a founding member of Douglas Timber Operators, and North West Timber Association, the forerunner of the American Forest Resource Council. He believed their mission critical to the education of the public and the survival of the forest dependent communities he loved.

Milt held a lifetime respect and friendship with his peers in logging and milling and will be remembered as one of the pioneers of the Oregon forest products industry. While his accomplishments were many, he was a quiet and private man. His biggest source of pride was his family and their successes. Acknowledging Arlene's contribution and sacrifice to the success of Herbert Lumber in the early days and the resourcefulness with which Lynn has endowed the company, Milt knew his legacy was secured.

Milt is survived by his wife Arlene, son Lynn, daughter Bille Davidson and her husband Tom, and grand-children Chris Davidson, Julia Herbert, and Alex Herbert. Through them, Milt's legacy of humility, generosity, and humor lives on.

Milton Herbert believed in his extended community, where he dedicated his resources and time. True to his nature, he asked that no services be held. In honor of his memory, please join us in considering a contribution, in his name, to one of the following foundations that were his favorites.

Doernbecher Foundation
Mail Stop 45
PO Box 4000
Portland, OR 97208-9852

Wildlife Safari
PO Box 1600
Winston, OR 97496

Community Cancer Foundation
2880 NW Stewart Parkway, Ste 100
Roseburg, OR 97470

He will be greatly missed. /*Paul Beck & Betsy McGreer*

Interfor Corporation Buys Simpson Mills

On December 18, Interfor Corporation announced that it has reached agreement with Simpson Lumber Company, LLC to acquire Simpson's sawmill operations in Meldrim, Georgia; Georgetown, South Carolina; Longview, Washington; and Tacoma, Washington.

According to Interfor's press release, the Sawmill Operations are located within geographic proximity of Interfor's sawmills in both the Southeast and Pacific Northwest and will fit within the company's existing operating infrastructure. The Sawmill Operations have a combined annual lumber capacity of 750 million board feet and are expected to produce 555 million board feet in 2014. As a result of this transaction, Interfor's total capacity will increase by 30% to 3.1 billion board feet. The company's lumber capacity in the Southeast and Pacific Northwest will total 1.2 billion board feet and 900 million board feet, respectively, representing 67% of the Company's total pro forma capacity. /*Tom Partin*

Sierra Pacific to Construct New Sawmill

Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) will begin construction of a new sawmill on the Frederickson, Washington Industrial site. SPI purchased the property earlier this year with the intent of expanding its milling capabilities in Washington, where it currently operates in Aberdeen, Mt. Vernon, and Centralia. Frederickson is located near Tacoma.

Company officials reported that clearing and leveling on the property will begin in the next two weeks, with construction beginning in early 2015. The plant should become fully operational by 2016. It is estimated that approximately 150 new jobs will be created. Sierra Pacific Industries is based in Anderson, California. They own and manage nearly 1.9 million acres of timberland in California and Washington, and are the second largest lumber producer in the United States. /*Tom Partin*

Forest Service Personnel Changes

AFRC welcomes newly appointed Natural Resources Director M.L. Smith to Region 6. M.L. (short for Marie-Louise) was most recently Deputy Forest Supervisor on the Boise National Forest. Prior to that, she served as Staff Assistant to the Deputy Chief for the National Forest System in the Washington Office. Early in her career, she worked as a research ecologist at the Northern Research Station. She has a B.S. in Natural Resources at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, a M.S. in Forestry at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and a Ph.D. in Forest Ecology from the University of New Hampshire.

AFRC also looks forward to continuing to work with Aly Piwowar, former Region 6 silviculturist, as she moves from acting to fully appointed Region 6 Timber Program Manager.

There have been a number of recent changes of Forest Supervisors in Region 6. Former Malheur Deputy Forest Supervisor Steve Beverlin has been named Forest Supervisor, replacing Theresa Raaf who became Director of State and Private Forestry for Regions 6 and 10 on November 2. Former Deputy Supervisor Tom Montoya is the new Supervisor of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, taking over from John Laurence who has taken on new responsibilities as the Special Assistant to the Regional Forester. On January 12, 2015 current Siuslaw National Forest recreation, lands and heritage staff officer Stacy Forson will become Supervisor of the Ochoco National Forest, replacing Kate Klein who is retiring. Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest Supervisor Mike Balboni has announced his retirement effective January 3, 2015. Chris Frisbee, Klamath National Forest Deputy Forest Supervisor will become acting Supervisor until his replacement is named.

AFRC looks forward to working with these folks in their new roles. We thank Kate Klein and Mike Balboni for their service and wish them well in retirement. */Tom Partin*

Phillippi Named to OFRI Board

In her role as President of Perpetua Forests, AFRC member Rough and Ready Lumber Company President Jennifer Krauss Phillippi has been named to represent small landowners on the Board of Directors of the [Oregon Forest Resource Institute](#).

Also appointed to the Board to represent large landowners were Greg Miller, Oregon public affairs manager for Weyerhaeuser, and Jim Hunt, logging manager for Campbell Global in Seaside.

AFRC values OFRI's work and appreciates the willingness of these new Board members to serve. */Ann Forest Burns*