

Utah Forest News

Utah Forest Landowner
Education Program Newsletter



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15 Lessons from 25 Years of Aspen Management on the Fishlake National Forest

Allen Henningson has been a forester on the Fishlake National Forest in south-central Utah for the past 20 years. During that time the Fishlake has treated more than 35,000 acres of aspen stands. Treatments have included over 1,000 acres of timber harvests, prescribed fire, combinations of these two treatments, and wildfires.

The need for these treatments is the result of several factors. Aspen clones rely on disturbances such as timber harvests or fire to grow new sprouts or suckers from parent roots. Historically, aspen stands on the Fishlake experienced wildfires every 20 to 60 years, but many current stands have not seen fire for 150 to 200 years. This has resulted in many areas being converted from a pure aspen forest type to a mixed aspen-conifer forest type. Also, current numbers of deer and elk are much higher than they were in the past, and managers have added livestock to the equation. Because deer, elk, and livestock all browse on young aspen suckers,

aspen regeneration is hindered when these animals are present in large numbers. The problem can be summed up in the words of USU Researcher Charles

Kay: "We have too many [deer and elk] mouths to feed and not enough fire."



Over 35,000 acres of aspen have been treated on the Fishlake National Forest during the last 25 years.

Over his career on the Fishlake, Henningson has diligently worked to turn this situation around. The results of his efforts can be seen on the ground in the Fishlake National Forest. Students of forestry can learn from his list of recommendations for aspen treatments:

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Pando aspen clone on the Fishlake National Forest.

1. Each aspen clone presents a different challenge for maintaining sprouting aspen.
2. Pressures from browsing vary from area to area.
3. Aspen regeneration is generally successful on slopes greater than 40 percent.
4. On slopes gentler than 40 percent, aspen is more susceptible to herbivory.
5. Exclosures (effective fences) for both wildlife and livestock are necessary for successful aspen reforestation on the highest use areas.
6. All treated aspen clones have initially regenerated.
7. Aspen treatments have been successfully completed in every season of the year.
8. When protection from browsing is needed, put the exclosures in place early.

9. Leaving tree tops and other unmerchantable material in harvested areas may provide some protection for young aspen shoots from browsing animals.
10. Aspen sprouts abundantly after fire. Sprouts are capable of moving out in the nonforested area about 50-75 feet.



Allen Henningson

11. Treatments should be rested from livestock for two years after treatment.
12. Avoid early or late livestock grazing.
13. Aspen regeneration can recover from single grazing events, but not multiple years of grazing.
14. Three-way exclosures are extremely helpful to determine use levels.
15. Have a contingency plan for regeneration failures. Consider planting coniferous forest species such as Douglas-fir, or appropriate mountain shrubs in areas where aspen does not regenerate.

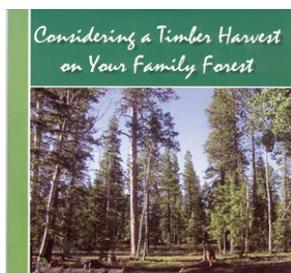
In the end, the question tends not to be whether you are going to get aspen sprouts from a treatment, but rather, when you do get them, whether they will need protection from browsing animals. Over time, the elimination of grazing pressures, either through resting the pasture from livestock grazing or fencing out wildlife, will be your best insurance for successful aspen regeneration.

by Darren McAvoy



New DVD Available: Considering a Timber Harvest on Your Family Forest

Many landowners don't consider timber harvesting a priority on their land. However, with careful planning and implementation timber harvesting can result in more diverse and beautiful forests that are better able to withstand natural disturbances like insect outbreaks and wildfire.



This 22-minute DVD discusses how you can use timber harvesting in the sustainable management of your family forest. Topics covered include visual quality, leave-trees, water quality, soil, and post harvest recommendations.

To order a free copy, contact Darren McAvoy at 435-797-0560 or darren.mcavoy@usu.edu.

“Thousand Cankers Disease” Affecting Black Walnut Trees in Utah

During the last 10 years, a decline in black walnut trees has been observed in several western states, including Utah, where it is often planted as a landscape tree. Researchers at Colorado State University have identified a serious new insect-disease complex that is behind the problem, which they are calling “thousand cankers disease.” This disease is caused first by the invasion of walnut twig beetles, which bring with them two types of fungal associates. These fungi cause canker development within the galleries created by the walnut twig beetle. Eventually these cankers girdle the trunk and branches of affected trees. After initial symptoms of the disease appear, trees usually die within three years. Further research is needed to identify effective controls for thousand cankers disease.



Walnut twig beetle. Photograph by Jim LaBonte, Oregon Dept. of Agriculture

For further information concerning the walnut twig beetle and the thousand cankers disease of walnut, contact Whitney Cranshaw (whitney.cranshaw@colostate.edu) or Ned Tisserat (ned.tisserat@colostate.edu), Department of Bioagricultural Sciences and Pest Management, Colorado State University.

CROP Data Compiled for Entire State of Utah

Coordinated Resource Offering Protocol (or CROP) is a method developed by Mater Engineering of Corvallis, Oregon to synthesize detailed information about harvestable timber and biomass in a given region. The main goal of this process is to encourage investment in sustainable forest management by increasing confidence in a steady supply of raw materials (see UFN Summer 2006 for more information).

CROP data have now been compiled for the entire state of Utah. It is the first state in the nation to have all of its land covered by CROP analysis. To see a copy of the Utah CROP report, visit: www.forestsandrangelands.gov/Woody_Biomass/supply/CROP and click on the Utah CROP report at the bottom of the page.

Lone Peak Nursery to Close Next June

As reported in the Summer 2008 issue of *Utah Forest News*, the Lone Peak nursery provides valuable conservation-grade seedlings for agencies and landowners in Utah who wish to conduct large-scale restoration projects. Unfortunately, the Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee of the Utah State Legislature has recommended closure of the Lone Peak Nursery, and it is slated to shut down on June 30, 2009. The Subcommittee cited budgetary concerns in their decision to close the nursery.

According to Nursery Manager Brandon Long, Lone Peak Nursery's focus on large-scale conservation projects means that it has always operated as more of a public service than as a strictly money-making venture. The loss of this public service has come at a particularly bad time for Utah. In recent years, Utah's forests have been devastated by fires and bark beetle activity. Landowners and agencies seeking to restore these damaged areas to a healthy condition will have a difficult time finding private nurseries within the state that grow conservation-grade seedlings in the sheer numbers that Lone Peak Nursery did. Instead, they will probably need to work with the federal Lucky Peak nursery in Boise, Idaho, or get seedlings shipped in from state-run nurseries in Colorado and Montana. Seedlings grown in these nurseries will not necessarily be native to Utah and may therefore have a harder time thriving here.

Fortunately, there is some hope that the nursery will remain open with a similar mission. Geoff McNaughton, Forestry Programs Supervisor with the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands, says that the Division is currently exploring the possibility of a public-private partnership to keep the nursery running. The details of the proposed partnership have not yet been developed. However, the basic plan will be to sell the nursery to a private



Lone Peak Nursery in Draper, Utah.

company or individual and lease out the existing nursery land, facilities, and water rights. These leases will potentially be sold at a reduced rate to provide an incentive for private investment in the nursery. A Request for Proposals is set to be released in the near future to gather information from companies and individuals interested in taking over the nursery. According to McNaughton and Long, half a dozen companies have already made inquiries about a potential partnership, and the Division expects the Request for Proposals to stir up even more interest. Preference will probably be given to applicants who express interest in maintaining the conservation mission of Lone Peak Nursery.

Questions and concerns regarding the decision of the Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee can be sent to the following Subcommittee co-chairs:

Sen. Dennis E. Stowell
PO Box 796
Parowan, UT 84761

Rep. Ben C. Ferry
905 N 6800 West
Corinne, UT 84307

by Olivia Salmon

Utah Forest Products Directory Now Online

The Utah Forest Products Directory is now online at www.utahforestproducts.org. The directory is a resource for businesses and individuals involved in the sale and manufacture of forest products and services in Utah. Those needing products can browse through the directory, new businesses can log in and be added to the database, and existing businesses can check and update their information. The directory includes not only businesses that are primary producers (sawmills, etc.), but also businesses that make finished products such as furniture shops, cabinet makers, and the like. Forestry service providers (such as loggers, custom processors, etc.) also are included.

The directory was created by Utah State University Extension Forestry (with helpful funding from USDA Forest Service State & Private Forestry).



Coming Up: Live Webcast on Utah Forests

Join USU Forestry Extension for our first Webcast on Wednesday, January 14, 2009, at 3:00 p.m. Extension Forestry Associate Darren McAvoy will present "An Introduction to Utah Trees and Forests." This will be a live discussion over the Internet where you will see and hear the presentation on your computer and be able to interact by typing your questions and comments into a chat box that will appear on your screen. Most modern computers already have the Flash plug-ins preinstalled that are needed to view this program. It will work best with a high-speed Internet connection. To participate you will need to register and log in prior to the Webcast time. For more information and to register, visit extension.usu.edu/forestry and click on Presentations.



USU Students Excel in Society of American Foresters Quiz Bowl

Utah State University scholars proved they're a force to be reckoned with at the 2008 student quiz bowl at the Society of American Foresters national convention held Nov. 5-9 in Reno, Nevada. The Aggie team bested competitors from 31 schools in single-elimination rounds of competition designed to test students' knowledge of theory and practice in varied disciplines of forestry.

Team members were undergraduate students Matt Lewis (captain), Jeremiah Armentrout, Seth Ex, Richie Gardner, Peter Howard, Rachel Pyles and Crest Simeon.

"To my knowledge, this is the first time USU has participated in the competition," says faculty mentor Terry Sharik, professor in the College of Natural Resources' Department of Wildland Resources.

"And our team absolutely blew the other teams away. No one expected 'the newcomers' to dominate the tournament."

Preparation, team members say, made the difference.

"We started weekly training for the competition at the start of fall semester," says team member Seth Ex, a senior forestry major and president of USU's SAF chapter.

At training sessions, Sharik and colleague Jim Long, professor in the Department of Wildland Resources, grilled the team in timed trials on silviculture, forest and range ecology, fire management, remote sensing, entomology, ethics, forest pathology, the history of forestry and more.

Placing first in the nation was a thrilling experience, the students say, but attending the convention was a worthwhile opportunity.



From left: Rachel Pyles, Crest Simeon, Seth Ex, Jim Long, Peter Howard, Jeremiah Armentrout, Terry Shark, Matt Lewis, and Richie Gardner.

"I can't underscore enough how valuable this experience was," says Ex, who plans to pursue graduate studies in silviculture. "We met with researchers, grad students, and professors from around the country. We also met and talked with U.S. Forest Service chief Abigail Kimball."

Armentrout, an environmental studies major, says he appreciated the opportunity to network with forestry professionals and learn about graduate programs offered at varied universities. A native of West Virginia, Armentrout plans to pursue a career in mine reclamation.

The convention's theme, "*Forestry in a Climate of Change*," offered lively discussion sessions and a rich range of research presentations, the students say.

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“Foresters are not only dealing with the impact of climate change and its implications for forests,” Howard says. “They’re also dealing with a changing political climate, changes in the profession, the impact of new technology and, of course, an economic crisis.”

The U.S. Forest Service and the forest industry, the students note, are also facing a generational turnover. Many current agency and industry positions are held by baby boomers who will soon retire and pass the reins to a new crop of forestry professionals. The challenges in their chosen field are many, but the Aggies agree that USU is providing a solid training ground.

“Our forestry program is relatively small yet our faculty is recognized nationwide – they’re of the caliber you’d expect from an Ivy League school,” says Howard, great-grandson of longtime Bureau of Land Management conservationist Fred Pack Howard, USU Class of ‘34. “As students, we receive exceptional one-on-one interaction with our professors.”

The team is already setting their sights on next year’s competition, which takes place in Orlando, Florida.



USU Forestry Club team members at the SAF Quiz Bowl in Reno, Nevada.

In preparation for the trip, the Aggies kicked off one of their annual fundraisers – a Christmas tree and firewood sale – during the Thanksgiving break.

“Our goal is to defend our title and bring younger students on board to share in the excitement and learning opportunities,” Ex says.

by Mary-Ann Muffoletto

For more information regarding any of the information presented in this newsletter, please call Darren McAvoy at Utah State University, 435-797-0560, write to him at 5230 Old Main Hill, Logan, UT 84322-5230, or email darren.mcavoy@usu.edu.

The Utah State University Forestry Extension Web site, found at <http://extension.usu.edu/forestry>, is an excellent source of technical forestry information for woodland owners. Check the “What’s New” section periodically for new postings.

State of Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands (DFF&SL) service foresters for your area can be contacted by calling 801-538-5555.

Ideas and written contributions to this newsletter are encouraged. Send your contributions or comments to the return address above or call 435-797-0560, or email darren.mcavoy@usu.edu.



Forest Landowner Education Program
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Utah State University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution.
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COMING EVENTS

Live Webcast on Utah Forests. January 14, 2009, 3:00 pm. See page 5 of this newsletter for more information.

Forest Engineering, Inc. Training Workshops. Various dates in January and February 2009. Reno, NV, and Coeur d'Alene, ID. Classes on cable logging, fuel reduction, mechanized harvesting, and helicopter logging. Visit www.forestengineer.com/html/training.html for more information.

Small Log Conference: Living Locally, Surviving Globally. March 25-27, 2009. Coeur d'Alene, ID. For more information, visit: <http://www.timberbuysell.com/slc/>.



Vernon Condie remeasures the Utah Champion Ponderosa Pine in Beaver Canyon this fall. In the Utah Big Tree Registry it is listed as 207 inches in circumference (66 inches in diameter at breast height) and 130 feet tall.