



IDAHO FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION



2026 IDAHO TREE FARM FALL TOUR PACKARD FAMILY TREE FARM VIOLA, ID, SEPTEMBER 19, 2026

With the days still warm and your 4th of July sunburn still healing it may be hard to believe, but it's time to mark your calendars for the annual Fall Tour. We will be travelling to Viola this year to showcase the 2026 Idaho Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year, the Packard Family!

The property was purchased in 1948 by Cecil Packard. The ownership originated as a 160-acre parcel that had been high graded before purchase. Originally purchased as a "stump ranch", the property was used as a cattle operation that also sold Christmas trees. Due to the high grading of the property, logging of the property did not begin until the mid to late 1990's. Since then, logging on the property in the interest of improving stand health has become more of a priority. Today the property totals 630 acres.

The tour will take place at 1230 Davis Rd., Viola, ID 83872 and will begin at 8:00AM with a coffee & doughnut hour. We plan to leave for the woods at 9:00AM and finish up around noon with lunch provided by the Idaho Tree Farm Program. Along the way we will visit a variety of forest stands of various ages and species, talk about the history of these

stands, look at plantations as well as stands of natural regeneration, see some stand improvements to increase health and vigor, take a look at some recent salvage logging, view the forestry equipment used in the Packard forest, and see some wildlife enhancements.

To get a good head count for the meal, please RSVP by August 25, 2026 to Colleen Meek at:

admin@idahotreefarm.org

Also, Larry Packard has offered to let people dry camp on his property the night before the event.

For more info or RSVP contact 509-336-0483.

Remember, this is a "rain or shine" event so watch the weather report, bring appropriate outerwear and sturdy shoes for some light hiking.



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2026 IFOA DIRECTORS

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Marianna J. Groth
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Kevin K. Karn
Cynthia R. Mead
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MEET-A-MEMBER: KEVIN & TANYA KARN, COEUR D'ALENE

Kevin and Tanya Karn are the stewards of Spring Creek Ranch, a 29-acre forest property in Kootenai County located on the western edge of the Blue Creek district along the north side of Lake Coeur d'Alene. The property has been in the Karn family since May 1960, when it was purchased by Kevin's parents, Alvin and Francis Karn. At the time, Alvin was serving as an active-duty officer in the United States Navy, so little activity occurred until after his retirement.

The property was named Spring Creek Ranch after the Class II stream that flows through and nearly divides the property in half. In 1989, the Karn family completed its first timber harvest. During that project, roads were constructed and four culverts were installed to improve access. Following the harvest, the family planted 500 seedlings purchased from the University of Idaho in Genesee, a mix of western larch, Douglas-fir, and western white pine.

In 2001, the Karns designed and built an 18-hole disc golf course on the property. Fifteen years later, in 2016, Boy Scout Troop 211 helped plant an additional 100 trees, with each Scout earning a Forestry merit badge for participating in the project.

In 2023, the Karns began planning another forest thinning to improve the health and productivity of their timber stand. After consulting with Idaho Forest Group, they were referred to a smaller logging operation that was better suited to their management goals. Before harvesting could begin, a professional survey was completed because the property boundaries were not clearly marked. Once the survey was finished, the logging crew removed approximately 10 to 12 loads of timber. The family was especially impressed with the logger's commitment to leaving the site in excellent condition.

To prevent invasive weeds from establishing after the harvest, the Karns hired a forestry contractor to masticate approximately eight acres in preparation for reforestation. This past April, they planted another 800 trees, including western larch, Douglas-fir, western white pine, ponderosa pine, and western redcedar. While the family enjoys planting trees, the work is physically demanding due to the property's shallow, rocky clay soils.

Long before their first timber harvest, Alvin Karn became a member of the Idaho Forest Owners Association (IFOA). Drawing on information provided by the IFOA and guidance from the Idaho Department of Lands, he developed a forest management plan that established the family's long-term commitment to active forest stewardship.

Although Spring Creek Ranch remained largely undeveloped for many years, it has always been a special place for the Karn family. Each summer they camped along Spring Creek on the former log landing - the property's only level campsite - and every year after Thanksgiving they returned to select and harvest a Christmas tree.

With the exception of the generous donation of 800 seedlings from the Idaho Department of Lands, all forest improvements have been funded through the Karn Family Holding Trust. Among those investments is a 3,000-gallon freshwater cistern equipped with a fire hydrant connection to provide emergency water for wildfire protection. The family also maintains a 60-foot fuel break along one side of the property to help reduce wildfire risk. In addition, they have applied for water rights from Spring Creek for livestock use when water is available.

The Karns remain committed to maintaining the property's agricultural heritage and plan to continue raising livestock, having previously raised sheep, pigs, and chickens. Kevin recently joined the Idaho Forest Owners Association Board of Directors, where his practical experience and commitment to sustainable forest management have already proven valuable.

For Kevin and Tanya Karn, managing Spring Creek Ranch is more than a responsibility - it is a source of pride and fulfillment. Their ongoing dedication to thoughtful forest stewardship ensures that the property will remain healthy, productive, and resilient for generations to come. *by Cindy Mead, IFOA Secretary*



BURNING THE MYTH: WHY WESTERN FORESTS NEED MANAGEMENT GROUNDED IN REALITY

The national forests of western Montana, Idaho and Washington are not abstract landscapes. They are lived-in, worked-in, fire-prone places shaped by more than a century of decisions, constraints, and unintended consequences.

Boundary County sits at the center of this story. Our forests have burned, regrown, been restricted, litigated, locked up, and - when we were allowed - successfully restored. If we are going to talk honestly about the future of western forests, we must begin by grounding the conversation in what history actually shows.

The first reality is that these forests have never been static. The Big Burn of 1910 reset the entire Panhandle, replacing old-growth cedar and white pine with dense lodgepole pine that grew thick, uniform, and primed for fire. By the 1960s, that lodgepole belt stretched from Shoshone County to the Canadian border - an over-mature, tightly packed fuel source waiting for a spark. In 1967, it got two: the Sundance Fire and the Trapper Peak Fire. Together they burned more than 70,000 acres in a matter of days, long before modern climate change became a factor. Their severity was driven not by temperature but by fuel.

That pattern has repeated itself for more than a century. Catastrophic fires have occurred in cool decades, warm decades, wet decades, and dry decades - but always in forests overloaded with fuel. Climate change now lengthens fire seasons and increases the number of high-risk days, but it does not create fuel. Policy does. Decades of fire suppression, the 1975 grizzly listing, the 1984 caribou listing, and the 2001 Roadless Rule collectively restricted thinning, road access, and timber harvest across millions of acres. The result was predictable: timber harvests in the Idaho Panhandle and Kootenai National Forests collapsed by more than 90 percent from their early-1980s levels. But the forests didn't stop growing. They grew faster than ever.

This is the second reality: timber is a renewable resource, and the United States has never harvested more than grows back. Even at peak harvest - 400 to 500 million board feet per year in the 1970s and early 1980s - annual forest growth exceeded removals. The forest base expanded. Fuel loads stayed in balance. When harvests collapsed, the imbalance began. Today, unmanaged stands contain three to ten times the fuel loads of their historical conditions.

The third reality is that non-management is not neutral. Leaving overstocked forests untreated does not preserve them - it subjects them to unplanned transformation through severe wildfire, insect outbreaks and watershed degradation. Boundary County has lived this firsthand. When the Myrtle Creek watershed burned, the city of Bonners Ferry, the Forest Service, and local partners launched a Herculean restoration effort: stabilizing slopes, reseeding, replanting, repairing culverts and reinforcing streambanks. The watershed recovered because people acted. Myrtle Creek is proof that when local communities are allowed to manage their forests and watersheds, they do it well.

Yet the gap between ecological need and management capacity continues to widen. Land managers face staffing shortages, contracting limitations, litigation risk and administrative processes that delay even widely supported projects. These systems exist for good reasons - public accountability, environmental protection and stakeholder involvement - but they are not functioning at the pace the landscape requires. Reform is needed not to eliminate oversight but to ensure that oversight does not substitute for action.

Mechanical thinning, prescribed fire, and strategically designed timber harvest remain the only scalable tools capable of reducing fuel loads across broad landscapes. Their effectiveness depends on thoughtful design, long-term maintenance, and cross-boundary coordination. They also depend on the infrastructure - mills, contractors, equipment and workforce - that decades of declining harvests have eroded. In the Inland Northwest, the debate over timber harvest cannot be reduced to caricatures of "logging versus conservation." It must be grounded in site-specific analysis, ecological evidence, and the recognition that unmanaged forests carry their own ecological and social costs.

Western national forests are not museum pieces insulated from human influence. They are dynamic systems already shaped by roads, past harvest, grazing, recreation, fire suppression and now climate change. Delaying decisions does not prevent change - it simply shifts it into the realm of crisis response. The question is not whether we will manage these forests, but whether we will do so deliberately or by de-

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COMING EVENTS

AUGUST 2026

IFOA Board Meeting

Coeur d'Alene, Tues., 8/11/2026
evpifoa@gmail.com

Nursery Propagation Tour

Princeton, Friday, 8/14, 2026
audrac@uidaho.edu

Nursery Propagation Tour

Deary, Thursday, 8/27, 2026
audrac@uidaho.edu

SEPTEMBER 2026

IFOA Board Meeting

Coeur d'Alene, Tues., 9/8/2026
evpifoa@gmail.com

Chainsaw Basics

Bonnars Ferry, Thurs., 9/10/2026
www.uidaho.edu/extension/natural-resources



2026 Idaho Tree Farm Tour

Viola, Saturday, 9/19/2026
admin@idahotreefarm.org

OCTOBER 2026

IFOA Board Meeting

Coeur d'Alene, Tues., 10/13/2026
evpifoa@gmail.com

NOVEMBER 2026

IFOA Board Meeting

Coeur d'Alene, Tues., 11/10/2026
evpifoa@gmail.com

Turning Idaho Trees into Wreaths

Council, Friday, 11/14/2026
www.uidaho.edu/extension/natural-resources

Turning Idaho Trees into Wreaths

New Meadows, Sat., 11/14/2026
www.uidaho.edu/extension/natural-resources

IFOA WELCOMES THESE NEW MEMBERS:

David Brown, Coeur d'Alene

Brian Dulin, Moscow

Patrick Evans, Moscow

Betsy Stansell, Spokane, WA

EVERWILD EDUCATION

The IFOA-Education Foundation was created to support programs that educate Idaho's private forest landowners and the people who live, work, and recreate in our forests. We also seek to inspire future generations to pursue careers in forest management by supporting programs that introduce children and young adults to Idaho's forests and forest products industry. As the charitable outreach arm of our sister organization, Idaho Forest Owners Association, the Foundation provides a tax-deductible way for individuals and businesses to invest in forestry and natural resource education across Idaho.

One of the organizations we proudly support is EverWild Forest School in southern Idaho. EverWild is a non-profit organization that introduces children - from 18 months of age through the teenage years - to Idaho's forests and natural resources through immersive, outdoor education. Each school year, EverWild's team of certified teachers and experienced educators develops 36 weeks of place-based lesson plans that use the local community and natural environment to teach language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and other core subjects.

Place-based education emphasizes hands-on, real-world learning experiences that help students make meaningful connections between the classroom and their surroundings. Research shows this approach can improve academic achievement, strengthen students' ties to their communities, deepen their appreciation for the natural world, and inspire them to become active, engaged citizens.

To learn more about EverWild Forest School and the other organizations supported by the IFOA-Education Foundation, visit www.ifoafef.org/what-we-support. If you would like to help expand forestry and natural resource education in Idaho, simply click the *Donate* button at the top of the page. Your tax-deductible contribution helps ensure these valuable educational opportunities continue to grow for future generations.

IDAHO FOREST GROUP IS THE PRESENTING SPONSOR FOR THE 2026 U.S. CAPITOL CHRISTMAS TREE

SPONSORSHIP SUPPORTS “THE PEOPLE’S TREE” JOURNEY FROM IDAHO TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Society of American Foresters is pleased to announce Idaho Forest Group as the presenting sponsor of the 2026 U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree. Support from Idaho Forest Group, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Society of American Foresters ensures the tree’s safe journey from Idaho to the U.S. Capitol. Along the way, the tree will be featured at events that celebrate Idaho’s heritage of forest stewardship, agriculture, and awe-inspiring natural resources.

The Society of American Foresters is excited to announce Idaho Forest Group as presenting sponsor of the 2026 U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree. Support from sponsors and partnerships with the U.S. Forest Service and the Society of American Foresters makes the tree’s journey possible. Their collaboration helps deliver the tree from its home in Idaho to its final destination on the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol. Along the way, the tree will take center stage at engaging whistlestop events and will provide a celebratory platform to share Idaho’s long legacy of forest stewardship, agriculture, and awe-inspiring natural resources.

“We’re proud to be the presenting sponsor of the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree to help bring ‘The People’s Tree’ from Idaho to Washington, D.C. It’s a great opportunity to share why forest stewardship is so important and how our forests impact our environment, economies, and communities. We look forward to helping showcase Idaho on a national stage,” said Idaho Forest Group CEO, Todd Brinkmeyer.

The tree will be harvested from Idaho’s Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests near the end of October and will be showcased at multiple whistlestop events through its late November arrival at the U.S. Capitol. From there, the Architect of the Capitol and their team will erect the tree and decorate it with handmade ornaments created by Idaho residents.

The tree’s official route and whistlestop event locations will be shared in early fall. At these stops, community members will be able to see the tree in person, sign a banner on the truck, participate in various activities, purchase food and merchandise, and learn about Idaho’s responsible forestry practices that enable us to share our majestic trees with the world. Attendance at the whistlestop events is free to the public, thanks to our sponsors.

ABOUT IDAHO FOREST GROUP

Idaho Forest Group (IFG) is a privately-owned company, based in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho. IFG operates five sawmills across northern Idaho and one in Mississippi, employing more than 1,300 team members and producing more than 1.7 billion board feet of lumber each year. IFG’s mission is to enhance the lives and livelihoods of our employees, customers, partners and the communities in which we operate by providing the earth’s best renewable building products. ifg.com

ABOUT THE U.S. CAPITOL CHRISTMAS TREE

The U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree initiative is a 55-year tradition in which one of our 154 national forests provides a tree for the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol for the holiday season. The project is made possible with support from partners, including The Society of American Foresters, cash and in-kind contributions from large and small businesses, and volunteers locally and across America. For a list of 2025 sponsors and to join in the Christmas spirit, please visit www.uscapitolchristmastree.com and [@uscapitolchristmastree](https://www.facebook.com/uscapitolchristmastree) on Facebook and Instagram.

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fault through megafire.

A realistic path forward requires sustained funding for hazardous-fuel reduction, expanded workforce capacity, streamlined but accountable environmental review, stronger tribal and community engagement and adaptive management frameworks that evolve with new science. It requires acknowledging that uncertainty is not an excuse for inaction. And it requires moving beyond the false choice between “pristine nature” and unrestricted intervention.

The lesson from Boundary County’s history is clear: When we manage forests, they remain resilient. When we don’t, they burn. The future of western forests depends on whether we are willing to act on that reality.

by Darrell Kerby, Bonners Ferry

AMERICAN FORESTS PRIVATE LANDS REFORESTATION PROGRAM

My name is Frank Curtin, and I serve as the Director of Private Lands Reforestation for American Forests. My work focuses on supporting non-industrial private forest landowners through every stage of post-disturbance recovery - from identifying funding opportunities and developing reforestation plans to implementing climate-adapted planting strategies tailored to each landowner's stewardship goals. Across the western United States, forest ecosystems are facing increasing pressure from wildfire, drought, insects, and disease, and for many landowners, recovering from these impacts can feel overwhelming given the technical, financial, and logistical challenges involved in reforestation.

Recognizing these challenges, American Forests launched its Private Lands Program and developed ForestSupport.org to help landowners navigate the complexities of post-disturbance reforestation. Our Private Lands Reforestation Program connects landowners with the technical expertise, resources, and funding opportunities needed to successfully restore resilient working forests for future generations. Healthy private forests provide far more than timber value; they protect water resources, improve wildlife habitat, support rural economies, and help sustain landscapes and communities. Our goal is to ensure landowners have practical, science-based support to successfully reforest their land and build forests that are more resilient to future disturbances. For more information, or to work with American Forests, landowners can contact me at 509-800-3726 or fcurtin@americanforests.org.



FOREST MANAGEMENT

Douglas-fir
Ponderosa Pine
White Pine
Western Larch
Cedar

GOT SEEDLINGS?

Lock in your seedling order today,
pickup in CDA or Priest River.
Order online: www.jdforest.com

Logging plans? Make a reforestation
plan **BEFORE** logging starts. Give us a
call at **208-817-9786** for complete
management of your harvest and
reforestation project.

Email: info@jdforest.com

Order Forms: www.idahoforestowners.org/seedling-program

*JDFM is partnering with IFOA to provide quality seedlings
with advanced genetics to Idaho landowners using IFOA seed.*



14+ feet tall in 4 years!
Same tree plus a year of growth
Planted in April 2021
Photo September 2024

LIKE A GOOD NEIGHBOR: IDAHO'S GOOD NEIGHBOR AUTHORITY AT WORK

A CONVERSATION WITH JON SONGSTER, GNA BUREAU CHIEF FOR THE IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF LANDS

When Barry Manilow wrote the State Farm jingle in 1971 - for \$500 - he probably had no idea it would be referenced on a forestry website 55 years later. But here it is, courtesy of the 2014 Farm Bill and congressionally authorized Good Neighbor Authority.

Good Neighbor Authority allows the U.S. Forest Service and Interior's Bureau of Land Management to partner with state forestry departments, Native American tribes, and counties for forest restoration and management services on federally owned forests and grasslands.

In Idaho, Jon Songster is GNA Bureau Chief for the Idaho Department of Lands. With apologies to Manilow, he is always there, just like a good neighbor.

We have known Songster since IDL hired him to run the state's GNA program. It is a daunting task made difficult by numerous problems, none more challenging than the lack of loggers and wood-processing infrastructure needed to do the on-the-ground work necessary to protect Idaho's 21.5 million acres of forest from the ravages of wildfire, insects, and disease.

At 80 percent, the federal government is by far the largest forest landowner in Idaho. Private landowners follow with 14 percent, and Idaho's endowment beneficiaries own six percent. Not much, but timber harvesting from State Endowment Trust Lands is a funding source for Idaho's public schools.

Songster was one of several federal and state leaders who made presentations at the April 7-8 Idaho/Montana Forest Collaborative Conference in Coeur d'Alene. We were so impressed with his PowerPoint presentation that we sought him out.

The result is this Q&A.

THE INTERVIEW

Evergreen: Jon, tell us a bit about your career.

Songster: Sure. I'm a graduate of West Virginia University and the University of Idaho with degrees in forestry and forest products. My first jobs were working in the field as a forestry technician before starting a position as a research forester with the University of Montana Bureau of Business and Economic Research.

Two years later, I went to work for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, assisting private forest landowners. Stimson Lumber Company then hired me, and I worked on its lands in Northeast Washington, Northern Idaho, and Western Montana.

Ten years ago, IDL hired me as the GNA Program Manager, and I've been in Coeur d'Alene since then.

Evergreen: You are definitely well traveled in the Interior West. How are things progressing in Idaho's GNA program?

Songster: My bosses could probably give you a better answer to your question, but from my perspective, there is no bigger or better challenge than being GNA Bureau Chief in Idaho.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE

Evergreen: What's the biggest challenge?

Songster: There are many, but I'd put the ecological conditions we observe on forestlands in Idaho at the top of the list: insect and disease infestations and the increasing risk of wildfire at the same time logging companies and mills are struggling.

So are some of the collaborative groups that help us design projects. Everyone needs money, and money is scarce. All of these problems are connected.

Evergreen: So what's the good news?

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ATTENTION, DIY MEMBERS

A spot for members to offer extra or no-longer-needed forest/homeowner equipment/tools/etc. for sale or exchange.

2 new items: (1) Rigid Seedling Protector Tubes - qty 400 - 18" tall.

(2) Bamboo sticks - 5 to 7 mm - qty 500

Call Lorri Tretter (208) 277-7382. Cost was \$75.00 and \$36.00

Look for this reserved space in the Newsletter. In the meantime, put together your own list and send it (with name and contact phone #) to evpifoa@gmail.com. We'll put it in this spot and spread the word!

GOOD NEIGHBOR (CONT.)

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Songster: The good news is that Good Neighbor Authority and the Shared Stewardship Initiative allow us to get more work done on the ground in a more timely manner with less money.

Evergreen: How so?

Songster: You saw my PowerPoint at the Coeur d'Alene Resort in April, so you saw the best quantitative representation of the pluses and minuses that I have.

My job is to help and support Forest Service District Rangers and Supervisors, their counterparts at IDL, and Idaho counties with whom we have signed GNA agreements. It's a learning process for all of us, and the learning curve is steep.

A STEEP LEARNING CURVE

Evergreen: Why is the learning curve so steep?

Songster: There are many related factors. Harvesting on non-industrial forestlands in Idaho is declining. These are our Tree Farmers. Their operating costs are increasing at the same time log prices are relatively flat.

The economics of forestland ownership are very difficult. These ownerships are generational. Grandparents and parents don't want to give up, but their children and grandchildren see more problems than opportunities, so they would rather sell to land developers. Our most stable landownership pattern is fragmenting.

Our situation is made more challenging by serious competition from the Southeast's forest products industry. There is a reason why Canadian manufacturers are investing billions in new mills in the South. Trees grow much faster there than they do here. But there is also a cultural factor. Southerners have been working timberland and farmland there for centuries.

Evergreen: That's true. The first mills along the eastern seaboard date from the 1700s. The westward migration did not begin in earnest until Lincoln signed the Homestead Act and the Pacific Railway Act - Homestead in May 1862 and Railway in July 1862. The culture you reference was embedded in the South 100 years before the westward migration began.

Songster: On the cultural side, we're currently facing two big problems in the Intermountain West - a lack of infrastructure, loggers and mills, and recruiting a new workforce.

If you walk through a mill today, you'll see many men and women approaching retirement. It's the same in the woods. Young people want more financial security than they see in the forest products industry. We have to fix this.

PUBLIC TRUST AND SOCIAL LICENSE

Evergreen: How can we help?

Songster: You are, but I assume you are facing the same money challenges we all face.

Evergreen: Boy howdy. It's scary!

Songster: At IDL - and certainly at the federal level - we also have to bring the public along. We have to protect our social license to cut timber when the public does not believe it is necessary or appropriate.

We're trying, but Idaho is the fastest-growing state in the nation. Between 2020 and 2025, 190,000 new residents moved here. The in-migration is coming mostly from California, Oregon, and Washington. These are states where forest management is a contentious issue.

Education becomes a very important part of our job. It's overwhelming for all of us, not just in Idaho but in every state in the Interior West.

Evergreen: We hear about it every day, and like everyone else, we're in the hunt for more money so we can do our work more effectively. Your customers are also our customers: mills, logging companies, and the federal government. We often feel like we're all walking in circles with one foot nailed to the floor.

Songster: IDL has a lot of support from Governor Little, the Land Board, the state legislature, and county commissioners, some of whom have signed GNA agreements with the Forest Service or with IDL. But - again - we are working in publicly owned forests.

SHARED STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION

Evergreen: The collaborative groups that attended the Coeur d'Alene conference all seemed to be pleased with the messages that Forest Service Chief Tom Schultz delivered in his keynote address. How does Shared Stewardship - especially GNA - fit into what the Chief envisions?

Songster: We're all walking in the same direction on the same evolutionary path. It's collaboration in action. Our shared goals are to protect forests, watersheds, fish and wildlife habitats, and year-round outdoor recreation opportunities from wildfires and insect and disease infestations.

All the amenities the public loves require that we actively manage our forests.

Evergreen: We certainly have all the technological tools we need to meet this responsibility head on. Likewise, thousands of peer-reviewed scientific studies give strong support to the need to manage forests in ways that increase their health, productivity, and longevity.

Songster: I agree. Collectively, GNA and Shared Stewardship collaborators represent a tremendous public resource. The on-the-ground work we are collectively doing can be controversial, and the learning curve is steep. But that's our job, and we intend to get our work done in a timely and efficient manner.

by Jim Petersen, Evergreen Foundation

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH UPDATES

ROLE OF WOMEN IN EARLY TIMBER INDUSTRY

Iron pipe, concrete foundations and an abandoned railroad grade off a dirt road deep in an Eastern Oregon forest mark a once-bustling mill community that operated in the early 20th century. Established in 1910 by the Baker White Pine Mill Lumber Company, the site was occupied for less than a decade. Now only traces of the industrial landscape remain as testament to the timber industry that once dominated the region.

Archaeologists working at the Baker White Pine Mill site a century later found it a welcome opportunity to explore daily life at the mill. The artifacts recovered challenge mainstream notions of flannel-clad lumberjacks doing manly things in the woods into a more nuanced story, recognizing the important contributions families made in the male-dominated lumber industry.

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE BAKER WHITE PINE MILL

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the rich pine forests of the Blue Mountains in northeastern Oregon were seen as a resource ripe for harvest. With the depletion of east coast timber reserves, attention shifted westward. Railroads made accessing remote forests easier and also created a near-insatiable need for lumber as they continued to build and maintain tracks.

The Baker White Pine Lumber Co. logged public and private lands using a system referred to as “milling in transit.” Workers built their own railroad grades, logged trees and used their own rail cars to transport their harvest to the mill at White Pine.

The logs were then milled into rough cut lumber, railroad ties and timbers, which were transported by the Sumpter Valley Railroad to their mill in Baker City for drying and finishing.

When the mill closed and moved its operations elsewhere, all of the portable infrastructure was moved with it, leaving little trace of the once bustling community that supported it.

The short occupation, abandonment and remote location of the site made it an excellent candidate for archaeological inquiry.

The Southern Oregon University Laboratory of Anthropology (SOULA), local archaeologists and citizen scientists investigated the former Baker White Pine Mill in 2022, and have spent the last few years analyzing more than 8,000 artifacts recovered from the site.

Those items revealed important information about the former logging town’s workforce and also uncovered new insights into the domestic lives of logging families in Oregon’s early lumber industry.

THE WORKING WIVES OF BAKER WHITE PINE MILL

Historians might be able to tell you how a tree in Grant County became a mansion in Portland, but only an archaeologist can tell you what the loggers and their families had for dinner.

During the Baker White Pine Mill era, there was a shift from an all-male workforce living communally under the company’s care towards a company town model where workers’ families were invited to join them.

This kept families together, but was also a means for companies to save costs for feeding and caring for the all-male workforce, by outsourcing that labor to their wives. As an added bonus, company stores could now sell the food and supplies they once provided for their workers for free.

The presence of women at the Baker White Pine Mill can be seen in a number of ways through the material culture left behind. The household chores and caring for lumbermen can be seen in the washboard fragments, enamelware basins and shoe polish bottles recovered from the abandoned households.

These items were found alongside corset stays, jewelry and face creams that indicate a care and attention to appearances in the remote community. High-end tablewares and decorative household furnishings reflect the emulating of middle-class domesticity deep in the forests.

Canning jar fragments and lids and a copious amount of tablewares speak to women’s roles provisioning their families. Where the mess hall meals were designed to recruit and retain workers by providing high quality and plentiful meals, families were incorporating wild game, home canning seasonal ingredients and employing other cost saving measures to stretch the dollar.

The presence of teapots, tea cups and large serving vessels also indicate that social entertaining was practiced.

Household assemblages from Baker White Pine Mill speak of families that closely curated their dinner tables, decorated their homes with cut glass and hung curtains: Activities aligned with the “cult of domesticity” one might not expect in such rural or industrial contexts.

A porcelain doll arm and porcelain plate fragments with children’s poems and decorative motifs reflect on-site education and play over a century ago.

FINDING FAMILIES IN THE FOREST

The presence of women is surprisingly loud in the archaeological record of the Baker White Pine Mill, in direct contrast to how silent they are in the documentary record.

Whether or not these women were willing participants does not really change their contributions to the industry at this key moment in history - when flannel and corsets alike helped build the West.

edited from Chelsea Rose & Christie Goshe, Southern Oregon University Laboratory of Anthropology

MORE FIREWOOD LITERATURE

IN ENGLISH THIS TIME

I admired a friend's beehive firewood stack, and he loaned me a firewood book. Even though I manage about 6 MMBF of combustible cellulose, I thought I'd put firewood behind me. Put myself through college burying wedges into unsplittable elm. Burned unnumbered ricks during my young, impoverished winters. But I haven't kindled a wood stove in half a century - and had almost forgotten that elm.

Darn this book anyway. Its short title is "*Norwegian Wood*" by Lars Mytting. Don't confuse that with Lennon and McCartney's "Isn't it good - Norwegian Wood." The endless subtitle is "*Chopping, Stacking, and Drying Wood the Scandinavian Way*." It's not just the tech of how to get warm twice. To a Norwegian, a resource that facilitates human existence so close to the pole permeates their history, culture, and life philosophies. Firewood even affects their mental health. As Arne the bachelor farmer remarks "My mind is never so pleasantly empty as when I'm chopping wood."

Ah yes, it's such good exercise. A wood cutter burns a minimum of 6 thousand kilocalories daily - so you see few chubby choppers. And it's very personal. We know the leafy inhabitants of our family forests intimately - planted most of 'em. So, we're not just extracting warmth. Our carefully selective axe strokes sculpt our forest heritage and improve its collective health.

A man can be judged by his stacking. Criteria range in 16 categories from lazy and drunken heaps to immaculate OCD squares. I particularly like the cylindrical bee hives. Stacking becomes tangible art in creative forms - even faces. Ole Kjelling is famous for his woodpile faces of Queen Sonja and the composer Rossini. Imagine our wooden politicians we could disfigure over the winter and slowly roast. Drying is a religion of seeking a new Pope's vote *fumata bianca* (white smoke) when it eventually rises from the chimney of your own Vatican.

Everywhere Lars embeds jewels of firewood history and tool tech. Who knew that tiny Bhutan uses more wood fuel per capita (2.7 tonnes per annum) than any other country? For the geographically challenged, it is stuck high up in the Himalayas. And there's the longest continuously burning wood fire since 470 AD in an Iranian Zoroastrian temple. Hey, now I know that my Douglas-fir yields 22.84 mBTU's per cord and Jotul has a new downdraft wood stove (model 473) that would help me extract 75.4% of it. Nice efficiency when an open hearth hits 18% at best.

Ah the axes. Harry Potter took less care selecting his wand than Lars does with his axes. All seem to be hand-forged and Scandinavian (and pricey) though a surprising exception is a recent Fiskars with synthetic handle and Teflon-coated head. I am in some disagreement with his favoritism of Swedish Jonsered saws over *my precious* - a German Stihl. But I am grateful to learn its true label, "Stihlsche Baumfallmaschine."

In the end a firewood ethos is captured by the story of an old dying wood cutter putting up his final beehive stack. He knows that his widow will need it to survive alone through the coming Arctic winter. Firewood is a token of the great annual cycle of things. "It's not such a bad idea to have this kind of relationship with something as fleeting as life itself." And so we circle back to last issue's firewood as poetry. "The scent of fresh wood is among the last things you will forget when the veil falls" (Hans Borli, Norwegian poet). His whole poem is also worthy of attention.

I loved this book even though it cost me yet another \$300. After reading the collective wisdom of Lars, I couldn't resist a hand-forged Granfors Bruks falling axe. Hey, my forest is a business, so my axe is just as deductible as my annual IFOA membership. And I'll bet this book is too, if I couch it as a technical how-to produce a fuelwood product. Just don't let on to the IRS that it is so much more.

by Charley McKetta, IFOA member

Contact information for family forest owner interests:

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>E-mail</u>	<u>Website</u>
Idaho Forest Owners Association	755-8168	evpifoa@gmail.com	www.idahoforestowners.org
Idaho Forest Stewardship Program	666-8632	jrclark@idl.idaho.gov	www.idl.idaho.gov
Idaho Tree Farm Program	437-4820	admin@idahotreefarm.org	www.idahotreefarm.org
National Woodland Owners Assoc.	703-255-2700	argow@nwoa.net	www.woodlandowners.net

SEVEN WORDS TO ADD TO YOUR REFORESTATION VOCABULARY

With so many scientific and technical terms being thrown around, the conversation around reforestation can be tricky to follow. Here is a quick guide to the what's-what of reforestation and tree planting-related terms.

- 1. SEQUESTRATION:** In an environmental context, sequestration happens when elements in the air and atmosphere are captured and stored through either a natural or human-generated process. Sequestration can transfer greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide from our atmosphere to places where they naturally occur or come from, such as in plants or underground. Trees sequester carbon by breathing in carbon dioxide during photosynthesis and storing it in their trunks, branches, leaves, and roots. In the United States, our forests are the most efficient natural system for pulling carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere.
- 2. REFORESTATION VERSUS AFFORESTATION:** Afforestation means planting trees and establishing a forest or woodland where there previously wasn't one. This contrasts with reforestation, which means planting trees in an existing forest or woodland where their numbers have been depleted. Reforestation unlocks many benefits of healthy forests, such as climate change mitigation, clean air and water, human well-being, recreation, increased wildlife habitat, and resilience to future challenges like wildfire. By planting trees in forests, we are reforesting these areas for the benefit of all and helping to restore native ecosystems. This helps forests recover from disturbances and become more resilient.
- 3. SILVICULTURE:** Silviculturists are essential to tree planting, but odds are you've either never heard of them, or you aren't sure what exactly it is they do. In a nutshell, silviculture is the practice of forest and tree management. The goal of silviculture is to control the establishment, composition, growth, and health of forests and woodlands to sustainably meet a variety of ecological, economic, and societal needs. Reforestation programs should work in close collaboration with silviculturists to ensure that tree planting projects have a time-tested, climate-smart, and science-based approach.
- 4. NATIVE SPECIES:** There is lots of talk about "native" versus "non-native" or "invasive" species of plants and trees. How do we determine the difference? A native species is one that is indigenous to an area or region and supports a healthy, balanced ecosystem there through no human interference. Native species of plants, including trees, tend to be adapted to a given area. Non-native species are ones that have been introduced somewhere, usually by human influence. Invasive species are non-native species that perform so well in a new environment that they outpace the existing biodiversity and pose a threat to one or more native species. Reforestation programs should only plant native tree species. These species are selected following a careful assessment of the tree planting area in which we consider regional specifications and future resilience.
- 5. MICROSITE:** A microsite is a spot in a natural environment where a newly planted tree has shelter and protection. Planting in a microsite gives a budding tree a better chance of survival. Microsites can either be naturally occurring or created by planters. For example, many tree planting projects occur in forests affected by disturbances like wildfire. These terrains often contain opportunities for natural microsites near charred or fallen trees that can provide a baby tree natural shade, wind cover, greater soil moisture, and cooler temperatures.
- 6. SEEDLING:** A baby tree is a seedling when it reaches 1 to 3 years old – the age where it's just starting to form. At the seedling stage of life, a tree is ready to be replanted in reforestation projects because it's old enough to withstand a change in environment, but its roots are still young, dense, and easy to plant. This is also when a tree is most vulnerable to disease, grazing animals, and other risks. Tree planting projects often increase the chance of seedling survival by planting them in microsites. Reforestation programs typically plant seedlings selected for their resilience and locality.
- 7. SEEDBANKS:** Seedbanks safeguard reforestation efforts for generations to come. A seedbank is a place where seeds are stored for future use. Because the primary goal of seedbanks is to preserve genetic diversity, they usually contain huge quantities of seeds from a variety of plant species. Seedbanks have strict protocols for keeping seeds safe and sound, so the vaults are typically flood, bomb and radiation-proof! Seedbanks are like an insurance policy against the threat of extinction for native species, especially in the face of wildfire, invasive species and pests, and climate change. Seedbanks are an important part of reforestation and ecological restoration efforts.

PERCEPTIONS FROM THE SCALE STICK

I ended the Spring IFOA Newsletter with a question: “How can a scale rule that was developed nearly 200 years ago be of any practical use today?” This is a reasonable concern. In this article I will try to answer that question.

The Scribner scale rule is used in the State of Idaho. It is based on sawmill operations as used in the mid-1800s. At that time, the lumber market was quite different than it is now. As you can imagine, the early sawmill equipment was different than it is today. For example, the thickness of the saw blade (called the saw “kerf”) and its effect on the sawmilling process was different. Saw kerf has a direct relationship to the amount of lumber a mill can produce (called “lumber recovery”): the thinner the saw blade, the less wood that is wasted as sawdust.

At the time Mr. Scribner developed his rule, the saw kerf in most mills was about 1/4 inch. By the mid-1900s the kerf had been reduced to about 1/8 inch by using a band saw in the main saw or head rig. Since then, sawmill engineers have developed even thinner blades. The thinner saws in use today can result in more lumber being produced per log.

There have been other improvements in sawmill manufacturing that increase the amount of lumber that can be made from a log of a given size. For example, if a market for short lumber (less than eight feet long) exists, a mill can take advantage of the log taper by sawing shorter pieces (The Scribner log rule does not consider the taper of the log.) Another technique, sawing parallel to the bark, can also increase the amount of lumber produced (and its value). A more recent development allows a mill to take advantage of the curvature of the log, or its sweep. Curve-sawing technology, which cuts lumber along the natural line of curvature, can significantly increase lumber yield. In addition, new markets are constantly emerging for what used to be waste products such as chips, hog fuel, shavings, sawdust, and bark. Sawmills are constantly developing new methods to produce more and higher value lumber and other materials from a given log.

So, how does a scale rule keep abreast of these new developments which can vary significantly between different sawmills? Furthermore, how can the log selling industry adjust its log measuring practices to match modern technologies? An equitable solution seems nearly impossible.

In the late 1960s, the State of Idaho was experiencing this dilemma. It was extremely difficult to estimate how much a certain amount of timber was worth to the log seller because each mill had its own system for determining the value and the amount of lumber they could manufacture from a given number of logs. Attempting to match the estimating method with every mill would not work. The difference between mills was significant and difficult to estimate. Something was needed to solve this problem. As a result, the Idaho Board of Scaling Practices (IBSP) was created to reach a common ground with a given set of rules and guidelines that each log scaler within the state had to follow. The method selected to be used was the Scribner Decimal C logging scale. All log scalers had to be licensed to perform log scaling. In addition, anyone scaling logs for payment had to be licensed. The main reason for this scaling requirement was so that the sawmill industry could not be accused of dictating how payment was made for logs.

I believe one of the reasons the State of Idaho decided to use this scaling method was not its accuracy but its repeatability. Repeatability refers to the closeness of the results between successive measurements using the same procedure. Different people using the same scaling rules would produce comparable results. The Scribner scale seemed to have this benefit. A scaler employed by the sawmill could be inspected by a check scaler employed by the State of Idaho to determine if the scale was reasonable and consistent. It is important to understand that the Scribner log scale was not necessarily accurate according to sawmill output of lumber, only that it was able to be repeated by an unbiased check scaler using the same scaling rules. It became the responsibility of the IBSP to enforce this new state law.

Now that the log buyer and seller can agree on the log scale rule, it was left to the competition between different mills to decide on their final offered price. Other things being equal, a sawmill with modern, state-of-the-art technology could theoretically offer a higher price for the logs than a competing mill with less modern equipment. So, the final log price depends on the knowledge, skill, and negotiating ability of the log buyer, not the process of measuring the logs.

In future articles, I will explain further how the Scribner scale is used, how it works, and how it is verified. If you have any questions concerning any of these articles, feel free to contact me with your questions. I will do my best to find answers.

by Dennis R. Parent, IFOA's Idaho Board of Scaling Practices Representative, drparent74@gmail.com

QUARTERLY LOG MARKET REPORT

<u>Species</u>	<u>July 2026</u>	<u>May 2026</u>
<i>Douglas-fir/western larch</i>	\$450- \$550/MBF	\$450- \$550/MBF
<i>Grand fir/western hemlock</i>	\$350 - \$475	\$350 - \$475
<i>Lodgepole pine</i>	\$385 - \$475	\$385 - \$475
<i>Ponderosa pine</i>	\$300 - \$400	\$300 - \$400
<i>Western white pine</i>	\$300 - \$400	\$300 - \$400
<i>Western redcedar</i>	\$1,200 - \$1,300	\$1,200 - \$1,500
<i>Cedar poles</i>	*\$2,200*	*\$2,200*
<i>Pulp</i>	\$1 - \$15/ton	\$20 - \$40/ton
<i>Tonwood</i>	\$35-\$45/ton +/-	\$40/ton +/-

Please note that these figures represent prices paid by competitive domestic facilities in the Inland Northwest, based on average-sized logs and standard log lengths - typically 16'6" and 33'. MBF stands for Thousand Board Feet. Be aware that higher prices may reflect rates only in select locations within the Inland Northwest. Additionally, pole values can vary significantly depending on length. Market information is current as of July 31, 2026.

As shown in the table above, log market activity is fairly stable with moderate demand. Fuel price concerns continue to ripple through the supply chain causing hesitancy when setting longer term price agreements. We could see price fluctuations either direction quarter by quarter or even month to month depending on supply chain costs.

by Garrett Kleiner, ACF

This information is provided by Inland Forest Management, Inc., a forestry consulting company.

For additional information, they can be contacted at 208-263-9420, IFM@fwforestry.com or www.inlandforest.com.

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THE BOARD WALK: MAY, JUNE, JULY

May 12, 2026

The Board received an update from Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) on revisions to the Compliance/Notification form required under Idaho's new Private Property Rights Protection Act. The revised form now requires landowner, contractor, and operator signatures before inspections can occur, with electronic signature options being implemented. Directors discussed implementation challenges, landowner notification, and outreach, with plans to promote the IDL Private Forest Specialist Finder through Constant Contact and the Summer Newsletter.

Financially, the FFL&MC had reduced sponsorship revenue. The Board discussed expanding sponsorship opportunities, controlling catering costs, and evaluating future registration fees.

Planning for the 2026 Forest Owners Field Day (FOFD) is progressing well, with logistics, speakers, equipment, and promotional efforts largely in place.

The Board approved a response supporting mandatory forest management plans for current -use tax classifications, provided plans are reviewed and signed by a professional forester, and endorsed proposed changes to the bare land and yield classification.

Additional reports covered the Associated Logging Contractors meeting, legislative rulemaking, membership growth, communications performance, seedling

program updates, and technology initiatives to strengthen sponsor engagement.

June 9, 2026

The Board received a positive update on the 2026 FOFD, with planning progressing well. Event logistics, catering, equipment displays, and nearly all speakers are confirmed, while registrations continue to arrive.

The Board discussed outreach opportunities, concluding that staffing a booth at the North Idaho Fair would be difficult unless shared with another organization. Alternative outreach options, including the Homesteading Show and smaller county fairs, will be explored.

Reports were presented on the Idaho Lands Resource Coordinating Council meeting, current grant projects, forest health issues, and urban forestry activities. The Board also reviewed IFOA merchandise, deciding to postpone reordering engraved Buck Knives due to rising costs and instead investigate new promotional items.

The Board voted to reduce IFOA's Associated Logging Contractors membership to the Proponent level for a one-year trial while seeking reciprocal support. An extensive discussion was held regarding proposed changes to Idaho's forest land taxation categories; no additional Board action was taken pending further legislative developments.

Committee reports high-

lighted progress on salvage logging rulemaking, membership growth, increased website traffic, newsletter planning, and ideas for future conference topics.

July 14, 2026

The Board received an update on the 2026 FOFD, reporting that event planning is on schedule with equipment, speakers, catering, and logistics confirmed.

Research continues on potential IFOA merchandise, including embroidered canvas work vests and engraved multi-tools. Additional pricing information will be shared with the Board before any decisions are made.

Action items included outreach opportunities, with the Lat-ah and Bonner County Fairs identified as possible venues, while the Homesteading Show was deemed a poor fit. Discussion also included conference advertising partnerships and an update that salvage logging rule drafts remain unavailable for Board review.

Planning for the Summer Newsletter is underway. The Treasurer reported the mid-year budget remains in good condition, with income slightly below expectations but no categories overspent.

Committee reports highlighted new memberships, continued distribution of membership brochures, receipt of additional forest seedling stock, and website traffic statistics, along with discussion of adding a possible online trading post feature.

by IFOA Secretary Cindy Mead

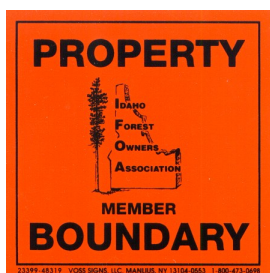
<u>IFOA</u> Size	<u>ADVERTISING</u> IFOA Member	4 Issue Discounted	<u>RATES</u> Non-member	4 Issue Discounted
Business Card	\$8.75	\$31.50	\$12.50	\$45.00
1/4 page	17.50	63.00	25.00	90.00
1/3 page	23.00	82.80	33.00	120.00
1/2 page	35.00	126.00	50.00	180.00
Full page	70.00	252.00	100.00	360.00

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w/multi-color embroidered logo

IFOA FLANNEL SHIRT circle your sizes: M, L, XL, 2XL, LT, XLT

Dark green heather w/multi-color embroidered logo

IFOA FLEECE VEST circle your sizes: ML, MXL

Black w/multi-color embroidered logo

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IFOA Engraved BUCK 110 HUNTER KNIFE

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number		x \$65.00 ea. =	
number		x \$2.00 ea. =	
number		x \$8.00 ea. =	
number		x \$16.00 ea. =	
number		x \$31.00 ea. =	
for Postal shipping fee, add \$8.00/order =			\$8.00
Summer 2026 TOTAL \$ =			

All prices include Idaho Sales/Use tax

Make check payable to Idaho Forest Owners Association and mail to: IFOA, PO Box 1257, Coeur d'Alene ID 83816-1257

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YES, I would like to become an Active Member of the Idaho Forest Owners Association.

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I own _____ acres of forest land in _____ County, Idaho.
(If multi-county ownerships, please list all)

☐

I do not own forest land in Idaho, but would like to become a *Participating Member* in the Association.

NAME(S): _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____ **ZIP:** _____

PHONE: _____ **E-MAIL:** _____

Annual dues are \$45 for an individual, family, partnership, or corporation; \$123 three years; \$205 five years. Please make checks payable to the IDAHO FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Summer 2026