



Society of American Foresters

NW Leadership Conference 2016

**Engaging Members in
Forest Policy Issues**

Paul Adams, Ph.D., CF #2064

Chair, OSAF Policy & Legislation Committee



Engaging Members in Forest Policy

Issues

Why is this important?

- Our forests and our society need the expertise and experience of our broad membership!
- We need to maintain our profession and reclaim its leadership in effectively managing our nation's public and private forests
- State and National SAF leaders can't do it all

All too often now, legislative and other policy proposals for forest lands and their management are developed without broad and substantive input from the forestry profession

Forestry Professionals are stakeholders too!

- ✓ We implement policies made by others!
- ✓ We have highly relevant expertise & experience
- ✓ We have a unique, diverse perspective when independent from employers



Forestry Professionals

A key stakeholder group in forest issues, policies and management planning

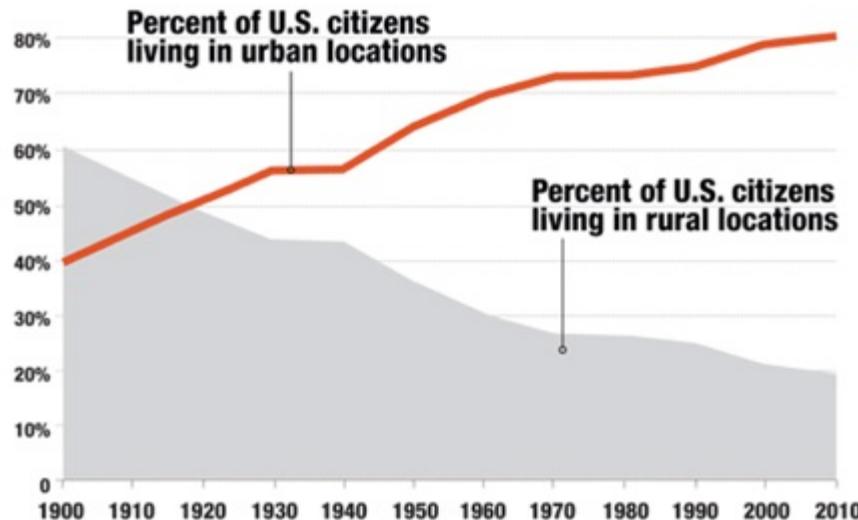


The Issue

Public agencies and other decision-making groups often seek input and advice from stakeholders as they evaluate forest resource issues and develop related policies and management plans. Forestry professionals sometimes are among these participants due to their affiliation with more commonly identified stakeholder groups (e.g., forest industry, forest landowners). However, these individuals are rarely called upon to represent the professional forestry perspective independent of their employer or client interests. This independence is important because when they represent these interests, forestry professionals in both the public and private sector may be unable or unwilling to offer their full and candid views about important forest issues.

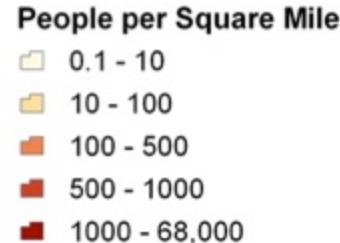
...a disconnected public

Out of the Countryside, Into the City



PORLANDIA

Approx. 47% of OR population

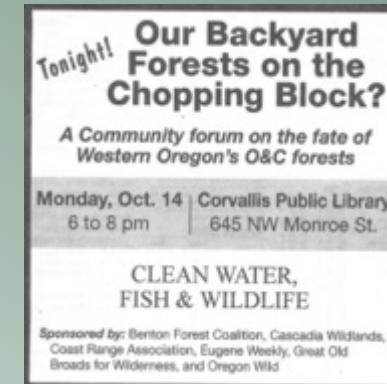


"Trees have rights."

– Dan Saltzman, Commissioner
City of Portland, April 2008

Issues that continue to resonate in the city:

- **Old-growth “protection”**
- **Clearcutting**
- **Chemicals & water**



December 1972



“Many foresters are concerned about growing distrust of their decisions, evidenced by a dramatic increase in lawsuits to protect wilderness, prevent logging and road construction on public land, stop development of recreational facilities in national forests, and the like. Foresters and forestry education are increasingly criticized in nationwide publications. Such developments suggest that perhaps American forestry is not a profession and thus does not deserve prestige, public confidence, and general acceptance.”

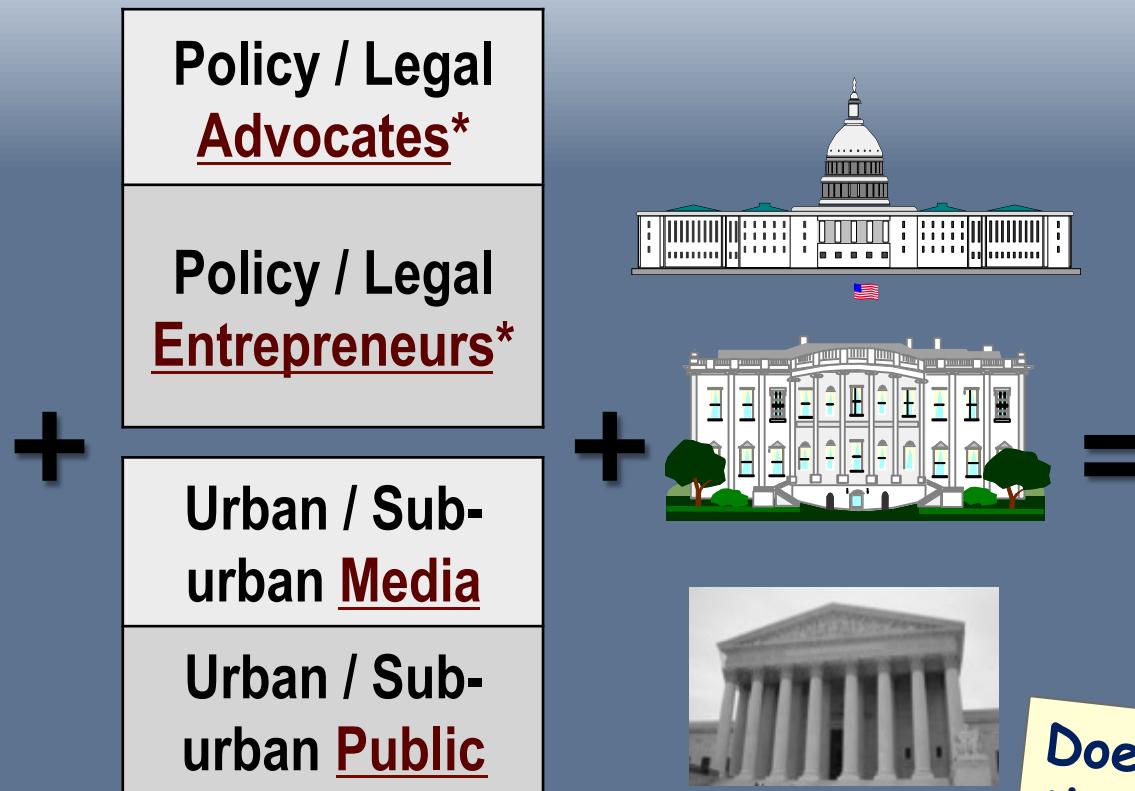
Forestry—A Profession

J. W. Barrett

“It's déjà vu all over again”
- Yogi Berra

The current federal forest policy formula:

MUSY
O&C Act
ESA
NEPA
FLPMA



Legislation that would micromanage forestry professionals

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION
S. 1784

To improve timber management on Oregon and California Railroad and Coos Bay Wagon Road grant land, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 9, 2013

Mr. Wyden introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To improve timber management on Oregon and California Railroad and Coos Bay Wagon Road grant land, and for other purposes.

U.S. House of Representatives

Does Congress legislate the technical practices of govt. engineers and medical personnel?

	Entrepreneur*
Motivation	Uses issue for personal advancement
Use of Science	Stresses personal reputation vs. review
Facts	Uses facts selectively
Hearsay/Myths	Builds myths around self
Values	Favors own values
Success	Own policy role is enhanced

*see Garland, J.J. The Players in Public Policy. Journal of Forestry, January 1997.

Some common concerns for forestry professionals in recent legislative proposals for federal forests:

- **Place-specific legislation** (primarily an issue for National Forests)
- **Legislating specific silvicultural practices**
- **Land allocations to protect amenity resources**
- **Science panels to evaluate management plans**
- **Mgmt. goals contrary to existing foundation laws**

Some Concepts for New Legislation for Federal Forest Management from Oregon & Washington SAF

April 24, 2014

Many of our members are directly or indirectly involved with and affected by federal forest policies – thus we are among the primary stakeholders for existing and proposed federal legislation that affects forest lands in our states. Although our state SAF chapters have not taken a formal poll or position on new federal forest legislation, the notes provided here were developed by leaders of our state SAF chapters to provide a professional perspective that we believe is consistent with the general views of our broader membership.

Some concerns about current federal forest management in the PNW:

- The wide extent of relatively poor forest and community health in and near federal forest lands; increasing extent and severity of wildfires; declining ecological diversity in many areas; sustainability (i.e., environmental, economic and social) of the diverse resources of these lands and communities is often marginal.

(politics)

"All Forestry is Local"

(site & community specific)

***And, why local professional
experience is needed as
much as (or even more than)
outside "experts"***

(Don't overlook or discount what field foresters can offer!)

So, where are the Forestry Professionals?

- We're relatively small in number & easily overlooked; policy makers can use a few, selected “experts” to cover technical concerns to help develop policies
- Our common government and industry affiliations contributes to media and public skepticism



Another basic reality:

At the state and local level we're volunteers with limited and unpredictable and inconsistent time and other resources.



And, another basic reality:

Every member can play a role but...

...not every member can or wants to do everything!



Taking stock of our human resources:

- Who writes well?
- Who's a good speaker?
- Who likes to work with data?
- Who's good with "new media"?
- Who knows and loves "the woods"?



Some approaches at the state and local level:

- ✓ Individual and group meetings with elected officials and community leaders
- ✓ Field tours for public leaders and others
- ✓ Letters, emails and comments to public leaders, agencies and mass media
- ✓ Participation in community groups and meetings
- ✓ “Behind the scenes” support for the above activities (“ghost writing,” data summaries, etc.)



SAF in the Policy & Public Issue Arena



From left, Congressmen Greg Walden, R-Ore., Brian Baird, D-Wash., Jay Inslee, D-Wash., and Peter DeFazio, D-Ore. (holding the coffee cup), listen to John Bergin, a planner with the Bureau of Land Management's Butte Falls Resource Area. Bergin was talking about forest restoration in the Timbered Rock fire area. The group later held a congressional hearing in Medford on salvage logging in burned areas.



OREGON SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS
4033 SW Canyon Road • Portland, OR 97221 • 503.224.8046

August 20, 2015

RMPs for Western Oregon
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 2965
Portland, Oregon 97208

To the BLM:

On behalf of the Oregon Society of American Foresters (OSAF), I wish to submit to the BLM some comments on the current RMP DEIS for Western Oregon. For background about our perspective, the OSAF has nearly 1,000 members and is the largest state affiliate of the national Society of American Foresters (SAF). The SAF supports and represents the forestry profession in advancing the science, education, technology, and practice of forestry. OSAF members work throughout the state in a variety of organizations, including local, state and federal agencies, higher education, as well as the private sector.

**Comments to BLM
on new RMPs**

Forestry Field Tours: *Better than 50,000 words!*

✓ Example: **OFRI-OSAF tour for state legislators**

Attended by 4 Senators, 6 Representatives, 11 staffers

Oregon's Private Forestlands – Keeping Working Forests Working



(with vital support from a Foresters Fund grant!)



"Forests are
constantly changing"

"Active management can
provide reliable results"

"Forestry professionals
can manage for diverse
objectives"

"All forestry is local"



Local (County) Leaders Forestry Tours

(also with vital support from a Foresters Fund grant!)



All groups of public leaders are invited

August 26, 2008

Dear _____:

Please join your fellow business and civic leaders on



Pier One, loading the log ship Matahna Island

Clatsop
Forestry & Wood
Products Economic
Development Committee

Invites you to the
Community
Leaders Forestry Tour

Thursday
September 5, 2013

Itinerary

7:45 to 8 am Meet at Clatsop County Fairgrounds. Introductions, coffee & snacks, restrooms available. Astoria School District Bus transportation provided by the Committee. (Depart the Fairgrounds at 8:30)

8:45 am

Active Timber Harvest Operation. Representatives from The Campbell Group will discuss unit layout and preparation and product merchandising considerations. ODF District Forester Tom Savage and Protection Unit Forester Neal Bond will provide an update on this year's fire season and share information on the upcoming Forestland classification process. Portable restroom available provided by the Oregon Dept. of Forestry.

Linn County Board of Commissioners, Cascade Timber Consulting, and the OSU Extension Service.



Forest uses described
in local terms & scale

Wood Consumption – A Linn County Example

- Building permits, new single homes, 1998-07:
5880
- Median size, single homes (West), past 10 yrs:
2100 square feet
- Approx. wood use in 2100 square-foot home:
12,500 board-feet
- Est. Linn County wood use, new homes 10 yrs:
73.5 million board-feet

Managers Need Mandate

Letter to the Editor, The Oregonian, 1 April 2006

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'Use and renew' forest practices are successful

Letter to the Editor, The Statesman Journal, Oct. 1, 2013

It has been the habit of people since the beginning of time to think of themselves as experts on many subjects, including natural resources that they actually know little about.

Depending on the situation and subject, this can be hilarious or disastrous.

We in Western Oregon are extremely fortunate to have a native tree, the Douglas fir, which fits easily into the role as a very versatile, renewable forest resource. Our "use and renew" law is very efficient, both financially and biologically, and responsible practices have proven that a well-managed forest is forever.

At almost 93, with a family-owned tree farm and a sawmill, as well as both a BS and MS degree (the latter emphasizing plant pathology) under my belt, I feel qualified to lend my support to the practice of using and renewing our forest products responsibly instead of locking them up for the benefit of insects and diseases.

Edith C. Neff, Salem

(PWA note: Edie is an active member of the Capitol SAF Chapter!)

Monday, August 6, 2007
Corvallis Gazette-Times, Corvallis, Ore.

A3

Scientist's data, volunteerism will be missed

BY HASSO HERING
FOR THE GAZETTE-TIMES

Even though he was retired, Benjamin B. Stout, a scientist who was more interested in data than political labels, spent the last 9 years of his life trying to inform the public debate in Oregon about forests and fish.

Stout, an Albany resident since 1988, died July 29 at the age of 83.

During his time in the mid-valley he, among other things:

- Served as an unpaid volunteer adviser on natural resources to state



Stout
Scientist

When a newspaper columnist condemned the Snake River dams as "blockages to survival" of salmon, Stout went to the data and reported, in a letter to the Sunday D-H and Gazette-Times, that the number of fish passing through the first and fourth dams were about the same, debunking the blockage idea.

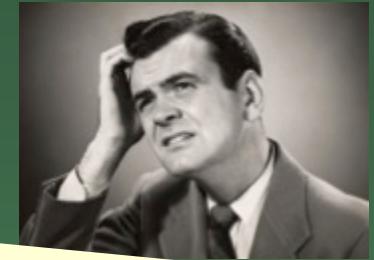
To these excursions into policy debates, the native of West Virginia brought a long life in science and education.

He earned a bachelor's degree in forestry at West Virginia University in 1947, a master's in forestry from Harvard University in 1950 and a Ph.D. in forest ecology from Rutgers University in 1967.

Story by Hasso Hering,
Executive Editor,
The Democrat-Herald

An individual challenge with policy issues:

Being careful to identify & separate personal (or employer/client) views & preferences that may inconsistent with a professional perspective.



Is this what's best for the profession or just what I'd like?

- Other groups exist to advocate for policy & public interests that are not central to the profession.
- SAF exists primarily for purposes other than political advocacy; Politics & political compromise do not mesh well with SAF's focus, which emphasizes professional service, science & ethics.
- Providing a unique, professional perspective helps SAF have greater credibility & influence with the public & policy makers.

Tips for Success

- ✓ Know the issue(s)
- ✓ Know the policy players and process
- ✓ Keep messages simple and focused
- ✓ Draw from SAF position statements for key concepts & talking points
- ✓ Always be professional!



Managing Mature and Old-Growth Forests

A Position of the Oregon Society of American Foresters

The Oregon Society of American Foresters recognizes the unique characteristics and values that mature and old-growth forests provide for society. Definitions for old-growth vary and none are exact; however, these forests can include large snags and downed logs, some patchiness/openings, trees of various sizes and ages, and some relatively large, old trees with single (dry forests) or multiple canopy (wet forests) layers. Not all forest land had or ever will achieve such conditions because of natural disturbance (e.g., wildfire, windstorms). Importantly, as living ecosystems, trees and other vegetation in these forests can change significantly or die, thereby impacting unique habitat and other desirable features and functions. OSAF supports policies that effectively reflect the diverse and dynamic nature of forest ecosystems, such as a targeted mix (e.g., percentages) of younger and older forests across the landscape.

Speaking as a Professional

Our country's direction that public policy will continue to shape the future of forests. We foresters seem to take what's served up, wishing we had more influence in the ingredients and how they are prepared. We need to assert more leadership in providing forestry knowledge to citizens and decisionmakers. However, information delivery is not enough; we need to be involved in the process of policy as well as its outcome. Technical information and good science will not prevail on their own. We don't have to push a particular option to be effective. We can use our skills and enthusiasm to present a perspective, a process, or the issue itself.

Our technical skills and science are important, but we must interpret them to the public and decisionmakers. If we don't do a good job of providing "knowledge services," citizens and decisionmakers will develop judgments without us, and perhaps without the necessary technical or scientific information. Here are some tips for making the most of our communication efforts:

Understand the audience. Today's forestry issues are numerous, complex, and difficult for even the most astute individual. Read professional publications, talk to specialists, attend seminars, ride field tours. Seek out a variety of perspectives, even if you don't agree with them.

Realize your opinions are shaped. Because of how the media portrays and the public perceives the issues, How do policymakers and decisionmakers feel about the facts? When opportunities

a strong and compelling intervention is sound stewardship of natural resources. When dealing with contentious issues, this concern may not be readily apparent and thus your message may be less effective.



Be specific. Detail brings life to written or spoken comments. Illustrate your points with examples, statistics, photos, drawings, and maps.

Have a clear purpose and strategy. If you agree with something you have seen or heard, voice your support and offer examples or ideas that provide confirmation. If you disagree, carefully assemble a case to substantiate your points.

Be calm. Let your story tell itself. Don't let random emotional shout at individuals, institutions, or interest groups. Don't deny your emotions; rather, direct them toward clarifying and articulating the facts that support your views.

Don't blarney. You weaken your message by blaming individuals, society, institutions, or interest groups for problem

fact. Current forestry issues also encompass a wide range of personal or organizational values. You should identify your values if they shape your interpretation.

Raise questions. Even if you are not an expert in biology or economics, it is important to raise questions about key information gaps or poorly supported arguments. And if it appears that opinions are mixed with facts or that values are shaping how information is used or interpreted, ask for clarification.

In brief. Whatever your audience is, time and attention may be short. Your objectives are to deliver a compact bundle of facts and views and to be remembered in a positive way. Organize your material and write it one ahead of time. When speaking, allow time to answer questions.

Practice. When preparing oral remarks, write them just as you expect to say them. Practice aloud. Think through questions you might be asked and rehearse your responses. If you are reluctant to speak up verbally, send a carefully written letter or commentary.

Follow up. Provide a written copy of your remarks or other material supporting your point. Note any questions that you did not answer well and provide a more complete response in a follow-up letter or commentary.

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How Legislation Evolves

A major issue/problem, and a perceived need for a legislative solution

Legislative Committees: Where the Action Is

Who?

- Majority party "rules"
- Other politics, seniority
- Expertise, issues
- Staffers do the work!

What & How?

- Review & draft legislation
- Review & draft budgets
- Confer between committees
- Review exec. & judicial appointments
- Schedule hearings, fact-finding trips



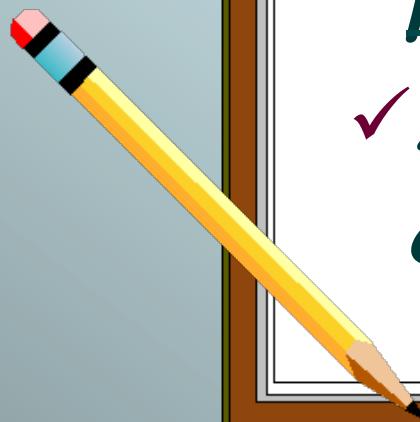
*"If it doesn't make
it through committee,
it's dead!"*

Where to Focus



➤ *Many groups & people often provide input, so a unique, professional perspective can be vital*

Speak to what we know best!



- ✓ Implications for forest managers?
- ✓ Implications for forest resources?
- ✓ Will the forest policy purpose be achieved?
- ✓ Are there unintended consequences?

SAF's "voice" is unique & vital

A highly credible, professional perspective:

- ✓ Our members from “all walks of forestry”
- ✓ We have essential expertise & experience
- ✓ We’re involved in cutting-edge research
- ✓ We follow professional standards & ethics



New home page link to
current issues, actions
& member resources



Some General Forest Policy-related Questions for SAF Members:

- Are our state & federal lands destined to become de facto park lands?
- How can our urbanizing public better recognize its resource needs?
- How can forestry retain its full “toolkit” (clearcutting, pesticides, etc.)?
- Why isn't the forestry profession perceived like engineering, etc.?
- How can forestry professionals be more visible & influential publicly?
- How can forest products be better recognized as exceptionally green?
- Does the news media deserve time & attention, given the “new media?”

Policy activities, approx. 240 years ago

