

An Interview with our own Dan Green Retiring Clackamas County Forester

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Dan was born in Seattle, but spent his younger years in Baker City before moving to Portland in 1957, where he attended and graduated from Franklin High School.

When asked why he chose forestry as a career, he chuckled and replied, “it was because of maps.” While growing up, he enjoyed outdoor activities such as hiking, fishing and studying trees and wildlife. He developed an interest in Forest Service maps—they were free for the asking—which he used to plot hikes and fishing adventures. He began reading all the information about trees and wildlife included on the backs or margins of the maps in those days,

and an interest was born. Just prior to graduation from high school he attended a career day, where he was able to talk with both forestry and wildlife personnel. The wildlife biologist, complete with frayed collar, said that you would never get rich working in his field and Dan, being Dan, said ok, the forestry guy never said that, so I choose forestry.

He entered OSU’s College of Forestry and graduated in 1969. In 1971 he went to work for the Oregon Department of Forestry where, for five years, he worked in the forest management department. His first posting was in Forest Grove, followed by a tour in the Coos Bay area. During this time period he saw the need to further his education so he enrolled in the masters program at the University of Idaho. In 1976 he received a Masters Degree in Forest Science.

In 1976 he started a nine year stint as our OSU Extension Forester for Clackamas County. This is where this writer first came in contact with him. Dan, along with people like Wendell Harmon, Clem Hunter and Ellis Graves, were instrumental in putting me back in “Tree Management Mode.”

To list all the firsts and achievements of Dan’s OSU Extension Forestry time in our county would take up this whole edition, so we will try to list some of those that have impacted woodland owners the most:

- Having his ear to the ground, he learned from woodland owners of an interest and need for some practical courses on forest stewardship. He began small by first providing educational speakers to CCFFA at our annual meetings. While it



Dan Green at his retirement celebration.



Dan working with Christmas trees.

helped, and interest grew, he saw the need to expand into what we now refer to as our “Twilight Tours.” Wednesday evening’s educational tours, with a couple of Saturdays thrown in, were well received. Dan complimented Mike Bondi for having a broader educational vision that led to the nationally recognized “Tree School” held annually at Clackamas Community College.

- The implementation of an OSU Extension Forestry newsletter started during his tenure and now we all enjoy “Woodland Notes.” It provides woodland owners with ready-to-use educational articles, happenings around the county and an events calendar for all forest-related activities.

- Expanding on the CCFFA speakers program and the twilight tours, Dan began a series of six

forestry related classes around the county. He started holding classes in forestry centers like Molalla, Estacada, Redland and Sandy, and it grew into an organized program with lesson plans, handouts and completion certificates. We now know it as the “Basic Forestry Shortcourse.”

• Dan also opened conversations with professional foresters, small woodland owners, Christmas tree growers, the general public and the county regarding the need to coordinate management of our forest lands. This was especially true of the county, where the opportunity was there to make their forestlands a revenue source for the county budget. Putting his time and effort where his mouth was, he volunteered to put together and oversee a plan to do just that. After many months of work, trials and tribulations, the effort paid off with the hiring of the first salaried forester in Clackamas County’s employ.

Dan has also been involved with the Christmas tree business, both as the county Extension forester and as a producer. As he stated, he was small potatoes compared to others in the county, but managing his 40 acres helped keep him informed of the problems facing that industry.

In 1984, he left OSU, and the County Extension, for an opportunity to work in the private sector as a consulting forester. He spent the next 23 years with Woodland Management, Inc. and in 1999 he became one of the principal owners of the firm.

In 2008 Dan accepted the position of Forester with Clackamas County. In this position he was responsible for managing the forests on some 4,000 acres of county forest and timbered park lands. He is also a good communicator and as such, was able to smooth out some rough spots with the environmental organizations; this allowed the forest

management program to keep on target with minimal conflict. When asked why he hung up his county hard hat, his response was that his health issues, and yes, a little age, had prevented him from fulfilling his idea of what a true forester should be able to do; and being able to perform those duties in a timely fashion without passing them off. In short, hold up his end of the stick! (After a bout with cancer, Dan is now cancer-free.)

With all this going on in his life, he still found time to contribute to several local and professional organizations. He served several years on the board of CCFFA and in the late 1980s was elected chairman. He followed this up by chairing the Oregon chapter of the Society of American Foresters in the 1990s. In 2010, Dan was elected Board Chairman of Forest Forever, which manages Hopkins Demonstration Forest. There were other organizations, throughout his career, that benefited from Dan’s involvement and he’s not done yet.

Our discussion soon got around to his thoughts on the challenges facing the woodland owners in the county. Almost immediately he mentioned one of the beliefs that Clyde Ramsey, one of the founders of CCFFA, had related to him early in Dan’s career. Clyde said to speak out on issues that have an adverse impact on operation of your forestlands; don’t give an inch. To that philosophy, Dan concurs. Resist those efforts from groups or individ-

uals that want to tell you how to manage your forests. Work with those individuals and organizations, like CCFFA, that support good stewardship practices.

What’s ahead for Dan now? Well, he has picked back up his share of the reins at Woodland Management, Inc., allowing partner Jim Wicks to take some vacation time. Dan will be alternating work hours at Woodland Management with some of his retirement time until his wife, Sue, retires from her librarian position in Hillsboro. Dan has two children and two grandchildren and hopes to spend more time with them and as time becomes more available, do a little more traveling. Sue and Dan have an unusual extended family; nine foreign exchange students that they have hosted over the years. They have maintained contact with them and about every two or three years, travel to Europe to visit; with nine exchange students I lost track of the number of extended family grandchildren, but Dan and Sue know.

Dan will be around, hopefully for a good long time, and will remain active in forestry circles. We still have the opportunity to draw on his many years of experience and knowledge and if the opportunity affords itself, make use of it. If you are interested in lively debate, just take an opposing view on an issue important to him—but you’d better be prepared. Please find an opportunity to thank Dan for his service to all the forest owners and for the legacy he is leaving for us. ■