

CCFFA Twilight Educational Tour—Craven Family Tree Farm

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On September 9th, the CCFFA/OSU Extension Forestry Educational Twilight Tour came to the Craven Family Tree Farm. Derek and Jessica Craven and family were nominees for the 2013 Woodland Farmer of the Year Award.

This tour was a triple educational opportunity that included a tour of the family tree farm, an opportunity to observe Derek's firewood processing operation and to hear from Clackamas County Forest Technician, Sena Sanguinetti, about the use of cameras on your forestlands.

Upon arrival at the Craven farm, the first thing that caught our attention was Jessica's vegetable and berry garden with her raised vegetable beds. The garden was surrounded by a very high, first class, deer fence constructed of steel posts and a pipe top rail. The girls, Peyton and Laynie, showed us their own raised beds and chickens with the help of the family dog. Everyone works around the farm and it warmed our hearts to see the sharing among the family members.

Located in the hills above Colton and Molalla, the 39-acre property was poorly-stocked and brushy when the family took possession. Nestled in among the boundaries of Weyerhaeuser plantations, the small stand



Derek Craven outlining their plan.

of 14-year-old Doug-fir looked a little underwhelming. The decision was made to return the logged over land back into a productive forest.

Derek led the tour group down the steep hill to the stream that divides their property into two areas. Each area was considered a separate project and planning for each was different. With the discovery of some root rot pockets, a learning curve began on how to deal with this problem. The decision was made to re-stock these pockets with Western redcedar and red alder. The stream also has some active beaver ponds. What it doesn't have is a bridge or culvert between the two areas necessitating use of the rural road to move around

the property. At the streamside, Derek laid out their plans for improving the riparian area for stream and wildlife enhancement.

The family has spent the past 10 years clearing the brush and invasive species in preparation for re-planting. Derek explained that most of that work was done the hard way, by hand! That practice had changed somewhat and we followed him to an area where a brush mowing machine had chewed across some land they are preparing for planting. We also had the opportunity to see some of the early replanted areas that included a nice stand of cedar tucked in clearings under larger Douglas-fir.

The group then moved on to the Cravens firewood processing center where Derek gave a short demonstration of the operation. He built a lifting platform to handle the big rounds and set up two splitting tables so that he can operate from either the left or right side of the splitter. Their operation is capable of producing a uniform size firewood that can be sold to firewood users. The wood is obtained from on-site thinning projects and offsite timberlands. So far in 2014, they have processed 104 cords of wood. Twenty-four cords

will be bundled, wrapped, and marketed at local commercial outlets. Derek is a member of the Oregon Woodland Co-operative and works closely with them in this endeavor. This is a total family work project, with daughters helping dad.

Sena Sanguinetti passed along personal experiences about wildlife and security cameras that she uses as part of her job. She had three different cameras for us to examine and explained various placement positions and advantageous disguises used for both wildlife and trespass settings. She had photos of some of the results obtained with her placements. The use of such cameras is a great way to document what animals are damaging your woodlands as well as documenting trespassing encounters with two legged animals. If properly placed and camouflaged, vehicle license plates can be obtained from trespassers and illegal dumpers. Sena works very closely with the Dump Stoppers Program doing just that.

All in all, it was a very educational and enjoyable tour. If you missed being part of the group, you missed a good thing. Give some thought to coming along on the next twilight

tour. Check the calendar of events in the *Forest-Tree Leader*, OSU's Extension Forestry *Woodland Notes* or our

website: ccffa-oswa.org.

Thanks to the Craven family for hosting the tour. ■



Derek processing firewood.



Sena Sanguinetti with camera display.



Derek showing riparian site improvements.