



FOREST-TREE LEADER

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New Member Spotlight — The Farringtons

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On a nice sunny fall day, I took a drive over to the Buckner Creek area to visit with Mel and Elizabeth Farrington to see how they were coming along with their woodlands. I got there in time to see logger Roger Daugherty hard at work on a commercial thinning project for Mel and Elizabeth. He had a small landing cleared, but it was filling quickly with logs and more were on the way courtesy of his skidder operator. Roger was expecting a self-loader any minute to clear out the landing so they could get back to work.

When Mel and Elizabeth bought the 26-acre property 49 years ago, it was primarily a working cow

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Mel and Elizabeth Farrington

farm that had some timber located in one corner and on the slopes of a canyon. After a few years of chasing cattle, fixing fences and getting in hay, they decided there had to be a better way of using the property.

Contacts with the Clackamas County Extension Forester and with input from the Oregon Department of Forestry Stewardship Foresters, the decision was made: they would plant trees.

Beginning with Douglas-fir seedlings, they began planting their new forest, which now covers about 20 acres. A trip on the "Gator" took us through nice rows of 25 to 30 year old stands that are already marked for selective harvest. Mel indicated that they had not signed on for limb removal, mainly because they didn't have the time to expend doing so, but

left it up to Mother Nature to do the job. In their instance, it seems to be working as the lower limbs are dead and easily broken off and the stands have nice 40 to 50% crowns.

We also stopped and looked over a small alder plantation. Trees were nicely spaced.

There were some vacant spaces which Mel attributed to die-off. He indicated that he was somewhat disappointed in the survival rate and thought that they should be experiencing a faster growth rate.

About 25 years ago, they rounded out their main timber plantation by planting over two acres of Valley Ponderosa pine. In Mel's opinion they didn't thrive as well as he expected on the hillside location. The stem size is a little small but on average isn't too bad. There are some nice eight to ten inch diameter trees spread throughout the stand and once thinned, should show a more rapid growth rate. We discussed the potential markets for the pine, on this side of the Cascades; Mel said there are always chips.

While planting of his new forest was underway, they didn't neglect their existing timber stands. Work was done to clear out undesirable understory brush and control the usual invasive species culprits. Some seedlings were planted to fill in small open areas. The logging that is underway, will include taking some of the existing trees and removing some trees interfering with property activities. This will include a few



Farrington thinning project. Roger Daugherty Logging.

bigleaf maples.

Before I left, I had the opportunity to visit Mel's workshop; one that reflects his 50 years of being a machinist and mechanic in the smaller industrial firms in and around Portland. A metal lathe, large drilling equipment, and other tools were spread around the shop. He also showed off a small steam engine that he built and small brass pit-cock valves (and I mean small.) They were amazing examples of machining. Surprisingly, the shop also included a wood carving area where unique hand carvings were made on small sections of what appeared to be limb wood and tree trunks. This is his real hobby.

Elizabeth retired from the life of an accountant and when she is not on her regular roadside trash patrol, she finds time to work in her garden. Her big love though, is playing the organ. She is a member of the American Guild of Organists and if you listen closely, you can hear her playing in churches and events all over the greater Portland area.

I enjoyed the visit with the Farringtons and I'm sure you would enjoy talking with them also. Please welcome them to OSWA/CCFFA when you have the opportunity. ■