



United States Department of Agriculture



valuing you
AN R6 UPDATE

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regional leadership signs off on sustainable recreation strategy

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for the greatest good

a regional commitment TOWARD SUSTAINABLE RECREATION



From left to right: Tracy Beck, Becki Heath, Jim Peña and Dianne Guidry

On March 2nd the Pacific Northwest Regional Leadership Team signed the R6 Sustainable Recreation Strategy.

Their 37 signatures lend strength to a strategy which provides the vision, leaders' intent and action-oriented components required to quicken the pace of the Region's cultural shift toward sustainability.

Underpinning a set of tools and resources designed to help managers make sound decisions that are ecologically, economically and socially sustainable, the strategy was developed by an integrated team of professionals from across the Region, many of whom are now leading the way in implementation.

"Nurture relationships to build strong connections to place; inspire passion, enhance sustainability and provide outdoor experiences that foster stewards who nurture relationships to build strong connections to place; inspire passion, enhance sustainability and provide outdoor experiences that foster stewards who..."

- R6 Vision for Sustainable Recreation

continuing the tradition of ADAPTING, CHANGING AND INNOVATING

Our National Forests and Grasslands provide the greatest diversity of outdoor recreation opportunities in the world, connecting people with nature in an unmatched variety of settings, activities and traditional beliefs. People hike, bike, ride horses and drive off-highway vehicles. They picnic, camp, hunt, fish enjoy recreational shooting and navigate waterways. They view wildlife and scenery and explore historic places. They glide through powder at alpine resorts and challenge themselves on primitive cross-country ski or snowmobile routes.

Recreation is the portal for understanding and caring for natural resources and public lands. It provides opportunities and motivation to advance from fun and attraction, through awareness, education and understanding, to a role of citizen stewardship, one of “giving back” and supporting sustained management of natural resources.

The benefits to society that outdoor recreation provides are needed more today than ever before. America spends \$2 trillion dollars on crisis medical health care. Physical activity is an integral part of a healthy lifestyle and combined with good nutrition it contributes to improved physical, mental and spiritual health. Outdoor recreation is the natural solution, a disease prevention solution, and it helps shift us away from treating illness toward creating wellness.

Here in the Pacific Northwest outdoor experiences are the primary way that most people connect to their National Forests and many communities are beginning to realize the economic opportunities that outdoor recreation experiences represent. Nationally the economic impact of outdoor recreation is staggering; it accounts for over \$13 billion dollars nationwide and for every dollar of agency funds invested \$46 in societal revenue is generated.

The growing challenge of sustaining outdoor recreation opportunities requires a clear vision and a bold strategy to meet the environmental, social and economic needs of present and future generations. We can no longer manage as we have in the past. Any course we choose cannot depend solely on appropriated funding to meet our constituents' needs.

The sustainable recreation strategy will help us unite diverse interests, create and strengthen partnerships, focus scarce resources on mission-driven priorities, connect recreation benefits to communities, provide for changing urban populations and most importantly, sustain and expand the benefits to America that quality recreation opportunities provide.

defining our SUSTAINABLE RECREATION STRATEGY

The strategy is comprised of interrelated components that build off, inform and complement one another. They are: **Vision, Leaders' Intent, Critical Success Factors, Necessary Conditions and Key Actions.**

These are our regional building blocks to further our cultural shift towards sustainability. The use of the strategy will ensure regional alignment and consistency in our program delivery and serve as a platform for decision makers to make timely, informed and sustainably based decisions.

The journey towards providing sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities and better connections to our communities is not new in the Pacific Northwest. Throughout the Agency's history this region has been at the forefront of innovation and the last 90 years have prepared us well to respond to recreation challenges of today and the future.

who's on THE MOVE

- **Alexis Burke**, Administrative Assistant for the Detroit RD on the Willamette NF to Support Services Specialist for the Detroit RD on the Willamette NF
- **Sherre Copeland**, Partnership Liaison for the Natural Resources Conservation Service to Regional Forester Representative for R6
- **Maija Corliss**, Assistant Engine Captain for the McKenzie River RD on the Willamette NF to Engine Captain for the McKenzie River RD on the Willamette NF
- **Dennis Darling**, Fire Management Officer for the Umpqua NF to Deputy Fire Staff of Operations for the Gifford Pinchot NF and Mt. Hood NF
- **Cara Farr**, Watershed Program Manager for the Umpqua NF to Soils Scientist for R6
- **Diane Freeman**, Ecosystems Staff Officer for the Fishlake NF (R4-UT) to Deputy Forest Supervisor for the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie NF
- **Simon Freeman**, Civil Engineer for the Rogue River-Siskiyou NF to Facilities Engineer for the Deschutes NF
- **Nick Goldstein**, Management Analyst for the Office of Regulatory and Management Services (WO) to Legislative Affairs Specialist for R6
- **Darrah Isaacson**, Communications Specialist for St. John's Episcopal Church (Jackson, WY) to Web Manager for the Siuslaw NF/Willamette

new welcome station OPENS ON THE DESCHUTES

By: **Kassidy Kern**, Public Affairs Specialist, Deschutes NF

On March 19th, the Deschutes NF in cooperation with Discover Your Forest opened the new Cascade Lakes Welcome Station situated at the gateway to some of the most popular recreation sites on the Forest.

Located on a national scenic byway, the new post will provide an opportunity for visitors to receive personalized service every day of the week through the busy summer and fall seasons.

"Above all, we hope the new Welcome Station is a place where visitors will have convenient access to Forest Service employees to ask questions about upcoming trips, help plan activities and obtain any permits or maps they need to recreate safely and legally on the forest," said **Kevin Larkin**, District Ranger on the Bend-Fort Rock RD.



Inside the Welcome Station

The new Welcome Station features a touchscreen recreation guide, interpretive panels, revolving displays and various retail opportunities. Additionally, visitors will have convenient access to a trailhead just outside of the station which accesses over one hundred miles of non-motorized hiking and biking trails.

The Cascade Lakes Welcome Station will be open seven days a week from May through early fall from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and is located 5 miles southwest of Bend, Oregon on Century Drive.



District Ranger Kevin Larkin

controlled burns on AN ACTIVE BOMBING RANGE

By: **Katie Isacksen**, Public Affairs Specialist, Willamette NF

Four firefighters from the Willamette NF recently returned from sunny Florida, not from vacation, but from a hands-on training. They spent three weeks conducting controlled burns on an active bombing range, the Air Force Range near Avon Park, Florida.

The trip offered mutual benefits. The controlled fires pushed back the encroaching vegetation, it made it safer for the military to test bombs by reducing wildfire risk, and the fire fighters got exposure to a different fuel type and burning techniques. While it is common for the military to partner with other agencies to do these burns, it was the first time the Willamette NF sent its fire fighters.

“We are interested in forming a partnership to assist with this work on an annual basis,” said **Maija Corliss**, an Assistant Fire Engine Operator, who forged the connection. *“It’s a great way to train and develop firefighting skills during the slow part of the year.”*

To set up the agreement, Corliss worked with Colorado State University, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the State of Florida, as well as the Department of Defense, all of which help manage controlled burns in Florida.



From left to right: Steven Cooke, Chris White, Maija Corliss and Randy Pyle

who's on THE MOVE

- **Steven Lopez**, Engineering Technician for the Department of Defense to Project Engineer for the Central Coast RD on the Siuslaw NF
- **Michael Loudermilk**, Acting Special Agent in Charge for R6 to Special Agent in Charge for R6
- **Lisa Machnik**, Wilderness, Wild and Scenic Rivers and Congressionally Designated Areas Program Manager for R6 to Recreation, Heritage, Lands and Partnerships Staff Officer for the Deschutes NF
- **Aaron McDowell**, Squad Leader for the Santiam River Zone on the Willamette NF to Assistant Handcrew Captain for the Detroit RD on the Willamette NF
- **Leanne Murray**, Appraiser for the Lolo NF (R1-MT\ID) to Rgional Review Appraiser for R6
- **Jill Oertley**, Wildlife Biologist for the Coconino NF (R3-AZ) to Wildlife Biologist for the Central Coast RD on the Siuslaw NF
- **Rachel Pawlitz**, Communications Coordinator for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to Community Engagement and Public Affairs Staff Officer for the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area
- **Angie Sewell**, Administrative Support Clerk for the McKenzie River RD on the Willamette NF to Resource Assistant for the Willamette NF

who's on THE MOVE

- **Mike Stearly**, Issues Manager for the USFS (R2-CO) to Public Affairs Officer for the Malheur NF
- **Nikki Swanson**, Aquatics Program Manager for the Willamette NF to District Ranger for the Sweet Home RD on the Willamette NF
- **Jason Wilcox**, Fish Biologist for the Umpqua NF to Fisheries Program Manager for the Deschutes NF
- **Rita Wilson**, Support Services Supervisor for the Middle Fork RD on the Willamette NF to Procurement Technician for R6 Contracting West Acquisition Area

who's MOVING OUT

- **Cheryl Bright**, Supervisory Forestry Technician for the Middle Fork RD on the Willamette NF to Engine Captain for the BLM (Vale, OR)
- **Juliet Garretson**, Resource Assistant for the Middle Fork RD on the Willamette NF to Timber Sale Accounting Group Lead for R2 South Zone (Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, Gunnison, Rio Grande, Pike and San Isabel and San Juan NF's)
- **Melissa Swain**, Recreation and Minerals Technician for the Cottage Grove RD on the Umpqua NF to Minerals Administrator for the Boise NF (R4-ID)

oregon firefighters help with CONTROLLED BURNS IN FLORIDA

(continued from previous page)

“It has been great to see fire behavior in a different fuel type and to learn new practices and techniques from multiple agencies,” said **Randy Pyle**, an Engine Captain on his first trip to the state.

The work is also beneficial to the land since many of the native plants in the southern state needs fire to stay healthy. The bombing range is an expansive area and only a portion is utilized for testing bombs. Parts of it remain undeveloped yet are still burned to maintain native plants, which helps provide habitat for wildlife, such as the threatened Scrub Jay. For fire fighters used to working in the cooler, rainy Northwest, the change of burning in warmer climate added some unusual challenges.

“We saw some cottonmouth snakes right on our fire line,” the group reported. *“And we had to be vigilant for alligators.”*

Now the group is back in Oregon, doing routine work in the rain and snow. They plan to use this winter's experience to help them throughout our careers and apply some of the different firing techniques when they travel across the country fighting fire.



Fire behavior in the different fuel types of Florida

coming to a campground NEAR YOU

By: *Paul Meznarich, Public Affairs Specialist, Siuslaw NF*

This summer's blockbuster sensation? If the Siuslaw NF has its way it will be a series of student videos stressing the importance of keeping campgrounds clean of food scraps to protect threatened marbled murrelets.

PJ Collson's eighth-grade science students at Newport Middle School have created a variety of public service announcements spoofing popular movie trailers. Whether a hard-driving suspense thriller with a pounding soundtrack or a feel-good, comeback story with an uplifting chorus, the message remains the same: Keep campsites clean to keep murrelets safe.

Marbled murrelets, a secretive Pacific Coast sea bird that nests in old-growth trees commonly found adjacent to campgrounds, have seen their numbers decline despite efforts to restore and protect habitat. Wildlife managers suspect the birds and their nests have come under attack from predatory jays, crows and ravens (a group of birds known as corvids) drawn into campgrounds to feed on campers' food scraps.

"Scientists have shown that corvids will fly mile to and from the woods to access campgrounds or other sites when trash or food scraps are available. These corvids are then preying on the eggs of murrelets," said **Deanna Williams**, Wildlife Biologist for the Siuslaw NF. *"There is a direct link between human food, high numbers of corvids and a resulting loss in the murrelets' ability to successfully raise their chicks."*

Collson says he and his students are excited that their efforts are being noticed and reaching a larger audience.

"Having worked in natural resources before becoming a teacher, I know how people, unwittingly or not, can either help or harm the environment," he said. *"It takes everyone working together to make a difference."*

Collson says the videos can be used by anyone who could benefit from them, noting they're already circulating through the Redwoods State and National Parks in California. A [list of the videos](#) can be found on Collson's classroom homepage by searching "**PJ Collson**" and "Newport Middle School."

So what's next for Collson's cinematic scientists?

"The slate is wide open at this point," Collson said. *"I'd actually encourage agencies to [get in touch with us](#) and we could see what we could do to help them out."*



regional forester's individual award FOR EXCELLENCE IN SAFETY AND HEALTH

The Pacific Northwest Region has recently awarded **Cheryl Sonnabend**, Eastside Special Forest Products Coordinator for the Barlow RD on the Mt. Hood NF with the Regional Forester's Individual Award for Excellence in Safety and Health.

Over the past year Cheryl led a cooperative effort with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to improve Highway 216 by evaluating the existing Memorandum of Understanding regarding hazard tree identification and the agreement between the Forest Service and ODOT. She helped the staff to choose proper training courses designed specifically for ODOT employees so they could properly identify hazard trees using the R6 Hazard Tree protocol and helped create a workable process for ODOT to efficiently fall hazard trees along the highway. After taking the course several hundred trees were identified as hazards and more than 200 trees were felled in a cooperative effort between ODOT and FS personnel. During the field trip the entire length of Highway 216 to the Forest Boundary was covered and many of the trees removed from the road prism were moved to a safe area to be utilized as firewood for the public.

Sonnabend also serves as the Barlow RD Safety Representative to the Forest Safety Committee and helps District Ranger **Kameron Sam** communicate safety messages to employees each month. She provided great leadership to mitigate most of the hazards identified during last year's annual facility safety inspection and championed the Emergency Action Plan for the district, as well as Emergency Evacuation Drills and fire extinguisher inspections. Because of her efforts, the District has fostered a climate where employees feel safe to highlight hazardous work conditions so they may be addressed.

If this wasn't enough, Sonnabend also organized a joint tire recycling effort, with help from District employees and the Youth Conservation Corps, to dispose of more than 100 tires that were picked up after being abandoned in the forest. A facilities inspection on the Barlow RD identified several items as needing attention, and the tires were one of the more immediate issues.

Proper disposal of the tires proved to be a bit tricky.

"I found a place that took them by the ton and it was located in Arlington," Sonnabend relates in an e-mail. *"Everything went wrong, but it went right in the end."*

After finally tracking down trailers, certified drivers, and help to load and unload the tires, she encountered technical difficulties with the trailers, which led to a late departure and then a misdirection, which caused her to nearly miss the recycling facility's hours of operation.

"We pushed forward and got there late, but apparently there was a wreck on the road just before we got to the facility," explained Sonnabend. *"The accident held up traffic for a couple of hours (and many trucks that needed to unload as well), so they let us in - even though we were 30 minutes late!"*

Clearly Sonnabend goes above and beyond to job get the job done, even when there are bumps in the road. *"I am pleased that Cheryl has received this well-deserved recognition from the Regional Forester,"* noted Barlow District Ranger **Kameron Sam**. *"She is a wonderful asset to the District and the Mt. Hood National Forest. Her cooperative approach with our partners, commitment to safety, and adherence to Forest Service protocols is commendable."*



Jim Peña and Cheryl Sonnabend

digger BEAR



As always, thanks to Jimmie Turner, Walla Walla RD

where in the region ANSWER



Last month's **Where in the Region** photo is of Northern Washington's Picture Lake and Mt. Shuksan located on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie NF.

One of the most photographed vistas in America, Picture Lake is the centerpiece of a strikingly beautiful landscape in the Heather Meadows area of the Mt. Baker RD. The classic alpine vista of Mt. Shuksan mirrored in Picture Lake amidst a backdrop of mountains, wildflowers and colorful plant foliage make for a magnificent experience.

The 0.5 mile path around the lake is universally accessible.

For more information: <http://go.usa.gov/cABnz>

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where IN THE REGION

Win a prize for the most correct answers this quarter!
Using the following haiku hints,
try to figure out the location of the photo.

Send your guess to r6update@fs.fed.us.

Cascade lightning rod
has our southern most glacier
for the time being