

Summer 2021

Idaho Tree Farm Program

****Note New Address**

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Idaho Tree Farm

2021 Fall Tour

Roady Family Tree Farm, Bonners Ferry

We're back in person again for the Fall Tour!

Saturday, September 18, 2021, in Bonners Ferry

Please join us at the home of Chuck and Gayla Roady, our Idaho Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year, for a tour of their Family Tree Farm.

The day will begin at the Roady's at 8:00 AM for a coffee and doughnut social hour, then at 9:00 we will head for the woods. We will spend the morning on a walking tour of their Tree Farm and wrap up around 12:00 noon. Lunches and soft beverages will be provided by the Idaho Tree Farm Program. During lunch we will have a short presentation of current happenings with Tree Farm and should be done by 1:30-2:00.

Chuck and Gayla's home is located just north of Bonners Ferry and a short distance south of 3 Mile Junction at 959 Hillcrest Road. From Highway 95 near the top of the north hill turn west onto Homestead Loop Road then in 200 ft turn left onto Hillcrest Road and proceed approximately 1 mile to the Roady home driveway at 959 Homestead Road.

Chuck and Gayla have cared for this property since their initial 20 acre purchase in 1977 and have added surrounding parcels through the years. During the tour we will see areas of periodic commercial thinning, wildlife enhancement, reforestation, and stand improvements.

Since lunch will be provided, we will need a good head count prior to the tour. To ensure we have enough for all, **please RSVP** to our State Administrator, Colleen Meek, at admin@idahotreefarm.org or call her cell at 208-691-5933. Wear clothing and footwear suitable for a day in the woods on moderate slopes.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Idaho Tree Farm Program Vice-President

Calling all Idaho Tree Farmers! Anyone out there looking for a way to get more involved with our program? The Vice-President position on our committee is currently vacant and we are on the lookout for an interested candidate to fill it. If you have a desire to serve as an officer on the State Committee, the Vice-President position is a good way to learn the ropes before moving into a leadership position. Your main duty would be to stand ready to help the Committee President in the workings of the program during that person's term and then move to the President position for the next term. The terms are 2 years, though we are already several months into the 2021-2022 term. The committee holds quarterly meetings the third Thursday in January, April, July and October; an annual meeting normally held during the Family Forest Landowners and Managers Conference in March; and the Fall Tour which is held in September at the Idaho Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year's property. Our current President, Erin Roos, is expecting her first child in September (Congrats Erin!) so filling the Vice President slot will be especially important this term in order to have someone available to help her out from time to time.

We currently have over 1,000 Tree Farmers in Idaho, so hopefully someone is available and interested in stepping up. If so, please contact our State Administrator, Colleen Meek, at admin@idahotreefarm.org or call her cell at 208-691-5933 to let us know you are interested.

Pilot Program for Wildfire Fuel Reduction Projects

Currently the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and the US Forest Service (USFS) are working with selected county Office of Emergency Management (OEM) in two pilot projects in Idaho. One project area is in southwest Bonner and northern Kootenai counties, the other is in Adams and Valley counties. Both are part of the Shared Stewardship Program.

Shared Stewardship builds upon the success of the Good Neighbor Authority for the Idaho Department of Lands and USFS to coordinate with willing landowners to implement cross-boundary projects to reduce the threats of wildfire and improve forest health. Silvicultural and restoration treatments include such as hazardous fuels reduction, prescribed fire, thinning, harvesting, weed control and stream projects. This effort will combine with treatments on nearby national forest lands to cross boundaries between federal, state and private forestlands.

This program is in the initial stages at this time and landowners located in the pilot areas adjacent to projects planned by the USFS or IDL may be receiving post cards indicating they qualify for priority access to various grant-funded or cost-shared forest health and/or fuels reduction treatments offered through IDL, NRCS, or county OEM.

For more information on this, contact your local IDL office and ask to speak with a Private Forestry Specialist (PFS) about the "Shared Stewardship Program".



Preparing For Forest Fires

 Christopher Schnepf, University of Idaho Extension

The 2021 western drought has made everyone more aware of risks of wildfire, whether it be to homes in the wildland urban interface (WUI) zone or surrounding forests. Fires are a natural part of the ecology of Inland Northwest forests. Our forests evolved in response to a varied types of fires. For example, drier forest types typically had regular surface fires burning mostly in the understory. Colder higher elevation forests did not burn as regularly but when they did, stand replacing crown fires were common. The larger part of Idaho forests, particularly family forests in northern Idaho, more typically burned in mixed severity fires, which burned along the forest floor in some areas and became stand replacing in others.

Fire exclusion and a variety of other factors have made our forests quite different now than they were historically. Idaho forests often have more stems per acre and more shade tolerant species (e.g., grand fir and Douglas-fir) than in centuries past. Generally, this has increased fire risks both to homes and to forests – risks that become more acute during droughts.

You can never completely eliminate fire risks, but you can reduce risk significantly by taking some preventive actions to reduce fire risk to your home and prepare your forest for fire. We have multiple UI Extension publications that help you chart a path to this goal.

Most peoples' first focus is protecting their home from wildfire. There are a variety of very good local guides to creating defensible space by reducing both horizontal and vertical ladder fuels within 100 feet of a house. Unfortunately, people often delay acting on these measures until they smell smoke. If fires are already burning in the area, cranking up a chainsaw may be ill-advised. In extreme fire situations, use of chainsaws and similar devices may be highly discouraged or limited due to fire risk.

The good news is that there are important things you can do to reduce risk of fires burning down a structure that do not focus on removing nearby vegetation (though that should still be done at some point). Jack Cohen is a USFS scientist who has done extensive research on homes that burned down in forest fires. He discovered that while the disposition of vegetation surrounding a home is important, it was really factors connected directly to the house (the roofing material, organic flammable materials that collected around the house, firewood stored under a deck, etc.) lit by embers, sometimes called firebrands, that most determined whether a structure burned down in a forest fire – something he has called “the home ignition zone”. The UI has an excellent extension publication outlining both these “survivable space” principles and defensible space practices titled “Protecting and Landscaping Homes in the Wildland/Urban Interface” downloadable at <https://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/SB/SB67.pdf>. You can also see an excellent YouTube video titled “Your Home Can Survive a Wildfire” with Jack Cohen discussing his research with home ignitions from wildfires. The video includes footage of an enormous lab where scientists are showering different building materials and structural elements with artificially generated embers and is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vL_syp1ZScM.

Fire resistant plants can also be a factor in reducing home fire risk. They are far less important than reducing ladder fuels and risk factors connected to the house, but if you are interested, we have PNW extension publication (PNWs are joint publications of UI, OSU, and WSU) titled “Fire-Resistant Plants for Home Landscapes” (PNW 590) that will help you explore the topic. It is downloadable at <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/catalog/files/project/pdf/pnw590.pdf>



Preparing For Forest Fires (Continued from Page 3)

In interviews with people whose homes burned down in a fire, some people have expressed as much or more loss for the surrounding forests that were burned by a fire as they did their home. There are many strategies to reduce forest fire risk on family forests and we have an excellent 40-page PNW extension publication to give you insights on reducing fuels and other measures to prepare for fire on family forests. The publication is titled “Reducing Fire Risk on Your Forest Property” (PNW 618) and can be downloaded at

(<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/catalog/files/project/pdf/pnw618.pdf>)

Finally, if you are impacted by fires – or if you know of others in your community who are addressing the consequences of forest fires, we have a good publication to help assess the damage, prepare for post-fire consequences, and restore areas that have been burned. The publication, titled “Assessing and Managing Your Forestland After a Wildfire” (SB76) is downloadable at:

<https://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/SB/SB76.pdf>

Forest fires are a fact of life in western forests. The key to responding to them is to reduce the likelihood of homes igniting and preparing forests so they are more resilient in the face of fire. If you would like some on-site assistance in assessing fire risk on your home, check with your local fire protection district. In some cases, they may have people willing to do a walk through with you. They or local Idaho Department of Lands offices may also be aware of programs available locally to help you pay for the cost of these fuel reductions around your home as well as in surrounding forests.

Forest Health Updates Tom Eckberg, Idaho Dept of Lands

Update on Douglas-fir tussock moth

Last year saw some defoliation from the native Douglas-fir tussock moth (DFTM) caterpillar in the Silver Valley (Mullan and Wallace) and also east of Clarkia in the vicinity of the Floodwood State Forest. DFTM occurs throughout the West and has periodic outbreaks occurring about once a decade (the last outbreak in northern Idaho occurred from 2010-2012). Damage in the Silver Valley was light, but it had not been noted there since at least the 1940s. The Floodwood area east of Clarkia and Elk River had been defoliated in the 1947 and 1955 outbreaks, but not since. Egg mass surveys conducted last fall and larval surveys this spring indicated that the Silver Valley populations are declining and the Floodwood populations are healthy and probably building. A trip to Moon Pass south of Avery in July found very few larvae and defoliated areas have recovered fairly well. Outbreaks typically last from 1-4 years before natural enemies such as parasites, predators, and a viral disease specific to DFTM cause populations to collapse. The Silver Valley populations appear to have collapsed though defoliation in the Floodwood area will probably continue through next year. Historically DFTM causes problems in the Moscow Mountain, McCroskey State Park and Coeur d’Alene Indian Reservation areas of Benewah and Latah Counties. No defoliation has been observed and we found very few larvae this spring in these areas. We are installing male monitoring traps now and will have more information in October.

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Forest Health Updates (continued from page 4)

Dry weather and forest insects

The drought of 2021 is stressing trees throughout the area. Certain forest insects such as bark beetles are attracted to drought stressed trees, and defoliation by caterpillars can be more severe during drought. The last major drought in northern Idaho occurred in 2015, and 2021 is shaping up to be similar (see graph). The water year runs from October through September and accounts for fall and winter moisture going into a growing season. During 2015 we observed increased pine engraver damage when food is made available (slash piles). This year presents a similar scenario with the winter storms that toppled many pines in January and March. We also noticed increased secondary bark beetle activity in Douglas-fir starting in the fall of 2015 and lasting through 2016. Two species of *Scolytus*, *S. unispinosus* and *S. monticolae* caused mortality of Douglas-fir regeneration and sawlog-sized trees from the Clearwater River Valley north to Coeur d'Alene. We expect the possibility of similar damage this fall, especially where Douglas-fir is growing on adverse sites (rocky soils).



Small Douglas-fir on poor soils killed by drought and *Scolytus monticolae* south of Post Falls in November 2016.



Scolytus monticolae galleries (left) and pupae under the bark of young Douglas-fir bark (right).



Events to Highlight

September 18, 2021 – Idaho Tree Farm Program Fall Tour. Rody Tree Farm, Bonners Ferry, ID

October 21, 2021 – Idaho Tree Farm Committee Meeting. Post Falls, ID Extension Office

January 20, 2021 – Idaho Tree Farm Committee Meeting. TBA

Stay Informed....

In case you are ever wondering what is going on at the committee level, our Minutes are now being posted on the Idaho Tree Farm Program website. Just log onto our website for Minutes of previous sessions, contact information, upcoming events, and other news of note to help you in your Tree Farm endeavors.

We're on the Web!

Learn more at:
www.idahotreefarm.org

About Our Organization...

The purpose of the Idaho Tree Farm Program is to promote better forest management among family forest owners. The vehicle for achieving this aim is the American Tree Farm System® (ATFS), sponsored nationally by the **American Forest Foundation (AFF)**, statewide by the **Idaho SFI State Implementation Committee (SFI SIC)**, and administered by the **Idaho Tree Farm Committee (State Committee)**.

Welcome New Members!

The Idaho Tree Farm Committee extends a special welcome to the 4 newest Idaho Tree Farm Program's certified members. Thank you to the District Chairs and Inspecting Foresters for promoting membership in the Idaho Tree Farm Program through the American Tree Farm System®.

As a current member, and a steward of the land, we appreciate your current support of the program and your management of the forestland for pride and pleasure. Thank you for your continued commitment to protecting watersheds and wildlife habitat, conserving soil and, at the same time, producing the wood America needs and uses.

Tree Farm Member	Acreage	County	Inspecting Forester
Zoe Cooley	108	Latah	Robbie Easley
Robert and Carol Randall	123	Kootenai	Steven Bloedel
Gabe Molnar	14	Bonner	Douglas Bradetich
Twilla and Lonnie Miller	115	Bonner	Douglas Bradetich

Please make plans to attend our 2021 Fall Tour on September 18, 2021 at the Rody Family Tree Farm in Bonners Ferry.

Remember to RSVP admin@idahotreefarm.org to Colleen Meek or call her cell at 208-691-5933 to give us a good head count on the lunches

Stay safe and we hope to see each other in person again very soon!

