Community

Forest tours illustrate restoration

USFS policies changed after 1988 forest fire

By Alasdair McCondochie

The Willamette National Forest Service is conducting tours to show the public some of the newest ideas for forest preservation and restoration.

The tours take place four miles south of Oakridge, at the site of the 1988 Shady Beach fire, which burned 9,163 acres of forest. It was the worst wildfire in the Willamette National Forest since 1910.

Many of the restoration plans in effect at Shady Beach have come from public input, said Patti Rodgers, assistant public affairs officer in charge of conservation education for the public in Willamette National

The tours will point out restoration efforts and illustrate changes in policy regarding management of forest lands, in-cluding the New Perspective plan, a collaboration on ideas to preserve forests that has been emerging nationally for the last three or four years.

One component of the plan is to leave large woody material at a fire site rather than burning it, as would normally be the

"We mimic the natural process that maintains productivity." Rodgers said. By allowing the wood chunks to decompose, vital nutrients are returned to the earth and a habitat is created for many "critters," she said.

Besides the New Perspective plan, elements from other restoration plans have been incorporated at Shady Beach, including "connectivity," in which connecting corridors of trees are provided as travel and migration routes for wildlife. The corridors are especially beneficial for amphibians, reptiles, birds and small mammals who may be stranded by the large treeless areas left after a

Rodgers said some trees have been replanted and about 95 percent of unwanted logs have been removed. The planting of new trees is expected to be finished by fall 1991.

lightning last week had con-

sumed more than 4,000 acres of

Oregon forests by Monday, au-

The Spring Butte fire near La

Pine grew to 935 acres Monday while smoldering brush on the

Warm Springs Indian Reserva-

tion re-ignited and consumed

146 acres. The Corral Basin

blaze near John Day had de-

stroyed 880 acres, according to

state and federal fire managers.

spread from 850 acres Monday

morning, said Dave Morman of

Morman said the fire was

about 20 percent contained and

crews hope to have it fully con-

tained by Wednesday. He said

the Deschutes National Forest.

The Spring Butte fire six miles southeast of La Pine

thorities said.

Fires triggered by

Firefighters battle blazes

Tuesday



The Forest Service has opened the site of the 1988 Shady Beach fire in the Willamette National Forest to public tours to demonstrate changes in forest restoration policies.

Rodgers said caring for the land is half of the Forest Service's mission. The other half is serving people. "Ultimately. it is with the people that we redeem our mission in its entirety," she said. "Our public is far more aware of and involved in our activities than ever be-

Rodgers said she realizes not everyone is happy with the new forest plans, but that's all the more reason for more people to get involved, she said.

One such person who has become involved is Dennis Lueck, Lueck, a forest ecologist and educator, leads Shady Beach tours to provide a learning experience for the people on the tour.

Lueck said the point of the tours is to let people know that forest restoration policies are changing.

People who are concerned about the forests are encouraged to voice their opinions on the tour, Lucck said. After all, the work the service is doing is

Near John Day, fire crews

hoped to have the 880-acre Cor-

ral Basin fire contained by

Jennifer Harris, a spokes-

woman for the Malheur Nation-

al Forest, said 580 firefighters

were battling the blaze while

planes and helicopters dumped

water and fire retardant. Anoth-

er 240 firefighters have been

difficult to fight because of

strong winds and extreme dry-

Jim Steele, spokesman for the

Bureau of Indian Affairs, said 200 firefighters from the Bu-

reau of Indian Affairs, the Con-

federated Tribes of Warm

Springs and Jefferson County

were working to contain the

146-acre blaze 20 miles northwest of the Kah-Nee-Tah resort.

Harris said the fire has been

called in, she said.

mostly for them, he said.

"I talk about how forests came to be and the role of fire, he said. "Fire does play a number of extremely important roles," helping with the development of habitat and creating a rich variety of plants and animals their homes

Lueck said the area varies in appearance. In some areas 100 percent of the forest is burned. in others the fire hopscotched across areas, burning very lit-

Lueck said it is important to "broaden people's focus" toward the Forest Service. This tour is meant to help the public understand what is going on. he said.

The Shady Beach project is a good start for this because it informs the public of changes. said Lueck

To find out more about the New Perspectives plan and tours, call Patti Rodgers at 465-6450

Tours leave from the Federal Building, 211 East Seventh Ave., on the second Saturday and fourth Wednesday of every month through October.



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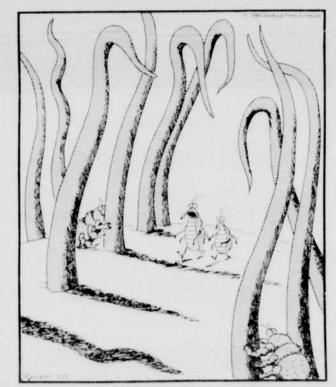
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THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



'Frances, I've got a feeling we're not on Toto anymore.

about 445 firefighters were battling the blaze. Oregon Daily Emerald