

Council charges yew bark wasted

By Janay Blazejewski
Emerald Contributor

Thousands of pounds of taxol-containing yew bark have been wasted as a result of mismanagement by the pharmaceutical company that controls it, according to the Oregon Natural Resources Council.

ONRC Coordinator Wendell Wood charged Bristol-Meyers Squibb in an Oct. 16 press release with "a complacent management attitude," resulting in irresponsible cut-and-burn methods, as well as lax security procedures that cause widespread yew bark thievery.

Taxol, a drug derived from yew bark, has shown to be a cancer-cell inhibitor that has proved effective against ovarian cancer, and may be valuable in fighting lung cancer, breast cancer and rectal cancer.

As taxol is currently running at \$22,000 an ounce, yew bark proves to be a profitable venture for poachers.

The ONRC charged the Boulder, Colo.-based Hauser Northwest, which is Bristol-Meyers Squibb's only authorized bark-collecting agent, has permitted virtually "unregulated yew tree cutting."

Wood said this has resulted in the loss of thousands of yew trees in hundreds of timber sales currently under contract. ONRC is concerned about clearcut logging and burning practices, which will kill "living stumps" that might otherwise regenerate the Pacific yew.

ONRC claimed they have documented proof in which yew bark has been high graded, which means that only the biggest and oldest trees are used, resulting in the waste of smaller limbs and needles.

Wood theorized bark collectors who, he said, are paid by the pound, rather than by the hour, have no incentive to recover the limbstock and needles.

This means workers may leave the smaller twigs in order to speed up work, going on to larger trees in the attempt to produce more poundage, Wood said.

Jim Mayo, timber planner for the Willamette National Forest Service, agreed yew has been

wasted. However, he said the waste was understandable.

"In the past, there was no recognized value for the species. A lot of it was wasted because we didn't know its value," Mayo said, adding the Forest Service is now being more careful to recover the smaller pieces.

ONRC also believes complacent management attitudes has resulted in rampant thievery of yew bark, with agencies not providing adequate monitoring of yew transactions that assures the bark originated from Hauser Northwest.

Next year, the Forest Service is issuing sequentially numbered permits, in order to trace yew bark back to its place of origin.

Just two weeks ago, five Eugene men were convicted of stealing yew bark. James Harrison Oviatt, 30; Danny Joseph Powell, 30; Stephen Brock, 36; Ronnie Michael Jones, 33 and Douglas Randolph Daniels; stripped two tons of wet bark in the Sweet Home Ranger District near Cottage Grove — one of two main processing sites of yew bark. The men could face terms of 16 years in prison and \$600,000 in fines.

At this time of the year, Mayo said, thievery is less common because the yew is not peeling. Beginning in April, sap in the tree will start to run, causing the tree to peel and making bark theft easier. It is also easier to sell, because taxol is made from dry bark, and wet bark must be dried and chipped before being sold.

Jim Simonson, Forest Yew Coordinator, defended the Forest Service, saying they are doing all they can by having law agencies patrol the National Forest to prevent yew poaching.

Mayo suggested the war being waged between the Forest Service and the Oregon Natural Resources Council may go on for a long time because taxol, one of the most effective drugs used to fight cancer now on the market, is not a synthetic. Because of the complexity of its chemical make-up, a synthetic may be a long time in coming, creating a greater need for the Pacific yew, he said.

Government inventories yew trees

By Janay Blazejewski
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The U.S. Forest service began conducting an inventory this fall of the number of yew trees growing in national forests to determine how much of it can be harvested without endangering the species.

The inventory, which is part of a cooperative agreement between the Forest Service and the National Cancer Institute, is being funded by the pharmaceutical company Bristol-Meyers Squibb and will cover 1.7 million acres of the Willamette National Forest.

The Pacific yew has recently been the subject of controversy because its bark is the source of the drug taxol, which is used in fighting various forms of cancer.

The inventory will estimate the abundance of the yew and record associated vegetation and site characteristics to help determine conditions necessary for yew to grow.

Jim Mayo, timber planner for the Willamette National Forest, said the researchers already have some knowledge as to what kind of environment the yew requires to grow.

Researchers will prepare 400-500 sample plots. They will measure off a five-acre square and make five circular plots. Any yew within the 33-foot plots will be counted and measured by height and width.

Data will be analyzed this winter and the program will conclude in August.

POLICE BEAT

The following incidents were reported to the Office of Public Safety from Oct. 30 to Nov. 6.

- Two transients were reported trespassing near the University Inn on Saturday Nov. 2. Jon Ament, 31, and Steven Miller, 33, were reportedly seen taking chairs from a dumpster near the UI. The officer gave Miller a warning. Ament was cited for trespassing after the officer discovered he had a legal letter of trespass, which barred him from campus. The letter of trespass was given to Ament by an OPS officer on Sept. 21 when Ament was found with an open container of beer at 13th and Kincaid St.

- A Westmoreland Family Housing resident reported a fracture in his window Sunday Nov. 3. According to a police report, John Greydanus, 36, of 1649 Arthur St., heard a crack and discovered a fracture in his living room window. The small hole was believed by an OPS officer at the scene to have been caused by a pellet gun, wrist rocket or BB gun. There are no suspects. The damage is estimated at \$150.

- The top of a lamp post at 13th Avenue and Kincaid Street was broken off on Monday Nov. 4. An officer found pieces of a vehicle taillight on the scene but there were no witnesses. The damage is estimated at \$600.

- There were two bikes stolen and none recovered.

ET ALS

MEETINGS

Student Campaign for Disarmament will meet today from 3 to 5 p.m. in EMU Century Room F. Call 346-4248 for more information.

Students for Creative Anachronism will meet tonight at 7 in Agate Building No. 1. Call 484-4198 for more information.

Alpha Phi Omega will meet tonight at 6:30 in EMU Cedar Room C. call 346-9911 for more information.

OSPIRG, 346-4357.

- Consumer Hotline meeting today at 4:30 p.m. in EMU Century Room B.
- Core Planning meeting tonight at 5 in EMU Century Room B.

MISCELLANEOUS

"Did God Change Between the Old and New Testaments?" is the title of a roundtable discussion sponsored by Restoration Campus Ministry today at 12:30 p.m. in EMU Century Room D. Call 343-4914 for more information.

An evening of poetry with Ted Kooser will take place tonight at 7 in the Northwest Christian College Burke-Griffith Banquet Room (corner of 12th Avenue and Kincaid Street). A book signing reception will follow his reading.

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- Increase knowledge about sexual harassment and rape.
- Provide opportunities to share knowledge with peers.
- Apply theory and information learned in the class and from the readings.
- Provide practical experience in designing, implementing and evaluating prevention and education strategies.
- Offer students experiential learning in public speaking or student programming.
- Empower students to work toward creating a rape-free environment on the University of Oregon campus.

Creating A Rape-free Environment
UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

For more information contact:
Ernie Robinson
Director of Student Affairs
368 Oregon Hall
462-2121

Course Number: 220PM-40N
CRN: 6402
Meeting Time: 1:30-3:30 P.M.
Location: 368 O.H.
Grading: P/F
Credits: 0.5

Sponsored by the Office of the Dean of Students, Student Affairs, and the Division of Educational Policy and Management in the College of Education.

THE FAR SIDE By GARY LARSON

"Sure. The place you're lookin' for is straight over them hills — course, that's as the crow flies, not as the chicken walks. Ha ha ha ha."