

NEWS BRIEF

Student develops DuckHunt alternative

It can sometimes be frustrating to search for open classes when registering, especially for most freshmen who have to wait as classes fill with juniors and seniors. But junior Trevor Seherer has developed an alternative that may make the registering process a little less painful.

Last year, Seherer spent several days developing Class Check, a program

that students can use to search for open classes. The philosophy major developed the program after experiencing frustration when registering.

"As a freshmen once, I also had my fair share of problems registering for class," he said. "So by using this program, it just makes things easier."

To use the program, students can visit <http://gladstone.uoregon.edu/~tseherer/cc.html>, and fill in the term, the class they want to enroll in and the class CRN. The program searches for requested classes and sends an e-mail if there is an opening in the class.

"Instead of always needing to hit the refresh button on the computer, all you have to do is to check your mail," Seherer said.

Seherer said he views this program not as a replacement of DuckHunt but mostly as an improvement of the current system. He added that he is willing to give the program to the University once he graduates.

"Although the current registering system is justifiably fair, it still does not make registering any easier," he said. "This program will make it fairer."

— Rachel Lee



Courtesy Siskiyou Project

Post-fire logging along roadsides has already taken place, such as along the Eight Dollar Road near Fiddler Mountain.

SISKIYOU

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Rare flowers, such as the carnivorous cobra lily and the *Kalmiopsis leachiana*, the oldest living relative of the rhododendron, bloom there. Chinook salmon and steelhead trout can be found in the rivers, while the Pacific fisher, pine martin, cougar, black bear and spotted owl are among the creatures that dwell in the woods.

It's these qualities that the USDA Forest Service is responsible for maintaining. Biscuit Fire Forest Service spokeswoman Judy McHugh said the purpose of November's Draft Environmental Impact Statement is to protect communities and firefighters in the event of a wildfire, to maintain fish and wildlife habitat and to stimulate economic recovery.

Under the preferred alternative of the DEIS, 11 percent of the forest — in which nearly 500,000 acres burned during the 2002 Biscuit Fire — would be replanted using native conifer seeds, and 89 percent would be allowed to reforest itself. Any potential logging would take only dead trees; of the 29,000 acres of salvage under the Forest Service preferred alternative, 110 acres have living trees.

Questions still remain

Southern Oregon Timber Association Vice President Dave Hill — whose organization represents wood-products manufacturers, secondary manufacturers, saw mills and loggers — said the economic viability of the area is questionable.

"Those trees have been losing value since after they've died," he said. "It's hard to know what you're going to be able to recover."

Money aside, Hill said most of his clients want to see a healthy forest return speedily.

"If you let Mother Nature take her course, there will be large areas that don't reforest themselves naturally," he said. "It's going to be a slow process to produce a new forest."

But Skar is skeptical of the DEIS preferred alternative. Skar said he thinks it is ideologically driven and inaccurately

represents the environmental motivations of the Forest Service, adding that the forest is a fire-dependent ecosystem.

"We want to grow old-growth forest. Look, we should be restoring that old-growth habitat as best as possible. The best way to do that is with artificial planting and logging first. That's the mantra of these guys," Skar said.

"They can't sell it to the American people like that so they're trying to sell it like, 'We want to protect the owls and re-grow the forest,'" he continued. "But whenever we're doing something artificial, there are unforeseen consequences — the repercussions may not manifest for decades."

Potential ecological effects

Timothy Ingalsbee, director of Western Fire Ecology Center for the American Lands Alliance, said the logging proposal will simplify the forest and reduce biological diversity of its ecosystem. Replanting trees wouldn't replace the usability of fallen and standing dead old-growth ones, he added.

"These are the most ecologically valuable trees in the forest," he said. "A tree really begins its second life after it has died. Many creatures adapt their habitat to utilize big standing old-growth trees and use them for shelter, food and protection."

Ingalsbee, a research assistant for the University, said salvage logging would not prevent forest fires, but instead provoke the opposite effect — increasing their ability to burn.

"Logging will make this site more flammable because it will focus on the big old trees," he said. "It will dump the most flammable portion of the tree on the ground — needles, branches, small under-story trees, brush and stumps."

McHugh said economics do play a part in the plans for the forest.

"Nobody's saying that salvaging trees is being done for ecological reasons," she said. "To be economical, a fair amount of material per acre will be taken."

Both Skar and Ingalsbee also noted that aspects of the DEIS are worth keeping, namely those focused strictly on restoration without any salvage logging. Ingalsbee said the Forest Service's effort to promote prescribed burning of

the landscape, giving the area a necessary dosage of fire, is commendable.

Impending changes

The Forest Service expects to release its Final Environmental Impact Statement in mid-April simultaneously with a Record of Decision, which will finalize one course of action, McHugh said.

Should the decision allow for timber sales, it almost certainly would sit unfavorably with some people. That being the case, Skar said he would expect protests.

"Probably what you'll see after that is massive civil disobedience in the form of blocking roads, tree-sits and a whole range of things," he said.

Ingalsbee was similarly vocal about the potential repercussions.

"There will be public outrage from coast to coast," he said. "This is a national outrage, an assault on a place that has global ecological value."

Western Environmental Law Center attorney Andrea Rodgers, whose firm recently represented a case against the Forest Service that resulted in the protection of 574 acres of old-growth forests in Oregon, said once the final impact statement is released it can be appealed. She is currently working with five organizations — the American Lands Alliance, Klamath Siskiyou Wildlands Center, ONRC, the Siskiyou Project and the Sierra Club — to help them draft comments and assist with any legal questions.

"If it does get to the litigation stage, then we are planning on representing those five plaintiff organizations," Rodgers said.

McHugh said people must ultimately consider a balance between environmental and economic values, and added that the Forest Service should choose the best possible balance between the two.

"Forests are not static. They evolve all the time," she said. "That process is going to happen with or without humans. The question is, what do we as a society see on that landscape? We've got to decide that together."

Contact the Pulse editor at aaronshakra@dailyemerald.com.

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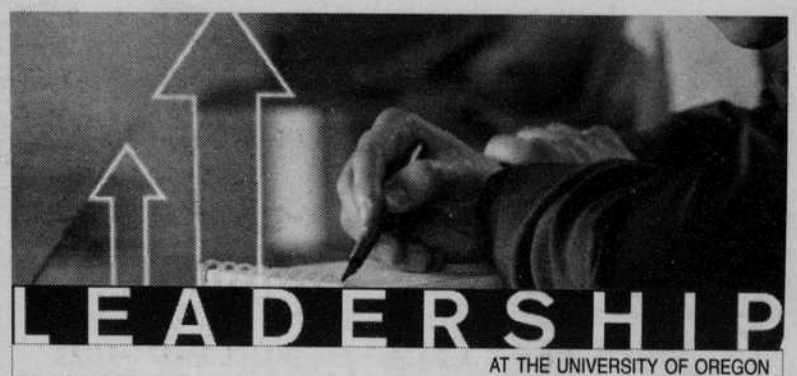
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