

People & Places

Forester teaches tree owners management

Chris Schnepf develops master forest stewards program

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**
Capital Press

COEUR D'ALENE, Idaho — When forest owners in the Idaho Panhandle began noticing an increase in the snowshoe hare population, Chris Schnepf went looking for an expert.

When he couldn't find one, Schnepf put in the time to research the hare compared to other possible causes of damage to young trees and shrubs, grasses and other plants. Schnepf hasn't gotten a lot of calls about damage yet, but said the hare population goes through a nine- or 10-year cycle.

It's all in a day's work for Schnepf, University of Idaho Extension educator for forestry in the Idaho Panhandle. He's worked for the extension service since 1988.

Schnepf speaks to a broad audience that includes family forest owners, who own roughly 40 percent of the forest land in the panhandle; loggers; and professional foresters.

"My goal is to give them enough forest ecological literacy to make decisions that are going to help them meet their goals in their forest," he said.

Working in the forest is not the main job for most family forest owners. Schnepf estimated only a few dozen in the region earn the majority of their income from logging. Some are also farmers.

"Most (family forest owners) have very little training on their forests, even simple things like tree identification," he said. "It's very different from cereal producers, where you have people who have been growing a crop most of their lives and do a fair amount of management activity every year. A lot of our time is spent giving people a basic literacy on forestry and



Chris Schnepf, University of Idaho Extension area educator in forestry, talks about his work outside the UI Extension office in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Schnepf provides experienced foresters and first-time small forest landowners with the information they need.

Photos by Matthew Weaver/Capital Press

Western Innovator
Chris Schnepf

Occupation: Area Extension Educator-Forester

Hometown: LeMars, Iowa

Current location: Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Age: 54

Family: Married, three children

Website: <http://www.uidaho.edu/extension/forestry>

forest ecology." Schnepf works with loggers and forest owners to determine how their needs can influence UI research. Loggers in particular are looking for more efficient and sustainable timber management methods, he said.

Al Kyle in Athol, Idaho, is part of the master forest stewards program, designed by Schnepf so that experienced foresters can advise newcomers.

"He's a personable person

— he's interested in the people and helping them to really manage what they have better all the time so we can improve the health of the forests all over the state," Kyle said of Schnepf. "He's effective. He's been a real asset to the forest community."

Janet Benoit in Careywood, Idaho, is also a master forest steward.

"I think he has had quite an impact with those people who actually want to learn some-



Chris Schnepf, University of Idaho Extension educator in forestry, talks about his work in his office. He developed a master forest stewards program to help spread best practices for forestry.

thing about their property," Benoit said. "He makes certain he is hitting what they think they need to learn."

Schnepf enjoys the reactions from people who are "grateful to learn something

new about something they were struggling with."

"I work with so many people who just love to learn about this stuff," he said. "You get energized by that. It's a real high satisfaction job."

Speed reading, or the speedy destruction of reading

By **RYAN M. TAYLOR**
For the Capital Press

Cowboy Logic
Ryan Taylor

I might have to fire myself from the trucking division.

Book run

The printers for my most recent book were kind enough to store the books for me after they printed them, until they decided to vacate the building where they were stored and told me to come get them. The trucking division jumped in his three-quarter-ton pickup with a piece of plywood on the pickup bed to help the pallets slide in nice and slick.

Here at the trucking division of Sandhill Communications we check the forecast before we make a run. If it's going to rain or snow

we shovel the manure out of the horse trailer and pull the partly enclosed trailer to put a roof over our paper bound inventory. On this most recent trip, the forecast was clear so we just forklifted the books onto the pickup and wrapped them with plastic to hold them together.

Flying prose

After a hundred and some miles of highway speed cruising, the plastic was losing its grip around the boxes of books. Looking back, I heard a thump and saw 40 copies of "Cowboy Logic Family Style" bouncing and skidding and flying behind me on Highway 52. I pulled over before I lost another box and I grimaced as each passing truck and car laid tread tracks on my precious prose.

I turned around, parked

on an approach, and began collecting cowboy logic. Highway 52 is pretty busy these days by rural North Dakota standards, so it took me awhile to get them all picked up. When I had to dart down into the ditch to avoid traffic, I could see the further mangling of my manuscripts quite closely. A highway speed 18-wheeler with the trailer skirting along the bottom to improve the fuel efficiency can really suck up a book underneath the trailer and toss it around.

After about a dozen forays onto the highway I got my mess pretty well cleaned up. There might still be one or two stray pages that the wind swept away, but I reckon a mouse or a bird can incorporate that column into its nest, a rancher can bale it with some hay and read it when they roll it out to feed,

or maybe a cow can eat it with some grass, digest it and, well, leave it reincarnated on the ground behind her.

Special sale

I did launch a "BOGO" sale on my Facebook page — buy one new book, get a second one (retrieved with road rash from the highway) absolutely free, while those scuffed-up supplies last.

The whole trucking experience did make me think that publishing my stories digitally as an e-book would save trucking, postage, paper and the damage that can result when a box of paper pounds the pavement at 65 miles an hour.

Guess I'll run it by the board of directors here at Sandhill Communications when we have supper tonight. Right after we replace that guy in the trucking division.

Calendar

To submit items to the calendar, send an email with information to calendar@capitalpress.com

JANUARY NATIONAL
Jan. 28-31 — American Sheep Industry Association annual meeting, Nugget Resort and Casino, Sparks, Nev., www.sheepusa.org/About_Events_Convention

FEBRUARY NATIONAL
Feb. 1-3 — American Sugarbeet Growers Association annual convention, Long Beach, Calif., www.americansugarbeet.org
Feb. 19-20 — Family Farm Alliance annual meeting, Monte Carlo Resort and Casino, Las Vegas, 707-998-9487 or ffameeting@aol.com
Feb. 23-26 — Potato D.C. Fly-In, sponsored by the National Potato Council, Mayflower Renaissance Hotel, 1127 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, D.C., www.nationalpotatocouncil.org

OREGON
Feb. 3 — Focus on Weed Management pesticide applicator's short course, 7:45 a.m.-5:30 p.m., \$80, Building 19, Lane Community College, Eugene, 541-463-6103
Feb. 7 — Oregon Pork Producers Annual Meeting and Educational Workshops, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Oregon State University, Corvallis, 541-737-1906, matthew.kennedy@oregonstate.edu
Feb. 19-21 — Oregon Logging Conference, Lane County Fairgrounds and Convention Center, Eugene, 541-686-9191, www.oregonloggingconference.com
Feb. 24-25 — Oregon Dairy Farmers Annual Convention, Salem Conference Center, www.dairyfarmersor.com/101-convention-general

CALIFORNIA
Feb. 5-7 — Sierra Cascade Logging Conference, Shasta District Fairgrounds, Anderson, sierracas
Feb. 27 — Drones for Forestry workshop, 1:15-4:30 p.m., University of Idaho Extension, 1808 N. Third

WASHINGTON
Feb. 3-5 — Spokane Ag and Pacific Northwest Farm Forum, Spokane Convention Center, <http://www.agshow.org/ag-expo-home.html>
Feb. 6 — Tehama Walnut Day, 8 a.m.-noon, Elks Lodge, Red Bluff, 530-822-7515, <http://cesutter.ucanr.edu/>
Feb. 6 — Glenn-Butte Walnut Day, 1-5 p.m., Silver Dollar Fairgrounds, Chico, 530-822-7515, <http://cesutter.ucanr.edu/>
Feb. 10-12 — World Ag Expo, International Agri-Center, Tulare, <http://www.worldagexpo.com/>
Feb. 25 — Sutter-Yuba-Colusa-Yolo-Solano-Sacramento Walnut Day, Veterans Hall, Yuba City, 530-822-7515, <http://cesutter.ucanr.edu>

OREGON
March 16-17 — Oregon State University Blueberry School, LaSells Stewart Center and CH2M Hill Alumni Center, OSU campus, Corvallis, <http://osuberry-school.org/>
March 20-22 — Northwest Horse Fair & Expo, Linn County Fair and Expo Center, Albany, [www.equinepromotions.net](http://equinepromotions.net)
CALIFORNIA
March 3 — Walnut (7-year-olds) No Pruning-Pruning Comparison Field Meeting, morning, Nickels Soil Lab, Arbuckle, 530-822-7515, <http://cesutter.ucanr.edu>
March 3 — Walnut (2-year-olds) No Pruning-Pruning Comparison Field Meeting, afternoon, Nickels Soil Lab, Arbuckle, 530-822-7515, <http://cesutter.ucanr.edu>
March 17-18 — Fruit Ripening & Retail Handling Workshop, University of California-Davis, <http://postharvest.ucdavis.edu/Education/fruitripening/>

MARCH OREGON
March 22-24 — California Fresh Fruit Association Annual Meeting, The Grand Del Mar, San Diego, www.CAFreshFruit.com

APRIL OREGON
April 18 — Oregon Women for Agriculture Auction and Dinner, Linn County Fair and Expo Center, Albany, 503-243-FARM (3276), <http://owaonline.org/>

MAY CALIFORNIA
May 1-2 — Forest Landowners of California annual meeting, Holiday Inn, Auburn, www.forestlandowners.org/

JUNE CALIFORNIA
June 15-26 — Postharvest Technology Short Course, University of California-Davis, <http://postharvest.ucdavis.edu/Education/PTShortCourse/>

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