

Tribe must decide forest's future



Forest ecologist Chris Maser met with Natural Resources officers, foresters and interested tribal members at Dahl Pine where he related the importance of defining what the forest means to tribal members. With this in mind tribal members can then set goals and objectives in forest planning.

The forest is a living organism. It needs water. It needs sunlight. It needs the nutrient's found in a healthy soil.

Like other living organisms, the forest is part of a complex, interrelated community composed of plants, insects, animals, birds and numerous species, each contributing to one another's survival. Each species plays a role.

A tree that is part of a forest needs time to proceed through its life cycle. As it grows it takes nutrients from the soil, nutrients that come from plant and animal species inhabiting the same area. Small animals carry and deposit more nutrients and eventually a vigorous tree stands, providing food and homes for other forest species.

Fire and time take its toll in the natural life cycle of the forest. The tree may survive 400 years or more before it begins to die. But dying provides life for other forest species. A decaying tree adds nutrients to the soil, encouraging the rotational cycle to begin again.

On a larger scale, the forest is a blanket on the earth. It provides a protective covering for soil and bedrock. It prevents erosion in areas of heavy precipitation. It filters water, making it clean and clear. And the forest is continuously changing, adapting slowly to new conditions.

The benefits of a forest for man were simple centuries ago. It pro-

vided food, shelter, firewood for warmth and areas to graze livestock. It continues to be of economic importance today. The difference now, however, is that man's use of the forest has increased considerably, and he has returned little back to the resource. The forest is being diminished through overharvest, overgrazing and clearance for agriculture and development.

This denuding of forest areas has had profound effects in some areas around the world. Erosion, resulting from loss of stabilizing vegetation, washes away the soil in Bangladesh. Pollution has increased in Mexico near the capitol where forests, removed for firewood and building materials, no longer filter the air. Small Caribbean islands have lost their forest resource completely by selling their trees to be made into coal. Worldwide, scientists fear that the diminished forests contribute to declining oxygen supplies and increased temperatures as well as resulting in the extinction of thousands of species of plants and animals which may one day prove beneficial to mankind.

Forestry practices are constantly being revised as it is learned that in the long-run, particular practices are basically not to man's benefit. Short-term economic profits are no compensation to errors that may prove irreversible for the environment. For some people, whose forests are gone, it is too late. For the owners of forests still

healthy, still standing, there is a chance to maintain a forest for both economic benefit and for environmental health.

The Warm Springs people "must decide what they want in the future, what they want to pass on," says former U.S. Department of Interior research scientist and forest ecologist Chris Maser, during a recent visit to Warm Springs. Speaking to a group of Warm Springs foresters, Natural Resources personnel and tribal members, Maser explains that the Tribe must determine goals and objectives regarding the forest. The Tribe must decide, "What will work for us," he says.

These decisions cannot be left up to foresters and biologists. The Tribe itself must figure out "what you want in terms of profit and in sustained ability of the forest," Maser relates. The Tribe "must define what the forest means."

Professional foresters and biologists can provide technical knowledge in making these decisions and in implementing objectives but they cannot define the values of the Tribe. With goals and objectives defined, however, foresters and biologists can work cooperatively to those ends.

Time is still available to make adjustments necessary to maintain the forest. Forest planning, says Maser, "can go on for centuries—if the decisions are well thought out." It is important that options are part of the planning process.

In determining what the Tribe wants, when, why, how much and how long, the Tribe must also create a forest for future generations. "We have the responsibility to pass on options," Maser asserts.

Forests today, says the forest ecologist, are viewed as crops. Super trees and nurseries are part of forest management. Management takes place with economic profit in mind. With this focus, the forest is not allowed to proceed through its full regeneration cycle. Sustainable forests are surviving only over three crops. Time is not allowed for a natural cycle. With this approach, Maser asks, "How can we allow the land to heal?" He adds, "All foresters know how to grow a sustained forest, but they aren't allowed to do it." Economics is the driving force, not the health of the forest.

"The Pacific Northwest has the world's largest repository of healthy forests," says Maser. These forests may eventually be important in establishing forests elsewhere. Environmental situations call for hardy, adaptable old growth trees. The global warming phenomenon may cause some tree species to decline. Old growth genes may be required to reestablish forests. Pollution, too, may destroy the less adaptable trees in the future. Old growth species may be the earth's hope for forest areas.

Old growth is habitat for many species that may go extinct as the areas decline. The extinction of particular species indicate the condition of these areas. According to Maser, the spotted owl itself may not be important, but the flying squirrel, which inhabits the same environment is necessary to provide nutrients for tree growth. "We must maintain diversity," Maser emphasizes. "We must look at forests as habitat, not timber."

Concern must be given to the soil and water in forest areas. Trees gain nutrition from the soils. "We have to put capital back into the ground," Maser explains. A sustainable forest needs sustainable soil and sustainable water. "The forest is not finite."

The Tribe must decide "whether or not it wants an ancient forest and why." It must make decisions about profit from the forest and it must decide what type of forest it wishes to pass on to future generations.

A healthy forest depends on decisions made by its landowners. There's not much time to make those decisions. As custodians of the forest, says Maser, we need to establish a "responsible relationship between humanity and the earth." We need to do it now.

out adversely affecting the watershed. A point system for different actions such as road construction, clear cutting, prescribed burning, etc. was utilized to determine the level of impacts that had occurred over the past ten years. This information was then compared against the actual conditions in Beaver Creek and a stability threshold established. The planned actions for the next ten years were then scheduled so that the validity of the watershed would be maintained. This study was then expanded across the reservation and utilized to arrive at the recommended reduction in cut implemented by Tribal Council in 1988.

Cumulative impact analysis is based on the best information available today. Like the amount of insurance one carries, it must take into account the Tribes' present as well as future needs.

ment, as can be read in the following statement.

"Management of the Water Resource is dependent upon the preservation of reservation watershed areas. Good land use practices must be observed in the forested areas, rangeland and stream bottoms. Adequate vegetative cover must always be maintained. The development of all related resources such as the forest, ranges, farmland and all construction, such as roads and dams must be accomplished in a manner that will cause the least deterioration of the watersheds. Stream pollution, excessive run-off, erosion, changes in water temperature and other factors that change water characteristics must be minimized."

Additional information and research since that time has emphasized that, in some critical areas, actions that cause even the smallest amount of deterioration to other resources can be excessive. It's like watching someone building a house of cards or match sticks; at some point it all falls down. Cumulative impacts as the name signifies, are a total of all impacts on a watershed, reservation, nation or the world as a whole. The "greenhouse effect" is a world wide example of a cumulative impact.

In one watershed it is the total impact caused by road building and use, logging, recreation, cattle and horse grazing, natural erosion, climatic actions, prescribed fires, etc. All of these work together to create an effect such as the degradation of a watershed or an aquatic resource. Nature can and does heal itself over time, therefore, the objective of the Planning Team is to plan actions to sustain the environment on any one area over a given time period.

An example of a planning action is the work done by the Coordinated Resource Planning Team that utilized a modified cumulative impact analysis method in 1986-87 to arrive at a rating for the Beaver Creek Watershed. They did this in order to predict the optimum amount of timber that could be harvested from that watershed annually over the next ten years, while providing other uses, with-

through the Warm Springs mill and calculating their value. She notes any log damage, insect infestation, disease and rot and determines the amount of marketable wood in the log. Hernandez began working with the Forestry Office five years ago and looks forward to continued work as a scaler.

Log scaling is a position traditionally held by men. Bev Hernandez didn't care about that when she requested a position as scaler with the Warm Springs Bureau of Indian Affairs Forestry Office. She just wanted to do it.

Since January 1989 Hernandez has been helping to measure the \$10 million worth of logs going

Concurrent Notice Notice to Public of No Significant Effect on the Environment and Notice to Public of Request for Release of Funds

Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs
Tribal Administration Building, Tenino Road
P.O. Box C, Warm Springs, Oregon 97761
(503)553-1161

To all interested agencies, groups and persons:

On or about July 7, 1989, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs will request the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to release federal funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (PL 92-383) for the following project:

Warm Springs Tribal Museum
Warm Springs, Oregon
Jefferson County
Warm Springs Indian Reservation

Fifteen and one-half percent (15½%) of the total cost of the Tribal Museum project will be financed with federal money, an amount equal to \$700,000. Total cost of the project is \$4,500,000.

It has been determined that the request for release of funds will not constitute an action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment and accordingly the above-named tribe has decided not to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (PL 92-290).

The reasons for such decision not to prepare such Statement are as follows:

No potentially adverse impacts have been identified as a result of the proposed Warm Springs Tribal Museum project.

An Environmental Review Record respecting the museum project has been made by the above-named tribe which documents the environmental review of the project and more fully sets forth the reasons why such statement is not required. This Environmental Review Record is on file at the above address and is available for public examination and copying upon request at the tribal planning office between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays.

No further environmental review of such project is proposed to be conducted prior to the request for release of Federal funds.

All interested agencies, groups and persons disagreeing with this decision are invited to submit written comments for consideration by the Tribe to the office of the undersigned. Such written comments should be received at the address specified on or before July 7, 1989. All such comments so received will be considered and the Tribe will not request the release of Federal funds or take any administrative action on the within project prior to the date specified in the preceding sentence.

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs will undertake the project described above with Block Grant funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs is certifying to HUD that the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and Ken Smith, Secretary-Treasurer of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, in his official capacity as Secretary-Treasurer, consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to environmental reviews, decision-making and action; and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. The legal effect of the certification is that upon its approval the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs may use the Block Grant funds and HUD will have satisfied its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. HUD will accept an objection to its approval only if it is on one of the following basis: (1) that the certification was not in fact executed by the certifying officer or other officer of applicant approved by HUD; or (b) that applicant's environmental review record for the project indicates omission of a required decision finding or step applicable to the project in the environmental review process. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedure (24 CFR Part 58) and may be addressed to HUD at the Office of Indian Programs, Seattle Regional Office, Arcade Plaza Building, 1321 Second Avenue, Seattle, Washington 98101-2054.

Objections to the release of funds on bases other than those stated above will not be considered by HUD. No objections received after July 7, 1989 will be considered by HUD.

Ken Smith, Secretary-Treasurer
Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs
PO Box C
Warm Springs, OR 97761

Cumulative impact on watersheds important

One of the most important, if not the most important forest resource concept, is that of cumulative impacts. This is one of the most maligned concepts in society today. The Integrated Resource Management Planning Team is wrestling with this concept and all

that it implies. It has been utilized as a rallying point for both "environmentalists" and forest and other industry spokespersons and their employees.

Ordinance 45 of the 1968 Tribal Water Code recognized the importance of good watershed manage-

Hernandez enjoys scaling job



BIA scaler Bev Hernandez helps determine the value of logs for the Tribe.

Grass is wildfire carrier

The Fire Management staff would like to take this time to remind all residents of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation of the upcoming fire season and associated dangers. Spring rains have produced a new crop of cheatgrass, which, coupled with the old crop, increases the dangers of wildfire. This new crop of cheatgrass is now in the curing stage and very soon will be dead and highly flammable. Grass is the principal carrier of

wildfire, so don't be fooled by light rain as the moisture dries very quickly and the fire danger remains almost constant.

With the Pi-Ume-Sha celebration approaching, everyone is looking forward to a merry festival. Be sure to use good judgment while using fireworks and use only those fireworks that are approved by the local law enforcement agencies. Be extra careful with debris burning near grasses.



A recent fencing project on Beaver Creek will help protect sensitive streamside areas from livestock which tend to compact the soil and denude areas of vegetation. This is one of many projects on the reservation designed to protect water quality and quantity.