



## What's going to happen?...some realistic expectations...

- \* the loss of wildlife habitat;
- \* severe alterations in riparian and fisheries habitat due to loss of shade along streams; and
- \* the decay of large numbers of dead trees before they can be harvested and utilized.

These concerns are included in various projects we are currently working on or proposing for preventing more damage and for restoring the already-damaged forest ecosystem through better management of our National Forests. The quarterly newsletter will highlight these projects along with other important up-to-date information concerning Forest issues in general.



The forest health problem has affected an entire ecosystem and has raised the concerns of a diverse group of interested citizens. Truly, *everyone* is concerned including

affected. Large numbers of trees are dead and dying from the combined effects of prolonged drought along with infestation by insects and disease.

**"...we stand to lose everything we are trying to preserve (if we do nothing)... This is not like the spotted owl-old growth issue. We cannot walk away and leave these forests. We are going to have to do some things to restore their health".** Tom Quigley, Blue Mountain Natural Resources Institute

hikers, ranchers, anglers, campers, sightseers, managers, forest residents, fire fighters, and even city-dwellers and others who visit the region for its relaxing recreational potential and scenery.

The question everyone is asking is "What's going to happen? What are you going to do?" Forest Supervisor Tom Schmidt acknowledges that there are many different opinions about what ought to be done to combat the problem. "Some people think we ought to cut down every tree and start over again," he said. "Others believe we should leave it (the forest) alone and let nature take its course. There's going to be a lot of dialogue between our resource managers and the public," Schmidt says. "What's important at this point...is that people begin to set some realistic expectations for what will and will not happen on the Ochoco National Forest during the next few years."

Here, in the opinion of Schmidt and other resource managers on the Ochoco, are some important basic truths about forest health on the Ochoco National Forest:

**IT'S REAL** Nearly 50% of forested lands on the Ochoco are already

**THERE'S NO QUICK FIX** It has taken nearly a century for this situation to become obvious through its gradual evolution. It will probably take decades of planning, treatments, and monitoring before we can say whether our plan is working...it just takes that long for trees and forest ecosystems to grow.

**WE CAN BE SUCCESSFUL** We already have on-the-ground proof that we can plan and execute successful treatments, both preventative and restorative, through various actions including timber sale contracts. Resolving the forest health issue is likely to be the most important challenge we face in the 1990's on the Ochoco National Forest. It's critical that YOU, our local public, be well informed and participate in the decision making process. I encourage you to fill out the response form on the next page and mail it in. We really need your help!

Sincerely,

THOMAS A. SCHMIDT  
Ochoco National Forest Supervisor

**Stay tuned for more to come in June!**

