

USDA, Forest Service promote wood as green building material

Oregon forestland owners and the forestry community today applauded a synthesis study by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Forest Service that ties together important themes about wood and active forest management, including the environmental benefits of wood in green building, carbon and climate change, and forest-sector employment.

The September 29 USDA press release, with commentary by the U.S. Forest Service, highlights the study "Science Supporting the Economic and Environmental Benefits of Using Wood and Wood Products in Green Building."

"Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack's announcement is very welcome news," said Paul Barnum, OFRI executive director. "Despite the down economy, Oregon has a natural competi-

tive advantage in wood products. Oregon already leads the nation in softwood and wood panel manufacturing."

Ray Wilkeson, president of the Oregon Forest Industries Council, said that by acknowledging wood as a green building material, government agencies like the U.S. Forest Service can positively impact rural employment in Oregon. "Recognizing wood as a green building material can promote investment in sustainably managed forestland, mills and secondary manufacturing. These all have a multiplier effect on employment in small Oregon cities and towns." OFIC's members include large forestland owners and wood products manufacturers.

Jim James, president of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association, said, "Our members are contributors to Oregon's

forest-sector economy. Keeping our members' family forestlands economically viable is not only important to our economy; those forestlands are important to all Oregonians as sources of high-quality water as well as fish and wildlife habitat." OSWA represents members whose woodlands range up to 5,000 acres. Some 62,500 family forestland owners throughout Oregon care for and manage about 15 percent of Oregon's forests.

The USDA's press release recognizes many themes on which OFRI has worked over the years, including federal forestlands in Oregon, water in Oregon's forests, family forestlands, the role of wood in green building, carbon and climate change, and wood's role in employment for mill workers and those working in forests.

Forest Service Chief Tom

Tidwell noted in the government's press release the deplorable condition of many publicly owned forestlands in the West, which include millions of acres in Oregon. Tidwell said, "...we have hundreds of thousands of dead trees killed by bark beetles that could find their way into the building-supply chain for all types of building. Taking a harder look at wood as a green building source could reduce the damages posed by future fires,

maintain overall forest health and provide much-needed jobs in local communities."

OFRI was created in 1991 by the Oregon legislature to improve public understanding of the state's forest resources and to encourage environmentally sound forest management through education. To learn more about the Oregon Forest Resources Institute and its work, visit OFRI online at Oregonforests.org.

August job numbers remain flat

Columbia County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 10.6 percent in August, essentially unchanged from the previous month (10.3%) but lower than the year before (12.1%). The rate was above the statewide rate (9.6%) and the national rate

(9.1%). Total employment climbed by 125 to 22,327 and the number of unemployed people dropped by nine to 2,562. Total employment this August was 622, more than one year before, and there were 273 fewer people unemployed this year.

Community Calendar

VERNONIA

Alcoholics Anonymous	Mondays	6:30 p.m., 410 North Street
Alcoholics Anonymous	Thursdays (Big Book Study)	7:00 p.m., 410 North Street
American Legion Post #119	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., 627 Adams Avenue
Booster Club	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., VHS Library
Boy Scout Troop 201	Tuesdays	7:00 p.m., Scout Cabin
Boy Scout Troop 860	Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., LDS Church
Cemetery Beautification Comm.	2nd Thursday	6:30 p.m., Library
CERT	4th Wednesday	For Info Call 503-429-3018
Chamber of Commerce	2nd Wednesday	For Info Call 503-429-6081
Community Coalition	2nd Monday	12:30 p.m. School District Ofc.
Cub Scout Pack 201	Scout Cabin	For Info Call 503-429-4250
Friends of the Library	1st Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Vernonia Library
Girl Scouts, Neighborhood 4-2		For Info Call 503-819-0143
Izaak Walton League	3rd Thursday	For location call 503-429-7193
Kiwanis Club	2nd & 4th Tuesdays	6:30 p.m., New Hong Kong
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Tuesdays	6:30 p.m., New Hong Kong
Municipal Airport Committee	1t Wednesday	6:30 p.m., City Hall
Pioneer Museum		For Info Call 503-429-3713
Public Works Committee	4th Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Cares Directors		For Info call 503-429-1414
Vernonia City Council	1st & 3rd Mondays	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Community PTA	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., WGS Library
Vernonia Garden Club	2nd Tuesday	1:30 p.m., Vernonia Library
Vernonia Grange	3rd Monday	7:00 p.m., Grange Hall
Vernonia Health Center	3rd Thursday	6:30 p.m., 510 Bridge St.
Vernonia Learning Center	1st Wednesday	6:00 p.m., VLC
Vernonia Parks Committee	3rd Wednesday	6:30 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Planning Comm.	1st & 3rd Thursdays	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Pride	2nd Thursday	1:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Ridge Riders	Last Thursday	7:00 p.m., Senior Center
Vernonia RFPD Board	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
Vernonia School Board	2nd Thursday	6:00 p.m., District Office
Vernonia Sr. Center Board	2nd Friday	10:00 a.m., Senior Center
Vernonia Transfer Station	2nd & 4th Saturdays, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.	Behind VHS
Vern. Volunteer Ambulance Assoc.	1st Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
Vernonia Volunteer Firefighters	2nd Monday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
WOEC Directors	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., WOEC

MIST-BIRKENFELD

M-BRFPD Board Business Mtg.	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-BRFPD Board Workshop	4th Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Ambulance Drill	1st & 2nd Thursdays	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Fire Drill	1st & 2nd Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Helping Circle	2nd Monday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B SAR Drill	3rd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Volunteer Assoc.	1st Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
Natal Grange	2nd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., Natal Grange Hall
T.O.P.S.	Mondays	9:00 a.m., Main Fire Station
Upr Nehalem Watershed Council	For date call 429-0869	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station

BANKS

Alcoholics Anonymous	Friday	7:30 p.m., Methodist Church
Alcoholics Anonymous	Wednesday	7:30 p.m., Methodist Church
American Legion Post #90	2nd Tuesday	7:30 p.m., Main Street Post
Banks City Council	2nd Tuesday	7:30 p.m., City Hall
Banks Fire District #13	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Station 13
Banks Library Commission	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Banks Planning Commission	Last Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Banks School Board	2nd Monday	7:30 p.m., Jr. High Library
Banks Youth Group	Sunday, Wednesday	7:00 p.m., UMC Youth Bldg.
Chamber of Commerce	1st Thursday	12:30 p.m., Fire District Office
CPO 14	3rd Monday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Everybody's Hometown Band	Tuesdays	7:00 p.m., BHS Music Room
Friends of the Library	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Mondays	7:00 p.m., Brown Derby
Sunset Park Assoc.	3rd Wednesday	8:00 p.m., Gun Club
T.O.P.S.	Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Administration Bldg.

COLUMBIA COUNTY (All meet in St. Helens unless otherwise noted.)

Board of Commissioners	Wednesday	10:00 a.m., Courthouse
Citizens for Senior Justice	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Sunset Park Church
Columbia Comm Mental Health	1st Tuesday	5:30 p.m., 58646 McNulty Way
Columbia Soil & Water District	3rd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., NRCS, 2514 Sykes
County Fair Board	2nd Monday	6:00 p.m., Fairgrounds 4-H Bldg.
County Parks Commission	3rd Tuesday	Times vary, 1054 Oregon St.
Mental Health Advisory Comm.	Quarterly	For Info call 503-397-7211
Comm. on Children & Families	3rd Thursday	5:30 p.m. OSU Ext., 505 N. Hwy. 30
Local Alcohol & Drug Plan. Comm.	Quarterly	For Info call 503-397-7211

Organizations and meeting dates not listed may be included by calling 429-9410 or by mail to The INDEPENDENT, 725 Bridge Street, Vernonia, OR 97064.