

Agenda Item No.:	5
Work Plan:	Administrative Work Plan
Topic:	Ceremonial Events and Recognitions
Presentation Title:	2014 Forest Practices Operator of the Year awards
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### **SUMMARY**

The Board of Forestry annually recognizes Forest Practices Operators of the Year. This year's award recipients are Bewley Investments, Todd Hueckman Contracting, and Robert Howell Logging.

### **BACKGROUND**

The *Forestry Program for Oregon* includes the Operator Recognition program, which aims to protect, maintain, and enhance Oregon's forest soil and water resources through voluntary resource enhancement efforts. The program recognizes operators who voluntarily protect forest resources and exemplify forestry values. To recognize operators meeting or exceeding the forestry practice minimums, each year the program names:

- Up to three Operators of the Year (one from each Area);
- Merit Award recipients (typically up to one per District); and
- Letters of Commendation (as many as are earned).

The program has two goals:

- To recognize operators who consistently exceed the Oregon Forest Practices Act and voluntarily raise industry standards.
- To improve public understanding of the Forest Practices Act, its administration, and its effectiveness in protecting natural resources.

### **Process**

To earn an Operator of the Year Award, operators must be nominated. Nominations may be made by ODF Stewardship Foresters, other companies, or individuals. After screening the nominations to ensure the nominee meets the minimum requirements, the three Regional Forest Practices Committees may tour the final nominee operator sites and interview the nominees and nominators.

As directed by the Board, the Committees review the written nominations and tour videos and select the Regional Operator of the Year based on the operators innovative techniques, cooperative spirit, consistent performance, and preventative measures.

The 2014 Forest Practices Regional Operator of the Year Awards recipients are:

**Todd Hueckman Contracting**, (Eastern Area – Burns). Todd Hueckman earned the Eastern Oregon Operator of the year award for his work on a roughly seventy-acre harvest with the primary purpose of stopping dwarf mistletoe from infecting the property owners' remaining acres. Mr. Hueckman's techniques using equipment to decrease the impact on the land, like using the boom of his tracked equipment as a pivot rather than just skidding on the tracks to turn, show his ongoing commitment to protecting the land. Mr. Hueckman also found a way to make the harvest work, despite the nearest mill being over two hours away.

**Robert Howell Logging, LLC**, (Northwest Area - Cottage Grove). Robert Howell Logging, LLC earned the Northwest Operator of the Year Award for work done in the Triangle Lake area. Mr. Howell skillfully executed a small harvest on difficult terrain with neighbors close by. The Howell team's work with the neighbors and considerate planning allowed a successful harvest while protecting two domestic water sources, homes, and power lines. Their work not only protected natural resources but also satisfied neighbors.

**Bewley Investments**, (Southwest Area - Central Point). Bewley Investments, owned by Brian Bewley, earned the Southwest Operator of the Year for their sustained commitment to protecting natural resources. This particular harvest Mr. Bewley's company worked on, had three streams to protect and a neighbor whose view could have been impacted by the harvest. Mr. Bewley took extra precautions, beyond the Forest Practices Act requirements, to prevent debris and dirt from entering the streams and to retain more trees throughout the harvest area for habitat purposes and aesthetics.

These operators have been and continue to be recognized at annual state-wide industry events throughout the year including the Associated Oregon Loggers Convention, the Oregon Logging Conference, and the Oregon Small Woodland Association conference.

All nominees exceeded the Forest Practices requirements and improved Oregon's forests, fish and wildlife habitat, fire safety needs, and water quality. Merit Award recipients selected by the Regional Committees will be recognized by their Regional Committees. The 2014 Merit Award recipients are:

- WyEast Forestry Management – Hood River (Video at <http://youtu.be/eYibb6Ue3w8>)
- Huffman and Wright Logging Co. – Canyonville (Video at [http://youtu.be/RleyKnaI\\_d0](http://youtu.be/RleyKnaI_d0))

Additional operators have been selected to receive district Letters of Commendation. These merit and commendation awards will be presented at local functions this spring.

A brief presentation, including videos describing the Operator of the Year projects has been prepared.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Department recommends the Board of Forestry formally recognize the recipients and commend them for excellence in forest operations.