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5-25-2010

## Interview with Steve Jones, US Forest Service, 2010 (audio)

Steve Jones

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# PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

## INTERVIEW INDEX

INTERVIEWEE: Steve Jones

Interviewer: Scott Swenson

Date: May 25, 2010

Location of Interview: Hood River Ranger District

Research Assistant: Ben Fowler

Interview Series: Sustainability History Project

Recording Equipment: DIGITAL RECORDER (WINDOWS MEDIA AUDIO FILE) WITH AN EXTERNAL, OMNIDIRECTIONAL MICROPHONE

| Time  | Notes   |
|-------|---|
| :30   | Interview intro - how long have you lived in Hood River?  |
| 1:30  | Education background?   |
| 2:30  | Professional history with wildfire management.  |
| 3:45  | Transition from Timber Management to Hydrology in 1991; bottom fell out on timber industry; sawmills closing down. 1997 transition back to commercial presale forestry.     |
| 5:10  | 2002 – Another round of downsizing in timber management. The “thirty mile fire”. Went to fire management, then back to timber management.                                   |
| 7:00  | What was the “thirty mile fire?” - 4 people killed out of 20 fire firefighters.   |
| 9:00  | What did you do in fisheries and hydrology? Restoration work in stream channels, obliterated roads, rehabilitating 80’s clear cuts.   |
| 11:12 | Typical day or week? Start in the office, then head out to the woods.   |
| 12:00 | An aypical day? Last minute data analysis for expanded wilderness project...  |
| 12:30 | What is sustainability? – Primarily an ecological balance. Forest Service expands that to social elements due to human interactions with the land.                          |
| 14:25 | How do you gauge progress toward sustainability? – Social acceptance of land management decisions. Clear cutting = loss of public support, now public is more of a partner. |
| 15:08 | Describe the “Dalles Watershed Fuel Break” – Interdisciplinary group came   |

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|-------|--|
|       | together to manage over-stocked timber stands.   |
| 17:12 | How was the project successful?  |
| 18:25 | How does severe fire affect watershed quality? - Loss of trees, flora bad for water.   |
| 20:04 | Describe the 2008 cooper spur fuel reduction demonstration project in the Tilly Jane Watershed and your role in that project.  |
| 21:44 | In 2009, there was project called the Clyde stewardship aimed at reducing fuel loads and improving the overall stand vigor. Describe the criteria you used to determine tree health. - Root disease... |
| 23:33 | How will this help the stand's health? – Are ponderosa and western larch pines less susceptible to disease than true firs?   |
| 25:44 | The 2008 Gnarl Ridge fire burned 3280 acres of beetle-killed subalpine fir with entailed large amounts of dead woody debris. How could sustainable thinning beforehand affected the damage?            |

Time            Notes

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 27:26 | Explain how your profession as a forester may be linked to fire management professions. - Logging, harvesting is one way to reduce. Or introduce fire as underburn to kill off encroaching trees.   |
| 28:40 | What are some of your proudest achievements? - Sharing knowledge with new people coming in to work for the agency.  |
| 29:15 | Persistent challenges? – Downsizing of agency over the last 20 years. Gone from quick-response large workforce, to a small – less vocational type work force. Fewer people working in the woods.  |
| 30:00 | How will climate change affect forest ecosystems in Oregon? – Decrease in stand health means more frequent large catastrophic fires and fewer self-managing events. Temperature affecting root disease, insect populations...   |
| 31:25 | How important is the role of forest management in combating future forest health issues? – Mankind continues to have a need for wood products, and recreation, so we have a challenge to meet those needs. Moved away from clear-cut, fire-suppressing plan, to a more socially diverse, multi-use prescription plan. |
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