



Director's Message

John Calhoun, *Director*



It was a thoughtful choice that placed UW ONRC near the community of Forks. Research centers are often located on the University campus or, in the case of a Center that has a natural resource focus, in a wilderness setting. By choosing to locate in close proximity to the Forks community, a strong message was delivered: this research center will engage rural, resource-dependent communities and work to address the most pressing issues they face.

This special relationship between UW ONRC and rural, resource-based communities such as Forks is manifested in nearly everything we do. Research, education, and service programs are all related, sometimes directly, to community needs. In fact, that is the way we test the relevance of our work. We always ask the question, "How does this project affect rural, resource-based communities such as Forks?"

This issue of *ONRC Update* places a focus on activities that directly involve the Forks community.

Community service permeates our professional activities and spills over onto our personal lives as well. Many UW ONRC employees are active in community affairs locally. As center director, I encourage this participation and provide the workplace flexibility necessary to

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facilitate active community involvement. Personally, I believe we all have a duty to give back to our community when we are able. This ethic fits well with values that supported the decision to locate UW ONRC within the community of Forks. Indeed, a fundamental

purpose of UW ONRC, as set forth in the enabling legislation, was to conduct research and education that explored the social and economic implications of natural resource management in support of sustainable, healthy, resource-based communities.

If our work can increase the capacity of the community of Forks to deal with a changing world, the work will likely be valuable to other resource-dependent communities as well. Healthy, sustainable natural resource-based communities are a valuable part of our heritage and should remain a part of the diverse socio-economic character of our country. I believe this value is shared by those responsible for placing UW ONRC where it is; embedded within the community of Forks.

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Contributions of Low-Income Workers to Forest Management and Production

Lesley Hoare

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With the shift in forest management from a focus on timber production to an emphasis on ecosystem management, it becomes increasingly important to gather information on non-timber forest products. Non-timber forest products provide both an alternative source of income and ecological diversity. Manual forest workers are an important yet often overlooked source of knowledge regarding forest ecology.

My research focuses on the knowledge of salal (*Gaultheria shallon*) harvesters, and what it can offer to forest management and production. Harvesters can be seen as primary sources of knowledge in the salal industry. These workers spend five to six days a week working on forested lands. Their work requires constant vigilance to safely navigate their way through the woods as they search for salal and then successfully return to their vehicles. Tangent to these activities, workers acquire valuable local ecological knowledge. Unfortunately, forest managers have historically paid little attention to the information these workers gather through their direct experience and interactions with the forest flora and fauna.

Over the past nine months, I collected data about salal and salal harvesters through 35 interviews and by accompanying several workers into the woods. Informal interviews with landowners provided an overview of the management system. The tables on the following page provide a preliminary look at the local ecologi-

Researcher
Lesley
Hoare,
exploring in
the local
flora on the
Olympic
Peninsula



cal knowledge of salal harvesters.

As the salal industry expands, it is important to better understand the ecological impacts of harvesting. The large amount of land covered under salal permits makes the task of collecting data extremely difficult when looking at the resources and the manpower that managers have available in their agencies. The majority of harvesters have prior experience in natural resources and/or agricultural work, providing a strong ecological base of knowledge. By taking a collaborative approach, managers can work with harvesters to compile valuable information and monitor forest health. This can be useful for salal as well as other non-timber forest products.

This study needs to be seen as a starting point, realizing that communication and collaboration can lead to a better understanding of the state of our forest resources and their sustainability.

The information presented here are only the preliminary results. Final results will provide a more in-depth description of local ecological knowledge and explore networks where communication between communities may occur.

FOOTNOTES

¹ While several respondents specifically named Hemlock or Douglas fir, others used the word “pino” to represent these species. By looking at the other information given about the surrounding environment, such as humidity, plant associations and language, Hemlock or Douglas fir was assigned to each “pino” response.

² Less than four respondents cited each of these characteristics: high areas, lower areas, less salal as the presence of ferns increases, with small alder, blackberry, salmonberry, maple, moss, silver fir, and spruce and there are no specific plant associations.

³ This occurs when workers are carrying salal out of the forest and the leaves rub against other plants/trees. This can make the salal unacceptable for sale.

⁴ Harvesters picking too much and/or stepping on plants; also the effects of logging machines/work of loggers.

⁵ Less than four respondents cited each of these characteristics: too much cold kills salal, ice does not hurt salal, sun has little effect on salal and sun/heat is necessary for reproduction.

Contributions of Low-Income Workers to Forest Management and Production (continued)

Table 1. Plants that are good for sale.

Response	Frequency
Good leaves: shiny green leaves; wide/large; more rounded/less pointy tip; not dry/yellow; without discoloration; entire leaves without bites; without red/black points (found at the edge of forest covering); without flowers or fruits	34
New growth: branches, not the stem of the plant (to let plant produce again); this year's growth	20
Straight stems: without too many branches off of the main stem	4



Bunch of freshly picked healthy salal



Table 2. Environment that supports salal.

Response	Frequency
With Douglas fir ¹	11
With hemlock ¹	11
With medium sized trees; not under a closed canopy; areas with some shade and some sun	11
Recognize that they see the same plants/trees but do not know their names	11
With ferns	9
Where lightly picked/not picked the previous year	8
With cedar	8
Where water passes nearby/humid	7
With mushrooms	4
Not with alder	4
Other ²	less than 4

Table 3. Climatic effects on salal.

Response	Frequency
Too much sun dries/kills salal	25
Cutting down trees, salal underneath <i>temporarily</i> dies (re-grows in 2-3 years)	18
Cutting down trees, salal underneath dies	11
Fires kill salal	9
Fires <i>temporarily</i> kill salal	4
Snow damages salal	8
Ice/hail damages salal	8
Ice/hail <i>temporarily</i> damages salal	2
Heavy rain leaves streaks on salal leaves ³	6
Salal needs sun/rain cycle	6
People's impacts kill salal ⁴	5
Snow helps salal	4
Other ⁵	less than 4

Healthy salal



Unhealthy salal

GIS Lab: Bringing "the Hill" Down to Earth

Teresa Zena Alcock, GIS Specialist

Local people know about the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Lab and its staff at ONRC. They line up their kids to participate in our internships. They request our fun, family-style recreational Global Positioning Systems (GPS) classes. They call when they want a map of the local area.



The GIS Lab is a very visible aspect of ONRC, not only because GIS and GPS are popular

subjects, but because the leadership at ONRC encourages community involvement, provides resources and time to get involved, and we DO!

ONRC provides Recreational GPS classes several times a year.

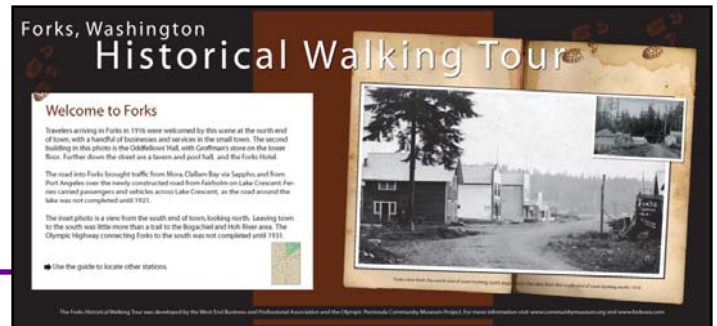
Local hunters, boaters, campers, and fishers come to ONRC to finally learn how to use that new gadget they got for Christmas.

Forks High School interns are always busy in the GIS Lab, learning how to create websites, how to use GPS and GIS, being introduced to research produced here and elsewhere, and developing a foundation of business skills for the workplace.

ONRC GIS is involved with the local schools and colleges. We redesigned and maintain a web-based interactive website with database for entering water quality data for the Washington Virtual Classroom. Invited by the teachers, we present our current work in GIS and GPS at Peninsula College and Forks Schools.

City and County groups receive GIS and GPS support. As part of a contract with the City

of Forks to build GIS capability, we provide supplemental maps and GPS training for the local Police department and Forks Search and Rescue. We support the Clallam County Noxious Weed Board, compiling Knotweed GPS data for integration into a shared GIS data resource for all participating members to use. We printed the Forks Historical Walking Tour posters one sees along the main street in town. We were also a participating member of the local ICN (Integrated Community Network) Project to bring high-speed Internet access to the area. We also provide technical support and professional classes to local GIS and GPS practitioners such as a local forestry consultants, private timber companies, and tribal entities.



The Official Forks Geocache:

A Family Activity Bringing the World to Forks

Teresa Zena Alcock, CITY OF FORKS Rod Fleck, City Attorney, & Pat Soderlind, Events Coordinator



"A great hide. Thanks for a great day in Forks."

"We've been driving through Forks for years, and until this year, considered it to be a spot with a Thriftway, a hardware store, a visitor center, and an intersection with the road to La Push. Thanks for showing us a part of town we'd never have explored without geocaching."

In partnership with the City of Forks, local businesses and community members, ONRC houses the official "Forks Geocache," a GPS-referenced location listed on www.geocaching.com. Geocaching is an ongoing treasure hunt for GPS users worldwide. Visitors to the Olympic Peninsula stop in Forks to find what's regarded as one of the best-"secretly"-located and largest, best-maintained family caches ever. A quick Zip Code search on the website (98331) will list all nearby geocaches, including our Forks Geocache. Check out what visitors say about the Forks Geocache:

"Way cool. Kids were out studying on the resource center property, what a great asset."

"What a great cache, thank you Forks. The skunk cabbage and trilliums were in bloom. Never would have stopped here and looked around without looking for a cache. Stop at 47° 57.204N 124° 23.140W for a really great burger afterwards, we sure enjoyed it."

"I flew in to Forks from Everett to find the cache. The cache was sure loaded with goodies."

"This was the COOLEST cache!!! Wow, such neat trails and I never had a clue they were there. We saw these gigantic elk on our drive up the winding road, and heard them just barely off trail as we hiked."