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Sent: Wednesday, July 10, 2024 5:37 PM
To: cof-all-non-undergrads <cof-all@oregonstate.edu>
Subject: Woodpecker Harvest

Dear College of Forestry community:

I hope you are all well and that you had a wonderful Juneteenth and Fourth of July. It looks like the hottest days (of early July!) are behind us, but even still, if you are out doing field work, please take proper precautions in line with the guidance Adrienne sent out last week.

By now, most of you have received some type of message about the [Woodpecker Harvest](#) that is underway on the McDonald-Dunn, or you have seen conversation about it via local news or social media outlets. Unfortunately, much of what has been shared via the Gazette-Times, various letters to the editor, and in sensationalist blogs is highly inaccurate. The messaging around the harvest is the direct result of an orchestrated misinformation campaign started ~three weeks ago by a neighbor of the McDonald-Dunn who has long opposed active forest management on the college forests.

As we know, even within our own college community, there are multiple perspectives on forest management. A fundamental role of the Research Forests is to demonstrate different approaches and identify and contrast the benefits and trade-offs. This is one of the many ways we learn, and it often also creates conversation or even conflict.

With this in mind, I was still a bit surprised that the Woodpecker Harvest was the most recent target of ire, because although it is very visible to recreational forest users, this harvest is aimed at achieving a number of ecological objectives. This also means that it is a relatively high-cost harvest with limited revenue generation, all of which will be invested back into the forest – through replanting, road maintenance, research, recreation management and staffing. Regardless, the fearmongering campaign yielded numerous emails and complaints sent to the OSU Research Forest staff, to myself, President Murthy, the OSU Board of Trustees and many of you. All of these reflect a lack of understanding of the objectives of the harvest or the larger picture of management on the McDonald-Dunn.

To help dispel some of the misinformation being shared, and to provide you with resources in case you receive questions from students, collaborators or community members, I've attached a document that provides more details on the Woodpecker Harvest and factual responses to some of the most common inaccuracies that are circulating.

It is never easy to have your work or reputation disparaged, especially when what is being said is riddled with inaccuracies. And in this case, it is sad that a harvest with the right intentions and positive motivations is being sensationally cast as an environmental disaster. It is not a disaster; it is an appropriate treatment and demonstration project that is forward looking and in line with the collaboratively-developed [mission and goals](#) of our research forests.

In the next few weeks, we will be hosting an optional all-college gathering to provide an opportunity to ask questions, share concerns and have a dialogue with your colleagues. More details will be shared once we identify a time and location. In the meantime, and as always, if you have questions or concerns, please reach out to me directly.

Take care,

Tom