



Grouse Hollow News

SPRING 2012



Service is in their Name

BY JIM KADERA

A number of schools send students to learn at Hopkins Demonstration Forest. But the teenagers from Oregon City Service Learning Academy also lend a collective hand in helping to improve the place.

Fifty-five students and five staffers from the academy, a charter school in Oregon City School District, spent almost three hours at Hopkins earlier this year. The high school age teens pulled weeds, removed plastic wildlife protection tubes from young trees that outgrew them, and planted new seedlings in empty spaces on two acres where reforestation began almost a decade ago. A good time was had by all, given the afternoon weather was dry and moderate compared to the shivering hours of their previous visit several weeks earlier on a foggy, icy December morning.

"It's wonderful," academy teacher Allison Winningstad said of Hopkins Forest. "Before I came here, I had no idea what this forest was. It's an

excellent educational tool."

"This is a fun way to enjoy the environment by helping it grow. And it's better than being in school," said Brandon, 15, as he used a hoedad to grub weeds and grass from around a tree.

"It's nice. There's always work to do," said Tracy, 14, as he toiled nearby. Down the hill a bit, Hopkins educator Tim Delano showed Haley and McKenzie, 16 year old girls, how to plant seedlings—their first!

Winningstad said students earn class credit for their effort. "Every Friday we go out



PHOTO: TIM DELANO

Local teens learn about competition and succession by removing weeds from around young seedlings. Grass is an especially vigorous competitor for late summer moisture.

"This is a fun way to enjoy the environment by helping it grow."

of the committed helpers. "This is my third time here. I like working in nature, and helping in the community," he said while cutting weeds.

"We concentrate on the students who most enjoy helping here," Delano said. "With a focus on safety and fun, no one has a bad day."

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to do a community service project. Sometimes it's a food drive, or a trip to the coast for beach cleanup. But most of the projects are near Oregon City."

If truth be told, some of the teens show more interest than the others in working at Hopkins. Austin, 16, is one

Attn: Teachers and Youth Leaders

Teachers and youth group leaders looking for projects or forest science programs can contact Tim DeLano at 503-632-2150.

Forest Hall—a Reality!

BY JIM KADERA

The new Forest Hall classroom and community building at Hopkins Demonstration Forest is being completed after most of the construction and installations cost has been

financed.

Fund raising reached \$335,000 at year end, leaving about \$26,000 additional needed for interior moldings/trim, hardwood floor finishing, rest-room completion, and near-building paving. The moldings were milled from big leaf maple harvested at Hopkins.

A prolonged weak economy slowed fund raising for Forest Hall, but total needs exclusive of landscaping were nearly reached with two major donations at year end from Oregon State University Extension Service and retired tree farmers Clem and Phyllis Hunter of Oregon City. Extension contributed \$30,000 and the Hunters \$10,000. The Hunters also gave a series of donations totaling \$40,000 earlier in the fund-raising.

“It’s exciting to see the building coming to completion,” said Ken Everett, the building project manager and executive director of non-profit Forests Forever Inc., which manages the 140 acre Hopkins Forest south of Oregon City. “After several years, the building finally is a reality. The fund-raising was a bigger project than I anticipated. I didn’t realize how much time and effort it would take to raise money during a poor economy.”

The vision to construct the one-story wood frame building with seating capacity for about 90 began in 2007 with an initial gift of \$50,000 from the Ramsey and Waldorf families of Molalla. Since then, about 180 individuals, groups and companies came through with donations of all sizes.

“Those of us in forestry could feel



PHOTO:TIM DELANO

in 2007 that the poor economy was coming, and some people thought we bit off more than we could chew,” said Mike Bondi, Extension Service regional administrator and founding board member of Forests Forever. “But we made progress over four years and now there is a lot of relief.”

Construction began in 2008 and continued only when Forests Forever saw enough money and donated building supplies coming to do more work. Everett said much of the interior work, including smoke and fire alarms and a security system, was completed in January. The Extension Service and others have shown interest in holding meetings in the building, but occupancy will not be allowed until handicap parking and building access are completed.

Landscaping could be the most costly of the unfinished exterior improvements. However, Everett said he expects many volunteers from the community and plant donations from local nurseries will reduce the expense. Forests Forever will need an undetermined amount of cash donations to complete landscaping.

Everett said asphalt sidewalks and driveway will be in front of the building, and parking for 75 vehicles provided. He expects an event will be



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Grouse Hollow News

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PHOTO: TIM DELANO

held this spring to dedicate the building and thank donors.

Bondi said Extension contributed to the funding because “this place (Hopkins Forest) is a hallmark for outreach and community education in forestry. The Extension Service has been involved since the inception of this place (more than 21 years ago). And for the last nine years, Extension has put a full-time educator here. We will be a major user of the building, including for 4-H and other Extension programs in addition to forestry.”

Tim Delano, the educator and outreach coordinator, supervises the visits of hundreds of students who are bused to Hopkins annually to learn about trees, wildlife, soils, water and other forest resources. “Schools and youth groups will continue to use the forest as they have for years,” claims DeLano. In addition to schools, other use of the property is expected to continue: woodland owners travel to Hopkins to learn about sustainable

tree farming; and the many dog walkers and others will be hiking the tree farm’s trail system throughout the year.

Before Forest Hall was built, the forest had only Hopkins Hall, slightly bigger than a two-car garage, for its board of directors’ sessions and small group meetings. Hopkins Hall will continue in use for some small meetings.

Meanwhile, the historic fire lookout tower erected near Forest Hall last year awaits construction this year of a small cabin atop the metal framework,

before the tower is available for public visits. Work also needs to be completed this year on cleaning and deepening the second of two small ponds to provide water for fire protection on the property. The improved pond environment will be integrated with an expanded and revised riparian (streamside) forestry demonstration. These projects all require additional fund-raising or grant writing before they can continue.

Also, the Forests Forever board met in February for its annual one-day retreat. Topics included a new education plan for Hopkins, and operations and business plans for Forest Hall. Board Chairman Dan Green urged flexibility in renting the building for widespread use to generate income for Hopkins, but some board members expressed concern about use for private parties. The board voted to take a conservative approach during initial marketing of the building but did not forbid private parties.

EDUCATION PROGRAM ASSISTANTS

Several volunteers are needed to assist with education programs this spring. If you are available during the week and would like to help young people learn in the outdoors, this could be a good opportunity. On-job training provided.

WRITERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS

If you have a talent in writing or photography, consider contributing to this newsletter or the Hopkins Demonstration Forest website. A list of story ideas and desired images will be provided.

For information about volunteering, contact Tim DeLano at 503-632-2150.

WANTED

YES! I want to support Forests Forever & Hopkins Demonstration Forest

Levels of Annual Support:

- Friend \$25
- Supporter \$50
- Contributor \$100
- Steward \$250
- Sponsor \$1,000
- Other _____

Please complete form and enclose check payable to *Forests Forever, Inc.*

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Thank You! Your gift is tax deductible.

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Calendar

Community Forestry Days (CFD)

2nd Saturday Each Month, 8:30am-4:30pm. These family-friendly community events include volunteer projects that vary depending on the season. Lunch is provided for volunteers, often including a brief topical program. A tour or demonstration activity is offered in the afternoon for the community to see what we're up to.

Community Forestry Days begin at 8:30 am; lunch at noon; tour begins at 2:00 pm; clean-up and depart by 4:30pm. Please RSVP to 503-632-2150 by the Thursday prior to each CFD if you plan to join us for lunch or the tour. Thank You.

April 14—Hit the Trails!

Winter winds blew limbs and logs across many of the trails in Hopkins forest: April is a good month to remove these. Besides cutting open a few trails, there's also a need to control weeds around newly planted seedlings, and we begin preparations in the landscape around Forest Hall. There will be a good mix of "dirt-work" and facilities chores—something for everyone.

May 12—Dig-in a New Landscape

'Tis the season to take spade in hand and tuck some special plants into special places around Forest Hall. All hands will be needed to move soil, mulch, rocks, plants and more into their proper place. We'll also put up the big white canopy in advance of the summer season, and generally get our facilities ready for the busy months ahead.

June 9—FireWise in the Forest

Get ahead of fire season and learn how you can protect your home in the woods. Volunteer projects in late spring focus on fuel reduction—making the forest around our facilities less likely to burn. We'll also have a big chipper on-site to process roadside slash in the forest.

June 9—Tour de Forts

Sunnyside Environmental School students were busy constructing forts in the forest during their last week of school. The children invited their families to tour their rustic digs—and you can join them too! More details will come available as the date nears. Call 503-632-2150 if you are interested in touring the forts.

Eagle Helps Birds

Hopkins Demonstration Forest has about 15 new bird boxes to encourage nesting by certain species, thanks to Brian McKeon and his helpers. McKeon, a Canby High School student, selected Hopkins several months ago as the site for an Eagle Scout project. The cedar boxes were attached to trees during the January 14 Community Forestry Day, after McKeon planned and built them.

"I decided to do my project at Hopkins Forest because I heard it was a great place with good opportunities for projects," he said. "It took a couple of months between when we formulated the idea and when we put up the boxes. Most of the time it took to do the project was in the paperwork. It only took one week to cut the cedar boards, one Saturday to make the boxes, and one to place them".

McKeon said he made two owl boxes, two more for wood ducks, and about a dozen more for common forest songbirds. "I never had made bird boxes before with drain holes or hardware cloth so hatchlings could get out.

"I had many volunteers to construct and place the boxes. My father and I did all the wood cutting."

Because the boards were glued, nailed and screwed together, "they should last a long time," he explained.

There was no specific distance for spacing the boxes apart, just three or four in each area. "We placed them facing a clearing or meadow. One of the wood duck boxes is mounted on a tree overlooking a pond." The second wood duck box will be hung over the lower pond when that is completed later this year.

When the project was completed, the Scout felt good about his project. "I really enjoyed the experience. I hope the birds use them, and that Hopkins Forest will be able to use them to educate people," he concluded.



PHOTO: TIM DELANO

Brian McKeon hangs the first of a dozen songbird nest boxes at Hopkins during January Community Forestry Day.



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