

Forest Seasons

The Newsletter of the Northern Arizona University School of Forestry

Rocky Mountain Research Station and School of Forestry Partnership Benefits Researchers and Students

When the School of Forestry (SoF) first opened its doors in the Fall of 1958, the USDA Forest Service's Rocky Mountain Research Station (RMRS) immediately became one of our most active partners, a role they have continued to play ever since. During the School's first semester, when founding Dean Charles O. Minor was the only faculty member, scientists from what was then called the Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station stepped in and helped teach several courses.

As the SoF developed graduate degree programs and expanded its research, the interaction between the two organizations

evolved into what it is today—a highly productive and research-focused partnership that frequently involves RMRS scientists, SoF faculty, and students working together.



The Southwest Forest Science Complex at Northern Arizona University houses the School of Forestry and the Flagstaff Lab of the Rocky Mountain Research Station.



Amanda Kuenzi (right) and Research Assistant Steve Till researching post-fire plant succession following the Rodeo-Chediski Fire for an RMRS-funded study. Carolyn Sieg, an RMRS scientist, and Pete Fulé, SoF faculty, served as Amanda's M.S. thesis advisors.

In recent years, the most active areas of research collaboration have been in forest health, wildland fire, ecological restoration, wildlife, landscape ecology, or some combination of these. For example, Professor Paul Beier and M.S. student Jeff Jenness worked with RMRS scientist Joe Ganey on a project that examined the relationships between forest fires and Mexican spotted owls. In another example, Professor Tom Kolb and Carolyn Breece, also an M.S. student, collaborated with several RMRS staff on a study that examined the effects of prescribed fire on bark beetle activity and tree mortality. A particularly active collaborator has been the RMRS's Carolyn Sieg, a plant ecologist who has worked with several faculty and students on issues such as fire effects, post-fire recovery practices, and invasive species.

(Continued on page 6.)



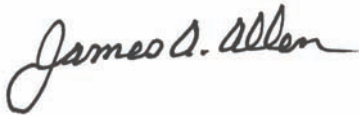
From the Executive Director

Dear Alumni and Friends,

As I write this message, we are nearing the end of our “summer mode” here at the School of Forestry. While quieter in some ways, this can be a very busy time of the year for many of our faculty, staff, and students, who switch from an emphasis on classes to field research projects, summer jobs, Centennial Forest-based environmental programs for youth, and other activities. This summer, we have had faculty working as far afield as Spain and Greece, where Professor Pete Fulé taught a course and conducted fieldwork; staff as far away as Afghanistan (see the photo below); and graduate students as far away as Malawi and Panama. Our undergraduate students also seem to be everywhere, from Alabama, where two are spending the summer working for Weyerhaeuser, to the 10 students who are taking Mike Wagner’s international forestry course in Ghana this month.

Although it is possible to feel a little gloomy nowadays given the very real budget concerns we are facing, we also have quite a lot to celebrate. This issue features some of the organizations and people that have helped make the School of Forestry so successful over the years and will surely help carry us through the current budget cuts. These include our long-standing and productive partnership with the USDA Forest Service’s Rocky Mountain Research Station, the great support we have received for endowed scholarships, and the accomplishments of our students and alumni. I hope you enjoy this issue as much as we’ve enjoyed putting it together!

Sincerely,



JJ Smith, our Centennial Forest Manager, is currently serving as an agricultural and forestry advisor in Afghanistan. He is on a yearlong assignment and is expected to return to NAU in March, 2012. JJ is shown here meeting with an agricultural official in Wardak Province.



Wanda Bruhns (right), a M.F. student in our Peace Corps Master International program, is currently serving in Mexico. Shown here with her Mexican counterpart, she is working with local communities surrounding the Sierra Gorda Guanajuato Biosphere Reserve.

Student SAF Chapter Visiting Hawaii for National Convention



SAF Student Chapter members help staff the NAU School of Forestry display at the National Convention in Albuquerque, October 2010.

The NAU Student Chapter of the Society of American Foresters traditionally turns out in force at the SAF National Convention each fall, with between 20 and 30 students making the trip. In the past five years, 93 different students have attended the convention, some more than once. Attending the national convention can make a real difference in the careers of our students. Those who go to the convention have a much higher than average graduation rate and are more likely to go on to graduate school. Some students have received job offers at the convention, and virtually all of them have gained a deeper understanding and appreciation of their chosen profession.

This year, the national convention is in Hawaii, which will present a substantial financial challenge for our students, even with some help provided by the School of Forestry and alumni donors. If you are interested in supporting the SAF students this year, please contact April Sandoval, April.Sandoval@nau.edu, or send a donation c/o the School of Forestry. You can find our contact information on the back page.

Forestry Doctoral Students Receive Prestigious Awards



Haydee Hampton

Haydee Hampton was awarded a three-year, \$30,000/year, NASA Earth and Space Science Fellowship. Carried out in association with NAU's Climate Science and Solutions program, her research will integrate satellite and field measurements using quantitative modeling to address questions about the future of forest management in the context of climate change.



Tabitha Graves

Tabitha Graves was awarded the \$20,000 American Fellowship from the American Association of University Women and the \$15,000 Philanthropic Education Organization Scholar Award for the 2011-2012 academic year. Graves' research centers on spatial ecology of grizzly bears in northwestern Montana.



Jeff Kane

Jeffrey Kane and Robert Strahan were awarded \$7,000 scholarships by the Achievement Rewards for College Scientists Foundation for the 2011-2012 academic year. The scholarships are awarded to graduate students in the fields of natural science, medicine, technology, and engineering. Kane and Strahan were two of the five students at NAU to receive these scholarships.



Rob Strahan

Scholarships Help Forestry Students with Rising Tuition

The students of the School of Forestry have benefitted greatly over the years from scholarships they have received. The financial assistance a scholarship provides is incredibly important in this time of tuition increases that exceed the rate of inflation. However, the intangible benefits a scholarship gives to students—recognition by the faculty, praise for performance, and acknowledgement of future potential—may mean just as much to the student recipients. We have been very fortunate to have a number of great supporters of our school, who have contributed to existing scholarship funds and established new ones. A few of our endowed scholarships are featured below and on the following page. Former faculty members either established these scholarships entirely on their own or played a major role in their creation.

Robert E. Larson Family Xi Sigma Pi Scholarship



Bob and Jan Larson with a family pet

The Robert E. Larson Family Xi Sigma Pi Scholarship was established in 2011 by former faculty member Bob Larson, his wife Jan, and their three children Susan, Katherine, and Andrew. With sixty-seven years of educational experience between them, Bob and Jan have made education a vital part of their lives. At the School of Forestry, Bob taught classes including wood science and technology, environmental science, and introduction to forestry for 35 years and is now a Professor Emeritus. He also served as the advisor of NAU's chapter of Xi Sigma Pi (the national forestry honor society) for 30 of those years.

When Bob retired in 2010, he and his family decided to establish this NAU Foundation scholarship with the intent of promoting the Xi Sigma Pi principles of scholarship, service, and leadership. The scholarship is awarded to the Xi Sigma Pi member whose contributions have made the greatest positive impact on the organization and on the School of Forestry during the academic year. It is a great pleasure to be able to be able to recognize Bob's past, and continuing, contributions to the school through this award.



Bob Larson presenting the first Robert E. Larson Family Xi Sigma Pi Scholarship to Patrick Shin (BSF, 2012), who will be a senior starting in the Fall 2011 semester.

David and Doris Patton's Wildlife Habitat Relationships Scholarship

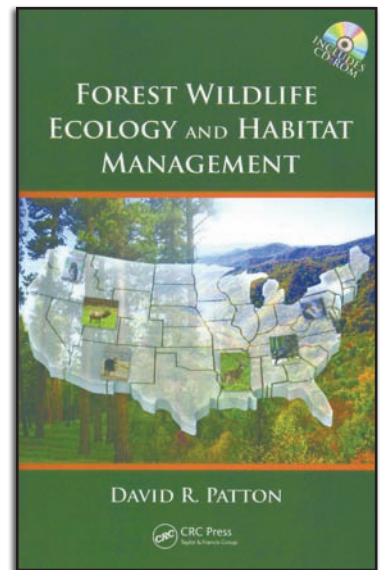


Doris and David Patton

Over the years, David Patton has served the School of Forestry in many ways—as a teacher, advisor of graduate students, research scientist, textbook author, and as our Dean. David, along with his wife Doris, has also been a major financial supporter of the school, a role that continues even after his retirement. In addition to their frequent donations to causes such as student participation in the Society of American Foresters national conventions, David and Doris have also played key roles in the creation of three endowed scholarships.

In 1999, the Pattons established the Wildlife Habitat Relationships Scholarship, to be awarded to a School of Forestry student who has demonstrated an interest in wildlife management. The funding for this scholarship was provided by the royalties from David's first textbook, entitled *Wildlife Habitat Relationships in Forested Ecosystems*. Royalties from his latest book, *Forest Wildlife Ecology and Habitat Management*, will also be contributed to this scholarship.

In 2006, David and Doris provided a key donation that helped lead to the establishment of the John "Jack" Dieterich Fire Science Scholarship, in memory of their good friend and important figure in wildland fire science. Finally, they provided the initial donation that established the Ernie Kurmes Forestry Scholarship, in recognition of Dr. Kurmes's 40 years of service to the School of Forestry and NAU.



David Patton's latest book, published in October, 2010.



Connie Ott presenting the William L. Holmes Memorial Scholarship to Dan Batha (BSF, 2012).

Connie Ott, the Development Officer who works with the School of Forestry, plays an important role in the establishment of scholarships, such as those described on these pages. She is also instrumental in a wide range of other development activities that support our school, from major gifts and planned giving, to helping find support for student travel to the Society of American Foresters national conventions. If you are interested in supporting the School of Forestry, please contact Connie at Connie.Ott@nau.edu or 928-523-0538.

RMRS and SoF Partnership Continued



Camille Stevens-Rumann, former member of the Carson Interagency Hotshot Crew, recently completed her M.S. thesis with RMRS support. Carolyn Sieg and SoF faculty member Molly Hunter served as co-chairs of her committee.

Another important aspect of the partnership is the funding provided by the RMRS for projects that do not directly involve their own scientists, but help address the Station's research mission. Many such projects have been funded over the years, a good portion of which supported graduate students. Of the 25 graduate students who completed their theses or dissertations during the 2010-2011 academic year, at least 5 were supported in part by RMRS resources.

In addition to funding graduate students, the RMRS has gained scientists for its own projects from the pool of Forestry students and graduates. At least 9 individuals who obtained graduate degrees from the SoF currently work in research positions for the RMRS, including Jose "Pepe" Iniguez, Roy Lopez, Jackson Leonard, Joe Ganey, and Steve Overby, all of whom are based in Flagstaff, as well as several out-of-state alumni—Michael Ryan, who is based in Fort Collins, CO; Michael Wilson, who leads the Station's Forest Inventory and Monitoring group in Ogden, UT; Chuck McHugh, based in Missoula, MT; and Megan Friggens in Albuquerque, NM.

One aspect of the partnership that may get the least attention is the sharing of facilities. Richard Hofstetter and his students use RMRS lab and greenhouse space for their studies of bark beetle acoustics, bark beetle microbes, and the Pandora moth. Many field studies conducted by School of Forestry faculty have taken place at the Fort Valley Experimental Forest, which is managed by the RMRS. In turn, School of Forestry classroom and computer facilities have been used



Michael Ryan (M.S. 1978) receiving the School of Forestry's Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2010 from his graduate school advisor, Wally Covington. Dr. Ryan is a Research Forest Ecologist with the Rocky Mountain Research Station.



Undergraduate Forestry students Stefano Padilla (foreground) and Eli Jensen work on an entomology study in one of the RMRS labs in the Forest Science Complex.

recently for short courses taught by RMRS scientists.

Looking ahead, important challenges face Southwest forest ecosystems, many of which require an interdisciplinary approach to fully understand and address effectively. At the same time, the number of scientists in many university forestry programs and within the ranks of Forest Service has been declining. In this era of declining resources and increasing threats to our forests, partnerships like the one that exists here in Flagstaff will become even more critical.

Alumni Notes

David Schmidt, BSF, 1962

In late May, Development Officer Connie Ott and Executive Director Jim Allen traveled to Oregon to visit with David and Heidi Schmidt. They were treated to a tour of one of the four tree farms outside of Corvallis owned by David and his children: Roger, Mark, and Lisa. Their company, Schmidt Family Forest LLC, manages approximately 540 acres of forest. David is a past Tree Farmer of the Year in Benton and Lincoln Counties.



Dave Schmidt posing in front of the Douglas-fir stands that he and his family planted.

Harry “Whitey” Hitchcock, MSF, 1973

Whitey wrote to us earlier this year in response to our announcement about the death of Bill Groman. He also provided this update: After graduating, “I went on to a short career in forest inventory with the TVA and the USFS State & Private Forestry, and then returned to the University of Tennessee to obtain a Ph.D. in Exercise Physiology. I was the strength and conditioning coach for the UT Lady Vols when we won our first NCAA basketball championship in 1987. For the past 15 years I have taught high school anatomy and physiology and am currently in the midst of retiring. I am also serving my second 4-year term as a county commissioner in Anderson County, TN.”

Terry White, BSF, 1975

Terry wrote to us to ask that we tell his classmates that his wife, Robin LaBan White, passed away in September 2010. Terry and Robin were married just before his senior year so many of the Forestry Club members, Forestry Club wives, students, and faculty from that time would remember her. Our thoughts go with the White family during this difficult time.

Scott Hunt, BSF, 1978

Scott is the Arizona State Forester with the Arizona State Forestry Division. He has had a 32-year career with the Forestry Division that began in 1978 as a temporary wildland firefighter, and progressed through the ranks as a service forester, district forester, and state fire management officer. Scott resides in Phoenix with his wife Tammy, and has two adult children, and one grandchild. In a recent message, Scott wrote, “I am honored to be able to serve as Arizona’s State Forester and have this opportunity to manage and protect Arizona’s forest resources.”

Lindsey (Goetz) Babcock, BSF, 2000

Lindsey is currently a forester at the Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) Oregon (OR) and Washington (WA) State Offices. Lindsey’s work involves leadership of several forestry programs, including stewardship contracting and woody biomass utilization. Lindsey began her federal career with the Forest Service’s Pacific Northwest Research Station, performing prescribed fire research. Eager to move from research to land management, Lindsey started with the BLM in Butte, Montana where she was a field forester for seven years. Montana’s successful “Fuels for Schools” program introduced Lindsey to biomass utilization, and she is thrilled to be working on biomass issues today. Lindsey and her husband Steve live in Portland, OR where they enjoy year-round bike commuting.



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Faculty Retirements: Michael Wagner and Thom Alcoze



Michael Wagner

Over the course of his 31-year career at NAU, Regents' Professor Michael Wagner became widely recognized for his research in the areas of forest health and entomology, as well as for his extensive work in international forestry. In addition to achieving the rank of Regents Professor, he was also the recipient of the Sir William Schlich Award from the Society of American Foresters, one of their top-ranking national awards.



Thom Alcoze

Professor Alcoze joined the School of Forestry faculty in 1997. He was recognized as NAU's Outstanding Research Mentor in 2009. Along with his wife Sally, he founded the highly successful Indigenous Sisterhood for Interdisciplinary Studies, a group of mostly Native American students interested in environmental issues.

Forest Seasons is a newsletter for Northern Arizona University School of Forestry alumni and friends. We welcome your feedback on the newsletter and encourage you to stay in touch. Feel free to call us at 928-523-3031.

Or visit the following websites:

nau.edu/forestry for the School of Forestry

nau.edu/centennialforest for the Centennial Forest

nau.edu/eri for the Ecological Restoration Institute



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