



**2026**

**Foresters Forum**

# **Draft Agenda**

Please note all aspects of this agenda are subject to change.





## **Wednesday**

**Event Opening 12:30 pm**

**Welcome Address**

**Presentations**

**Guest Inspirational Speaker**

Jamaar Smiley

**IPL 4.0 Credits/CFE 0.0 Credits**

**Evening Social 5pm-7pm**

February 4<sup>th</sup> -6<sup>th</sup> 2026  
Coeur d'Alene Resort

## **Thursday**

**Morning Keynote**

Matt Donegan

**Breakout Sessions**

**It's a great day to be a Forester**

Betty Munis

**IPL 7.0 Credits/CFE 0.0 Credits**

Workforce Development 1.0 IPL credit ( optional)

**Evening Social 5pm - 7pm**

## **Friday**

**Breakfast 7am-8am**

**SFI Updates**

**SFI Speakers**

**IPL 4.0 Credits/CFE 0.0 Credits**

**Close of Conference**

Welcome to the  
24<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Foresters Forum





## WELCOME TO THE FORESTERS FORUM

Welcome to the 24th Annual Foresters Forum, proudly hosted by Northwest Management, Inc. and Riley Stegner and Associates LLC.

This Forum is a premier opportunity for professional foresters to deepen their expertise, discover innovative ideas, techniques, and technologies, and engage in meaningful information sharing. We are excited to showcase outstanding speakers from across the nation who will inspire and inform you.

Thank you for being part of this event. We are confident you will enjoy and benefit greatly from this year's Foresters Forum!



Peter Stegner  
Riley Stegner & Associates, LLC



Mark Corrao  
Northwest Management Inc.

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RILEY STEGNER AND ASSOCIATES





# Wednesday, February 4, 2026

## **1:00 PM Welcome Address Bay 1-3**

with Mark Corrao & Peter Stegner

## **1:15 PM How We Tell The Forestry Story Bay 1-3**

### **Social Media Forestry Influencers**

- o Aaron Bren with Mezia Media
- o Brian Rupp with IFG and Rupp's Timber Tutorials
- o Blake Manley with the University of Idaho and Manley Jobs

## **2:15- 2:30 PM Break**

## **2:30-3:45 PM Idaho Forest Products Presentation Bay 1-3**

With Jennifer Okerland Frederickson & Betty Munis

## **3:45- 4:00 PM Break**

## **4:00-4:45 PM VIP Speaker Bay1-3**

Jamaar Smiley with The Smiley Experience

## **4:45 PM- Wrap up & additional Q&A**

24<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL



## **5:00-7:00 PM Social Events**

We are pleased to extend an invitation for you to attend our evening social and networking events, scheduled for both Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 5 PM to 7 PM.

The specific location within the resort will be announced in our final agenda.

We anticipate that these events will provide an excellent opportunity for meaningful interactions and professional engagement.

We look forward to seeing you there.





# Thursday, February 5, 2026 Morning

## **8:00 AM - Welcome Address, Bay 1-3**

with Mark Corrao, Peter Stegner & Idaho State Forester, Julia Lauch

## **8:00 - 9:15 AM Keynote Bay 1-3**

Matt Donegan - The Importance of Forestry Has Never Been Greater

**9:15-9:30 AM Break**

## **9:30-10:25 AM BLOCK I**

### **Bay 5: Tom Whalen – Red Squirrel Security**

Interesting Encounters In The Wood

### **Casco Bay: Sean Steinbach – Sun Mountain Lumber**

The Last Best Forestry: Challenges/Opportunities For A Montana Sawmill

### **Kidd/Northcape: Joel Glaze - ExxonMobil**

Locations, Feedstocks, and Growing Partnerships

### **Bay 6: Nicholas Kager and Jill Wagner - CDA Tribal Historic Preservation**

A Schitsu'umsh Perspective on Forest Management

## **10:30-11:25 AM BLOCK II**

### **Bay 6: Todd Morgan – Bureau of Business and Economic Research, University of Montana**

Differences in Western State Log Markets

### **Casco Bay: Montana and Idaho Foresters –**

Montana and Idaho Forest Practices Act

### **Kidd/Northcape: Wilfred Previat – Colorado State University**

Merging Technology and Dirt Forestry

### **Bay 5: Lindsay Tighe – Stuwix Resources Joint Venture**

Optimizing Log Merchandising





**Thursday, February 5, 2026 Lunch**

**11:30 AM to 1:30 PM Lunch Bay1-3**

**Bay 5**

**12:30 - 1:30 PM (optional) Workforce Development Session**

"Communications: From the Forest Floor to the Corporate Floor"

Join us as a team of industry experts who reveal valuable insights on how to effectively enhance your skills and expand your knowledge within the industry. Don't miss this opportunity to elevate your career and unlock your potential

with Chad Washington Title , Blake Manely title , Carmen Massey title, and Julia Grant title

# Virtual Reality Simulators

Univerity of  
Idaho  
Virtual Reality  
Simulators

place holder  
Virtual Reality  
Simulators

Wed 1pm to 5pm  
Thu 8am to 1:15 pm &  
Thu 2:30pm to 5pm  
Fri 8am to 11:30 am

Wed 1pm to 5pm  
Thu 8am to 5pm  
Fri 8am to 11:30 am

## Registration Table Hours

Wed, 4<sup>th</sup>  
Noon to 3:00 PM

Thu, 5<sup>th</sup>  
7:00 AM to 7:45 AM

Fri, 6<sup>th</sup>  
7:00 AM to 7:45 AM

Make sure to sign for CFE and IDL credits and the registration table after 2:45pm Thursday.





**Thursday, February 5, 2026 Afternoon**

**BLOCK III 1:30-2:25 PM**

**Casco Bay: Raymond O'Brocki – American Wood Council**

The Fire Service Doesn't Hate Wood: AWC's Journey with the Fire Service

**Bay 6: Tyler Nimke – Stimson Lumber Company**

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly- Adventures of Managing Timberland in a Mixed Ownership Landscape

**Bay 5: Washington & Oregon Foresters**

Washington & Oregon State Forest Practices Act

**Kidd/Northcape: Ryer Becker – University of Idaho**

Advancing Forestry Education and Engagement Through Logging Equipment Simulation

**2:25-2:45 PM Cookies and Coffee Break**

**BLOCK IV 2:45-3:40 PM**

**Bay 6: Rebecca Barnard – Sappi North America, Inc.**

Global Customers' Perceptions of Sustainable Forestry & Forest Certification – where are we headed?

**Casco Bay: Karie Decker – Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation**

Active Forest Management for Wildlife.

**Bay 5: Jon Songster – Idaho Department of Lands**

Leveraging the Good Neighbor Authority to increase forest restoration in Idaho

**Kidd/Northcape: Bruce Ripley - University of Idaho**

Leveraging lidar and other remote sensing data products to save time and increase productivity

**IT'S A GREAT DAY TO BE A FORESTER 3:45-5:00 PM BAY 1-3  
with Betty Munis**





**Friday, February 6, 2026**

**7:00 AM French Toast Breakfast in Casco Kid/North Cape**

**SFI Topic: Policies that work, Policies that don't.**

**8:00 AM to 10:00 AM Bay 1 & 2**

o Rebecca Barnard – Sappi North America, Inc.

o Seth Barnes - OFIC Director

**10:00-10:15 AM Break**

**10:15 AM to Noon Bay 1 & 2**

o Gourdy Mouw- SFI

o Lennard Joe - Chief Executive Officer, BC First Nations Forestry Council.

**12:00 Noon Event Closing**

We would like to take a moment to highlight three amazing legacy sponsors whose unwavering support for the Foresters Forum makes a significant impact each year. We are truly grateful for their ongoing sponsorship.







# Keynote Speakers



## **Betty J. Munis President Munis Family Limited Partnership**

Betty Munis manages her family's ranching and natural resources businesses. She and her husband also operate Growing Excellence, a forestry consulting business.

From 1992 to 2020, Betty served as Director of the Idaho Forest Products Commission where she was responsible for all aspects of the Commission's business. Betty's range of work included everything from producing award-winning advertisements and developing engaging programs to implementing top-notch forest tours and managing limited budgets.

Before joining the Commission, Betty served as a natural resource consultant, political campaign advisor, commodity broker, as executive vice president of the Idaho Cattle Association, associate director of the Public Lands Council, assistant to the director at the Council of International Exchange of Scholars. Munis also worked in Panama on a youth development program sponsored by 4-H and the Kellogg's Corporation.

Betty grew up on a cattle ranch in the heart of southwestern Montana. She holds a bachelor's degree in agriculture economics from the University of Georgia. Betty also attended Montana State University and studied in England and France. In her free time you'll likely find her in the garden tending a crop of mighty fine tomatoes.



## **Jamaar Smiley with The Smiley Experience**

Jamaar Smiley, the leader in Poetic Disruption™, is a Transformational Poet, Keynote Speaker, Cultural Curator, and one of the most impactful voices of this generation. His work captures the essence of our culture, the resilience of the human spirit and inspires the courage inside of us all, to be fearlessly authentic.

From the World's leading motivational speaker, Les Brown, to the international performer, artist and poet icon, Rupi Kaur, to an ever growing list of star-studded actors, comedians, international musicians, government officials and more, Jamaar Smiley has ignited the stage with the power of his words.



## **Matt Donegan President, Donegan Advisors LLC**

Matt Donegan is a professional forester based in Oregon with 35 years of experience in forest investment, operations and policy. Matt advises businesses, governments, universities and non-profits with a primary emphasis on wildfire. Matt is the former co-founder and co-president of Forest Capital Partners, a timberland investment management organization with operations in the Pacific Northwest, Inland West, Southeast and Lake States. FCP forests anchored regional economies – supplying over 100 mills and supporting thousands of jobs – while providing valuable recreational space for local communities and critical habitat for numerous species including grizzly bear, spotted owls and salmon. In Washington DC, Matt served as founding chair of the National Alliance of Forest Owners (NAFO) and director of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). In Oregon, Matt has chaired various state boards and commissions for the past four governors and currently chairs the Environmental Quality Commission. Matt earned a B.S. in Forestry from the University of Florida, where he chaired the student Society of American Foresters and was a member of the Xi Sigma Pi honor society. He earned an MBA with concentrations in Forestry and Finance from the University of Tennessee.



# 2026 Speakers



**Rebecca Barnard** is the Forestry Certification Manager for Sappi North America, Inc. (SNA). Rebecca manages Sappi's FSC®, SFI® and PEFC Chain-of-Custody certificates, FSC Controlled Wood Certificate and SFI Fiber Sourcing Certificate. Rebecca provides training, support and strategic direction on certifications to Sappi staff and customers, domestically and globally. She also is leading SNA's U.S. Lacey Act compliance and strategic response and compliance efforts to the new European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR).

Rebecca is an active member in the Society of American Foresters (SAF) and has served in a variety of state, regional and national leadership positions, including chairing SAF's National Committee on Forest Policy in 2020-2021. In 2024, Rebecca served as President of the SAF National Board of Directors and in 2025, Immediate Past President. Rebecca has also recently served on the National Forest History Society Board of Directors (2022-2024).

Prior to Sappi, Rebecca served as the National Forestry Programs Manager for the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) from 2013-2017 and served on the Wisconsin NWTf State Chapter Board of Directors from 2022-2023. Rebecca also worked as the Forest Certification Coordinator for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources from 2008-2013.

Rebecca has a Bachelor of Science degree in Forest Ecosystem Restoration and Management from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and an MBA.



**Seth Barnes** is a professional forester with over 25 years of experience. From harvest layout and design to silviculture, Seth has a vast array of expertise in both field forestry and forest policy. He has been OFIC's director of forest policy since 2015. Prior to coming to OFIC, Seth served as the operations manager for the forest practices program at the Washington Department of Natural Resources. In addition to professional experience with both private landowners and state agencies, he also participated for many years as a wildland firefighter on an incident management team. Seth has a Bachelor of Science in forest management from Oregon State University and attended graduate school at Washington State University for Political Science.



**Ryer Becker** is the Forest Operations and Products Manufacturing Extension Specialist with the University of Idaho based in Moscow, Idaho. Dr. Becker completed his undergraduate education at Paul Smith's College and before moving west in 2014 to complete graduate degrees at University of Idaho College of Natural Resources. Ryer joined the CNR faculty in 2022 prior to starting his current role in Extension in 2024. In addition to teaching forest operations courses in the forestry programs at the University, Dr. Becker's work advances workforce development, outreach, education, and training to support the logging, forestry and products manufacturing sectors. Ryer and his family live in Moscow, ID and enjoy recreating in the outdoors during their free time.



# 2026 Speakers



**Matt Binder** is a Forest Practices Forester for Washington State Department of Natural Resources. Matt grew up in Mead, Washington and graduated from Mt. Spokane High School in 2000. He attended the University of Montana, earning a degree in Forest Management. Matt has worked for the Washington State Department of Natural Resources for 20 years within the State Lands and Forest Practices programs.



**Aaron Bren** is the owner of Mezia Media LLC, a Lewiston, Idaho-based video production company that helps businesses communicate clearly and effectively through story-driven video. Aaron first began working with foresters in 2019 on Northwest Management Inc.'s Felled Tree Study and continues working in the industry today. Though he grew up surrounded by forests, his work behind the camera has given him a new appreciation for what it takes to keep them healthy and productive. Born and raised in the Pacific Northwest, Aaron loves helping companies turn complex information into clear, compelling stories.



**Kyle Carpenter** is a service forester with the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation's Clearwater Unit near Seeley Lake, MT. He graduated from the University of Montana with a BS in forest management in 2019, before joining MT DNRC. Kyle spent time working for Idaho Department of Lands, Bureau of Land Management and the US Forest Service. As a service forester he provides technical forestry assistance to private landowners to manage their land for forest health and fire mitigation. While helping landowners solve forest management issues, he provides education on MT Forestry Best Management Practices and administers the Montana Hazard Reduction and Streamside Management Zone laws.

## Place holder



# 2026 Speakers



**Rodney Cochrane** has been with the IDL for 19 years. Starting out as the TM forester for McCroskey State Park after college and then making a transition to Private Forestry and FPA in 2013. He grew up in a family split between mining and logging but the underground didn't interest him. Currently he is the Central Region PFS Supervisor with responsibility covering the area from Clearwater River to the Cd'A River. Rodney and his family live in Rose Lake, ID where they manage their property with intermittent harvest, thinning and planting. Go Vandals.



**Timothy Cudmore** has 20 years of experience in wildland fire and 25 years in Forest Management and Forest Entomology. He is currently working as the Training Program Lead with the Oregon Department of Forestry, after having spent over 10 years as a field forester on the Wallowa Unit in Northeast Oregon. Prior to coming to ODF, he did some GIS consulting work in Alaska and he spent 7 years with the Colorado State Forest Service, initially dedicated to helping manage an historic Mountain Pine Beetle Outbreak, and eventually working as a District Forester on the Gunnison District. Over his 17+ years with State Forestry (plus 2 years with the USFS in Montana), he has a vast amount of experience with everything from commercial logging and cost-incentive programs, Post-fire salvage logging, running a seedling nursery, aerial survey, Good Neighbor Authority cross-boundary projects, to working with multi-agency groups to accomplish forest health and fuels mitigation projects with agencies such as the NRCS. He also is passionate about wood utilization and helped start a program in Colorado using Aspen harvested from Sudden Aspen Decline and beetle-killed Lodgepole pine to make skis and snowboards. He received his M.Sc. Degree in Forestry from the University of Northern British Columbia and B.S. in Geoscience/GIS from Oregon State University. He grew up only a few miles from here in Post Falls, Idaho. He currently lives in Joseph, OR with his wife, 3 children, and random chickens, pigs, and horses.



**Karie Decker** serves as the Director of Wildlife & Habitat for the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation leadership for Habitat Enhancement, Management and Research projects implemented through RMEF partnerships. She also leads RMEF's Conservation Easement Program. Karie holds a Bachelor of Science in Natural Resources degree from the University of Montana and a Master of Science in Fish and Wildlife Biology from the University of Arizona. Prior to joining RMEF, she worked for state and federal agencies and universities in Montana, Arizona and Nebraska, providing expertise in wildlife and habitat management, grant administration and research.



# 2026 Speakers



**Jennifer Okerlund Frederickson** has been the Executive Director of the Idaho Forest Products Commission for the last six years. Prior to this position, the Boise State University alum served for almost 17 years as the Communications Manager for the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. She is a tireless advocate for active forest management, the forest products industry and educating all ages on the importance of Idaho's private and public forests.



**Joel Glaze** an attorney, landman, and business development expert currently working as a Global Business Venture Manager for low carbon and sustainability projects. He focuses on finding solutions to key challenges around land stewardship found in the cross-section of integrated real estate, ecological, and societal co-benefits. His focus on low carbon projects, carbon credit technologies, and geospatial strategies inform ExxonMobil's global land management practices.



**Julia Kertz Grant** – Director of Policy, Partnerships and Sustainability  
Julia has over twenty years of experience leading environmental, business, and community initiatives across the West. She excels at fostering collaboration among diverse and unlikely partners for lasting results. At Green Diamond Resource Company, she heads the public affairs team, focusing on natural resource policy, stakeholder relations, forest certification, community giving, and sustainability strategy.  
Before joining Green Diamond, she served in leadership capacities with Manulife Timberland and Agriculture, Micron Technology, and the City of Boise. Additionally, she has co-founded several initiatives including the Idaho Coalition of Land Trusts, the Boise River Wildlife Linkage Project, and, most recently, the Boise Nice Project.  
Julia holds a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Missouri, a dual master's in forestry and environmental management from Duke University and a badge from Boise State University's Venture College (entrepreneurial program). She, her husband and their four "free range" children have called Idaho home for 25 years.



# 2026 Speakers



**Lennard Joe**, RPF is Chief Executive Officer, BC First Nations Forestry Council. Lennard Joe, (Traditional name of Suxwsxwews, meaning Grizzly Man) brings over 30 years of natural resources and business experience into his current roles. He is a Registered Professional Forester, a member of the Nlaka'pamux First Nation, and CEO of the BC First Nations Forestry Council. Lennard is actively involved in the transformation of the forest sector within his territory as well as throughout Canada and the world. Living in balance Lennard carries the corporate knowledge of his nation and continues to practice its protocols and traditions. His role as an Indigenous Professional Forester has opened doors in Indigenous Governance, Provincial and Federal government, Industry, Academia, and Forest Certification.

Lennard also plays a key role with the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) since 2011, having served on its Resources Committee his primary goal was to incorporate Indigenous representation throughout the Standards revision process, and was successful in enshrining the Respect for Indigenous Rights and Traditional Knowledge as a standalone Objective in SFI's 2015 Forest Management Standard. Lennard has been a member of the SFI Board of Directors since 2018 and in 2023, received the SFI President's Award alongside other leaders for his contributions to advancing Indigenous relations within SFI's certification standards and governance.



**Nicholas R Kager** is originally from Washington. Nicholas has worked in Cultural Resource Management and Compliance for the Schitsu'umsh (Coeur d'Alene Tribe) since 2018 and has been working for Tribal entities (Fish/Wildlife/Forestry) for 12 years collectively. He is considered a Renaissance man as he embraces all fields of study in order to advance the THPO office. Nick holds a BS certificate from RSVRRO (Reservation School of Poverty and Racially Restricted Opportunities). As THPO, he is tasked with preserving, protecting and promoting Schitsu'umsh culture and cultural resources, as well as ensuring compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act on behalf of all residents of the Coeur d'Alene Reservation. In order to do this, his routine consists of continually re-educating his Federal partners about the Federal Trust responsibility that their agencies are mandated to uphold.



**Julia Lauch** works for the Idaho Department of Lands as the State Forester and Division Administrator for Forestry and Fire. She has 25 years of experience in wildland fire and forestry with state natural resource agencies. She spent 11 years with the Oregon Department of Forestry in various forestry and fire positions, prior to joining IDL in 2011. She helped establish Rangeland Fire Protection Associations in Idaho; spent a couple of years as the Regional Operations Chief, South; and was the Deputy Fire Chief, Operations prior to the position she now holds. Julia received her Bachelor of Science degree in Forest Management from Oregon State University (Go Beavers!) but has considered Idaho home for quite a while now. Julia has thoroughly enjoyed fighting wildland fire across the west in many capacities. She believes in the importance of active forest management, safe and effective wildland fire management, and ensuring that our forests continue to provide numerous benefits for Idahoans. Julia lives in Boise with her elementary-aged children, who keep her busy with an ever-growing interest in sports. As a family, they enjoy hiking, snow sports, and other activities that get them outdoors, enjoying the beautifully diverse natural environment.



# 2026 Speakers



**Blake Manley** is a fourth generation logger turned educator. He got his start in the woods in 1999 as a knotbummer for his dad. After college he has been involved directly in the forestry sector as a log buyer, forester, logger and as a teacher of forestry and natural resources at Sweet Home High School in Oregon for 5 years. After a brief time at the University of Idaho in workforce development, Blake now works directly with loggers to find solutions in labor scarcity. His passion to help young people find good jobs after high school set him apart from his peers as an educator. During the pandemic he started a YouTube series called "Manley Jobs." Distance learning wasn't working for hands-on classes and this was one way to reach students on their own level. The series has been featured nationally by media outlets such as FoxNews. Blake has been the keynote speaker for the Oregon Logging Conference, the Pacific Logging Congress annual meeting, the Intermountain Logging Conference and most recently the Sierra Cascade Logging Conference.



**Carmen Massey** is the Senior Indigenous Stewardship Lead at Forsite Consultants Ltd., based in Salmon Arm, British Columbia. She specializes in building strong, respectful relationships with First Nations and forestry organizations, ensuring Indigenous values and traditional knowledge are integrated into forest and resource management planning.

Carmen works directly with First Nations in their communities, supporting engagement processes that reflect cultural priorities and local stewardship goals. With extensive experience in strategic planning, stakeholder collaboration, and reconciliation initiatives, she facilitates government-to-government meetings, coordinates multi-party projects, and advances culturally informed forest and resource management approaches.

She is passionate about creating spaces for dialogue and partnership that honor Indigenous rights and perspectives while promoting sustainable resource stewardship.



**Todd A. Morgan, CF** is Director of the Forest Industry Research Program at The University of Montana's Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER). He received his MS in Forestry from the University of Montana in 1999 and has a BA in Philosophy and BS in Forest Science both from Penn State. At the Bureau, Todd manages a team of 10 working on a variety of research projects focused on forest economics including timber flow, harvesting and utilization, carbon stored in wood products, logging and hauling costs, milling capacity and timber use, and forest industry trends across the western United States. Todd is a Certified Forester and member of the Society of American Foresters. He lives in Missoula, Montana and really enjoys movies and Modern Art museums.



**FOREST INDUSTRY  
RESEARCH PROGRAM**  
UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA



# 2026 Speakers



**Gordy Mouw** engages the SFI community to leverage the work of SFI Implementation Committees across the U.S. and Canada. He focuses on demonstrating the value of this work for SFI Certified Organizations. His career in forest certification began in 2004 and includes experience on both sides of the border. He led certification efforts that implemented chain-of-custody, fiber sourcing and forest management certifications at Stora Enso, NewPage and Verso. Gordy previously had served on 11 different SFI Implementation Committees throughout the Great Lakes region, the U.S. East Coast, and the Southeast. Gordy is a graduate of Michigan Technological University's School of Forest Resources and Environmental Science. Gordy enjoys hunting, fishing, and spending time with his family enjoying the outdoors.

SFI Director, Network Relations [Gordy.Mouw@forests.org](mailto:Gordy.Mouw@forests.org)



**Tyler Nimke** is the St. Maries Area Forester for Stimson Lumber Company. He has been a forester for Stimson Lumber Company for over 18 years and has managed all of Stimson's Idaho land at some point over those years. Currently he manages Stimson's land in Kootenai, Shoshone, Benewah, and Latah Counties of Idaho. Prior to working for Stimson, he spent three years as a forester for Northwest Management out of Moscow, Idaho, and before that a year as a wildland firefighter for the Bureau of Land Management out of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. He graduated from the University of Idaho in 2003.

Tyler is a lifelong resident of north Idaho. He is married with three children and enjoys hunting, fishing, peak bagging, and most of all spending time with his family in the great outdoors.



**Raymond O'Brocki**, CBO, is the Director of Fire Service Relations for the American Wood Council. Before that he was the Chief Building Official for the City of Rockville, MD. He retired as the Assistant Fire Chief of the Baltimore City Fire Department in 2013. He was appointed fire marshal for Baltimore City in 2008. O'Brocki is the administrator of the Construction Fire Safety Coalition. O'Brocki has served on several building and fire code technical committees. He is an adjunct instructor at the National Fire Academy and has presented at various venues around the U.S. O'Brocki is a graduate of the University of Baltimore School of Law and a licensed attorney. Ray enjoys spending time with his three children on the beach in Fenwick Island, Delaware.



**Wilfred Previant** is an Assistant Professor of Forest and Rangeland Stewardship at Colorado State University whose work bridges traditional field forestry with data-driven analysis. His teaching and research integrate silviculture, forest monitoring, and technology—using tools like FVS, remote sensing, and AI—to guide adaptive management amid changing climates, markets, and social drivers shaping forest stewardship today



# 2026 Speakers



**Bruce Ripley** is currently the Chief Innovation Officer for the College of Natural Resources at the University of Idaho. Over the last 35 years he has worked in industrial forestry across the breadth of North America, from Northern New England to the Intermountain West, Pacific, South and Southeast. He has extensive experience in designing and managing forest information systems, as well as experience in forest planning, growth and yield, and financial analysis. More recently Bruce joined the University of Idaho to support its commitment to advance the science of forest innovation and high precision digital forestry leveraging LiDAR and other remote sensed data.



**Brian Rupp** is an experienced forester and log buyer with over a decade of hands-on experience in the timber industry, spanning procurement, quality control, and fiber logistics across the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. He currently serves as a Forester and Log Buyer for Idaho Forest Group in Grangeville, Idaho, where he purchases timber sales from the U.S. Forest Service and Idaho Department of Lands, manages contractor operations, and oversees quality control and day-to-day log deliveries to the mill.

Before joining Idaho Forest Group, Brian worked as a Senior Chip Buyer for Packaging Corporation of America (PCA) in Wallula, Washington, managing the procurement and transportation of wood fiber to support mill operations throughout the Northwest. His earlier experience includes nearly seven years as a Procurement Forester and Log Buyer for Port Blakely's export division, purchasing

and managing high-value timber for shipment to markets in China, Korea, and Japan. He also gained extensive field experience as a Quality Control Forester and Inventory Manager with Trans-Pac Fibre on Afognak Island, Alaska, where he coordinated harvest operations and export logistics. A graduate of the University of Idaho with a Bachelor of Science in Forestry, Brian combines a deep respect for the forest with a passion for practical, results-driven management. He thrives on building relationships with suppliers, customers, and coworkers to achieve shared goals in sustainable forestry and market performance. Beyond his professional work, Brian is deeply committed to forestry education and outreach. In 2018, he launched a high school forestry outreach program in partnership with local schools, introducing students to career opportunities in the timber industry, an effort that led him to present at the 2019 Pacific Logging Congress in Hawaii. In addition to his industry and educational efforts, Brian is the creator of Rupp's Timber Tutorials, a growing social media platform dedicated to showcasing the logging and forestry industry. Through Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube, Brian shares educational and behind-the-scenes content about modern forestry practices. His authentic and informative approach has attracted nearly 40,000 followers across all four platforms, helping bridge the gap between professionals and the public's understanding of forestry.



# 2026 Speakers



**Jon Songster** has been with Idaho Department of Lands since 2016, playing a key role in advancing active forest management on federal lands in Idaho under the Good Neighbor Authority. Prior to joining the department, Jon gained diverse experience in natural resources working with small private forest landowners and managing industrial timberlands in the Inland Northwest. He holds degrees in Forestry and Forest Products from West Virginia University and the University of Idaho.



**Sean Steinebach** has built a career at the crossroads of forestry, collaboration, and community engagement. A 2001 graduate of the University of Montana with a B.S. in Forest Resource Management, Sean began with hands-on logging experience as a faller and equipment operator, giving him a deep appreciation for the challenges of the timber industry.

In 2004, he joined Sun Mountain Lumber as Administrative Forester, where he helped guide sustainable forestry practices and strengthen the company's partnerships with federal land managers. From 2009 to 2021, Sean served with the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation as a Service Forester, where he advanced the Good Neighbor Authority, supported private landowners, and gained extensive experience in wildfire management, including a role as Crewboss for the Montana State Prison Inmate Fire Crew.

Sean returned to Sun Mountain Lumber in 2021 as Outreach Forester and Residuals Manager, a multifaceted role that combines agency relations, forest policy, and infrastructure development. Sun Mountain Lumber in Deer Lodge and Livingston collectively employ nearly 300 Montanans and rely heavily on federal timber supply, making Sean's work with collaborative groups and policymakers essential to the vitality of Montana's forest products industry. He currently serves as Co-chair of the Beaverhead-Deerlodge Working Group, board member on the American Forest Resource Council, Montana Wood Products Association Montana Forest Collaboration Network, and participates in the Lolo Restoration Committee. Known for his ability to connect diverse stakeholders, Sean emphasizes cooperation and effective communication to find common ground in forest management. Beyond forestry, Sean once made his mark in Seattle's grunge music scene, an experience that deepened his appreciation for creativity and collaboration—qualities he brings to his work today. His career reflects a commitment to forest health, wildfire risk reduction, rural jobs, and ensuring Montana's forests remain resilient for future generations.



**Lindsay Tighe** serves as Chief of the Shackan Indian Band and General Manager of Stuwix Resources Joint Venture, a unique forestry enterprise collectively owned by eight First Nations in British Columbia's Nicola Valley. This governance model exemplifies Indigenous-led resource management, where cultural values and traditional knowledge are integrated into modern forestry practices.

Under Lindsay's leadership, Stuwix has pioneered collaborative approaches to sustainable forest and resource management, including initiatives that reduce wildfire risk, enhance forest utilization, and create economic opportunities for Indigenous communities. His work demonstrates how Indigenous leadership can shape innovative, environmentally responsible solutions with broad relevance.



# 2026 Speakers



**Chad Washington** joined the Oregon Forest Industries Council in 2024 and brings nearly a decade of experience in forest planning, stewardship, and sustainability. His background includes managing Sustainable Forestry Initiative® certification, leading stewardship and community outreach efforts, and serving in a range of leadership and advisory roles, including the Oregon Governor's Wildfire Programs Advisory Council and chairing the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Private Forest Accord Mitigation Advisory Committee. Chad focuses on effective professional communication as a tool to support collaboration, informed decision-making, and successful natural resource management.



**Jill Wagner** is originally from Iowa, Jill has worked in Cultural Resource Management and Compliance for the Schitsu'umsh (Coeur d'Alene Tribe) since 2004 and has been the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for 15 years. She has 40 years experience in her profession ranging from field archaeologist, research linguist, and university professor, to preservation officer. Jill holds a BA in Linguistics, along side her BS, MA and Ph.D. in Anthropology. As THPO, she is tasked with preserving, protecting and promoting Schitsu'umsh culture and cultural resources, as well as ensuring compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act on behalf of all residents of the Coeur d'Alene Reservation.



**Tom Whalen** is the founder/operator of Red Squirrel Security, an LLC working in Washington and Idaho for the past six years. Prior experience includes 31 years as a Sr. Conservation Officer for Idaho Fish and Game.

At IDFG, Tom earned awards for both enforcement and wildlife education, ranging from recognition for work done in wildlife crime cases to conceptualizing and co-producing an award winning music video focused on the life-history of bull trout. Tom served specifically as the Bull Trout Officer for 19 years, which was a part of a larger collective formed under the Cabinet Gorge/Clark Fork River Settlement Agreement. The Federal Energy Regulatory Committee recognized this collaborative as the best mitigation program in the U.S. for 9 years running. Tom graduated from Purdue University in 1982 with a B.S. in Resource Management. Tom has experience as a whitewater river guide and as an accidental free-climber (once). He has been underwater many times, both anecdotally and for real. Tom is the proud survivor of his hardest job, being the proud dad of three daughters. That work never ends.



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We hope to see you there!



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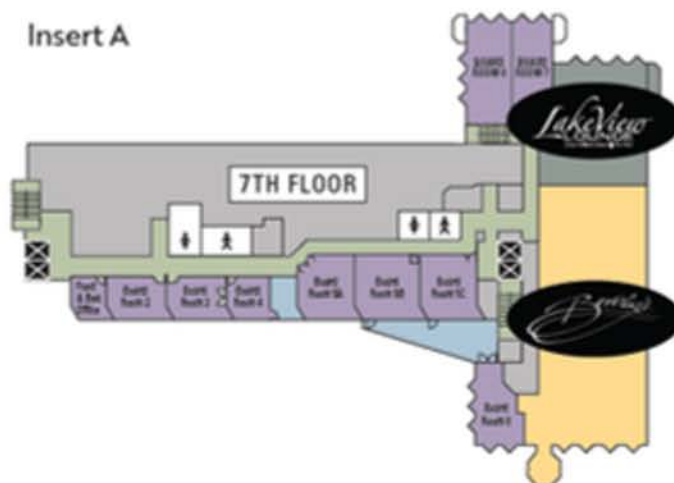
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