

FISCAL YEAR 2025-26



Oregon Forest
Resources Institute

ANNUAL REPORT



The importance of collaboration

When the Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) adopted an updated strategic plan three years ago, it included the priority of supporting forest sector workforce development.



We kicked off efforts to meet that goal this past spring when we convened a group of 50 leaders from across the sector, as well as K-12 and post-secondary education, to develop practical, collaborative recommendations and next steps to address the challenges of recruiting and training the next generation of forestry workers.

I was encouraged by the conversations we had at the OFRI Workforce Summit and the enthusiasm I saw for helping young Oregonians learn about the opportunities to have a meaningful career like the one I'm having in the forest sector.

As I reflect on the summit and all we've accomplished across our forest education programs for the public, K-12 teachers and students, and landowners over the past fiscal year, it's OFRI's role as a convener, collaborator and partner that stands out.

Our public education program partnered with Oregon State University and the University of Idaho to publish *The 2026 Forest Report* highlighting the substantial economic contributions of Oregon's forest sector.

The K-12 education program and its partner organizations provided field forestry education to more than 100,000 students, and this past spring, a record number of high school students participated in our annual Oregon Envirothon competition.

Last fall, the landowner education program collaborated with wildlife biologists and wildlife researchers on the inaugural Forest Wildlife Research Summit to help forest managers and woodland owners build upon the strong work currently underway and go even further to improve management practices for the benefit of wildlife.

These are just a few highlights from the past fiscal year. Read on to learn more about our work in 2025-26 to help Oregonians understand the social, environmental and economic benefits of our forests.

— Paul Betts, chair, OFRI board of directors

OFRI by the numbers

NEW OR UPDATED PUBLICATIONS

- *Forests Working for Wildlife* – a publication highlighting the contributions of working forests as wildlife habitat
- *Into the Forest* – an educational publication for students in grades 5-6
- Oregon Garden Natural Resources Education Program brochure – an informational pamphlet promoting OFRI's educational programming at The Oregon Garden
- *Resources for Family Forest Landowners* – a guide to technical, financial and educational resources for family forest landowners
- *The 2026 Forest Report* and *Oregon's Forest Economy* – a 92-page report and 16-page summary booklet highlighting the economic contributions of Oregon's forest sector

PUBLICATIONS DISTRIBUTED

- Printed publications distributed: 54,181
- Digital publications downloaded: 3,213

DIGITAL METRICS

- Facebook (11,833 "likes")
- Instagram (1,917 followers)
- LinkedIn (1,446 followers)
- Threads (511 followers)
- YouTube (5,742,586 total views)

EVENTS, WORKSHOPS AND PROGRAMS

- Community outreach presentations: 21 (with 964 total participants)
- Displays at events: 24 (with 59,832 total participants)
- Forums, tours and conferences: 30 (with 3,557 total participants)
- K-12 educator professional development workshop attendees: 803
- Landowner workshops: 92 (with 4,494 total participants)
- Students who participated in OFRI-supported field forestry programs: 100,325

OFRI STRATEGIC PLAN

The Oregon Forest Resources Institute Strategic Plan 2023-28 is available to download at OregonForests.org/about-ofri.

LANDOWNER EDUCATION

OFRI encourages sustainable forestry by helping to educate landowners and forest professionals. For more information, visit [KnowYourForest.org](https://www.knowyourforest.org).



Summit highlights wildlife research

OFRI organized the inaugural Forest Wildlife Research Summit, held last October at Oregon State University in Corvallis, to highlight scientific research on the habitat needs of forest-reliant wildlife and their response to forest management actions.

The summit provided the opportunity for scientists, forest managers, woodland owners, students and others with an interest in forest wildlife to discuss current research on the diverse array of wildlife species that depend on forests, as well as how research translates to on-the-ground habitat management.

TRAINING OFFERS GUIDANCE ON OAK HABITAT RESTORATION

More than 65 people attended a one-day training for landowners OFRI co-hosted in partnership with the Pudding River Watershed Council and The Oregon Garden that offered practical, real-world strategies for restoring Oregon white oak habitat and improving overall forest health.

The April 24 training in Silverton included a field tour of ongoing restoration work in The Oregon Garden's oak grove with live demonstrations of brush clearing and the use of an air curtain incinerator.



NEW PUBLICATION FOCUSES ON WILDLIFE STEWARDSHIP

In celebration of its 20th anniversary, OFRI's Wildlife in Managed Forests program released *Forests Working for Wildlife*, a new educational publication detailing the many ways Oregon's private forest landowners support habitat for native wildlife.



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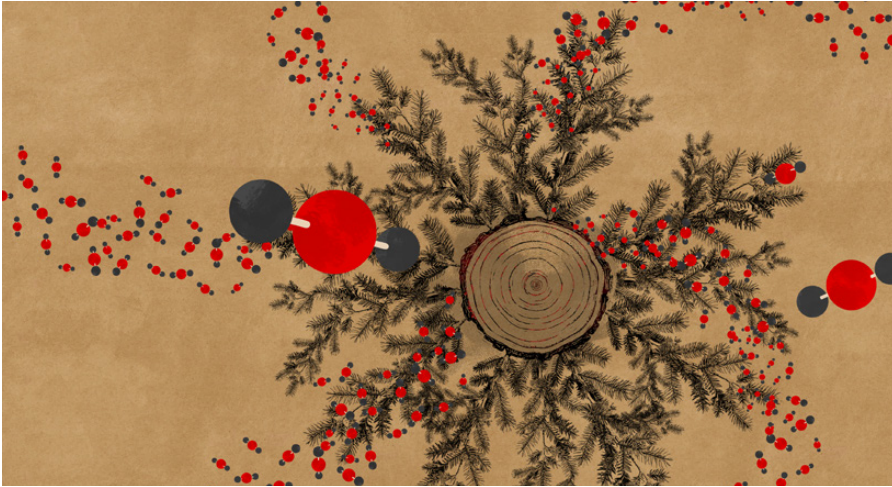
The landowner education program supported the Oregon Small Woodlands Association's 2026 Family Forest Convention and the Oregon Tree Farm System's Tree Farmer of the Year Tour at the Big K Guest Ranch in Elkton.

OFRI was a sponsor and exhibitor at Oregon State University Extension Service's Tree School events, which offer educational opportunities for forest landowners.



PUBLIC EDUCATION

OFRI works to advance public understanding of the social, environmental and economic importance of Oregon's forests. For more information, visit OregonForests.org.



New animated ads debut

OFRI released two new animated educational advertisements that aired in television markets statewide, as well as on streaming services and social media, this past spring.

The ads were part of a multiweek campaign aimed at informing Oregonians about the importance of replanting trees after logging to sustain forests — and all the benefits they provide — for future generations.

Although the educational advertising program has long been a part of the Institute's work to advance the public's understanding of the social, environmental and economic benefits of Oregon's forests, this is the first time OFRI has produced animated ads. The animation was created for OFRI by the Portland-based video production and animation studio Deep Sky.

REPORT DETAILS FOREST SECTOR'S ECONOMIC IMPACT

The 2026 Forest Report, a new OFRI-commissioned report compiled by researchers from Oregon State University and the University of Idaho, synthesizes and interprets the most recent data and research related to Oregon's forest resources and the economic contributions of the state's forest sector.

As a supplement to the 85-page report, OFRI published *Oregon's Forest Economy*, a 16-page booklet that summarizes key points. Data and information from both publications can be found online at TheForestReport.org.



Trees & Wood Products



CELEBRATING THE OREGON GARDEN'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY

As The Oregon Garden marked its 25th anniversary this summer, OFRI celebrated its more than two-decade partnership with the Silverton attraction to provide forest education to Oregonians of all ages.



On June 30, OFRI and The Oregon Garden held a joint anniversary celebration in the Rediscovery Forest, a 15-acre demonstration forest in the garden that OFRI manages for educational purposes. To mark the anniversary, OFRI also developed a pair of interpretive signs for display at The Oregon Garden that highlight the partnership.



OFRI SPONSORS HOOD TO COAST

To help the 19,000 runners and walkers who spend a good portion of the 196-mile Hood to Coast route passing by forestland learn about sustainable forestry practices, OFRI sponsored the 2025 relay and gave away a commemorative poster at the finish line festival in Seaside.

In addition to a booth at the finish line, OFRI's sponsorship included a full-page ad in the relay handbook, features in the Hood to Coast newsletter and on its social media, and a dedicated email blast to all participants.

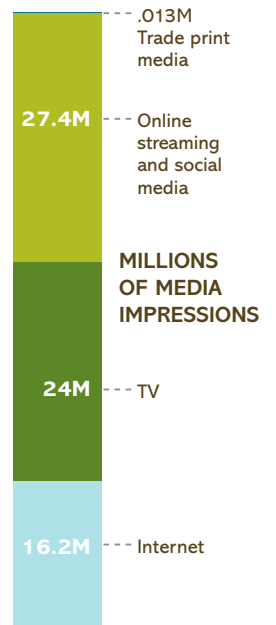
DIGITAL REACH

Website (monthly average)			
Visits	13,482	Downloads	3,213
YouTube			
Subscribers	3,468	Views	5.7 M
Facebook			
Followers	11,833	Likes/reactions	8,438
Instagram			
Followers	1,917	Post likes	1,390
LinkedIn			
Followers	1,446	Likes/reactions	1,917
Threads			
Followers	511	Likes	151

OFRI continues to expand its digital reach through websites, YouTube and social media.

EDUCATIONAL ADVERTISING IMPRESSIONS

67.6M TOTAL



FY 2025-26

OFRI's annual educational advertising campaign included trade print media, digital streaming services, social media and TV, as well as internet and search engine ads.

Previous page, from left:

OFRI's social media intern, Emma Knapton, created a stop-motion animated video, "Carbon in Oregon's Forests," about carbon distribution in the forest.

During the 2026 International Mass Timber Conference in Portland, OFRI helped organize a forest tour highlighting Oregon's sustainable forestry practices.

Below, from left:

OFRI designed a commemorative poster for the 2025 Hood to Coast relay that won a Gold Award from the Association for Communication Excellence.

OFRI created two new interpretive signs about the Institute's longtime partnership with The Oregon Garden in Silverton that were displayed during the garden's 25th anniversary celebrations in June.



K-12 EDUCATION

OFRI provides curriculum, classroom materials, workshops and field trip opportunities to increase forest literacy among K-12 teachers and students. For more information, visit LearnForests.org.



Summit focuses on pathways from classroom to workforce

OFRI, in partnership with the Western Forestry & Conservation Association (WFCA), hosted a two-day summit in May focused on strengthening Oregon's forest sector workforce and educational pathways into natural resource careers.

The OFRI Workforce Summit, which took place May 13-14 in Bend and coincided with WFCA's Mapping the Course conference, brought together 50 leaders from across the forest sector and K-12 and post-secondary education to examine the current workforce landscape, identify challenges and gaps in education and career pathways, and develop practical, collaborative recommendations and next steps for supporting sector workforce development.

A report summarizing what the presentations and breakout discussions covered during the summit, as well as outlining possible strategies to build and sustain a workforce adequate to meet Oregon's forest sector needs, is available to download from OFRI's website, OregonForests.org.

OFRI FUNDS NEW OUTDOOR LEARNING PAVILION

OFRI helped fund a project led by the Oregon Women in Timber to build a new outdoor learning pavilion at the Oregon Department of Forestry's Astoria District Office for students to use during the Clatsop County Sixth Grade Forestry Days, which are held at the district office each September.

Each year, the more than 400 students who participate in Sixth Grade Forestry Days receive hands-on experience and get a firsthand look at possible career opportunities in natural resources as they rotate through 10 outdoor stations. The new 16-by-24-foot timber pavilion, which is also open for community use, is the first permanent structure built for the event.





SUPPORTING EDUCATORS

The K-12 education program provided networking and professional development opportunities to Oregon's forestry educators.

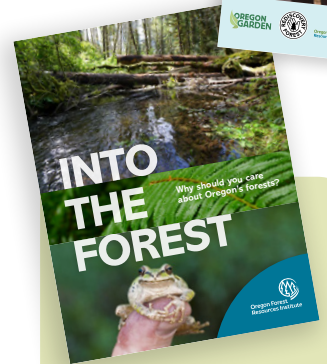
These included the annual OFRI and Oregon Natural Resources Education Program Natural Resources High School Educators Conference, which OFRI offered at no cost to 78 Oregon educators, held in December at The Oregon Garden in Silverton.

In January, 20 non-formal educators who work outside of a traditional classroom setting attended the OFRI-organized Forestry Educators Network's annual meeting, also held at The Oregon Garden. It brought together educators working for forestry, natural resources and environmental education organizations from across the state for professional development, as well as the opportunity to collaborate and learn from each other.

OFRI also provided a free two-day summer professional development workshop and field tour for high school teachers that visited a landscape impacted by wildfire.

NEW OGNREP BROCHURE

OFRI created a new brochure to promote the Oregon Garden Natural Resources Education Program, which offers low-cost field trips to The Oregon Garden in Silverton.



STUDENT PUB UPDATED

OFRI updated its *Into the Forest* publication for students in grades 5-6, which covers topics that include forest ecology, tree biology, forest management and forest careers.

Previous page, from left:

OFRI hosts an outdoor school for Marion County students as part of a coalition of organizations dedicated to environmental education.

The 2026 Oregon Envirothon competition, which OFRI sponsored and organized, had record attendance of about 200 students from 22 high schools across Oregon.

Below, from left:

Students competing in the 2026 Oregon Envirothon.

To provide an opportunity for outdoor learning to homeschooled students, OFRI organizes the annual Homeschool Day at The Oregon Garden.

OFRI partners with The Oregon Garden in Silverton to provide natural resource education to students in grades 4-6.





◀ **Paul Betts**
Chair
Miami Alternatives LLC



◀ **Jennifer Beathe**
Starker Forests Inc.



◀ **Dr. Thomas DeLuca**
Oregon State
University College
of Forestry (dean)



◀ **Daniella Giustina**
Giustina Land &
Timber Co.



◀ **Mike Hicks**
IAM-AW District
W24 (employee
representative)



◀ **Kristin Rasmussen**
Hampton Lumber &
Family Forests



◀ **Kate Skinner**,
Oregon Department
of Forestry (liaison)

▶ **Brian Trenholm**
Weyerhaeuser



▶ **Dan Newton**
Vice Chair
Newton Forestry LLC



▶ **Gordon Culbertson**
Whitewater Forests
LLC (small woodland
owner)



▶ **Dr. Kristopher
Elliott**
Oregon State University
Extension Service
(public representative)



▶ **Courtney Griesel**
Sierra Pacific
Industries



▶ **Garren Hitner**
Century Forest
Management



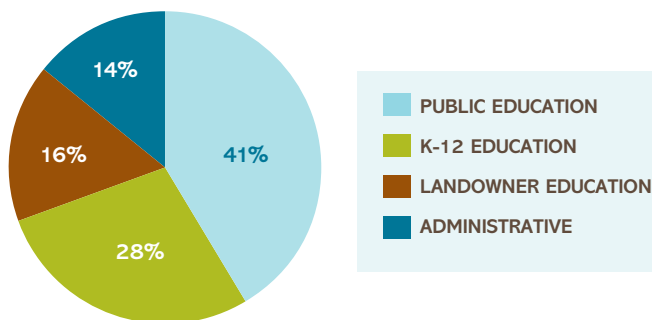
▶ **Madeleine
Thompson Rudolph**
Thompson Tree Farm



OFRI board of directors

The Oregon Forest Resources Institute is governed by a board made up of 11 voting members appointed by the state forester, plus two non-voting members. Board members represent timber producers, small woodland owners and forest products industry employees. Non-voting members include a public representative and the dean of the Oregon State University College of Forestry. An Oregon Department of Forestry liaison assists the board.

BUDGET BREAKDOWN BY PROGRAM



In each of the past 25 years, OFRI has received the state controller's "Gold Star" award for timely and accurate financial reporting.

OFRI STAFF

Inka Bajandas, Public Affairs Manager
Jordan Benner, Director of Communications
Rikki Heath, Director of K-12 Education Programs
Emma Knapton, Social Media Intern
Jenna Mendenhall, Environmental Educator
Margaret Miller, Forest Landowner Education Manager
Joni Nebril, Business Operations Assistant
Jim Paul, Executive Director
Kathy Storm, Director of Business Operations
Julie Woodward, Deputy Director and Director of Forestry

MISSION STATEMENT The Oregon Forest Resources Institute supports the forest sector and the stewardship of natural resources by advancing Oregonians' understanding of the social, environmental and economic benefits of our forests.



**Oregon Forest
Resources Institute**

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