



OREGON TREE FARM SYSTEM

Our Values: Connectivity; Collaboration; Stewardship; Inclusivity; Gratitude

Our Mission: Empowering private landowners to manage their forests sustainably

Our Purpose: Impacting the world by making Oregon a better place one acre at a time

OTFS Board Meeting Minutes October 9, 2025

Called to Order 8:30

Roll Call:

Present: Tom Agens, Rick Barnes, Mike Barsotti, Dick Beers, Dave Bugni, Steve Cafferata, Wylda Cafferata, Mary Chamness, Dick Courter, Jock Dalton, Pam Dalton, Dave Ehlers, Darren Goodding, Lauren Grand, Kate McMichael, Jim Merzenich, Norm Michaels, Margaret Miller, Dave Wells, Sue Zeni

Absent: Ed Easterling, Ted Reiss, Steve Vaught

Reading Values, Mission, Purpose Statement: David Ehlers

Additions/deletions to the agenda. David Bugni

- Item 7-A was removed from this meeting.

August 14, 2025 OTFS Board Meeting Minutes:

- **VOTE:** Rick Barnes made a motion to approve August 14, 2025 OTFS Board Meeting Minutes. Kate McMichael seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Sue Zeni,

- Prior to the meeting, board members had been sent OTFS Balance Sheet as of September 28, 2025, OTFS Budget vs Actuals: January-December 2025 Cash Basis September 28, 2025, and OTFS Profit and Loss Detail January 1-September 28, 2025.
- The most recent reports did not include Vanguard.
- Overall, we are doing well. Donations are ahead of plan. Invoices for ODF and SIC funds have been sent out and approved, but the money has not been received yet. Tom Agens can follow up with SIC.

- **VOTE:** Rick Barnes made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Reports. Steve Cafferata seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Items:

- Dave Bugni has been working on the 2025 Operation Manual with the Governance committee and proposes we vote to approve it for 2025 and continue to work on updates for 2026. Dick Courter brought up potential changes that may need to take place regarding the Memorial Fund.
- **VOTE:** Kate McMichael made a motion to approve the 2025 Operation Manual. Wylda Cafferata seconded the motion. Dick Courter abstained voting. All other members voted in favor. The motion passed.
- All Hands, All Lands conference summary- Kate McMichael
 - o This conference addressed management of older and more mature forests and included people from a variety of backgrounds. There were more areas people agreed upon than disagreed upon. Everyone agreed that management is vital to keeping our forests resilient and striving.
- Consideration of the ATFS National Leadership Award of Dick Courter- Mike Barsotti
 - o Overall, this award focuses upon actions that have taken place in the past few years, but there have been nominations in the past for longevity and past services as well. Dick spoke about why he believes he should be nominated for this award and suggested a few changes that could be made to the wording if the nomination is submitted. Discussion was raised about the respect the board has for the huge amount of work Dick has done over the years for OTFS and ATFS but also concerns over difficulties in communication and working with board members in the past few years.
 - o Due to the sensitive nature of this topic, board members have asked for a secret ballot vote on whether the nomination should be submitted by OTFS. Board members who are present at this meeting are asked to submit their vote by phone call, text, or e-mail to the secretary (contact provided in the chat) by 5:00 PM tomorrow (10/10/25).

Reports from Working Groups

- Recognition: Rick Barnes

- o We have already visited 3 out of the 4 OTFS candidates and the 4th is scheduled for a visit tomorrow. We will then be ready to vote on the OTFY. We are ready for the Hagenstein Award. Due to the current government shut down we have been unable to contact ODF to see if they will be providing the clocks for this year's winners. Rick is looking into options for OTFS if we must provide the clocks ourselves. He is also looking at including the OTFS logo to the awarded clocks. Thumb drives with the videos of the OTFS candidates have been received. This year they are in the shape of a tree and say OTFS on it. Thank you for all the hard work you have been doing, Rick!
- Communication/Landowners Journey: Kate McMichael, Lauren Grand
 - o We are working on our messaging to encourage people to join OTFS. We have scheduled a work session in the 1st week of November to plan and create the message. Overall, we are working on increasing communications with members through Constant Contact.
- Certification: Norm Michaels and/or Steve Cafferata
 - o Year to date there have been 168 inspections, 102 recertifications, 59 decertification's, 20 required inspections. There are 6 required inspections left (3 of these are Starker's).
 - o 3rd party audit update: There is a good list of candidates to choose from. We have been able to select some members and will contact them to see if they are willing to participate. If they chose not to, there would not be a penalty unless they are also part of the random selected pool. Some tree farmers will be randomly selected as part of the audit. If these members choose not to participate, they will automatically be permanently de-certified for life. All farms that are part of the audit will need to have a Tree Farm Management Plan, activities on the ground, and administrative files (i.e.: GIS location) that meets standards.
 - o Tree Farm decertifications report was presented by Wylda and will be attached at the end of these meeting minutes.
- Events: Pam Dalton
 - o Dave B. presented at the Hopkins Tree Farm event and at lunch helped represent OTFS and promoting the benefits of joining OTFS.
 - o November 15th will be our big event: Celebrating Family Forestry: Wood Water Wildlife Recreation. Wylda has been working hard

arranging speakers for the event and gathering “swag” that can be handed out. Ann Stevenson will be our keynote speaker. The “wood” speaker recently backed out, and Wylda is already working hard on a new option- possibly from the architect firm that worked on the Portland Airport. Sue has been coordinating the registration and payments, Rick Barns is getting the awards together, Kate has been promoting the event, and it’s great to have Margaret Miller back!

- o October 25th will be the Lane/Douglas County Tree School. Thank you to the Cafferata’s for staffing the booth.
- o The Logging Conference will be coming up in 2026, and we are working on coordinating staffing the table with partners such as OWIT.
- Finance: Sue Zeni
 - o November 7th will be the deadline for registering for the November 15th meeting. It helps if people register ahead of time so we can coordinate with the caterer.
 - o Speakers will be comped as well as the tree farm inspectors who would like to attend.
- Governance: Dave Bugni
 - o We have been working on updating the Operation Manual.
- Memorial Fund: Dick Courter
 - o No additional donations since the last report. The issue regarding Vanguard access has not been resolved yet. Dick would like to encourage everyone to attend the November Memorial Fund presentation.

Other items:

- Review of upcoming OTFS-related activities through to next meeting (Calendar of Activities)
 - o All ATFS Inspections need to be completed.
 - o Working Groups- please submit the 2026 goals you would like to accomplish.
- Update by Pam & Jock Dalton on Western Regional TFOY results
 - o 2 Inspectors from the East coast came out. Unfortunately, we did not make the cut to continue but it was an enjoyable event, and I sent congratulations to the tree farmers who won the chance to advance in the competition.

- Discuss retaining a part-time Executive Director or Assistant- Dave Bugni
 - o More assistance needs to be provided- the chair position is too much for me to want to continue without more support. Discussion with past- co-chairs Steve and Wylda have resulted in a scope of work. Discussion with OSWA has taken place to see if any of their staff would be available and they are all currently at capacity. Dave will reach out to Parks to see if any funding would be available through ATFS for staffing.
- A question surrounding the European Union's natural forest requirement- Dave Wells.
 - o In Europe, their semi-natural stands show a lot of diversity and there is a push to maintain, and document stand diversity. Discussion of the significant time and expense that would result if this became a requirement in the future here. Steve will try to locate and share an article with the board that he has read regarding this.

Partner Updates:

- Partner Report
 - o Margaret Miller-OFRI-Welcome back! Margaret gave a great partnership report and a copy of it will be included at the end of these notes.
 - o Lauren Grand -OSU Extension- the interviews for the MWM/WOW.net have been completed and we hope to announce a new hire for this role soon.
 - o Tree School Lane will take place on October 25th and has over 230 participants.
 - o New folks who have been hired are now starting.

Good of the Order:

- o Pam Dalton was seeking information on if there will be another trip to Finland in the future.
- o OSWA lobby day will take place after the first of the year.
- o

Meeting Adjourned: 10:15

TREE FARM DECERTIFICATIONS TRENDING OVER TIME

Report to OTFS Board October 9, 2025

1. Dave asked us to prepare a report on Tree Farm Decertifications, particularly noting if we saw any trends over time.
2. I examined the Inspection records from January 2022 through August of 2025. (Mary, I can send you this report so you don't need to try to record all the numbers!)

During that time, there have been a total of 641 Inspections, NOT including those of Charter companies. Charter companies have had NO decertifications, except for when they sold properties or combined properties so only one tree farm # was necessary.

So, 641 Inspections:

Of the 641, 5.6% were Initial (new) Inspections

55.1% were recertifications

39.3% were decertifications

The 39.3% is a disturbing number. Furthermore, when we look at the trend, 2022 saw a 28.8% decertification, 2023 saw a 35.2 decertification, 2024 saw a 41.3 decertification, and 2025 (so far) saw a 49.5 decertification. On first glance, it appears the trend shows an increasing decertification rate.

HOWEVER, there are some somewhat mitigating factors:

- As we work through the backlog, there are numerous tree farms that have gone without inspections for far longer than five years, so many properties have been sold, requiring decertification.
- We have numerous properties that have been in "Pioneer Status" for years. Pioneer Status refers to tree farms that are not up to standard for various reasons but the owners state they want to bring them up to standard. The Certification Working Group decided that 6 months was a long enough time to stay in Pioneer Status, and after advising all the Pioneers of this, have been decertifying tree farms that are not meeting that deadline.

- That said, we still have a large percentage of Decertifications. The Inspection Forms for each Tree Farm have a space to record the reasons for decertification if that is the result of the Inspection. I analyzed each of the 641 Inspection forms from 2022-2025 and identified SEVEN reasons for decertification.
1. Property Sold: 34%
 2. Owners had no interest in recertification: 24%
 3. Property owners could not be located despite intensive searching: 18%
 4. Owner deceased: 10%
 5. Ownership combined with other parcels: 8%
 6. Owner wants to be recertified at some unspecified future date: 5%
 7. Health Issues: 1% (more may be included in the “No Interest” category.)

Various ways to interpret this data:

1. For property sold, we could focus on attempting to contact the buyers of sold property. This is not a task the certification group has the bandwidth to tackle at this time.
2. Likewise, we could attempt to find out what has happened to the property of deceased owners. Again, this would be a time-absorbing task.
3. The “NO INTEREST” category can cover a multiplicity of reasons, none of which the forms explain. We can encourage our inspectors to be more specific when they complete the forms, if they can surmise the reasons for no interest.
4. We can attempt to create more interest through more communication with our members and also continue to work towards creating more value for membership.
5. It is somewhat encouraging that less than 25% of our decertification’s are for lack of interest.

OFRI Update

October 2025

The Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) supports the forest sector and the stewardship of natural resources by advancing

Oregonians' understanding of the social, environmental and economic benefits of our forests.

Landowner Education Program Updates:

Partnership for Forestry Education:

- The PFE has a fall 2025 meeting on Thursday, Nov 6, 2025 where partners will review a fall work plan and

get updates on educational opportunities, landowner technical and financial assistance and much more.

- The PFE's KnowYourForest.org website has been revamped.
- Learn more about the partnership at KnowYourForest.org

Wildlife in Managed Forest:

- Join OFRI and partners at the inaugural Forest Wildlife Research Summit: State of the State on Thursday, Oct

30 – for more information and to register for the summit, go to forestwildlifesummit.eventbrite.com.

Forest Vegetation Management Conference:

- OFRI is proud to sponsor this year's conference in support of education and outreach for Oregon's small

woodland owners. Use the promo code ORSmallLandowner for discounted registration — available to the

first 20 landowners who sign up!

Oregon Small Woodland Association:

- Contributing to OSWA chapter newsletters with both a landowner and wildlife in managed forest articles.
- OFRI is working with Mike to recruit and support new members.

Oregon Tree Farm System:

- OFRI is working with partners, including OSU Extension and OTFS, on the digital management tool. Thank you to all landowners and professionals who have contributed to the survey and input session!
- Looking forward to assisting with the upcoming Annual Meeting & Banquet!

Upcoming Events:

- Tree School – Lane | October 25, 2025
- Forest Wildlife Research Summit at OSU | October 30, 2025
- PNW Forest Vegetation Management | December 2-4, 2025

Landowner Educational Resources & Tips

Looking for practical information about managing your forestland? Visit [KnowYourForest.org](https://www.knowyourforest.org) for an extensive library

of resources to help you reach your goals.

If you haven't already, please visit the Oregon State University Extension Service's events page, where you can find

numerous trainings happening this fall as part of our Ties to the Land: Succession Planning for Forestland Owners

program.

For further assistance or to connect please contact:

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Margaret Miller, landowner education manager | miller@ofri.org | 503-347-5028