



Pinchot Partners Collaborative Group



Pinchot Partners Group Members shown above include: Red Rogers, Bob Guenther, Jacob Groves, Garry Wassenaar, Ron Pfejfer, Bill Little, John Squires, Taylor Aalvik, Lisa Moscinski, Jeremy Grose, Derek Churchill, Mark Swanson, Lee Grose, Catie Werner, Miku Lenentine

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Pinchot Partners Mission Statement

The mission of the Pinchot Partners is to work within the Cispus Adaptive Management Area and surrounding areas to promote policies and projects that create quality local jobs and benefit watershed health.

The Pinchot Partners are comprised of diverse forest stakeholders who share a vision of healthy vibrant communities.

The Pinchot Partners Strive to bring together differing perspectives in an open and safe forum in order to discuss and create innovative projects that incorporate the fundamental principles of ecosystem management.

Join Us

The Pinchot Partners is a volunteer based collaborative group working to create quality local jobs and benefit watershed health. You are welcome to join the Pinchot Partners. To learn more about the Pinchot Partners please visit our website at www.pinchotpartners.org or email Catie our coordinator at pinchotpartners@gmail.com.

Pinchot Partners Board of Directors include:

Jeremy Grose, Chair	Bob Guenther, Director
Taylor Aalvik, Vice Chair	Butch Ogden, Director
Bill Little, Treasurer	Red Rogers, Director
Emily Platt, Secretary	John Squires, Director
Derek Churchill, Director	Lisa Moscinski, Director

Cowlitz Valley Road Project

The Gifford Pinchot National Forest currently has over 4,000 miles of roads. Yet staff capacity and funding from Congress only allow the GPNF to maintain a small portion of these roads. The unmaintained roads wreak havoc on the safety of those who use the roads as well as fish and wildlife populations. Properly maintaining and in some cases removing sections of the road system is one of the most important, known climate-change adaptation strategies for flood-prone areas like the Cowlitz Valley. In addition, adequate maintenance of forest roads is vital for forest users such as recreationists, hunters, fishermen, people who collect special forest products, and for forest management activities.



Replacing the planks on the Big Creek bridge will improve access for forest users.

The Gifford Pinchot National Forest has over 4,000 miles of Roads on just 1.37 million acres and a \$50+ million dollar backlog that grows each year—demonstrating the importance for adequate funding for road maintenance and decommissioning work.



Pinchot Partner member, Emily Platt, walking a possible road to decommission to reduce maintenance costs and impacts to water quality and fish habitat.

The *Cowlitz Valley Road Maintenance and Improvement Project* aims to maintain and improve our existing forest service road infrastructure, which will have a long-term benefit for the communities of Lewis County and the GPNF. Specifically, the Project goals are to:

- 1) Provide improved access for forest users and forest monitoring and management activities;
- 2) Better position the Cowlitz Valley Ranger District to compete for dollars coming from Congress;
- 3) Reduce impacts to water quality, aquatic habitat, and threatened, endangered, and sensitive aquatic species caused by landslides, gullying, seasonal and permanent impassible culvert barriers, and surface erosion associated with unneeded roads;
- 4) Reduce road maintenance costs by removing unneeded roads.

The Pinchot Partners received over \$150,000 for our *Cowlitz Valley Road Maintenance and Improvement Project* from the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-393) Title II funding. This project aims to improve access on Forest Road 84 by replacing the decking. In addition, the project will work to prepare contracts for 22 miles of road removal identified in the Pinchot Partners Plantation Restoration Project, which will ready projects so additional funding for implementation can be leveraged. The project will also reduce maintenance costs and restore hydrologic function by implementing one high priority road project identified for removal in the Pinchot Partners Plantation Restoration Project.

The Pinchot Partners carefully selected the 22 miles of road for removal based on access needs and road impacts. High aquatic impact roads have been designated as such by the Forest Service. These roads are not needed for access for timber harvest or fire control and do not access developed recreation sites. Fish populations are affected by sediment and toxins that enter into creeks from road dust and water through roadside ditches, culverts, and bridge crossings. Sediment impacts are one of the largest limiting factors to fish recovery in the area. Some species of wildlife (e.g., Elk, Wolverines and Bear) are particularly sensitive to roads and generally use areas with very low road densities. Very selective removal of specific roads to increase habitat with low road density can have extremely beneficial impacts on these wildlife populations.

Plantation Project Update

The Pinchot Partners Restoration Plan Environmental Assessment was released in the beginning of September. We had an Open House that took place on September 10, 2009 and about 20 people from the Forest Service, Pinchot Partners and the public attended. The public was able to view maps, copies of the EA and ask questions to Forest Service officials and Pinchot Partner members.

The Plantation Restoration project will thin and restore 1,540 acres of plantations on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest (GPNF) outside of Packwood, (Washington). The Pinchot Partners completed the EA for the Plantation Restoration Project themselves, which is unusual in that the job is generally completed by the Forest Service. The EA was prepared to assess the potential effects of restoration-based commercial thinning and restoration work that will take place on the GPNF.

The restoration work for this project will include thinning, snag and down wood creation, road maintenance and removal, aquatic restoration and invasive weed treatment. The project will offer a series of stewardship contracts that combine thinning works with other restoration projects such as road decommissioning of high impact roads and culvert replacements to project and maintain important access routes as well as a fish habitat.

Stand Exam Project

Our successful Stand Exam Project is winding down. The 2007 and 2008 field seasons saw the bulk of the stand exam work completed, with 2009 serving as a wrapping-up of a final few exams and the compilation of a project report to be delivered to the Cowlitz Valley Ranger District. The district will use the report to plan when and where future commercial thinning harvest will occur.

The project targeted young, managed stands (age 25-60) for inventory, but also included a few older, natural stands (age 60-100). Over the three field seasons we inventoried a total of 655 managed stands and 17 natural stands across 38 sixth-field watersheds for a total of 31,253 acres examined. This work identified at least 13,551 acres that would be available for commercial thinning over the next five years, with several thousand additional acres available in the fifteen years beyond that.

The bulk of the exams were performed by Ron Pfeifer and Garry Wassenaar. This summer Garry trained and used the talents of a Mossyrock high school student Jordan Bowman to help him with his exams. Jeremy Grose also completed a small portion of the exams. The inventory work in the natural stands was done by WSU silviculture professor Mark Swanson.



The Pinchot Partners hosted an open house to receive public feedback on their Restoration Plan.

Jordan Bowman said "I learned a lot this summer not just about on the job tools but also a lot about nature and the different species of trees and shrubs. It really helped me out on a career choice too, I have decided I might want to look into forestry as a career."



Jordan Bowman examining trees this summer working with Garry Wassenaar.

**Pinchot Partners
Contact Information**

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The Pinchot Partners are a non-profit organization and rely on funding from grants and donors. Please feel free to contribute to the Pinchot Partners by mailing a donation to P.O. Box 442, Morton, WA 98356. Your contribution, whether \$50 or \$500, will make our work for healthy forests and vibrant communities possible.

Over the last nine months we were able to hire a collaborative coordinator, Catie Werner, who lives in the Cowlitz Valley to organize meetings, field tours, and fundraise for general support and on the ground projects.

Thank you Catie for all your great work!

Huckleberry Enhancement

The Pinchot Partners and the Cowlitz Indian Tribe submitted a proposal to the Forest Service for a joint project of huckleberry restoration enhancement within the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. In addition, we also requested to work with the Forest Service on research and monitoring of the overall knowledge of huckleberries and other special forest products within the Forest. The Forest Service may have money available through the Special Forest Products funds. If funded the huckleberry enhancement project will take place in the Burley Mountain Area.

The project will try and actively manage the Burley Mountain Huckleberry Area by exploring prescribed fire and/or other mechanical treatment options. We intend to reduce the tree density to the optimum level for huckleberry re-colonization or allowing suppressed plants to grow and reach their best possible production levels while maintaining the integrity and diversity of the Forest's ecosystem.



Butch Ogden, Red Rogers, and Taylor Aalvik discuss huckleberry enhancement projects in the Burley Mountain area.

Huckleberries are very significant as traditional food resources to the Cowlitz Indian Tribe. It has been harvested in many parts of the GPNF since time immemorial. The Pinchot Partners and the Cowlitz Indian Tribe are eager to work with the Forest Service on the protection, restoration, and enhancement of culturally significant resources.

Forestry Grant

The Pinchot Partners are working in collaboration with the Pacific Mountain Workforce Consortium, Centralia College East and Worksource Lewis County on the project Reestablishing Rural Communities: Working on Common Ground. This project will allow us to send at least 20 East Lewis County residents back to school to receive an Associate's Degree as a Forestry Technician. This project will provide new approaches to training that meet the skill needs of the forestry industry. The implementation of this training will result in renewed economic opportunity for the residents of rural Lewis County.

The Fall Quarter at Centralia College East started on September 21st and 10 students have signed up for the Forestry Technician program. The forestry classes are being taken via teleconference with Grays Harbor College. If you know of anyone interested in this program have them contact Centralia College East to ask about signing up for the Winter Quarter.



Some of the new forestry students from left to right: Derek Astrop, Jaycee Jerome, Fred Walther, Jeff King, Levi Weiher, and Jake Weiher.