MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

"UW graduates bring these strengths to their work: the benefits of a broad-based education, teamwork and problem-solving skills grounded in hands-on learning, and cutting-edge technical knowledge and skills that come from studying at a major research university with faculty members at the frontiers of discovery."

These words from a recent UW report, Fueling our State’s Economic Future, precisely identify our College’s strengths and future direction. Providing knowledge and leadership for sustainable management of natural resources and the environment is a formidable challenge. We have taken steps to better meet this challenge. Our newly approved Environmental Science and Resource Management undergraduate curriculum, integrating six former programs, will provide a flexible course of study for those interested in science and management and provides the foundation for graduate study in professional or learned areas. Our restructured Paper Science and Engineering undergraduate curriculum will provide students with training, tools, and experience for success in the pulp, paper, and allied professions. Our College organization has moved from two academic divisions to a single faculty headed by a chair and vice-chair.

Recognition that a focus on sustainability requires better integration of ecological, economic, and social sciences, as well as closer connections among faculty, staff, and students, was an important impetus for these changes. The new programs and organization support the strengths identified by the UW report.

Key to these strengths is the excellence of our graduate and research programs. Since 1974, the UW has led the nation’s public universities in federal research awards. As an important part of this great enterprise, our College has long been recognized as a leader in forestry research. We must think now about new ways to enhance this historic strength. How faculty are inspired and inspire others to do innovative research keeps us on the cutting edge — poised to contribute to tomorrow’s solutions. We must seek faculty who can create new knowledge through collaborative, innovative research, while contributing to professional needs at both undergraduate and graduate levels. This means that we must change how we define future faculty positions and responsibilities.

In 1997, we hired two faculty members, John Marzluff and Clare Ryan. They soon began collaborating with faculty from the College and across campus and, after several years of rewriting funding proposals, were awarded a prestigious $2.7 million NSF Integrative Graduate Education Training Research (IGERT) award in urban ecology. The program has grown and continues to attract funding and students, generating enthusiasm and a profound respect for the challenges of interdisciplinary teaching, learning, and research. Marzluff and Ryan also cover our professional needs in wildlife ecology. The program has attracted funding in urban ecology and across campus and, after several years of rewriting funding proposals, was awarded a prestigious $2.7 million NSF Integrative Graduate Education Training Research (IGERT) award in urban ecology.

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON College of Forest Resources

Wildfire in the West: Topic of upcoming Denman Forestry Issues Series

A combination of past logging practices, tree planting, decades of fire suppression, and reductions in timber harvest has resulted in dense stands of small-diameter trees in many areas of the inland west. Overstocked, drought stressed, and prone to insect infestation, some of these forests are crowded with as many as 3,000 trees per acre, putting them at high risk for wildfires of high severity, uncommon for historic forests in this region.

Historically, fire was an important disturbance process in western forest ecosystems, sustaining healthy forests through its effects on wildlife habitat, species composition, nutrient cycling, and other attributes of ecosystem structure and function. Because natural fire regimes have been altered, uncharacteristically intense, large fires now occur with increasing frequency. In response, active fire management currently includes such strategies as allowing some fires to burn, prescribed burning, and thinning to reduce fuel loads. How these uncharacteristically intense fires alter the landscape — affecting wildlife habitat and understory plants, degrading watersheds, risking human health and economic values in nearby communities — and threaten overall ecological functioning in these stands is being studied from a variety of perspectives by College researchers.

Professor Jim Agee has studied historical fire regimes in the inland west to understand how an ecosystem-based approach of active fire management can help change potential fire behavior and effects. Students in his fire ecology lab are comparing the effects of spring and fall prescribed fire on the resistance of ponderosa pine to bark beetle attack and participating in a national network of research sites evaluating the effects of thinning and fire on ecosystem processes, among other projects.

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The College's newly approved undergraduate curriculum, Environmental Science from the Pacific Ocean to the interior of Washington, from tidelands to alpine social sciences. The courses feature the world-class outdoor laboratory available to real-world problems integrating knowledge areas of physical, biological, and natural inquiry. ESRM is anchored by a junior-level core sequence that emphasizes learning in the Pacific Northwest as a learning environment for problem-based interdisciplinary study.

Researchers in the College's Rural Technology Initiative are offering landowners and policy makers a new software package to help determine the economic feasibility of thinning small-diameter trees to reduce the risk of catastrophic fires and disease outbreaks. On Washington's Okanogan National Forest and Oregon's Fremont National Forest, where some of the region's worst fires have occurred in recent years, the most effective treatment tested used the software preserved ponderosa pine and western larch, while taking the smallest trees of other species until a targeted density was achieved. This approach typically left between 40 and 100 of the largest trees per acre and rarely removed trees larger than 12 inches in diameter. Unfortunately, markets are weak or nonexistent for the small-diameter trees removed under this scenario — the smallest diameter logs, for instance, can't be used for lumber. The software helps weigh the economics of thinning in such cases to develop cost-effective approaches.

Wildfire in the West continued

The College’s Fire and Mountain Ecology Lab, led by Professor Dave Peterson, conducts a wide range of fire science and fire ecology research in national forests, national parks, and beyond in cooperation with the USDA PNW Station’s Pacific Fire and Environmental Research Applications Team. Peterson and his students are studying the fire history of eastern Washington and the Cascade Range, the effects of forest thinning on fire hazard, the interaction of fire and climate in western North America, and the effects of large wildfires on tree mortality.

Researchers in the College’s Rural Technology Initiative are offering landowners and policy makers a new software package to help determine the economic feasibility of thinning small-diameter trees to reduce the risk of catastrophic fires and disease outbreaks. On Washington’s Okanogan National Forest and Oregon’s Fremont National Forest, where some of the region’s worst fires have occurred in recent years, the most effective treatment tested used the software preserved ponderosa pine and western larch, while taking the smallest trees of other species until a targeted density was achieved. This approach typically left between 40 and 100 of the largest trees per acre and rarely removed trees larger than 12 inches in diameter. Unfortunately, markets are weak or nonexistent for the small-diameter trees removed under this scenario — the smallest diameter logs, for instance, can’t be used for lumber. The software helps weigh the economics of thinning in such cases to develop cost-effective approaches.

New Core Courses Emphasize Real-World Problems

The College’s newly approved undergraduate curriculum, Environmental Science and Resource Management (ESRM) uses the array of biological-social interactions in the Pacific Northwest as a learning environment for problem-based interdisciplinary study. ESRM is anchored by a junior-level core sequence that emphasizes real-world problems integrating knowledge areas of physical, biological, and social sciences. The courses feature the world-class outdoor laboratory available from the Pacific Ocean to the interior of Washington, from tidelands to alpine landscapes, and from dense urban environments to rock and ice. They present broad, synthetic physical, biological, social, and economic principles that govern management, stewardship, and restoration of biological systems. The collaborative learning teaching method enables students to become problem solvers and increases awareness of opportunities in environmental and natural resource management.

Two of the core courses — ESRM 303, “Preserving and Conserving Wildlands,” and ESRM 304, “Environmental Resource Assessment: Measuring and Monitoring,” were taught for the first time in Autumn 2003.

ESRM 303 develops three broad and interlinking perspectives about wildlands: the continuum from wild to intensively managed or impacted; the importance of scales, such as space and time, and assessing conditions and change in systems along the continuum. Learning modules combine traditional lectures and discussions with a collaborative learning studio format. Field trips and a final project provide the context for learning, integrated around a hypothetical case study in which student teams develop a detailed description of a wildland resource and respond to a threat to this resource from multiple stakeholders’ points of view. Professor Tom Hinckley reports that a highlight of the Autumn's 2003 course was a field trip to the Yakama Nation in which students learned about cultural differences and culturally unique approaches to natural resource management, including fire as a management tool. The students also had an opportunity to learn about job opportunities in environmental and natural resource management from two of the Nation’s natural resource managers, both CFR alumni.

ESRM 304 exposes students to the scientific method, hypothesis testing processes for developing research questions, and field and lab measurement procedures from a diverse set of disciplines. The course develops familiarity with methods that researchers use to produce relevant, unbiased information; provides basic field skills from each of several scientific-discipline areas; considers how the basic computational procedures of introductory statistics support scientific research; provides, through a case study, the context in which natural resource issues commonly require an interdisciplinary research approach; and develops experience in professional communication skills through technical writing and oral presentation. The focus during the Autumn 2003 course was an integrated case study of forest land use in nearby Lee Forest, which is managed for research purposes by the College.
New Denman Endowed Professorship

Dick and Mary Ellen Denman, longtime supporters of the College, have generously created the Denman Endowed Professorship in Sustainable Resource Sciences. This gift will help the College attract and keep distinguished faculty involved in the research and teaching of sustainable resource sciences. The endowed position joins previous Denman endowments supporting the College — the Denman Professorship in Paper Science and Engineering, the Denman Endowment for Student Excellence in Forest Resources, and the Anson Moody Endowed Scholarship in Pulp and Paper Sciences, through the Washington Pulp and Paper Foundation.

Merrill Hall Groundbreaking

A groundbreaking ceremony on October 1st at the Center for Urban Horticulture (CUH) marked the start of construction to replace Merrill Hall, destroyed in an arson fire bombing in May 2001. Dean Bruce Bare reaffirmed that “It is a testament to the will and desire of thousands of people and organizations — who gave their time, energy, and financial resources — that this warrant act was not allowed to stand.”

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Update on Faculty Searches

Searches for two tenured full professor positions are underway in the College with successful completion of the searches expected during this academic year. Professor Gordon Bradley is chairing a committee to fill the position of Director of the Center for Urban Horticulture and Washington Park Arboretum. This position also carries the title of Orris and Alonna Swetz Chair for Urban Horticulture. The position is being widely advertised nationally and internationally. Committee membership includes UW faculty, students, and staff and representatives from the Arboretum Foundation, Northwest Horticultural Society, Seattle City Parks, WU Extension, and the green industry. The committee expects to interview finalists for the position in March.

Professor Dave Briggs is chairing a committee to fill the position of Director of the Precision Forestry Cooperation (PFC), a component of the state-funded Advanced Technology Initiative. Committee members include faculty from the College, the Departments of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Earth and Space Sciences, and representatives from the PFC Executive Advisory Board. This faculty member will hold the Carken Family Endowed Chair in Forest Resources, as well as a joint faculty appointment with another UW academic unit, depending on disciplinary background.

A search to fill the position of Director of the Center for International Trade in Forest Products (CINTRAFOR), currently held by Research Professor Paul Boardman, will be underway in January. The College is in need of someone with specific experience and qualifications.

CFR-UWAA Cosponsor Lecture Series

February 12, 2004
A Fork in the Road: The Challenges of Forest Stewardship in the 21st Century
JERRY FRAKING, PROFESSOR OF ECOLOGY SCIENCE
February 26, 2004
Still Battles After All These Years? Contemplating the Future of Rights in the Managed Forests of the Pacific Northwest
STEPHEN WEST, ASSOCIATE DEAN AND PROFESSOR OF WILDLIFE ECOLOGY
March 11, 2004
Are Cities for the Birds? Balancing Our Needs and Desires with Ecological Function in Urbanizing Regions
JOHN MARLIFE, PROFESSOR OF WILDLIFE SCIENCE
To register, or for more information, call 206-540-5450 or go to uwalumni.com.

Alumni Focus

Alumni Day Fair 2004 needs your help — May 5-7, 2004
The Alumni Day Fair is a wildly successful event conceived by the College of Forest Resources Alumni Association (CFR-UWAA) and jointly sponsored by the College and CFRAA brings over 2,000 elementary school children to the College each year. Alumni involvement, enthusiasm, and support are essential to its existence.

Volunteers are needed to assist at the learning stations, where children experience many aspects of forestry and related sciences. Demonstrations and hands-on activities provide an introduction to nature, wildlife, forest soils, related sciences. Demonstrations and hands-on activities provide an introduction to nature, wildlife, forest soils, forest products, and forestry careers. Faculty, staff, students, and alumni provide leadership and training to assure that all participants are rewarded by an educational experience.

Alumni Day Fair is an opportunity to participate in a unique outreach program while getting acquainted with fellow alumni and College faculty, staff, and students.

Volunteers are needed each of the three days from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Morning coffee and pastries are provided to all volunteers. The CFRAA appreciates any support you can provide, and especially thanks those who have been so generous with their time in the past.

Please sign up with coordinator, Brie Goeppner by phone (206-526-5501), by mail (Box 352100, Seattle, WA 98195-2100), or by email (alumday@uw.edu). Be sure to include the day (s) you can volunteer.

CFRUA President’s Report

Professor Emeritus Dale Cole (’53) reports on College of Forest Resources Alumni Association (CFRUA) events: “This past year was a successful and eventful period for the CFRAA. In addition to the 2003 Arbor Day Fair, we had a highly successful annual meeting and banquet in November. Nearly 100 alumni and guests attended the banquet. Many also attended the annual business meeting and the College’s Research Showcase on Urban Ecology, presented by Professor John Marzluff and graduate students in the program. At the annual banquet, Colleen Points (’81), CFRA past president and founder of Arbor Day Fair, and the late Robert McCauley (’35) received Honored Alumni awards. Distinguished Achievement awards went to James E. Brown (’62) and William D. Hagenstein (’38). Bill Hagenstein is the first alumnus to receive both the Honored Alumni and Distinguished Achievement awards. Brian Bayne, former Washington State Land Commissioner and currently a College staff member and Chair of the College’s Visiting Committee, was named Honorary Alumnus. Dean Bruce Bare reported on the status of the College, highlighting the many changes in organization, curriculum, and staffing that have occurred during the past year, as well as challenges facing the College in the coming year. Banquet speaker John and Amy Chai presented a program on “Hiking the Magnificent Mountains of Europe,” featuring excellent slides and an informative commentary.

A special tribute prior to the banquet honored the late Professor Emeritus David R. M. Scott. M. Scott Mrs. Carolyn Scott and their son David joined in the program. Dean Bare, Professor Tom Hindley, and a sister and colleague, Jim Lowery (’74) and Bill Oink (’74) spoke about Scott’s significant impacts on the graduate and undergraduate students of the College, as well as the College’s regional and international impact. They also gave a slide presentation.

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Study of Japanese House Construction Provides International Research Experience

The College’s Center for International Trade in Forest Products (CINTRAFOR) recently completed a technical analysis of the traditional post and beam construction system used to build houses in Japan. A component of the Center's research on the use of wood in the Japanese residential construction industry, the project has involved extensive research in Japan conducted by Associate Professor Ivan Eastin and Center Director Professor Paul Boardman over a period of several years. Key to the project's success was the involvement of: then-doctoral student Joe Roos, who graduated from the College’s business, economics, and quantitative methods PhD program last year.

Roos was recruited into the graduate program based on his experience in exporting wooden building materials to Japan, his strong understanding of the Japanese business environment, and his fluency in Japanese. As a key member of the research team, he was involved in many meetings with Japanese post and beam contractors and officials of Japanese industry associations. Roos also visited Japanese construction sites to help interview carpenters and study and document the post and beam construction technology firsthand. As the recipient of a prestigious Fulbright Fellowship to Japan, he further contributed to the success of the project by conducting independent research on the Japanese construction industry during his year-long fellowship. The results of this research formed the basis of his doctoral dissertation, providing unique insights into how Japanese construction professionals evaluate and select building materials and the factors that influence their purchase decisions. CINTRAFOR’s Japan research program has been further supported by the participation of several Japanese graduate students who received graduate research assistantships from CINTRAFOR.

CINTRAFOR’s post and beam research in Japan is supported by funding from a wide variety of sources — federal and state agencies as well as the forest products industry, including private companies and industry associations. The program’s objectives are focused on developing a better understanding of the Japanese market for wood products, including the impact of regulatory constraints and non-tariff barriers on the competitiveness of the U.S. forest products industry. The next step will be a series of focus groups involving post and beam construction professionals to evaluate the potential for a branded Douglas-fir structural lumber product for use in the Japanese post and beam construction industry.

Upcoming Events Calendar

February 6
“The Science of Watersheds,” CWS 2004 Annual Review of Research, UW campus

February 12

February 20
“Aren’t Bats all the same? Contemplating the Future of Bats in the Managed Forests of the Pacific Northwest,” in Lecture Series: Sustaining our Northwest World: When Humans and Nature Collide, UW campus

March 8
“Wildfire in the West,” Denison Forestry Issues Series, UW campus

Northwest Horticultural Society Lecture Series at RHS Hall, CAIN January 11
“The Garden as Art”
February 25
“The Art of Planting Design”
March 2
“Shade Gardening with New Perennials”
Call 206-527-1794 for more details. Lectures start at 7:15 p.m.

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