

## **Forest Log Interview with Charlie Stone**

### **By Jeri Chase, ODF Public Affairs Specialist**

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**Forest Log [FL]:** *Are you all set to retire?*

**Charlie Stone [CS]:** Well, not really retire, just sort of retire – hopefully going to work on a part-time basis for awhile.

**FL:** *How many years total?*

**CS:** In the department? It's been 30 years and a month since I first started as a trainee in Astoria. Altogether it's been 29 years and 4 months of working. I was in Astoria as a trainee for three months and then I went back to finish school. Then I started in June 1977 as a seasonal technician from June to October 1977, was a temporary employee for a very brief period, and started permanent at the end of November 1977.

**FL:** *You were going to the University of Massachusetts. How did you find your way to the Oregon Department of Forestry?*

**CS:** By chance and semi-designed adventure. All forestry schools in the United States had a program with the US Forest Service where they allotted seasonal positions for students after their junior year and the University of Massachusetts had eight or ten of them. The standard process over the years there had been that the highest ranking students in the program (based on their GPA) that wanted to work for the Forest Service were given those positions. For whatever reason, that year the faculty had postponed and delayed, and hadn't done anything. Finally the Forest Service called and told the university that they didn't have names from them yet and wanted to know what was going on. So, the university put all of our names in a hat and drew lots. I didn't get one, even though I was the third ranking student in the program.

Since, I had thought I was going to be working for the Forest Service that summer, but it didn't work that way, I went on an adventure. I took three riders who to the west coast—two guys that were going to ride their bicycles back across the country in the bicentennial summer and a girl who did get one of the Forest Service slots and was going to be working in Nevada. I dropped her off in Portland with friends and I dropped the two bicyclists off in a Gearhart motel out on the coast so they could start their bike ride back across the country.

Then I went up to see an uncle in Seattle and I went to the national park and national forest offices in Seattle looking for work, then came back down to Portland and looked

for work there. After that, I went to visit some friends from back east that were going to OSU, a high school classmate and her soon-to-be husband. He grew up here in Salem and told me that he was going to Salem the next day to check on his summer job and look for an apartment, and invited me to come with him since there was a forestry office there.

So I came here and spoke to Sylvia Coomler who was the receptionist at the front desk for years and years. I asked her about forestry jobs and she kind-of snickered—but, really, she was very polite. She told me that they took applications for summer jobs back in February and made all the decisions in March, and that college students had to apply at that time. Not willing to take no for an answer, I asked what happened if someone got hurt during the season or they had a no-show or something like that. It was almost like I had stumped her and she hadn't faced that before. She looked down at the telephone and said that the personnel director was on the phone, but if I wanted to have a seat and wait, I could go talk with him. A few minutes later I went up and visited with Bill Sager.

That very morning, Mike DeLaune had got a job as a technician down in Coos Bay and so he wasn't going to need his trainee slot up in Astoria after all. Sager said, "Tell you what, instead of us going to the list . . . ." We had gone over my "resume" and coursework. He said, "You seem qualified, can you go up to Astoria and interview on Friday?" So I said "sure," and he called Chet Reed, the District Forester in Astoria, and told him he had a college student here that seemed qualified and he could interview him on Friday and decide whether he wanted him or not. Chet said okay, so on Friday I interviewed with Chet Reed, Tom Scoggins, and Bill Lecture, and on Monday I started work. I spent the summer there and then went back to Massachusetts and finished my senior year.

In January or February I wrote Bill Lecture a letter asking how to apply for a permanent job. I would be graduating in May and there were not a whole lot of jobs available in New England, so I asked him to tell me what to do. He wrote back and sent applications and information, but what I didn't know at the time was that he wrote a letter to Bill Sager saying, "Hire this guy and if there are not any jobs available, I want him back again as a trainee."

Sager eventually wrote a letter saying that he had heard from Bill, but because I was graduating I couldn't have a trainee slot. He said there would be Forester 1 openings during the

summer but I would need to be out here to interview if I was going to get one of those. So I didn't give it much chance that I would be able to do that.

I had successfully competed for a job in upstate New York to cruise timber on a 12,000-acre hardwood forest up near Lake Ticonderoga. On graduation day, Bill Sager called my parents and told them to have me call him on Monday morning. When I did that he said that he had two 'Firesafe' technician jobs out here that would allow me to be here when the interview time came up. One was in fire protection in Medford and the other was in forest practices in Coos Bay, and he wanted to know which one I wanted. I said that I would take the Coos Bay job, called New York to say that I got a better offer, headed out and have been here ever since.

**FL:** *So you went to school for forestry at the University of Massachusetts?*

**CS:** Yes. It dealt more with northeastern forest conditions and a lot of multi-species hardwood management. I can't remember an engineering course in the curriculum. You could have gone to civil engineering, but there wasn't significant road-building, harvesting, or engineering in the curriculum. So I was always a little behind on that type of thing, but strong on management, economics, and policy.

**FL:** *When you were going to school there did you always think you would have to come west to get a job?*

**CS:** No, I didn't really know for sure. I wasn't all that worried about it at the time. When I did come out here my thought was that I would probably be out here for three to five years and get enough experience that I would then be able to get a job back east.

About ten percent of graduates in the northeastern forestry schools were getting actual forestry work at that time. Out here about 50 percent of graduates were getting hired out of OSU and UW, so the opportunities were quite a bit greater here.

Until I moved from Gold Beach to Salem in 1980 and started working here on staff, and got married to Karen and everything, my plan had always been to go back east and be close to my family. Once I married a native and got to really enjoy the staff work, I figured I'd better retire here before making any drastic changes.

**FL:** *Your first job here, then, after you graduated from college was under the Firesafe Program?*

**CS:** Yes. Mine, specifically, along with Joe Misek, was as an assistant to the Forest Practices Officers in Coos Bay. We were

doing industrial fire prevention inspections and reforestation inspections. They quickly ran me through Forest Law 1, 2, and 3, and on-the-job training.

Not long after I started, there was a fellow back in those days—who has long since left the department—who was the Forest Practices Officer for the southern half of the Weyerhaeuser Millicoma tree farm, which they called the 'Dellwood side', and he was out for six weeks on a combination of vacation and sick leave, so basically I took over his area for six weeks.

When that was over I went back to doing reforestation checks for a couple of more weeks and then the Forest Practices Officer down in Gold Beach had kidney failure while he was away on National Guard duty. Ken Ockfen was in a similar position as mine in Gold Beach, and got a permanent job in Veneta about the time that the Gold Beach Forest Practices Officer found out that he only had one kidney. So they sent me down to Gold Beach.

I was still living in Coos Bay, but I would spend the week in a motel in Gold Beach and go back to Coos Bay on the weekend. That started about the middle of August and they were doing that with me until October when the Firesafe appointment ran out. They terminated me at the end of October and rehired me as a Forester 1 on the first of November on a temporary basis to continue to work the Forest Practices Officer job in Gold Beach. Four weeks later, they finally determined that the permanent Forest Practices Officer couldn't come back to work until he had a kidney transplant and that could take many months so they hired me permanent with the understanding that if he returned I would have to be laid off or moved to whatever other position was available.

It was more than a year before he had his transplant and got well enough to work. He didn't want to go back to Gold Beach, so he took a job in Veneta. He was there for about six months and then he resigned from the department and went down to California. I was "under-filling" because the job was a Forester 2 position since it was an outpost type job. Ron Fox was my supervisor up in Coos Bay, 80 miles away, and the Forest Practices Officer position in Gold Beach acted as a service forester for the south half of Curry County and land use planning coordinator for Curry County, so I was doing all that stuff down there, too. Finally, Stan Medema, who was the personnel director then, told Tom Lane (SOA Area Director) that he couldn't keep under-filling forever; he either had to move me out or reclassify me to a Forester 2, so they reclassified me on July 1, 1979.

**FL:** *Still in Gold Beach?*

**CS:** Still in Gold Beach. Soon after that, Rick

Gibson left the Forest Practices Staff Forester position in Salem to be Columbia City Unit Forester, opening up the staff specialist job in Salem. Nobody but me applied for it. There were only five and a half FTE in Forest Practices staff then.

That was probably the toughest job interview I ever had. Neil Skill, Leo Wilson, Dick Hamilton, Ron Fox, and Everett Hunt were on the interview board and they grilled me for about an hour and a half because they wanted to make sure that they didn't just pick me because I was the only one who applied; they wanted to make sure that I could do the job. Plus, I was still only 24 years old and had been out in the field only two and a half years. Finally they decided to take a chance on me and in March of 1980 I came into Salem.

**FL:** *So, you were always interested in forest practices work?*

**CS:** Well, I thought I was a pretty good Forest Practices Officer. I had a good rapport with the operators. I knew the law, and I really enjoyed solving problems in terms of how does the law apply and how do the rules apply in specific situations.

Like I said before, I wasn't a strong on-the-ground forester from a harvesting, road building standpoint, and that might have caught up with me over time working out on the ground. I don't know, maybe I would have learned the stuff.

Back in those days—I worked in the very early years of the program—a lot of the Forest Practices Officers were converted fire technicians and such. There was a lot of OSU-sponsored short-course training in soils, harvest, road-building, reforestation, etc., and I went to all of those while I was working at Gold Beach.

I had struck up a rapport with Rick in the job and thought that his would be a neat job. I was still single back then and a big part of the job was traveling all around the state to work with all the Forest Practices Officers to solve problems and provide guidance. I was intrigued by it. I was telling folks when I went to Salem that I was sentenced to three to five at the big house and when I was done serving my time I would be back out in the field again, but once I got in here and started doing the policy work, I really liked that.

I found that even in the short time I was doing the Forest Practices Officer job (two and a half, three years) it was a cycle—different things at different times of the year, but basically when you went through the cycle you were back doing the same things every year at those times. New operations of course, and sometimes new op-

erators, but it quickly got pretty routine for me.

When I came to Salem the landscape was always changing. There were always new issues and things to solve and that type of stuff, and I figured out that I really liked policy work and that kind of environment. I've been doing it ever since; several different jobs, but always on the headquarters staff.

At that time, there was a Forest Practices director, an assistant director, a training coordinator, staff specialist, a half-time soils scientist, and a full-time clerk. Then, in 1982, when we had General Fund shortfalls and a real crunch, it got pared back to just the program director and me. The training coordinator was laid off and transferred and we lost the soils scientist, assistant director, and clerk positions. So there was just Jim Brown as the program director and me as the staff assistant for probably a year and a half until the next budget cycle came around and we were able to start building back up again.

So, we started to build the program back up a little bit. Then in the mid-80s, Leo Wilson was the program director. There was a whole series of things going on, but a lot of it stemmed from land use planning controversy over some counties wanting to regulate forestry and the state law prohibiting that. Also, all agencies had to submit a coordination plan demonstrating conformance to the local land use plans and compliance with the land use planning goals for all the programs that affect land use. LCDC scheduled the agencies over time to get their plans approved and Forestry was number one in the queue. We battled over that for a couple of years, trying to write a plan that would satisfy LCDC. One of the hitches was the statutory requirement that counties couldn't regulate forest practices.

We were also getting constant pressure from certain groups that led to a petition that the Forest Practices Act wasn't adequately protecting wildlife habitat and riparian areas. Leo worked on a task force on riparian rules and land use planning. Riparian rules were ultimately adopted in the spring of 1987 and immediately the 1000 Friends of Oregon and other groups were saying it was still not adequate.

The legislature was in session in 1987 and Gail Achterman was the new Governor's Natural Resource Assistant. She and Jim Brown, Michael Huston from DOJ, Ward Armstrong from Oregon Forest Industries Council, John Kitzhaber as Senate President then, Ron Cease, and a whole bunch of others began working on concepts for revision of the Forest Practices Act.

They started having hearings and they came up with HB 3396 which totally overhauled the Forest Practices Act. It worked out the land

use planning issues so we didn't have to include forest practices in our coordination plan.

There was also a separate section that required that we approve written plans on certain operations. It required that the Board of Forestry adopt new rules for wildlife protection and considerations from the new state Endangered Species Act were brought into it all. We had to start providing additional protections for the habitats of protected species.

So, there were major changes in the program. And, surprisingly, the legislature actually gave us a budget for some of that, and we were able to create something like seven new positions in the Forest Practices staff—I don't remember the number for sure. A couple of them were manager positions, so ultimately in 1988 I was able to promote into one of those. I had earlier been reclassified as a Forester 3 in 1986 because of the level of work that I was doing in the program and then in 1988 I became Forest Practices Operations Manager as a Forester 4 or Forester D.

The other part of HB 3396, and maybe one of my greatest accomplishments in the agency, was the civil penalty authority for the Forest Practices Act. It started out as a separate bill that we had written. Late in the session, it was still languishing in one of the committees, so it got "stuffed" into HB 3396. I wrote the original bill and then eventually, working closely with Melinda Bruce, wrote the set of rules for civil penalties and was the first civil penalty administrator for almost three years.

Before that, Forest Practices violations were strictly criminal violations and we either wrote citations to appear or not to appear. We could write warning citations and not haul them into court, or if it was more serious or repeated, we had to actually prosecute them in court as misdemeanors. Of course, one of the big problems was that most of the District Attorneys' budgets were such that they didn't want to mess around with those types of crimes. In fact, Clatsop County's District Attorney flat out said that he would not prosecute Forest Practice violations, that he had no budget or time. That was a good part of the leverage that allowed us to say that we had to have a different system and ultimately gained us authority for civil penalties.

In the same time period, Scott Hayes, Dave Degenhardt, and I collaborated to write the implementation plan for HB 3396 and all of its pieces. We laid out about a four year timeline to adopt written plan rules, endangered species protection rules, wetland rules, and all that comes with making new rules. I ultimately did most of the rule writ-

ing on the written plans piece and some of the changes to the notification system. Scott did a lot of the site protection rules.

**FL:** *Were the pesticide rules being done at the same time?*

**CS:** Yes, but just one particular part of them. We had always had chemical rules as part of the program and had previously amended them as part of the riparian rules package, changing the buffer strip requirements for herbicide use.

About that same time, we got a new Board of Forestry as part of HB 3396. Even now I hesitate to say it, but we had made a significant mistake in the buffer strip changes. We had increased the buffers to 500 feet along Class 1 streams. Almost immediately, we realized that was unworkable and unnecessary. So, prior to David Morman and adding a monitoring unit to the program, and a lot of other changes to the pesticide rules around 1995, the Oregon Forest Industries Council petitioned the Board of Forestry in 1988 to back off from that rule. The Board of Forestry denied the petition but agreed that they would fix the problem, so I was given the "opportunity" to do all the literature searching and had to write a lengthy paper justifying a different standard, and carried a new proposed rule forward.

The new Board of Forestry had elected to operate nearly exclusively on a consensus basis, but this rule change was one of the few times the Board could not get there. Instead, they passed the rule on a five to two vote. Even today, nearly 18 years later, they probably have only come to a vote three times. The first time was on that new chemical buffer rule. Dick Roy and Pat Straub dissented while the other five board members voted for it and adopted the rule change.

So, there was a lot going on in the late 1980s. In 1990, Janet McClennan took over as the board chair. There had been frustration building that we hadn't gone far enough with some of the site protection measures and there was still dissatisfaction with the riparian protections among other things.

In late 1990, Janet declared that we were going to have a public forum at the World Forestry Center; an all-day event with panels of experts to talk to the board, and then an open microphone for the public to talk about what they didn't like about the Forest Practices Act. That was a marathon. Out of that came a special issue paper that was published in the *Forest Log*, about 70 pages on about 20 different subjects that were brought up during this conference at the World Forestry Center; the issues, the background, and then the board's recommendations.

Keith Mills and I wrote that up and it became the basis for the department's position regard-

ing SB 1125 changes that took place in 1991. The Oregon Forest Industries Council actually wrote the bill, and I worked closely with them to ensure that the concepts would match up well with existing structure of the act and rules and to provide for practical enforceability.

In 1987, Leo Wilson had retired and Ray Craig became the program director. At the end of 1990, Ray got promoted to the Forest Management Division Chief and we're in the middle of doing this huge writing project for the conference and then the legislative session began and we didn't have a Forest Practices Program Director. I was offered the chance to be the interim program director and said no, I had to concentrate on this work and the legislative session. So we brought in Ron Fox to be the interim director. Eventually, in March or April, they held interviews and I had applied and I became the Forest Practices Program Director in April of 1991.

The 1991 session was a split session. The Senate was Democrat and the House was Republican. Dick Springer was the Senate Natural Resources Chair and we were having weekly dual hearings on SB 500—which was his version of how to fix the Forest Practices Act—and SB 1125, which was OFIC's version. John Kitzhaber was still Senate President and we worked on that all through the session and into July, when, finally, they hammered out the compromise version of SB 1125. Senator Springer tabled SB 500 and moved some of that bill into SB 1125. So, the next couple of years we spent implementing SB 1125.

**FL:** *Was that the last major revision to the Forest Practices Act?*

**CS:** Yes and no. It was the last real overhaul of it, but because several of the things that were in the compromise bill didn't prove to be workable, in 1995 we tackled it again with a Board of Forestry-sponsored bill to "tweak" several items that had been in SB 1125.

I wrote that bill and it was another multi-section bill. It passed the Senate and the House, with both bodies then controlled by the Republicans.

John Kitzhaber was Governor by then, and he vetoed the bill because of one element that he didn't like—it was a little too conservative in terms of clamping down on the ability to make rule changes.

The legislature went right back into special session that fall because of the north-south light rail bill failure during the regular session. They re-passed our bill as part of the light rail bill—which ended up with about 25 different subjects in it. That was challenged

in the Supreme Court, which struck it down, so they had to have another special session in February of 1996 and split all those subjects into separate bills. Finally, our changes to the Act got passed during that special session.

That was actually the last "major" set of changes to the program and there were several of them. When they did the snags and downed wood piece in 1991, Senator Kintigh was pretty uncomfortable with that, so he put a four-year sunset on it. We had to go back in and make that permanent. The scenic considerations along highways part of the 1991 bill was too tight and it didn't have any opportunities for waiving the requirements if there was windfall problems or if there were better scenic vistas at long distance and if the trees were along the highway you couldn't see them. That type of thing.

Going back to my time as the field coordinator, there was another subject area I was very much involved in. I was working with the Forest Practices Foresters and Protection Foresters on industrial fire prevention. I was technically working for the Forest Practices Program, but was taking direction from Dick Hamilton and the Fire Prevention Unit, working as a field coordinator in fire, too.

**FL:** *What kind of experiences did you have on fire teams?*

**CS:** Throughout the 1980s I was working my way up in the fire team organization. When I first came to Salem, I worked with the fire cache and the fire cache kitchen, and then I became a Service Chief trainee (under the old large-fire terminology) and was actually a Service Chief starting on one of the teams in 1982-83. But we didn't have any project fires in 1982, 1983, or 1984; none of the teams did, although I was briefly dispatched to the extended attack Threehorn Fire in Douglas County during that period.

The we adopted the Incident Command System in 1985. Our team (Team 1) went out on the first ICS operation fire, the Parrish Creek Fire in the old East Central District. I was a Support Branch Director.

In 1986 I didn't go out with the team when they went over to northeast Oregon. 1986 was a real heavy fire year over in northeast Oregon—brutal. But I didn't get to go with the team because I was scheduled to be in court down in Douglas County in a landslide lawsuit against the department. Landslides were another big thing we were dealing with throughout that time period.

In 1987 I got moved to Team 3. Rick Gibson was the Logistics Chief and I was the Support Branch Director. We had the Calapooya Fire at the beginning of 1987 down in the Linn District, but they didn't use any of the three teams. Kenny Lane was the Unit Forester and

he was Incident Commander on Team 3 so he just pulled his own short team together and he asked me to come down as Logistics Chief on the Calapooya Fire.

Then, of course, all of the teams were out throughout the summer of 1987. First, there was the Bland Mountain Fire out of Douglas in July and, then, at the end of August going into Labor Day weekend, we had all the fires across Oregon, mostly southwest and Douglas District again.

Our team went out. I had to stay home because of HB 3396 and Jim wouldn't let me go because we were heavily involved in writing the implementation plan. The team kept screaming, Tom Lane kept calling for me. Tom was the Deputy State Forester at that time, but he was down in Roseburg and he kept calling Jim and saying, "Let Charlie come down and work with this team," and Jim said, "No, he's got to do HB 3396." Mike Curry had to fill in for me as the Support Branch Director and he was not happy with me for months. It was apparently some pretty tough duty at the Tri-Cities airport (Canyon Mountain Fire).

And then we did the Rock House Creek Fire in October of 1987 in Dallas. Rick went out as the Logistics Chief at the beginning of the fire. This fire started on October 19—which was also the day the stock market crashed, Black Friday. I had actually taken the day off to do some yard work at home and had just gotten all my yard tools out when my phone rang at about 8 or 8:30 in the morning and they said that my fire team was going to Dallas and to report to the Polk County Fairgrounds. So I put my tools away and loaded up my stuff and drove the half hour. It was the only time I ever went to a project fire in the morning. It always seemed like we had to drive all through the night to get there at 4 in the morning or whatever. This time we were able to get there and get everything set up in the daylight.

Then after three or four days Rick had to go and do Navy reserve duty and so I got elevated to Logistics Chief for the remainder of the Rock House Creek Fire which lasted at least 10 days. That was almost unheard of in those days. We've had a lot longer since then, but that was a long time for a fire in 1987.

We had two signature events (for me, anyway) at the Rock House Creek Fire. The first was no fun at all, the second was an interesting, silly little challenge.

The first one was we discovered we had some National Guard folks in camp that had hepatitis so we had to isolate them, do a total sanitation of the fairgrounds and the fire camp, and then try and figure out

whether we were going to have to immunize 1,200 firefighters or what we had to do. Eventually the county health folks got all that figured out—where it came from and who had it, and they were able to isolate it. They didn't make us all get gamma globulin shots and go through all that.

The other one, the fun one, was that I had to figure out how to make shift change without messing up the hours and all that while we went from daylight savings time to standard time. The only time we've ever had to deal with that on a fire that I am aware of. Plus we set up televisions in a part of the camp so the firefighters could watch the World Series during their off-duty time.

*FL: Is that the latest in the year that an actual team has been out?*

**CS:** In the 30 years that I've been with the department that is the latest we had a team out. We've had extended attack fires in the district later than that. In 1976, before I came, they had a fire in Astoria District that was either in November or January. It was about a 500-acre fire. A bit unusual for that time of year.

So, we were home by Halloween, but just barely. Of course, it was getting dark, we were making shift change in the dark basically. The morning shift changes are often in the dark in August and September, but hardly ever the night shift.

In those days it wasn't at all unusual to be up 48, 52, 54 hours the first day of a fire. You would work all day, get a call at 8 at night, drive all night, and then work all the next day before you get to sleep. But, the other fun thing about this one was that on the second night of the Rock House Creek Fire, things were starting to run smoothly, so I would leave camp at about 9 or 10 at night and drive home and sleep in my own bed. Then I would get up at 2 in the morning, shower, and drive back to Rickreall. I would wake up the cook and get things started for 4 a.m. breakfast and shift change. Four hours of sleep in my own bed was better than six hours sleep on the ground or whatever. So every night I went home and slept in my own bed and went back to fire camp at 2:30 or 3 in the morning.

So, that was kind-of fun. Then in 1988-89 I went out with the team to Ward Canyon and to the Canal Fire as Logistics Chief.

In 1991 I became program director and by then Karen's disability (MS) was significant and I had to give up being on fire teams. It just wasn't doable. It was a lot of fun and lots of big challenges for everyone who gets involved with a fire team. To me, the big thing about going to project fires is that you know absolutely what the goal is, you work hard at it for a period of time, you get it done, you've ac-

complished the goal, and then you get to leave it and go back to your regular job. It's so satisfying.

*FL: Especially for the kind-of work that you usually do— policy work, long-term and incremental change over long periods of time. It's a completely different mind set to go out and do something and then it's over, that's it. You don't get to see that a lot with what you do.*

*You became the Forest Practices Program Director then in 1991?*

**CS:** Yes. One of the smartest moves I've ever made, soon after becoming the program director, was slightly re-organizing the staff structure and then hiring Ted Lorensen as Policy Manager. I stole him from Resource Planning. Brought him aboard in late November of 1991, and moved Scott Hayes into my former position as the Operations Manager. We had a fun team! David Mormon, who had also been in Resource Planning, was previously brought in by Ray and essentially designed and organized the monitoring program for Forest Practices. Dave Degenhardt, Mike Schnee, Rosemary Mannix, and Clint Smith were in place as staff specialists. Keith Mills was our geotechnical expert—he came to the program back in 1984.

During the winters of 1981-82 and 1982-83 we had major storms and a bunch of landslides. This spawned a study taskforce and a whole bunch of development in that arena, and one of the key recommendations was that we have on staff a geotechnical engineer. So when the budget became available we hired Keith as the department's first geotechnical engineer.

Eventually, (I don't remember the specific timing) Scott left us for a while to go to Singapore for a few years, and David Mormon got elevated to Operations Manager. Then we hired, first John Runyon, then Liz Dent in monitoring and George Robison as hydrologist and we had Jenny Walsh in monitoring. We had a really, really talented technical staff of folks in the program.

Back in 1988, I had hired Sandy Middleton into the program. She had been the receptionist in Building 1 for about five years and I hired her to be the Civil Penalties Assistant. She's running that function entirely today and has been the constant with it for the past 19 years, another good move. We actually hired Paul Wilson as a Civil Penalties Clerk before he became the Fire Protection Office Manager and then went over to Information Technology.

We just had a great team in Forest Practices for several years. We had a lot of fun working together and things just seemed to flow

for a while. It really came along. I'm proud to say that I held that position longer than anybody in history because it is a burn-out, tough job as program director. I was in there for seven years. I actually thought for awhile that I could do it through to retirement if I needed to. I'm glad I didn't have to.

In 1998, Fred Robinson decided to retire as division chief in the Protection Division and I promoted into that job in June 1998. We had two really quiet fire years in 1997 and 1998, so I got to get my feet on the ground a little bit. In 1999 we had some project fires but it still wasn't a really tough year. And then all hell broke loose in 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003—with 2001 and 2002 being the really bad years. Just constant. We spent tens of millions of dollars fighting fire.

In 2002, the federal air tanker program was grounded for a week or so. They brought it back in 2003 at lower numbers and we were worried about the number of air tankers overall so we made arrangements through the Northwest Compact to bring one down from Alaska that we could control. That was when we first put our foot in the water with ODF managed air tankers. It worked quite well.

The year that we proved that the severity concept could work for us was really in 2003 because, basically, the conditions were actually worse then they were in 2002. In 2002 we burned nearly 100,000 acres on state-protected land. The ERCs and all the numbers that we measure fire severity with were worse in 2003 than in 2002. We also had plenty of fire starts in 2003, but through carefully planned expenditures of severity money, and hiring helicopters and crews and placing them in the right places, we still had four fire team dispatches, but we knocked the acres burned back to 9,000.

In 2004 the federal agencies went out of the air tanker business altogether at the beginning of the season and we had to scramble. They made the announcement in April that they weren't going to have any air tankers. I was determined that, by golly, if they weren't going to do it, we were, and we were going to find a way to do it legally and safely! With Bill Lafferty and Jim Ziobro doing the heavy lifting, we put together an emergency contract and that year we had four of our own air tankers. Now the Forest Service operates 16 air tankers nationwide (down from 45) and we are back to two. We hired on contract from Butler in 2005 and we had two from Butler again this summer.

So those were a big part of my "worries" in the program, and figuring out how to pay for it all. I took a strong interest in working with the Emergency Fire Cost Committee and Tom Lane.

My other big "claim to fame" here were the

budget notes that pushed us into redesigning the funding system for the Emergency Fire Cost Committee. Representative Susan Morgan was the chair and I did much of the staff work for the Budget Note #3 Task Force that eventually wrote HB 2327. I lobbied and worked hard through the legislative session to get it passed. The bill made severity a formal part of the fire program budget, and changed the design of the insurance deductible and the way catastrophic emergency fire seasons are paid for among landowner money, General Funds, and insurance.

I can't take all the credit for the enduring good relationships we have had with the legislature in the fire program, but maintaining that is critical. Most of that body understands these days the importance of funding fire and we have a real good set-up now in terms of when we go down to the Emergency Board or go to the legislature and say, "This is what we need to fight fire." It pretty much is recognized and usually gets through with not much difficulty at all. I'll take a little bit of the credit for that.

Another big improvement occurred during that time period. It was one of my goals, but I definitely have to say we had help, we got pushed into it before I ever got rolling with our own initiative. Basically, Senator Lenn Hannon called Jim Brown and me into his office one day back in the fall of 2000 and said that we needed an aviation program in our fire program (not air tankers) and he was going to make sure we got it. So, we put together a proposal for Emergency Board approval and then we got a fire aviation position hired—Jim Ziobro.

The 2001 fire season was a tough one—we burned 50,000 acres and spent \$19 million. Only to be followed by a worse one in 2002. We now have a really strong fire aviation program and Jim's done a wonderful job. He has a committee throughout the state. We've got people trained out in every district to be able to deal with aviation.

As another initiative, Jim Z. and I went out to every district, every staff unit, the seed orchard – anywhere in the department that uses aviation in any capacity, not just for fire, and went through an interview process with a series of questions, and checking their records to make sure we had a safe aviation operation. Now everybody's got a pretty good strong program. That followed on the death of Craig Mackey and the helicopter crash in the West Lane District.

In 2004 I was asked to step down from the Executive Staff. As an executive, you "serve at the pleasure" of the State Forester, and with a new State Forester, I was "reorganized." I landed in a newly created Fire Protection Project Director position, and

I've been having fun for the last two years doing policy work. I have enjoyed being part of a team with Tim Keith and Bill Lafferty, and still having a hand in running the fire protection program and trying to advance our capabilities there.

At this point, I'm doing a lot of different things. I've been guiding projects, not strictly policy. Rick Gibson's title has been Prevention and Policy Manager, but it's Bill's intent and design to have Rick become Fire Prevention Manager and have the fire policy be a committee-type of an operation between the Assistant State Forester, the Protection From Fire Program Director, and the new position he is intending to create by reclassifying my current position. I'm retiring the first of July and then they'll take that position and run it through a reclassification process and re-open it as a permanent part-time position. I hope to compete for that job and come back on a part-time basis in retirement and continue to work on policy for perhaps a few more years.

*FL: So you hope to come back and work part-time; what else do you hope to do after you officially retire?*

**CS:** Well, I have a lot of projects around the house that have been going undone for a long time. Deferred maintenance, so to speak. Remodeling and a back deck that is falling apart because I took the roof off it several years ago and never put it back on. I've got to catch up on some of those things. My three siblings and I inherited a five-acre piece of property in Massachusetts last August, so I'm hoping over time to spend more time going back there. After I really retire for good, a few years from now, my hope is to spend several months of the year in Massachusetts and the balance here in Oregon.

*FL: Does the property have a house on it?*

**CS:** It does have a house on it but the house needs to be replaced because it has serious issues; many things that make it more practical in the long run to demolish it and build a new house there. I'm hoping to be involved in taking care of that and probably set up a modular home on the same site, using a universal design construction so it's totally accessible. That's a long range plan.

I love to travel on road trips and hope to do more of that. Actually, we're working right now on getting Karen a new power wheelchair. The one she's had for 15 years is not cutting it anymore. She needs to have one that tilts and provides greater comfort when sitting for extended periods. Once we get that and know what we are working with, we hope to buy a van that we'll convert with a lift and then she can drive the power chair right into the passenger location, lock it in, and we'll be much better set to travel, not having to make transfers all the time from the wheelchair to a car

seat and vice versa.

Even though with a part-time job that will be basically 80 hours a month, I hope typically to work the last 80 hours of one month and the first 80 hours of the next month and then have a month off. I would like that so we can do some traveling and that type of thing.

I'm a bad banjo player. I also have a guitar, a mandolin, and a fiddle, and I'm hoping to spend time learning to play those. I hope to become passable on the banjo and at least pick out some tunes on the others. I've got years worth of reading deficit to make up for and yard work and hunting and those kinds of things.

**FL:** *Do you fish?*

**CS:** I don't fish. I have fished in the past. It's just not really ever caught me. I could do it again, but I'm not a fanatic fly fisherman like Ted, and I don't care to go deep sea fishing or salmon and steelhead fishing when it's cold out. My idea of fishing is having a good smooth place alongside the lake to lie down, cast out, and fall asleep.

**FL:** *So, the fish don't bother you.*

**CS:** Rig the pole with a bell on it or something would wake me up and I could reel them in.

**FL:** *What sort of hunting do you like best—is elk hunting your favorite?*

**CS:** Deer and elk. I enjoy a little bit going out for roughed grouse and whatnot but I'm not much of a bird hunter. I won't hunt anything that I won't eat so I don't hunt ducks or geese. Primarily, deer and elk. If I ever see a cougar again I'm going to get it, too. I carry a bear tag and a cougar tag just in case.

**FL:** *So you think you would like after all this time to spend more time back in Massachusetts?*

**CS:** I didn't leave New England because I didn't like it. Unfortunately my parents have both died in the last two and a half years, but I've got two sisters and a brother that are back there and cousins and aunts and uncles and friends. I'm a New England Yankee through and through. My family's been in New England for almost 400 years now. But I love Oregon, too. Physically, geographically—not necessarily politically. Although the politics aren't any better back in Massachusetts; I'm certainly not going back there for the politics. I want to explore back there. I want to explore all over the country.

I also have some notions—although I don't know if Karen supports it—of spending parts of the winter down in Texas. During three or four visits in the last ten years to Texas I've really become enamored with parts of that state. The flow and the pace. I could spend several weeks in the winter down there. I also like traveling through the desert, but the snow birds in Arizona—that's not for me. But I could hide out in San Antonio or Austin off and on.

I love exploring places like that. I could spend all my time just exploring. And when I get the United States more thoroughly explored, I can explore Canada. I kind of want to drive up to the very farthest north, the Northwest Territories. Someday I would like to do that. Just go on a road trip. The only state I've never been in is Alaska. So I'd like to knock that out one of these days.

**FL:** *That's the only state you have never been in?*

**CS:** Yes. Although, my wife and other folks keep telling me I can't count Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, since I was there when I was only six months old and I don't have any recollection of them. So I'll have to go down and do the Gulf Coast once they get recovered from the hurricanes if they don't keep getting slammed. That would probably be a fall or winter trip—I don't want to be down there in the summer.

If you want to entertain me, just stick a map in front of me. Of course, now I have to have a pair of glasses and a bright light, as well. One of the gifts that they gave me at the retirement party was a GPS starter kit and I'm going to get to play with that. My sister, who is due to arrive here for a visit sometime this coming weekend, is bringing a whole set of classroom, like 1960's, set of classroom maps; topographic maps of the United States, the world, Africa, South America that she picked up somewhere. That is going to be interesting thing to see what we do with those. My oldest sister, Susan (not the one that is coming out) is the same way—she just loves to stare at maps. They call her the map lady at work because anytime anybody has a geography question they go to her. If you go over to my office right now in my desk drawer there is a Rand McNally Road Atlas and a DeLorme Gazetteer and several Oregon highway maps.

**FL:** *And, if I didn't find what I wanted there, they'd be out in your truck.*

**CS:** So Susan and I can just get in a rig and start driving and say, "Let's turn here and see where this goes." And then go all day. Like Cliff Liedtke says, "You're not lost as long as you have a tank of gas." I was just back east a couple of weeks ago and we went to see the modular homes they are manufacturing there - Karen, my sister, Sue, and I. I had a general idea of where it was; I had seen it before when

I was flying by on the interstate and saw it off the side of the road. So I was trying to approach it on the surface roads and I had just missed it by a mile in the other direction and so we had to go 10 miles north and turn around and come back around and Karen asked if we were lost and Susan said, "No, we're exploring." So we got to see some neat places that Karen hadn't seen before and Susan didn't remember. We were just out seeing the countryside.

*FL: Other interests?*

**CS:** As the kids were growing up I was involved for ten years as a scout leader, den leader, cub master, assistant scout master Boy Scouts merit badge counselor, and both boys and girls little league. Doing things for the food drive with the department has been one of my favorite charitable contributions. One of the things that I hope to do in retirement eventually as I slow down and maybe later (in my 70s) is to volunteer with the Red Cross. I give blood on a regular schedule typically and I really appreciate the people, the retirees, that run that operation and volunteer, so I'd like to do something like that. Or maybe even get involved in disaster relief efforts since I have the background for it.

Our daughter, Sarah, is in her senior year at the University of Oregon majoring in Public Relations. Our son, Dale, is attending Linn Benton Community College full time and his wife, Kelli, is soon to become a veterinarian at Oregon State University.

*FL: Anything else you would like to say?*

**CS:** Of course. The Forestry Department has just been a really exciting, wonderful adventure. Being a transplant from another part of the country, probably 90 percent of my friends and acquaintances are Forestry Department people or our partners. The culture and climate has changed somewhat over the last 30 years, but I never really supported the idea of trying to maintain that the Forestry Department is itself, a family. Still, it really has been a big part of my family. I married into the department, basically, and it's been a wonderful experience from that standpoint. Not one that I plan to leave behind in any fashion. It's been great that way.