



Summer 2023 | Volume 17, Number 1

Tillamook Forest Center

*Inspiring people to
connect with the
Tillamook State Forest*



Staff

Director

Denise Berkshire

Interpretation, Education, & Volunteer Coordinator

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From Fires to the Future



*Governor Tom McCall renaming the Tillamook Burn to the
Tillamook State Forest on July 18th, 1973.*

This year marks the 50th anniversary of Tom McCall's forest dedication and the 90th anniversary from the first Tillamook burn. These milestones help us reflect on the past and look forward to the future.

1933 - A blaze began that would spread across the Oregon Coast Range returning every six years to curse the forest.

1951 - After four successive fires blackened 355,000 acres known as the "Tillamook Burn," restoration became the focus for many Oregonians. With the guidance of dedicated forest managers and the support of Oregonians near and far, the nation's first large-scale forest restoration project began.

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State Forests Trust of Oregon, Executive Director

Kelly Lau

1973 - Governor Tom McCall commemorated the success of these efforts by designating the region known as “The Tillamook Burn” as the “Tillamook State Forest and the Clatsop State Forest”.

2023 - 50th anniversary of the Tillamook State Forest Designation. Today, we want to honor the people that gave us a forest which provides social, economic, and environmental benefits to all Oregonians.

In recognition of this golden anniversary, the Oregon Department of Forestry, along with our partners, want to celebrate and acknowledge our community members who made it happen. It took 40 years for the burn to turn into a forest. Another 50 years later that same forest is now thriving. What do the next 50 years have in store?

Save the date information can be found on the [TFC website](#) and there will be updates of the event on our [Facebook](#) page and in various media outlets over the upcoming weeks. Stay tuned for more information!

From the Director

Building Bridges



What a difference a year makes! In June of 2023, I was asked to step up and serve as the Interim Tillamook Forest Center Director and rebuild the team to reopen the facility which closed in March of 2020. At that point, I was the sole employee remaining from operations prior to the pandemic working alongside two other brand-new employees. One year later, it brings me great joy to reflect on the incredible journey and what has been accomplished thus far:

- Six incredibly talented employees have been hired and received initial training.

- Roby's Furniture helped clean three years of dust and grime to prepare the facility to reopen.
- Oregon Youth Corps assisted with replacing 34 benches onsite.
- The new TFC team rolled up their sleeves to help find and organize materials, fix technology, schedule forestry field trips, trim trails, secure host volunteers, coordinate the *Timber Culture* traveling exhibit, and prepare the gift shop – all while accomplishing a herculean task list in preparation for the soft opening in March.
- Many existing and new Oregon Department of Forestry staff served as a friendly audience for the new TFC team so they could work out any kinks while learning their new jobs.
- March and April provided opportunities for visitors on the weekends, and additional training and team building activities.
- Regular operations resumed in May!

The Wilson River bridge out the center's back door symbolizes partnerships, connections, looking ahead, and opportunities. While I was tasked with rebuilding the team, I often thought I was actually tasked with bridging the gap in institutional knowledge, connecting new employees with a common goal, and looking ahead to building new opportunities for visitors to reconnect with the center and State Forests, which serve as our common ground.

While many things have changed in the past couple of years, one thing remains constant: our dedication to guests and our ability to host tens of thousands of people. The new team has incredible customer service in their core, and we are ready to serve you and assist with building your bridge with the forest. We invite you to come visit, and meet the new team who I am grateful to have the opportunity to work with.

Denise

Volunteers in Action



Ramon and Mary Ferguson have joined us for their second season as Hosts at the Tillamook Forest Center. As full time RV'ers, they enjoy traveling and getting to spend time with family and friends across the West. Both of their careers were in public service, and helping visitors have a wonderful experience each day at the TFC is something they both really enjoy. A huge thank you from all of the staff here, we

appreciate you and we look forward to seeing your smiles each day!

Earlier this Spring, 15 rock-star staff from Roby's Furniture in Tillamook spent an entire day helping us get the TFC ready to re-open. After the three-year closure, there was a huge amount of work to do, and this team made it happen with huge smiles on their faces! No dust bunny survived, no window was left unwashed and no fir needle was left on any fire tower step. Thank you again for the wonderful support from a local business and it was a pleasure to meet and hang out with all of you!

New Leadership for the State Forests Trust of Oregon

In October 2023, the State Forests Trust of Oregon welcomed its new executive director, Kelly Lau. Since joining, she has worked with the Trustees to explore new ways to partner and collaborate with stakeholders and local communities to enhance, recreate and learn in Oregon's State Forests.

Kelly shares, "While the Trust has a new name and mission, the Tillamook Forest Center (TFC) remains a core pillar of our work, and we will continue our commitment of supporting and enhancing the experience of its visitors, volunteers, and donors."

Kelly most recently retired from Nike's Community Impact Team. Her career began with United Way, where she was engaged in fundraising, communications, and community collaborations.



You can support the TFC by donating or learning more here: stateforeststrust.org.

Timber Culture Traveling Exhibit



The Tillamook Forest Center is excited to host Timber Culture, a traveling exhibit from the Maxville Heritage Interpretive Center. Timber Culture highlights the forgotten town of Maxville, a logging community in Eastern Oregon. The exhibit tells the story of multicultural loggers and their families, who traveled to Oregon during the Great Migration. In sharing and discussing the history of the segregated logging community of Maxville, the exhibit examines issues of race and social justice through the lens of Oregon's logging history.

Gwen Trice, the executive director at the Maxville Interpretive Center, is the descendant of a logger that worked in Maxville and has worked tirelessly to bring Maxville back to life. After hearing about Maxville and realizing there wasn't any real record of African Americans in the logging industry, Gwen was inspired to tell the story. Starting in 2006, Gwen began to speak about Maxville and developed an interpretive center that is located in Joseph, Oregon.

Timber Culture will be at the Tillamook Forest Center until September 3rd. To learn more about Timber Culture and where the exhibit is heading to next, you can visit the Maxville Interpretive Center website at maxvilleheritage.org.

Summer Interpretive Programs Starting Now!

Join us every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday for family friendly guided interpretive programs. We cover topics such as forest foraging, plant and tree identification, fire towers of Oregon, early Oregon logging and more! Check our [program website](#) for the latest updates. Scan this QR code with your smartphone to find out what's happening this weekend!



mark your calendar



Field Trip Registration

Registration for spring and fall field trips begin August 14th. Keep an eye on our education program registration page for some updates!



**50th Anniversary
Tillamook State Forest**
Celebrate with us on
July 22nd!

Winter Steelhead Release
June 10th - 11th

Summer Hours

Until Sept 3rd
Wednesday - Sunday
10 am - 5 pm



**TIMBER
CULTURE**
TRAVELING EXHIBIT
APR 1ST - SEPT 3RD

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