



MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hundreds of students to compete in 37th Idaho State Forestry Contest

(COEUR D'ALENE) – More than 700 Idaho students from 24 schools or organizations will compete in the 37th Idaho State Forestry Contest on May 9 from 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Delay Farms in Careywood, Idaho. The event is hosted by the Idaho Department of Lands, Bonner Soil and Water Conservation District, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the U.S. Forest Service.

Approximately 287 students will test their knowledge of natural resource management and basic forestry skills on one of the two competitive courses. Another 415 Novices will be introduced to Idaho forests and resource management on their own non-competitive course.

The three divisions at the contest are designed to accommodate students in grade levels 1 through 12, and include:

- The non-competitive Novice Course for elementary students that provides many hands-on activities and a walk through the woods guided by a professional forester
- The Rookie Course, an introductory competition for 6th graders with five test stations, including Tree Identification, Compass and Pacing, Map Reading, Timber Cruising, and Log Scaling, plus an introductory Silviculture station
- The Junior / Senior Division Contest, for students in grades 7 through 12, which challenges junior and senior high school contestants in ten areas of forestry and resource management expertise

The first-place Junior and Senior Division teams each take home a full-sized crosscut saw trophy to display until next year's contest. The winning Rookie Division team receives an Idaho trophy made from all nine commercial woods grown in the state. The Top Individual contest winners in each of the competitive divisions receive awards, and Junior and Senior Division individuals also win cash prizes.

Each year, a long-time volunteer or contributor to the Forestry Contest is selected to serve as Honorary Chairperson for the day and Curtis Elke was chosen for that honor this year. Elke has worked for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for the past 21 years, and is currently the Idaho State Conservationist. As State Conservationist, he provides support through technical and financial assistance programs, public awareness of effective conservation measures to increase food production, profitability and land stewardship. He has served NRCS as a Soil Conservation Technician, Soil Conservation Planner, District Conservationist and Assistant State Conservationist in North Dakota, Oklahoma, Massachusetts, and South Dakota. He is a Soil Science graduate from North Dakota State University. Curtis has two children who both work for NRCS in California and Colorado.

Elke has been an enthusiastic volunteer of the Forestry Contest since his first experience several years ago. Described by others as “a super nice person”, Curtis has championed the Forestry Contest within his agency, resulting in additional volunteers and funding. In fact, his support was instrumental in securing a generous 5-year grant from NRCS.

More than 250 volunteers from numerous agencies, forest industries, local businesses, organizations, schools, and private individuals donate their time every year to help run the contest. The Idaho State Forestry Contest is also made possible through the contributions of funds, goods, and services from many individuals and public and private organizations, including:

CASH DONORS

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Idaho Forest Group
Idaho Forest Owners Association (IFOA)
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IN-KIND DONORS & CONTRIBUTORS

Ace Septic Service, Bonner County, Coeur d’Alene Tractor (carts & gas), Custom Den, Frito Lay, Idaho Forest Products Commission (awards), Intermountain Logging Conference, Litehouse Inc. (gift basket, dressings), Super 1 Foods, Wildwood Grilling, Wood’s Meat Processing

More information about the 37th Annual Idaho State Forestry Contest is available online at the following links: <https://www.idl.idaho.gov/forestry/contest/index.html> and www.bonnerswcd.org/forestry-contest

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