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## **LOMAKATSI RESTORATION PROJECT PURPOSE:**

**To organize and implement community- based ecological restoration programs through education, vocational training, specialized workforce development, and the utilization of restoration by-products, encouraging the recovery of ecosystems and the sustainability of communities, cultures and economies.**

## **LOMAKATSI RESTORATION PROJECT VISION:**

**To repair damaged ecosystems through conscious caretaking while creating positive livelihoods for all generations.**

## **LOMAKATSI RESTORATION PROJECT OVERVIEW:**

Lomakatsi Restoration Project is a non-profit organization, which develops, and implements pro-active community based ecological restoration programs throughout the Cascade-Klamath - Siskiyou ecoregions of southern Oregon and northern California. Since 1995, our projects have assisted in the regeneration, rehabilitation and restoration of ecologically impacted forests and watersheds throughout the region.

We work according to our *Ecological Principles for Restoration*, a written guideline explaining our approach to a variety of forest and watershed restoration programs, which include, but are not limited to:

- \* ecological fuels reduction
- \* oak woodland & forest restoration
- \* prescribed fire applications
- \* riparian enhancement
- \* watershed restoration
- \* erosion control and stabilization
- \* noxious weed removal
- \* revegetation & community tree planting
- \* student internships
- \* timber and small diameter product utilization
- \* restoration workforce training programs
- \* environmental stewardship projects
- \* holistic ecological and rural community recovery programs

Lomakatsi's staff and workforce is composed of ecologists, biologists, ecosystem technicians foresters, timber operations specialists, and educators who seek to increase community understanding and involvement in the diverse aspects of watershed and forest restoration.



*Lomakatsi crew removes weeds to prepare sites for planting along Bear Creek.*

## Ashland Based Organization Has Long Term and Region-Wide Impact

by Jude Wait

When you fly across Oregon to land in the Rogue Valley, you witness industrial clearcuts and thousands of acres of burned forest, and you know that these watersheds no longer support plentiful wild salmon populations. On the ground, a new story is spreading, where hundreds of people are planting trees to provide shade for salmon in the streams, and creating a new economy based on restoration of degraded landscapes. Lomakatsi Restoration Project, a non-profit organization based in Ashland, has created a “green collar” workforce, and they are teaching the next generation of earth stewards.

Lomakatsi, whose name is a Hopi term meaning life in balance, engages students of all ages in hands-on environmental education – to grow native plants in shade-house nurseries, and plant them on streamside and forest restoration sites adopted for long term care. Lomakatsi crews help landowners make their properties more fire-safe, and they are demon-

strating that an ecological approach can create healthier forests while still producing wood products. They thin out the dense forest regrowth, to make the stands more fire safe and wildlife friendly, and remove barriers in the streams so fish can



*Thinning brush above Ashland to restore Pine Oak habitat & reduce fuels.*

access their native habitat.

Lomakatsi co-founders and co-directors, Justin Cullumbine and Marko Bey, know all about the toil of punching holes in the soil to plant a thousand baby trees a day, and thinning dense thickets of

industrial monoculture plantations on federal lands. But 12 years ago, they set out to create an alternative holistic approach that restores ecological diversity and wildlife habitat. Today, their allies include environmental organizations, as well as federal agency representatives and logging operators. Starting with a crew of 5, they now employ 35 workers who are constantly improving their skills.

Ecological restoration is defined as the process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed – and is the guiding science and practice for this grassroots worker-based organization. “The same way we work to restore the whole ecosystem from the ridge tops to the valley bottoms, we work to

organize the whole community in an effort to rebuild healthy ecosystems and sustainable communities” Marko explains. “We have treated 2,000 acres in and around the City of Ashland, and more in Williams, Colestin Valley, the Illinois Valley, and

beyond. We've worked in just about every tributary to Bear Creek, many within the Ashland City limits, and we've just begun to scratch the surface."

Talking about the upland 280-acre wildland forest Park above Ashland, Jeff McFarland of the City of Ashland Parks and Recreation Department appreciates that "Lomakatsi helps us promote our forest health and recreation goals for Siskiyou Mountain Park, incorporating worker and youth training along with their forestry treatments that consider soil, wildlife, and removing non-native weeds."

At the base of the same watershed, the trees planted in 1997 at the Willow Wind Community Learning Center are now more than 30 feet tall, providing shade for fish-bearing Bear Creek, cooling the waters that flow into Bear Creek, and creating bird habitat, as well. This was a big tree-planting year. Enlisting scores of volunteers, Lomakatsi helped to stabilize slopes that mobilized during the big



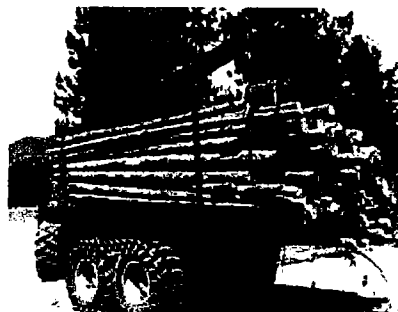
*Streamside restoration by Willow Wind students.*

floods of 1997 – torrents that swept many a downtown creek-side porch into Ashland Creek. Landowner Mary Ann Jones, who applauds Lomakatsi "for always working in harmony with the forces of nature, with a lot of technical expertise," reports that the areas planted on her land above Ashland are still thriving.

Not only does restoration require committed land stewards who will help monitor and maintain the sites, but also the different partners and funding has to come together. Lomakatsi has raised well over a million dollars for fuels-reduction projects across the region since 2001. Along with on the job training, landowner education, and community field tours, Lomakatsi demonstrates that the byproducts of restoration can be sold. Sort yards and local small-scale sawmill operations assist in marketing small diameter logs, lumber



*Forest assessment with Catalyst students.*



*Small diameter byproducts from restoration forestry.*

and poles, and the proceeds help pay for the work, thus creating a key element of a restoration-based economy.

During the rainy season, from November through May, Lomakatsi offers free hands-on events for 20-40 volunteers to plant trees along the creeks and uplands of a dozen adopted restoration sites. The plants are grown by the students and youth groups at shade house nurseries Lomakatsi set up at 4 schools and 2 community sites. Lomakatsi is currently growing 45 different native species, totaling 15,000 plants.

"Restoration Site Adoption is a key part of this Full Circle Schools program," Marko explains. "Students adopt a particular area, along a stream, or oak woodland, or mixed conifer forest, and they help maintain that site. Restoration is not a one-shot deal. We give the kids an opportunity to see the whole ecological restoration process – making an investment in their future, and the future of the forests and fish."

Several at-risk youth groups also adopt restoration projects. "Lomakatsi leaders are great role models for the young people we are serving, because they've been working in their field for a long time, and they provide the ecological context," says Christie Lawson, a crew leader for the Job Council. "The passion of Lomakatsi trainers catches



*Left: Roca Creek in Ashland, 2000, before planting. Below: 2007, 40-ft tall alders.*





*Training loggers to restore spotted owl habitat in plantations.*



*Lomakatsi's main shadehouse nursery at Jackson Wellsprings.*

the kids' attention, and they get a wide range of experience, in the nursery, planting streamsides, weed-pulling, and thinning."

Lomakatsi has expanded the Full Circle Schools Restoration Ecology program, and last year, they provided classroom lessons coupled with field work for 12 classes in 5 schools in Ashland, along with a few others across the Rogue Valley. Helman Elementary helped to fund their own shade-house nursery, and the Wilderness Charter School basically funds their own program. Teacher Jim Haim, claims that "Lomakatsi is a phenomenal organization dedicated to sustainability, and our annual Plant-a-thon provides students experience in tabling to fundraise for the school, and then they plant trees all day. Lomakatsi provides a tangible example for my high school students, who all love Lomakatsi – whether it's working in the nursery, or practicing fire ecology in the forest."

Some of Ashland's students have become regular Lomakatsi forestry crew members after graduation, and others are college-educated natural resources professionals. While transplanting seedlings into bigger pots, so the trees will have a greater survival rate when planted, one of the teens said "if it wasn't for Catalyst [program of Ashland High], and alternative education as a whole, I probably would not be in school at all." Catalyst teacher Caroline Spear said that "these kids thrive on the hands-on learning style for grasping ecological concepts – from our nursery, to the planting site, and even in the classroom, because it is definitely 'Full Circle'."

Lomakatsi is deeply rooted in the Ashland community and is a household word for many residents and businesses, whose regular donations are crucial. "I see my contribution as a restoration tax toward the positive ecological recovery work" claims David Stein, an Ashland resident since 1989.

The once substantial funding from Federal, State and County sources has nearly dried up, not only for Lomakatsi, but for the Job Council, the City, the cost share for private landowners, and for work on Federal lands. Lomakatsi is now pioneering innovative economic mechanisms that value the ecological work, in partnership with land managers and businesses. "We are asking our members, their friends and colleagues, to help us bridge the gaps, and invest in the future of the children and the environment they inherit" says Justin, "and we continue to work with many partners to create a truly sustainable model."

For the City of Ashland, the Fire Chief Keith Woodley reflects that "Lomakatsi was an essential asset to landowners – by looking at the overall landscape, recommending the treatments, and then doing the labor intensive work, they set the stage for landowners in the forested parts of our City to take responsibility for maintaining more fire-safe conditions. The landowners may be totally on their own in the future, but at least the initial thinning work, the most difficult, is done in the priority areas for protecting our community."

Building on their experience working on about 5,000 acres of forest and woodlands, Lomakatsi Restoration Project

is setting new standards for stewardship forestry across this region and the Sierra Nevada. Their practices are acceptable to many environmental groups, as well. Lomakatsi has 4 active stewardship projects on federal lands, some of which are adjacent to logging plans held up in court. Southern Oregon University Professor of Sociology, Vickie Sturdevant, who has been looking at a lot of conflict resolution and collaboration efforts for many years, says "Lomakatsi has an amazing ability to build bridges between different interest groups, because they are very respectful of the land and the people, they get a lot of restoration work done, and they are all about peer learning and sharing their model."

The Lomakatsi mission is to organize and implement community based ecological restoration projects through education, vocational training, specialized workforce development and the utilization of restoration by-products, encouraging the recovery of ecosystems and the sustainability of communities, cultures and economies. ■

*More information can be found at [www.lomakatsi.org](http://www.lomakatsi.org), by emailing [plantfunds@lomakatsi.org](mailto:plantfunds@lomakatsi.org) and [info@lomakatsi.org](mailto:info@lomakatsi.org), or calling 541-488-0208.*

*Jude Wait, a freelance consultant living in Ashland, has called the Northern California-Southern Oregon region home for 25 years. She spends most of her time supporting Lomakatsi's visionary programs, and works with watershed, forestry and social justice organizations across the country.*

## Evolution in the Woods

**In theory, an agreement between loggers, environmentalists and the state to enable forest restoration would seem a victory for all sides of a long-standing dispute. Now the theory is being put into practice**

By Paul Fattig  
June 01, 2008 6:00 AM

When veteran logger Don Hamann talks about the future of a profession whittled down in recent years by a growing economy and environmental restrictions, he beams with optimism.

"There is an incredible opportunity out there," he said. "Not only an opportunity but an incredibly important task that needs to be done.

"Part of it is educating people, particularly the next generation, to do the work and understand the need," said the Butte Falls resident.

"There is lots and lots of work out there."

No, the man who has been harvesting timber for more than a quarter of a century in southwestern Oregon hasn't had his hard hat rung by one too many logging chains.

He is referring to a future in which former adversaries — loggers, environmentalists and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management — work together to improve forest health, reduce potential for catastrophic wildfires and create more jobs.

His logging firm, Don Hamann Inc., has teamed up with the BLM, Lomakatsi Ecological Services Inc. and the Siskiyou Project, an environmental group based in Josephine County, to manage up to 2,000 acres in the Illinois Valley over the next seven years.

Called the South Stew stewardship, it's in the BLM's Grants Pass Resource Area. Lomakatsi, a community-based ecological forestry group, is the lead contractor.

"Restoration forestry is about trying to recover a site," explained Marko Bey, president and co-founder. "We get the product out as a by-product of the work. The goal of stewardship is also to find new markets, to be innovative on how we deal with this material."

Thinning projects provide small logs for local mills, smaller-diameter wood products to niche markets and woody debris to bio-electricity generators.

Not everyone within the environmental community is supportive of the effort, acknowledged Shane Jimerfield, executive director of the Siskiyou Project.

"We are going to get some criticism for supporting people with chain saws," he said. "But the reality

of it is the work needs to be done. In order to get where we need to go, some work needs to happen in these forests.

"I've seen the polarization, the demonizing of both sides," he added. "It's time to move on. I'm hoping the war is over."

"The time has come for people to work together," Bey said. "Everybody involved in this is putting their necks out. It's part of an evolution in the woods, a lot of which is being pioneered in Southern Oregon. But the mutual goal is to recover these lands."

Congress gave the BLM the authority to issue stewardship contracts in 2003. They provide a goods-for-service exchange that allows community groups to harvest and sell merchantable material that most large commercial timber firms would not find cost-effective to harvest.

"Stewardship allows the conservation community to be a key member at the table," said Oshana Catranides, a Siskiyou Project member.

The contracts that are aimed at boosting local employment save taxpayers money, said Jim Whittington, spokesman for the BLM's Medford District.

"With a stewardship contract, we have the flexibility to move around different areas where we need some kind of treatment," he said.

"It's a restoration-based treatment which includes a bunch of different things we might normally do under individual contracts," he added. "For instance, it's not just reducing the potential for a hazardous wildfire but also doing things like protecting red tree vole habitat."

The stewardship contract has more than two dozen objectives, thus saving money over having one contract for each goal, Whittington noted.

"We want to see these contracts increase significantly over the coming years," he said, noting that South Stew is one of three such contracts now under way in the district. "We're learning a lot from the ones going on now. We want to increase the speed of getting these projects on line in the future."

Some of the planned work on the South Stew is being held up by a decision by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco. To comply with the Endangered Species Act, the court said, the BLM must conduct a second biological opinion regarding the impact on northern spotted owls in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The service had withdrawn its earlier biological opinion.

On a recent visit to a stewardship site a few miles southeast of Selma, a chipper could be heard chomping up slash for biomass. Near the top of the ridge, a D-4 bulldozer dragged fir logs about a foot in diameter to a landing. Several chain saws buzzed away as workers thinned brush and small trees, leaving the large black oaks, sugar pine and madrone.

Thanks to decades of wildfire suppression, Douglas fir has been encroaching on the pine and oak habitat, Whittington noted.

"We are going to open it up and let the pines and oak and madrone that are used to this environment

have more space to grow," Whittington said.

Taking a break after falling a fir tree perhaps a foot in diameter at the base was Jake Hamann, 26, youngest son of Don Hamann. The young timber faller, who had gotten up at 3:30 a.m. that day, relaxed with his Stihl chain saw and 32-inch bar resting on his shoulder.

"I love being out here," he said. "I grew up in the woods. You can't beat it. You make a lot of good friends out here."

Noting the pay is between \$17 and \$20 an hour, he doesn't have any complaints when it comes to a paycheck.

"We make a pretty good living," he said. "It's better than any job I could get in town. Of course, you do get wet in the winter and hot in the summer."

Lomakatsi has a core group of 40 people working on the contract with hourly pay ranging from \$12.50 up to \$30, depending on the work being done, Bey said.

"We pay a decent wage — that's part of our mission," Bey said.

A living wage for people working in the woods is essential, said Don Hamann, who has five people employed at the site.

The 1970 graduate of Eagle Point High School said it took him some time for his perspective on logging to evolve from cutting mainly large trees to taking a more ecological approach.

"Thirty years ago I didn't understand as much as I do now about working in the woods," he said. "I didn't have the same understanding of our national economy, of the global economy, of the need for management."

He cited local forestry consultant Marty Main and others for giving him a new perspective.

"About 1994 Marty began to plant little seeds in my little brain," Hamann said. "Now I love doing the management work. It's a wholistic approach."

That means an approach that involves the local community, ecology and the economy, he explained.

"Teaching people about the environment, about what goes on out here, that's one of my passions now," he said. "And I like to share knowledge about managing our natural resource — that's what it's all about."

"As you get into one of these projects, you realize there is a lot to collaboration," he added of working with Bey, Jimerfield and others. "Their skills are very valuable to me to complement what I do."

Yet the loggers are also teaching them, said Justin Collumbine, vice president of Lomakatsi.

"We are teaching them about a different approach on the ground," Collumbine said. "But the loggers are teaching us that impacts are a reality, that things are going to look a little mucked up at first."

"People are telling us we should have started doing this 20 years ago," he said. "But a lot of this is trust building between the agencies, environmental groups and contractors."

Building trust and learning from each other are vital if collaboration is going to work in the woods, Bey stressed.

"It's people like Don on the timber side with a willingness to bend that can make this work," Bey said. "We're coming at it from the restoration side. But we're not loggers. We need their expertise."

The BLM, which normally marks trees to be cut, has demonstrated its willingness to work with the diverse factions, he said.

"We laid out the prescription — we marked the trees," Bey said. "We meet the end result they want by meeting it on the ground in an ecologically sound fashion. We are developing a trust."

The Siskiyou Project will monitor the sites where work is being done to keep tabs on the ecological impact, Jimerfield said.

"We feel this is a short-term disturbance for what is hopefully a long-term gain," he said. "For us, the ecology is largely the most important thing — that is our niche. But everyone involved is carrying their interest. We can all move forward together. No one is carrying a disproportionate power or interest."

Before heading down the ridge to thin more trees, Jake Hamann considered the future. He observed that he and his wife, Marlisa, have a 4-month-old boy named Gage.

"I don't know if he will follow my footsteps," he said. "I guess we will see what happens in the next 15 or 20 years. A lot will unfold between now and then.

"But I think there is a future with this work," concluded the second-generation logger.

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## Diverse destinations being considered for South Stew yield

By Paul Fattig  
Mail Tribune  
June 01, 2008 6:00 AM

From limbs to logs, every bit of material cut on the South Stew project will be considered for the market, said Justin Collumbine, co-director of Lomakatsi.

"We're exploring every potential market, starting with the grass roots," he stressed.

For instance, chips and other wood fiber are being trucked to the Rough and Ready Lumber Co. mill a few miles south of Cave Junction, where it will help power that firm's new biomass plant, he said.

"We're also working with local post-and-pole furniture makers, fencing companies, artists and other crafters — we have 10 different businesses, professionals and hobbyists who are utilizing everything from a one-inch stick up to a 10-inch-diameter pole for a pole barn," Collumbine said. "Materials will be going to 20 different places on this project."

Because of current low log prices, it's in their interest to find better niche markets, he said.

"We're even experimenting with making tongue-and-groove flooring out of a lot of the Doug fir," he said.

Much of the fir, because it is not suited for the site, has tight growth rings, making it suitably dense for making floors, he explained.

"It's almost like a hardwood," he said.

However, the largest of the logs — the 10- and 12-inch-diameter material at chest height — are being hauled to the local mill to be made into lumber, he said.

"Our overall goal is to restore the site — that is the primary goal," he said. "But we are also getting wood products out."

Not all the material that needs to be thinned throughout the region is marketable, cautioned Shane Jimerfield, executive director of the Siskiyou Project.

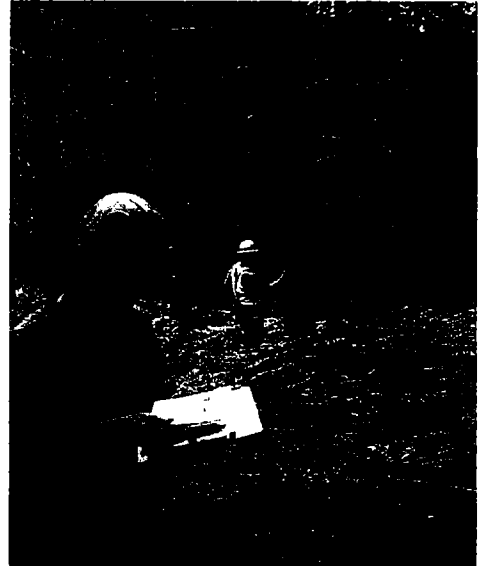
"Our position is that restoration needs to happen on a massive scale," he said.

"Congress is going to have to help. It can't all be completely economically driven because the work that needs to be done doesn't always have a commercial value."

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Stewardship Contracting was just a concept until Lomakatsi Restoration Project secured a Participating Agreement (PA) with the Tiller Ranger District of the Umpqua National Forest (UNF) in May of 2006. Through the Boulder Stewardship Demonstration Project, everyone involved gained experience using the Stewardship Contract authority, including UNF staff, logging operators and Lomakatsi crew leaders, as well as the 15 local restoration forest worker interns involved in Lomakatsi's *Ecological Restoration Workforce Training* program.

The 33-acre Douglas-fir plantation, previously logged 45 years ago and partly scorched in the 2002 Tiller Complex fire, is part of a 4,600 acre *Boulder Dumont Vegetation Management Project*. This was one of the first commercial projects in Late Successional Reserve (LSR) in the region. Under the Northwest Forest Plan, LSR management primarily allows activities that serve to restore late seral stage forest stand characteristics, and reduce uncharacteristically high fuel loads -- with commercial extraction only a byproduct of the restoration. This fits well with Lomakatsi habitat enhancement and ecological restoration goals, and they welcomed the opportunity to demonstrate LSR treatments that could garner conservationist approval as well.



Stewardship Contracts are also well-suited to Lomakatsi, for their flexibility and focus on “best value to the government” (overall value) and end results. Best value considers technical approach, past performance, local benefit, and is not reliant solely on best overall price. In this case the PA specified “designation by description” silvicultural criteria, whereby the contractor works toward an “end result”, and is responsible for laying out the project on the ground. Lomakatsi applied a *variable density management* prescription that created openings, or “gaps,” and left patches uncut, or “skips”. They also created down wood and retained snags, preserved patches of native understory plants, promoted structural diversity in this even aged stand, protected the soil, and ripped and rehabilitated the main skid trails following the extraction of logs. All treatment costs had to be covered by product revenue, because the USFS did not have appropriated funds for the project.

Lomakatsi convened an interdisciplinary team of restoration technicians, training interns and advisors, including foresters, a soils scientist, restoration ecologists, timber operators and the District Botanist, who collaborated on putting together a multifaceted ecological treatment prescription. This team took the basic Forest Service silvicultural prescription and expanded it to meet the LSR habitat restoration objectives on a detailed micro-site-specific scale. They designed the baseline biophysical monitoring in order to be able to verify results over time. Lomakatsi also commissioned a soils report, and a set of prescription recommendations accounting for historic reference conditions found in neighboring old growth stands. The soil scientist (George Badura) and ecologist (Dennis Martinez) who issued the reports and recommendations were part of the on-project training program, and their



recommendations are incorporated into the attached summary prescription guideline.

Common in the Tiller area, the vegetation type most closely resembles *Douglas-fir/salal/western sword-fern*, with some Oregon grape.

Thinning objectives maintained Douglas fir as the dominant overstory, and openings promote reseeding of Sugar and Ponderosa pine. Sunny gaps also promote understory and Douglas fir regeneration. A mid-successional stage and early stem-exclusion stand-reinitiation transition stage was promoted in the unburned areas. In the burn, an early to mid successional (stand-initiation) stage was the goal. Overall, the Fuel Model was reduced from an 8 to a 6. This was accomplished by reducing the number of stems per acre from 250 to 90 on average, a 20-40% reduction in canopy density, and basal area was reduced to 90 square feet per acre.



On-project training was a primary objective of the Boulder Demo project, which was an outgrowth of the Lomakatsi workforce training series that started in Tiller in the spring of 2005 with funding from the National Forest Foundation (NFF) to the Alliance of Forest Workers & Harvesters. Lomakatsi was invited in by local residents in this remote community in Douglas County, shortly after the 2002 fire, in hopes of accessing National Fire Plan (NFP) community assistance grants for private land fuels reduction (a specialty of Lomakatsi). Lomakatsi subsidized the Demo training component with an additional grant from NFF. The grant enabled the trainees to participate in Boulder project layout and monitoring, as well as oak-woodland restoration on private land. It was important that the technical range of training span the diversity of the forest stewardship opportunities available in the future on the District.

By the last phase of the Demo project in 2007, local loggers and workers, all training interns, were largely in charge of the entire field operation. The local logger used both skyline and tractor methods for extraction on steeper and gentle slopes, respectively.



Logging on the first phase of the project employed a modern Norwegian built cut-to-length (CTL) machine that cuts, de-limbs, bucks and stacks logs, which are then hauled out of the unit by a forwarder equipped for minimum ground disturbance. The branches also serve as ground cover on skid trails, and hand-pile burning requirements are minimized when slash is incorporated into the soil. The CTL logging was apparently more cost-effective, but the ground was easiest to operate on and had the best commercial volume. Some of the taller 16-inch trees had to be hand felled and bucked, because they approached the capacity limitations of the CTL machine. The skyline operation had a low yield of only 2MBF. Most of the trees were charred, and an expensive forwarder was loading the logs on the landing. These details are case-in-point that the most economical operations have just the right equipment for the job. The operators, logging supervisor,

contract officers, and the “purchaser” (Lomakatsi) were required to adapt and innovate. In spite of the small [economy of] scale, the project did succeed in breaking even.

The Boulder Demo project produced 276 thousand board feet of Douglas-fir sawlogs, between 5 and 16-inches diameter, which were sold to an industrial sawmill 65 miles away in southern Douglas County. Every commercial stem had to be branded on both ends, which is a lot of work for the value of the small diameter logs. Biomass consisted of 288 tons of 3-5 inch diameter logs, which sold for \$40-45 per ton to a biomass facility 45 miles away in Jackson County. Two mule train loads of “salvage” logs from the burned area went to a local value added product enterprise, for market trials. Involvement was wide spread, as timber industry businesses directly involved in the project included 3 milling operations, 5 trucking firms, the Southern Oregon Log Scaling Bureau, and 6 logging contractors.



The price for sawlogs fell by 24% during the life of the agreement, which effectively eliminated the viability of treating 100 acres of pre-commercial thinning originally planned, or other units with marginal commercial value. Consequently, there was much less employment on the project than expected by the interns participating in the Lomakatsi training program. The flexibility of the FS contract officer was key, given 3 adjustments to the contract due to the depressed timber market. Overall, the cost of operations was about \$380-480 per MBF.

Stewardship Contracting is a new way of doing business that combines the two once-separate functions of timber sales and service contracts. Agency personnel find that Stewardship Contracts tend to be more expensive to administer. Because the Boulder Demo was a capacity-building demonstration project, expenses were higher than might be expected on a regular Stewardship Contract, timber sale, or service contract. The project included on-project training and on-site supervision, regular team evaluations, special ecological considerations, multiple operators, and two operating seasons. Site tours were common, and included the multi-stakeholder southwest Oregon Provincial Advisory Council (PAC) and Provincial Interagency Executive Committee (PIEC).

What started as capacity building for ecological forest restoration workforce development, evolved into on-project Stewardship Contract training. Further expansion into a community-wide business development technical assistance program now involves more than 25 people, with support from USDA Rural Development grants to Lomakatsi, and a partnership with the newly incorporated non-profit organization. The South Umpqua Rural Community Partnership (SURCP) has a representative in several County-wide venues, provides liaison as well as local leadership, and they are “committed to facilitating the stewardship forest management model to generate a robust local

economy through the restoration of Public and Private streams, meadows and forests.” Economic diversification, not new to the people who have stayed in the community post timber-boom, is especially important while the community seeks to collaboratively develop stewardship projects that dovetail with the capacity and aspirations of locals. Inspired in part by the Boulder Demo-associated training, two local interns pursued value added product testing and marketing, and 2 pursued contracting business development. Innovative people are designing and shopping for equipment to log, process and add value to the products of their care-taking of the forest they live within.

There are significant challenges, including the fact that any sale of commercial timber requires upfront payment to the USFS, even in Stewardship Contracts (and this PA). This can be a big burden for the purchaser, and a line of credit is an added expense. A significant missing component to the local model is a continuous and accessible supply of material from public land. The County started a “Forest Council,” and has directed Title II grant funds to the 100-acre Boulder Biomass Stewardship Contract to be released by the USFS soon. Again, subsidy is essential due to the very low commercial value. In general, County officials prefer timber sales because the County receives a percentage of the stumpage, so Stewardship Contracts are relegated to areas with marginal commercial returns.

This story is still unfolding, and Lomakatsi acted as the “economic and moral backbone” of efforts, by presenting “a model of sustainable ecological forest management that creates jobs and a stable community as well as forest conditions that even the most ‘hands off’ environmental groups would not be able to genuinely gainsay”, according to the President of SURCP. The Boulder Demo project has helped restoration thinning gain acceptance among environmental activists, community members and veteran loggers in the South Umpqua community.



Located in the wildland interface community of Williams, Penny Stew was the first Stewardship Contract awarded by the BLM in southwest Oregon, and the first federal land project for Lomakatsi Restoration Project. Amid the Applegate Adaptive Management Area set up by the Northwest Forest Plan, the Penny Stew project is within the larger Scattered Apples Landscape Management Project originally proposed by the Medford District of the BLM in 1997.

A longstanding relationship with the federal agencies, conservation organizations, and many communities across southwest Oregon, helped to set the stage for this project. Since 2001, Lomakatsi Restoration Project has been awarded 13 BLM-administered National Fire Plan grants designed to support private land fire hazard reduction adjacent to federal land, provide ecological restoration training, and market forest thinning byproducts. Penny Stew, and subsequent Stewardship Contracts, help to provide ongoing jobs for the “green collar” workforce Lomakatsi formed, that continues to gain efficiency and experience on a wide array of projects.

Lomakatsi commenced work on Penny Stew in the winter of 2005, after Lomakatsi convened a multi-party interdisciplinary group that helped to design ecological treatment prescriptions, and established permanent biophysical monitoring plots. Community-wide workshops and field tours organized by Lomakatsi preceded and accompanied each phase of the project. Part of the project is directly adjacent to a private land neighborhood and shares road access.



The project took 3 years to complete, in part because seasonal restrictions in occupied Bald Eagle habitat precluded work between March 15 and September each year. In addition, the roads are not surfaced for rainy season operations, and in dry season there are fire hazard restrictions.



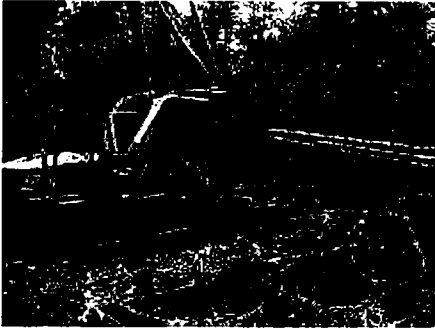
Fuel reduction and stand improvement objectives for pine-oak-woodland and mixed conifer forest types with dense encroaching Douglas fir pole stands were accomplished by thinning, small diameter tree removal and slash disposal, which reduced the Fire Regime Condition Class from 3 to 1.5. The basal area in dense understory of Douglas fir and madrone was reduced by 20%. The dominant trees, large pine and hardwoods, were protected by thinning more intensively around them. A primary goal was to enable fire to carry through the stand without destroying it, and under favorable conditions, this has been accomplished. BLM expects to



underburn part of the area after 5 years to control the resprouting madrone. All parties expect future stand management is needed to maintain and further improve the resiliency and diversity of the stand composition and structure.

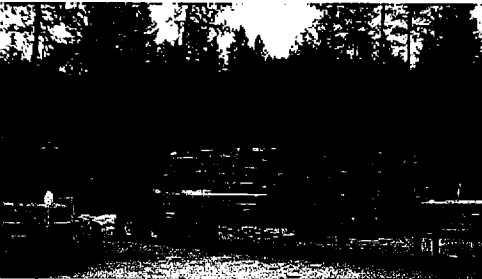


Lomakatsi crews performed both pre-commercial and commercial thinning, and used their “swamper burning” approach for disposing of the slash generated by treatments. No biomass was removed on some steeper slopes. The two timber operators were the local Cascade Wildlands, Inc. using an all-surface vehicle (ASV), and Summit Wood Products used a combination cut-to-length (CTL) harvester and forwarder. Overall, the net cost of treatments was about \$920 per acre.



flooring from pine and fir.

The project yielded 94 thousand board feet of commercial Douglas fir timber from 113 acres, and a small amount of Ponderosa and Sugar pine. The 25% drop in the market value of commercial timber over the course of the project adversely affected the economic benefits, but the small diameter utilization market improved over time. BLM funded the project with Silviculture and Fires & Fuels budget line items, and a Title II grant, so the product sales were not expected to cover expenses. The use of the Stewardship Contract authority did enable a 15% increase in the acres treated due to the revenue generated from the sale of thinned out trees. In 2006, two small units were added to the project, another benefit of Stewardship Contracting flexibility, bringing the total treatment area to 124 acres.



Penny Stew was a high-profile project in terms of conservationist attention in the area. In 2004, a Federal District Court ruled in favor of a lawsuit filed by Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands and Williams residents opposing the Scattered Apples commercial timber sale. Penny Stew helped to establish the areas of agreement for restoration thinning projects, and several organizations are now actively involved in collaborative processes advocating restoration of managed stands (plantations) across the region. Use of the Stewardship model has expanded, and Lomakatsi continues to partner with light-touch logging operators in the region on two of the four additional BLM Stewardship Contracts in nearby parts of Josephine County. Many communities and conservationists continue to call upon Lomakatsi as the demonstrable model of practices that they prefer and the practitioners they trust. The practices are based on Lomakatsi’s Ecological Principles, and the practitioners are continually upgrading their skills, adapting their management prescriptions based on monitoring results, and incorporating current forest ecology, restoration silviculture and conservation science into their approach.

Penny Stew was primarily slated for non-commercial thinning, and almost a ton per acre of small diameter “biomass” material was generated – 100 tons total. A substantial quantity of this material was sold to Rogue Valley Fuel, 45 miles away, for about \$40-45 per ton. They use Posts & Poles for a wide variety of products. BLM provided the use of their land for a sort yard, so that many products could be sorted or processed on site for local use, including pole-peeling, portable sawmill operations for lumber, and firewood. Lomakatsi sold 35 sets of tipi poles. Nearby manufacturers produced character grade paneling and



**PRINT | CLOSE WINDOW**

April 28, 2008

## Planting for the future

**Story and photos by Grayson Berry**  
Tidings correspondent



**Lomakatsi project director of operations Marko Bey** (far right) instructs students on the basics of tree planting on Wednesday.

As some of the final flurries of the season fell into the Colestine Valley, a group of local high school students toiled tirelessly Wednesday, planting Ponderosa pines along Cottonwood Creek.

For 10 years the Wilderness Charter School has collaborated with the Lomakatsi Restoration Project to repair Rogue Valley ecosystems and raise funds for both programs through what has been dubbed the Plant-a-thon.

Students at the school have been tabling in front of local markets for weeks, soliciting funds from community members who are able to make small donations or pledges per tree planted. The goal is to plant 500 trees this year.

"It's a great experience for students, to learn what it means to create and manage a project like this," said James Haim, one of three teachers at the charter school.

"The tabling itself is a really good experience — being able to face somebody directly who they don't know, tell them what they're about in order to get them to support something; that is basically a win-win for the students and the community."



The Wilderness Charter School is a one-year program for juniors and seniors at Ashland High that is the equivalent to taking a science or English course, or two elective credits. Its main focus is on sustainability but, according to Haim, the coursework goes well beyond environmental science.

"Sustainability includes not only how to live on the Earth through ecological forestry, permaculture or natural building, but it's also looking at sustainable community, developing community and looking at some of the social skills it takes to have good communication."

### **Future perspective**

Marko Bey, co-founder and director of operations for the Lomakatsi Project, works with thousands of students in Jackson County and Josephine County through Lomakatsi's Full Circle Schools Restoration Ecology Program. Bey takes a long view when considering the work the project does, a view that intrinsically involves members of the next generation.

"Ecological restoration is a long-term process," he said, "It's not something you can accomplish with one activity. We've been working at Cottonwood Creek, for example, for almost nine years. It's a lot of work to do over time and we need people of different generations to help keep this work going. We live in a natural resource state but a lot of that has gone away, so we try to involve people in that natural resource work, hoping that some will take the work on as a career in the future, but also that they will begin to improve the conditions of the areas where they live."

The Plant-a-thon featured several Charter School alumni, one of whom had gone to work as an employee for Lomakatsi. The work done helped to make the riparian zone (the interface between the land and the creek) more robust by planting long-term trees, the roots of which would support the soil and branches would eventually shade the creek, keeping the water hospitable for fish.

According to Bey, high water temperatures contributed to the Klamath water crisis a few years ago which resulted in the death of 60,000 salmon in the Lower Klamath River near Happy Camp. Cottonwood Creek is one of many tributaries in the Klamath River system.

Bey strives to keep spirits high and make the work both fun and meaningful. While instructing the students on the basics of tree planting he told them, "This is like graffiti, but it's ecological graffiti on the land that will be here long after you are."



**Student Kyle Kohlmann plants a Ponderosa pine** along Cottonwood Creek on Wednesday.

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