

icant. For example, equipment needed includes:

- Chainsaws
- Fire tools
- Drip torches
- OHVs/Side-by-sides
- Nomex
- Water tenders
- Bladder bags
- Water pumps
- Masticators
- Chipper
- Pick-up trucks

This is not an exhaustive list, and purchasing this equipment would require substantial investments. And the use of this equipment and the activities related to prescribed fire also require specialized training. It is vital these investments and this training occur well in advance of any request for proposal, service work contract, stewardship contract or other procurement method for services by the state or the federal agencies (USDA Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management). And as fires have gotten more severe in recent history, insurance has been harder and harder to obtain. Many businesses have to pay more and receive less coverage than even a few years ago.

### Solution development

For the past few years, the Oregon Prescribed Fire Council has met to address these barriers and passed language in SB 762 to develop a state-run Certified Burn Manager Program. This type of program would achieve some of the training needs associated with prescribed burning operations. It will also address liability and challenges in acquiring insurance for businesses doing burning operations.

In addition to liability coverage, other solutions are in the works. Associated Oregon Loggers (AOL) recently hired a Workforce Development Manager to create a workforce development program and is working on contractor workforce solutions with Oregon Department of Forestry. AOL has also been working at the federal level with the American Loggers Council and the Forest Resources Association to advocate for additional use of the H-2B visa program. These critical migrant workers complete the itinerant—seasonal and hard—work of reforestation and fuels mitigation.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs at high schools have also been getting additional attention. OSU is working to place equipment simulators at high schools with forestry CTE programs. Industry leaders are working to

identify additional barriers and possible solutions.

Ultimately, a multi-pronged approach to forest operator workforce development is necessary. Opportunity is truly on our doorstep, but guarantees are needed for businesses to incur the risk associated with starting and growing. *WF*

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## Why Join SAF?

Wildlife biologists, restoration ecologists, forestry technicians, policy makers, urban foresters, research scientists, and foresters. The membership of the Society of American Foresters is as diverse as the professionals who are charged with managing our nation's and the world's natural resources for now and the future.

SAF is a 9,000-member community that has held true to its original objective to bring forestry and natural resources professionals together and keep them informed about the latest advances in forest science and management.

As a member of SAF, you have access to benefits that help you stay current with the latest science and connect with other professionals.

- At the SAF Career Center, you can search for jobs and post your resume.
- Working Groups provides opportunities for you to connect with other members in a particular field of interest.
- Internship programs help our student members get started on their career path.
- Local chapters hold monthly meetings that feature engaging scientific content, and state society annual meetings provide opportunities to learn more about statewide activities.

### What is the value that Katie Nichols, PE, PLS, internal operations administrator and sustainability coordinator with Lone Rock Resources, gains from SAF?

I had been working at Lone Rock Resources for about six months when I attended my first OSAF chapter meeting hosted by the Umpqua Chapter. After being an inactive student member while attending Oregon State University, I was unsure whether I wanted to be involved with SAF in my professional life. At this meeting I met fellow foresters I now call friends. It was the welcoming atmosphere and the promise of knowledge that made me stay.

Over the last seven years, I have been given the opportunity to learn about a wide variety of topics from people around the nation. By participating in OSAF Annual Meetings, PNW Leadership Conference, and local Umpqua Chapter meetings, I have made personal and professional connections with people in the forest industry from all walks of life. Serving as Umpqua Chapter Education Chair and Chapter Chair, OSAF Delegate-at-Large, and Forester Fund Chair over the years has helped me improve my leadership and communication skills greatly.

Looking back on it now, I am grateful to my coworkers who pushed me to attend to that chapter meeting, and I look forward to the future to see how SAF grows and changes the lives of professionals young and old much like it did for me.

