

## **SAF Hosts Riparian Science and Management Workshop for PNW Policy Makers**

Spurred by the trend of increasingly restrictive policies for riparian areas in the Pacific Northwest, Oregon SAF, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and other natural resource associations held a regional workshop on state-of-the-art riparian science and management focused on policy makers and their staff. The all-day workshop was held on August 10 in Portland at the World Forestry Center for an audience of over 100 that included a notable number of local, state, and federal officials and staff, including state senators and legislators from Oregon and California. The program was fully sponsored by SAF and several other groups so that participants could attend at no cost. A \$3,000 Foresters' Fund grant helped support of the event. Technical experts reviewed recent study findings, and landowners and managers provided first-hand accounts that highlighted many complexities and challenges in managing these unique areas in the broader landscape. These observations helped show how simplistic or overly restrictive approaches and policies for managing riparian areas can lead to missed opportunities for improving watershed conditions and resources, as well as some significant unintended consequences for both people and resources.

Policy makers at all levels of government often do not have the expertise to assess regulatory proposals that come before them. They often lack sound, objective scientific information to assess the environmental and economic impacts of their decisions and analyze unintended consequences of regulations. This workshop was planned with the intent that legislators and their staff, agency regulators, and other policy makers could meet with research scientists, resources professionals charged with implementing regulations on the ground, landowners, and local government officials affected by the regulations to discuss the latest scientific finding and provide objective information on riparian management.

The workshop was organized and sponsored by SAF, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Oregon Cattlemen's Association, the World Forestry Center, Healthy Forests Healthy Communities, Oregon Small Woodland Association, Douglas Timber Operators, Starker Forests, Associated Oregon Loggers, and Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt. SAF members from Oregon, California, Washington, and Idaho participated in the event. Feedback from the workshop showed that the participants appreciated the information and encouraged SAF to hold future workshops as critical issues come before the legislatures.



