



## Annual Review 2021

# 2021

A year of change, adaptation,  
growth, and redoubled  
commitment to forests.

*The All Hands All Lands Burn Team burns piles to reduce fuel  
loads near Taos Ski Valley in Northern New Mexico.*

# ANNUAL REVIEW





Aspen and ponderosa pine on Borrego Mesa, New Mexico.

## The next quarter century

**T**he Guild has always had a sense of urgency. 25 years ago, founding members felt an urgency to nourish the spark that drew them together and to spread the passion for stewardship. In 2021, Guild members and staff showed that urgency and passion in their work in forests across the country. I read this Annual Review with a mixture of pride and awe for all the accomplishments. What really stands out is the focus on solutions.

The extreme weather we experienced in 2021 underscored the challenge of stewardship as the climate rapidly changes. The Guild is responding to that challenge with focused, actionable solutions: sharing tools for oak resiliency, preparing to return fire to Minnesota red pines, supporting innovation, writing management plans for wildlife forestry in bottomland hardwoods, and planting trees after wildfire. Each of the regional descriptions in this Annual Review just skims the surface of the good work happening on the ground. It is hard to capture the full breadth of the positive impact of our networks and collaborations.

Guild members know many of the biggest stewardship challenges involve people and communities. The Guild has made progress by setting aside political differences, focusing on a common appreciation for the forest, and collectively committing to stewardship. That isn't easy, but the rewards are solutions that balance social, economic, and ecological needs over the next 25 years. I'm proud to be part of a group that is showing the way forward.

Zander Evans, Executive Director

**Your membership and donations to the Guild are what keep us going. Thank you. If you can make an additional year-end donation, we will turn your contribution into a positive impact for the forest. To give:**

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- email [membership@forestguild.org](mailto:membership@forestguild.org),
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A recent Oregon Forestry for the Birds Guild Gathering included a woods walk where attendees discussed forest management with birds in mind.



## Pacific West

Maura Olivos hit the ground running as the new Pacific West Region Coordinator at the start of 2021. Community was revived in March with the long-anticipated Northwest Innovative Forestry (NIF) Summit. We partnered with several organizations to engage more than 120 registrants in stirring and reflective discussions online, highlighting tribal and other forestry practices, and establishing a community of ecological forestry professionals.

In fitting with the “innovative” nature of the Summit, the Guild introduced a new online forum for Northwesterners to continue their discussions. With over 150 members across the Pacific West, it also houses a Guild Student group led by the Oregon State University (OSU) Student Chapter and is open to all Guild student members across California, Oregon, and Washington. The NIF forum will continue to serve an important role in keeping NW members connected as we prepare for the 2nd NIF Summit, March 24-26, 2022. Partnering again with Tribal leadership, Guild members, OSU, University of Washington, and Northwest Natural Resource Group, 2022's Summit plans to gather in-person at University of Washington's Pack Forest!

The Forestry for the Birds guide is near completion with sincere thanks to Ornithologist Gregor Yanega, a dedicated advisory committee, Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District, and Oregon Community Foundation. An in-person workshop in July offered crucial guidance and the advisory committee has been instrumental in supporting the science and long-term relevance of this Western Oregon focused guide. The Guild plans to release the guide in early Spring of 2022.

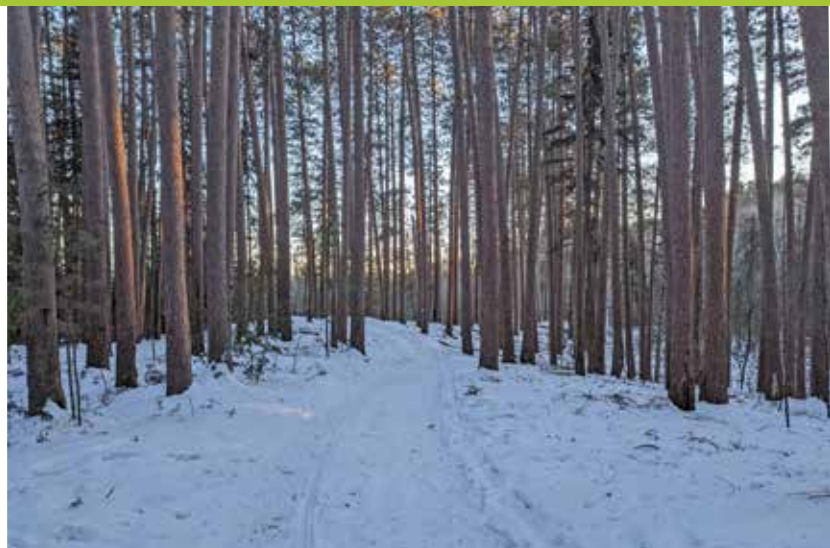
Lastly, we developed educational materials for Forest Stewardship Council® PNW patrons, hosted an online Klamath-Siskiyou Fire Regime webinar, and shared virtual Guild and forestry professional gatherings to help members connect, reflect upon their work, and enhance the work to come.



Wilson's Warbler by Mick Thompson, Creative Commons







Cloquet Forestry Center pre and post fuels reduction treatment. Photo by Lane Johnson



## Lake States

The cherished tradition of a Lake States Guild Gathering returned in August with field tours of three of the seven Michigan parcels that were donated to the Guild in 2016. It was great to use these forested properties as the demonstration sites we envisioned upon receiving the gift. We coupled these site visits with seminars on forestry and birds, and social events at the Michigan Technological University's Ford Center. The Guild, through our Lake States Manager Mike Lynch, has been an active supporter of the burgeoning Foresters for the Birds programs in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

We joined the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape partnership in 2020 and worked with partners this year to secure funding to expand stewardship practices in central Minnesota, and offer a series of Guild-led trainings.

We continue to support efforts to increase the use of prescribed fire. Examples include supporting the Minnesota Prescribed Fire Council, developing a Minnesota Fire Needs Assessment, and working with the University of Minnesota – Cloquet Forestry Center to create prescribed fire demonstration sites in several of their red pine stands. Dry conditions precluded the safe return of fire to the CFC pine stands in 2021 but the Guild was able to administer a series of fuel reduction and unit prep contracts that will make this effort safe and effective when fires can occur.

This is just a snapshot of how we find solutions to issues facing the region's forests, together. We need members and supporters to host and sponsor learning events to keep our community strong and grounded in putting the forest first.



Guild members discuss bird habitat, climate considerations, and site history while sharing management ideas on a Guild-owned parcel.





Guild members help relocate plots during a service project and Guild Gathering at the Holt Research Forest in Arrowsic, Maine.



## Northeast

The year kicked off with a welcome addition to the Guild's Northeast staff, as Logan Johnson joined as our Northeast Region Coordinator. Logan and Amanda Mahaffey are working out of a new Guild office in Portland, Maine. This year, our work centered on supporting and sustaining our community throughout the region.

We've continued our collaboration with the University of Maine's Forest Climate Change Initiative, co-hosting webinars focused on the Science and Practice of Forest Climate Adaptation in Maine. The success of our first series led us to develop the second year of programming that will take on a hybrid approach, coupling webinars with field tours.

Our Increasing Oak Resiliency in Southern New England project continued to make an impact. We hosted a virtual landowner town hall and question and answer session early in the year, followed by a 3-part miniseries for forest landowners. Partnering with the Forest Ecosystem Monitoring Cooperative and Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science, we launched an Oak Resiliency Assessment Tool for foresters and landowners to assess oak resiliency in their forests.

Additionally, we continued to support Foresters for the Birds workshops, Women Owning Woodlands chainsaw safety courses, and designed interpretive signs for the North Atlantic Fire Learning Trail. Looking ahead, we are excited to continue building our community of Forest Stewards through Guild Gatherings and other events that benefit foresters and other resource professionals.



Wildland firefighters run through a simulated exercise during an engine operations training. (NH Army National Guard and Maine Forest Service personnel pictured)



One of the interpretive signs designed for the North Atlantic Fire Learning Trail.







Tim Evans (Audubon SC) talks about bottomland hardwood forest management at a workshop in the lowcountry of SC.



Conducting a prescribed fire at DuPont State Recreational Forest. Footage from this burn was used in a virtual Learn-and-Burn experience for landowners.



Workshop participants walk through a forest managed by the West Virginia Land Trust, looking at restoration techniques.



## Southeast

Change is a natural part of forest ecosystems, and we would not be doing our part as forest stewards if we were not willing to adapt. This year, the Guild's Southeast Region office strategized, planned, and adapted plans, to bring forestry resources to the hands and screens of foresters and landowners Southeast-wide.

In July, the Guild welcomed Shawn Swartz as our new Southeast Region Manager. Alongside Dakota Wagner, they continue building connections and furthering the Guild's mission in the region.

We hosted a long-awaited workshop for landowners in Western North Carolina focused on non-timber forest products (both cultivation and marketing). This event welcomed more than 45 participants who were excited to get back into the woods with each other and learn about land stewardship.

We continued work in the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley,

partnering with Guild members to further ecological management of bottomland hardwood forests by writing forest management plans and implementing acres of habitat enhancement.

Collectively adapting, several partners with similar goals in the coastal region of North Carolina created a hybrid workshop with us for landowners and foresters. The focus was ecological management of bottomland forests in the Atlantic Coastal Plain.

In May, the Guild became an official partner of ForestHer North Carolina. This group's mission is to empower a community of women landowners and natural resource professionals to engage in forest conservation and stewardship in North Carolina, which aligns well with the Guild's outreach goals.

Our seasonal region member calls are a great way to stay involved and updated in the region, so please join us when you can!



## Southwest

This year is characterized by sustained growth in our staff and projects in the Guild's Southwest region. In May, we welcomed Miguel Olivas, the first ever Forest Stewards Youth Corps (FSYC) Field Coordinator, and new Program Coordinators Liz Bailey and Rachel Bean. In September and October, fall FSYC members planted more than 8,000 trees in a fire scar on the Philmont Scout Ranch through a partnership with New Mexico State University.

FSYC alumni are now supporting other forest restoration efforts through jobs with the Guild. Several went on to contribute to a successful first season of the All Hands All Lands (AHAL) Pile squad in the winter of 2020/2021. A Story Map on the Guild's AHAL webpage shares the Squad's accomplishments. We are fielding a timber marking crew based out of the Mt. Taylor Ranger District that includes FSYC alumni and local foresters/firefighters funded by the Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP).

Looking ahead, we have a full plate of new projects with familiar themes. We have been engaged in forest restoration in the Zuni Mountains for more than a decade through the Zuni Mountains Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLR). As a result of these efforts, the Washington Office of the U.S. Forest Service awarded top ranking to a CFLR extension covering the remaining western half of the Zunis. The Guild is also a key partner on the new Rio Chama CFLR project, which spans 3.5 million acres across four national forests in New Mexico and Colorado.

Continuing a legacy of community forestry on the Camino Real U.S. Forest Service Ranger District, our successful proposal for a CFRP grant will support the Rio de Las Trampas Forest Council through 2024. We will work with Trampas Council members to facilitate local wood cutters to complete small thinning units in exchange for a per-acre fee and free firewood.



The Espanola based FSYC crew. From left, Jaysen Sena, Genevieve Conley, Jim Rose, and Jose Ramirez.



FSYC crew members plant ponderosa pine seedlings at Philmont Scout Ranch, New Mexico.

# Stewards Circle

*Helping sustain and create our good work*

**Stewards Circle donations are a key part of delivering on our mission. Thank you for the support that keeps us both innovative and steady.**

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## Working Together

our community and forests thrive

This year, in addition to launching a new online forum, hosting hybrid events, and increasing the number of resources we share online, we surveyed members to better meet your needs. Thank you to everyone who shared thoughts, ideas, and offers to contribute. We heard that getting together in the field remains essential. We will work to focus on the issues you said are important including climate smart forestry, perceptions of forestry in the public, and invasive species response, among others. Stay tuned, and we welcome your support!

**Upcoming events! Register and learn more at <http://www.ForestStewardsGuild.org/events>**

- November 30: Southeast virtual Guild Gathering
- December 16: Management for Old Growth Characteristics webinar, by Dr. Bill Keeton
- The Science and Practice Series: Addressing Forest Climate Change in Maine
  - ~ Webinars: December 1, February 23, and April 27 from Noon – 1:00 p.m. ET
  - ~ Field Tours: December 3, February 24, and April 29 from 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. ET