

College of the Siskiyous

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PRESS RELEASE

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TRAINING THE 21ST CENTURY FORESTER

Weed / COS - If you've always wanted to work outdoors and are looking for the skills you need to work in forestry, fisheries, and wildlife management then COS's new program in Environmental Resources Technology could be for you.

Environmental Resources Technology is one of three new programs College of the Siskiyous is launching this fall. Fall classes start September 8th, and include: Introduction to Environmental Resources, Dendrology, Introduction to Field Studies and Forest Ecology.

The Environmental Resources Technology (ERRT) program will train students to be an Environmental Resources Technician. In the program students will learn to identify merchantable species and associated understory for west coast, coniferous forests, navigate in wildland environments using a compass, topographic map, aerial photos and GPS and collect data for wildlife and stream surveys, or other resource inventories.

Graduates of the program can expect a wide-range of career options and employers from governmental agencies to private forestry companies to non-profit conservation organizations. "In my career as a forester I have had the opportunity to work in the great out-of-doors in a variety of locations in the United States. My knowledge of natural resource management has continued to expand by working with a variety of resource specialists, including wildlife biologists, botanists, archaeologists, hydrologists, soil scientists, forest entomologists and pathologists. The greatest challenge has been in keeping up with the constantly changing laws, regulations and policies that effect the management of our forest resources," explained Dennis Poehlmann, instructor for Introduction to Environmental Resources.

Commenting on the new program, instructor John Kessler said, "Forestry can be quite challenging, but also very rewarding. Meeting the needs of competing interests and different landowners, while protecting and managing various resources in an economical manner takes a creative person. Working in the forest can give you a great feeling of accomplishing a job worth doing, whether marking timber, conducting wildlife surveys, or working on watershed analysis. While some days are

difficult, there are days when you can't believe that you are being paid to work in the woods."

Kessler explained that the opportunities in forestry are diverse and evolving, "There will always be a need for technicians and foresters to do the basic work of inventory, marking, and resource surveying. New opportunities include working with groups holding conservation easements or measuring and managing for carbon storage. Among the biggest challenges are the ever-changing rules and educating the public on the benefits of forest management," he said.

When asked what students can expect in his classes Kessler said, "This fall students in the Dendrology class will learn to identify trees and shrubs from our region, along with some of the history of the botanists who found and identified those plants. In the Introduction to Field Studies class students will learn about various aspects of resource management and measurements including fire and fuels, wildlife and fisheries, timber, and outdoor recreation, along with the ways in which the various resources are interrelated."

To learn more about the new Environmental Resources programs and see a list of fall course offerings visit www.siskiyous.edu/cte/environmental/ or call Christy Cummings Dawson at (530) 938-5305 or send an email to cummingsc@siskiyous.edu. To register online visit www.siskiyous.edu and click "Online Services" or call (530) 938-5272 or call toll-free (888) 397-4339.