



Hal James Salwasser

August 4, 1945 - October 15, 2014

Hal J. Salwasser, age 69, died Wednesday, October 15, 2014 at his Corvallis home.

Comments



“ I was at grad school in Montana at the turn of the 1990s. At the time, Hal was leading the US-FS New Perspectives Program (which morphed into US-FS Ecosystem Management). Excellent, inspiring, and respected leadership provided by Hal. I worked as a pre-harvest silviculturist with the US-FS for 2 summers. My bosses were strongly influenced by Hal's ideas and rationale, and they challenged me to take an ecosystem approach while developing my prescriptions. What an opportunity for me. Thanks Hal for your wide-reaching leadership. I then moved back to Canada and took that ecosystem approach with me, using it throughout my career in with the BC Forest Service. Overall, I have so much respect for Hal's work. Sorry to hear of his passing.

Patrick Daigle, RPF (Retired)
Victoria, BC

Patrick Daigle - June 23, 2018 at 12:34 PM



“ Prof. Salwasser (or just Hal as he would mention!) was the ultimate example of generosity, respectfulness, humbleness and compassion. He offered opportunities, support and encouragement happily to everyone. May you rest in peace, you set a perfect example for leadership. The field of forestry and ecosystem services lost a great leader, but your legacy continues. May God have mercy on you and your family, and grant them patience and strength. Respectfully, Dalia Abbas

Dalia Abbas - July 28, 2015 at 12:18 PM



“ It was only yesterday I learned of Hal’s untimely death in mid-October. I was shocked and saddened that such a vibrant individual was gone at such an early age.

I first met Hal in 1980 upon my assignment to the Forest Service’s Regional Office in San Francisco. During the next eleven years Hal and I crossed paths many times, often working together on wildlife issues and, in my final 2 years with the agency under his supervision regarding old-growth forest habitat preservation.

Hal and I were often at odds on process but never on objectives, Hal being much more of the eternal optimist on our ability to solve difficult social and biological issues. Yet he was always supportive, even when my dealing with the bureaucratic adversity resulted in my expressing a more concise retort to what he would have diplomatically termed, “bovine fecal matter.”

Always with a warm smile on his face, Hal was a “bigger than life” biologist, not only in physical stature, but in his innovative thinking on ways to best preserve wildlife in a changing world. He always had a new idea for solving difficult issues.

As we took our separate paths we lost touch, but his influence on me and so many others remained. I know Hal’s spirit persists forever in the western forest lands of this country and I will think fondly of him whenever I am there.

Dean Carrier

Dean Carrier - January 11, 2015 at 04:55 AM



“ I was schocked to hear of Hal's passing. I had the opportunity to work for (or with? not sure which is appropriate?) on many occassions relating to forestry issues and events. He was such a warm and inviting person, one you never forget. I wish the family peace and hope they are able to relish in the many memories they have of Hal.

Sincerely,

Angie (Johnson) Lane
Oregon Department of Forestry



Angie Lane - November 18, 2014 at 04:52 PM



“ Janine and Family:

I am so sorry for your loss and sorry for Oregon even more. It takes me awhile to be very good about expressing feelings over a loss because it is so important. I am from a multigenerational lumber and forestry family, my grandfather Orville Miller is widely recognized for being largely responsible for getting the Forestry research Center started at OSU, although I am sure many many others were right there with him. The only reason this is important is I grew up learning from Orville, and then my father, that in our family nothing is sadder than a tree being taken before its time from a forest, especially one of the few stalwart giants- or a man like Hal of legendary status in forestry being taken before his. I am so sorry, and he will be missed and his passing noticed like the empty space in the forest where trees and a man like Hal stood for so long. Spaces fill in in time in the forest, but never as easily in life when the space left is as big as the one Hal has left. I hope it helps some that some of us won't forget and hope you know that you, Janine, stand as tall with all of us as Hal does. Twin Giants.

Rob Miller
Mt. Jefferson Farms
Miller Forests Inc.

Rob Miller - November 05, 2014 at 05:24 PM



“ Hal was a rare gem, and I've been privileged to have him as a friend, colleague, and mentor. From our grad school days at Berkeley, it was obvious that he was destined for greatness in wildlife science and natural resources management. Our nickname for him, The Senator, acknowledged his natural leadership skills and his ease in engaging us all in thoughtful discussion of the latest science and policy developments. For many years he was my mentor and a true champion for my professional growth. Hal challenged me to new career heights that I would never have aspired to without his unwavering support and encouragement.

I often described Hal as a big Mack truck barreling down the highway and breaking new ground in the science and policy landscape. Many of us were sucked in behind him, setting to work on the novel ideas that sprang from his amazing mind. Meanwhile he was miles down the road, plowing new ground along the creative highway.

My heartfelt condolences go to Hal's family. May their many fond memories, and the knowledge that Hal was loved and appreciated by so many, help sustain them in this difficult time.

Wini Kessler, PhD and CWB
U.S. Forest Service, Retired
Past-president of The Wildlife Society

Wini Kessler - October 29, 2014 at 06:40 PM



“ Hal Salwasser was a pillar of the scientific community whose expertise in wildlife biology and leadership in forestry brought great credibility to the practice sustainable forestry in the Oregon.

His vision energized and engaged many stakeholders. He set the College of Forestry program at Oregon State University on a sustainable path of teaching and research, and inspired widespread participation.

I will always be indebted to Hal's invaluable contributions and his inspiration to support the science behind the practice of forestry.

Hal's family will be in our thoughts and prayers.

Rick Sohn
Retired CEO
Lone Rock Timber Co.
Roseburg, Oregon

Rick Sohn - October 25, 2014 at 03:27 PM



“ So sorry to lose Hal. I'm glad I had the opportunity to work for him and learn from him. He was a nice person who always treated me with warmth and encouragement, even in the most busy and challenging times. My deepest sympathies to Janine, Kaija, and the rest of his family.

Mark Reed - October 23, 2014 at 05:24 PM



“ "Dr. Salwasser was a mentor to so many in the indigenous community at OSU and other regions of the United States. I have to personally thank him for giving three grad students the chance to change history at OSU by developing and facilitating the "Traditional Knowledge Conference" for indigenous ways of knowing, a first for the university. He supported the introduction and implementation of Traditional Ecological/Environmental Knowledge to the rest of the mainstream scientific community. Dr. Salwasser was always proactive in implementing ways to retain and support indigenous students in academia. Thank you Dr. Salwasser for placing your piece of the pot back into the knowledge stream and helping us preserve our traditional sciences at OSU.

Gail J. Woodside (Nabahii Isdzanii)
Advanced Diversity Pipeline Graduate Fellow
Oregon State University



Gail Woodside - October 23, 2014 at 01:45 PM



“ Hal was a wonderful friend, mentor and colleague - someone I greatly admired and counted on for wisdom and guidance. He always took the high road, navigating significant natural resource decisions facing Oregonians and the global community with intelligence, courage and compassion. Oregon has been blessed with few leaders who consistently demonstrated such integrity. He will be sorely missed.

Leslie Lehmann
Executive Director (retired)
Oregon Forest Resources Institute

Leslie Lehmann - October 22, 2014 at 08:46 PM



“ Copy and paste to see a great article on Hal.

http://www.gazettetimes.com/news/local/former-dean-of-osu-s-forestry-college-dies-at/article_1b7fff4-5576-11e4-87c2-cf7e79ba429d.html

DeMoss-Durdan Funeral Home - October 21, 2014 at 12:23 PM



“ Diego T. Irwin
Hal seemed to be always happy. I never hung out with him at work or outside of Zias. He was always smiling knowing he has a once a week (sometimes twice) burrito. I enjoyed numerous of chats about his trips to NM and the chili. Hal thank you for painting such beautiful memories in my, taking me back to my home land. I'm just a little food booth. However with your smiles & good nature. You even touched me dearly.

Zia Cuisine - October 20, 2014 at 04:03 PM



“ Head*

Zia - October 20, 2014 at 04:07 PM



“ Hal was VIP in the 'wildlife staff in the WO during the 80's. Bob Nelson, who worked with Hal in Region 5 made me aware of what a great addition he would be to our staff, and Bob was more than right. In addition to being a great employee' he was a great friend. He will be missed by all those who loved him, including me and the Wildlife group of the USFS in the 1080's Dale A. Jones

Dale A. Jones - October 19, 2014 at 09:14 PM



“ I am so sorry and so sad. Mavis Tuten

Mavis Tuten - October 19, 2014 at 05:01 PM



“ Hal Salwasser was a big guy in so many senses of the word. He seemed to have a knack for playing critical roles in crucial situations that may have started out small. In the past few days of reflecting on his life I reread David Quammen’s fascinating account in *The Song of the Dodo* of Hal at the intersection of science, policy, and management when he pressed leaders of the emerging field of conservation biology for specification of “viable population.” He wanted that information so the Forest Service would know what it took to carry out the intent of the National Forest Management Act. Hal brought the real world to the ivory tower, asked for help, and was in the thick of those high-impact deliberations for many years.

A special and characteristic memory I have of Hal is visiting his small office in the tower atop the Auditors Building overlooking the Mall in Washington, DC. The panorama stretched from the Capital past the Washington Monument a stone’s throw away to the Reflecting Pool and the Lincoln Memorial. It was ca. 1991 and Hal was leading the Forest Service’s New Perspectives program – an effort by the agency to change its culture as the end of the federal-lands Timber Era became clear. The big man with the big job exuded youthful enthusiasm for his tiny office with a great view. When he visited field offices, though, he was no longer aloft and certainly never aloof; he carried out the difficult task with a sense of confidence, pride, and pleasure that helped many people through challenging times.

Fred Swanson

US Forest Service scientist (retired) and courtesy faculty in Forest Ecosystems and Society, OSU

Fred Swanson - October 19, 2014 at 03:59 PM



“ I’m a former department head at OSU who served with Hal during his tenure as Dean. He was an inspirational leader for the College of Forestry and galvanized us into action on many new initiatives ranging from strategic planning to progressive research projects. Hal was also a gifted educator and mentor. He often gave the kick-off lecture in my introductory forestry class and always impressed the students with his passion for sustainable resource management on both a local and global scale. He established a remarkable legacy at the College that will be long remembered and appreciated.

Jack Walstad
Professor Emeritus
College of Forestry
Oregon State University

Jack Walstad - October 19, 2014 at 12:19 PM



“ Ro is following this tribute.

Ro - October 18, 2014 at 05:39 PM



“ I was surprised and saddened to learn of Hal's passing. Our lives were loosely intertwined for over 40 years--it is hard to think of not meeting him at a conference again. We were fellow graduate students at Berkeley in the 1970s. He took a course for which I was a teaching assistant and I served as a T.A. for A. Starker Leopold's wildlife biology class. Starker was Hal's major professor, and you can't top those credentials in the field of wildlife biology and conservation. Hal went off to a distinguished career with the U.S. Forest Service and, ultimately, as Dean of OSU's College of Forestry. He was Dean when I started working for CoF as a Research Associate in 2009--our career trajectories took different paths--but he remained an enthusiastic and cordial colleague throughout. My condolences to his family and friends. Blair Csuti

Blair Csuti - October 17, 2014 at 03:32 PM



“ Former OSU forestry dean Hal Salwasser dies at 69
10/16/2014

CORVALLIS, Ore. – Harold J. “Hal” Salwasser, former dean of the College of Forestry at Oregon State University, died at his home in Corvallis Wednesday night (Oct. 15) of apparent natural causes. He was 69 years old.

Salwasser had been an active member of the forestry faculty since stepping down as dean in 2012 after 12 years leading the college. He had planned to retire from Oregon State at the end of December.

“Hal was a wonderful colleague, a respected forester and an engaged Corvallis community member,” said OSU President Edward J. Ray. “His work leading the College of Forestry grew the university’s essential contributions in teaching and research concerning the world’s forests, watersheds, natural areas and the wood products industry.”

Salwasser guided the OSU College of Forestry through a period of immense transition in forest policies and management nationally and globally. He led efforts to maintain forest production while incorporating new concerns about biodiversity, climate change, wildfire, stream health protection, and other issues.

As dean, Salwasser oversaw a forestry program that is more than 120 years old and is consistently ranked as one of the best forestry programs in the country. Today the OSU College of Forestry has an annual budget of some \$25 million, with more than a thousand undergraduate and graduate students and an internationally recognized faculty.

Salwasser also directed the Forest Research Laboratory at OSU, which spans a broad range of disciplines, while incorporating social, economic and policy aspects of forests.

Before coming to Oregon State, Salwasser was the chief executive officer of the Pacific Southwest Research Station of the U.S. Forest Service. There he supervised the natural resources research and development of Forest Service activities in California, Hawaii and the Pacific Islands. He previously was regional forester for the northern region of the U.S. Forest Service, which included Idaho, Montana, and the Dakotas.

The Salwasser family has requested that in lieu of flowers, contributions be made to the Hal Salwasser Fellowship Fund through the OSU Foundation.