

Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries

800 NE Oregon Street #28, Suite 965, Portland, OR 97232

503.731.4100 FAX 503.731.4066 WEB <http://www.oregongeology.com>

NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: James Roddey 503-731-4100 x242 or on cell phone at (503) 807-8343

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<http://www.oregongeology.com/news&events/NewsReleases.htm>

Rogue Flyfishers Association awards state reclamationist with 'Golden Demon' conservation honor

Portland, Oregon: E. Frank Schnitzer, Lead Reclamationist for Floodplains for the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI), has received the highest honor bestowed by the Rogue Flyfishers Association—the Golden Demon Award—for efforts to preserve fish habitat.

The award, given during the Association's meeting on Feb. 18, 2004, was last given to then-Governor John Kitzhaber for the creation of the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds. The "demon" is a special fly used for catching Chinook and Coho salmon, and was tied by association President Mike Ireland. It is given to a non-member for outstanding fish conservation efforts.

The award honors Schnitzer, who spearheads a diverse group of landowners, agencies and conservation groups started in 2000 called the Rogue River Stakeholders Group. The group's goal was to develop a river and floodplain management plan to protect a three-mile section of the river near Lower Table Rock that suffered major damage during the New Years day flood of 1997.

This flood captured an Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) owned pond formerly used for gravel mining near the river. This rerouted the river path and put adjacent farmland at risk of erosion and even more ponds at risk of capture. The re-routing of the river through the pond, if left unchecked, would have caused substantial damage to fisheries and farmland leading to the capture of more nearby ponds. This would also have resulted in the destruction of fish habitat by draining the

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riverbed and eliminating the backwater side channels so critical for fish in this popular fishing area.

“Frank organized our group’s role in the project to plant about 1,000 trees during the fall of 2002 and another 1,000 in the fall of 2003,” said Rogue Flyfishers Association Conservation Chairman Gary Graham, whose group volunteered about 200 hours of labor to plant native vegetation to stabilize the banks of the Rogue. “Frank was highly organized, he led by example – and he always managed to work harder than the rest of us.”

Rose Marie Davis, a prior recipient of the Golden Demon Award and active conservationist in the Rogue Basin Coordinating Council, said Schnitzer “involved all landowners and coordinated many diverse agencies in this project – he’s served as a role model by working long and hard on many jobs that needed to be done, from finding root wads to planting trees.”

The Rogue’s side channels would have dried up without the Rogue River Stakeholders Project, according to David Haight, fish biologist for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Central Point office. “This section of the Rogue is known for its habitat for young chinook and coho salmon,” Haight said. “When the trees that were planted mature, they’ll shade the river and provide a source of insects for fish and a source of woody debris in the river which provides habitat for young fish.”

Schnitzer specializes in restoring inactive floodplain sites and permitting new mining sites for the agency’s Mineral Land Regulation and Reclamation Program in Albany. He also has other ongoing restoration projects in the Willamette River basin. Schnitzer has a B.S. and M.S. in Soils and Biometeorology from Utah State University and has been with DOGAMI for 20 years.

The Rogue River Stakeholders’ Project will conduct monitoring over the next 10 years. It is a \$1.3 million project jointly funded by the stakeholders and by two grants of \$551,102 from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board.

Stakeholder landowners include two family-owned farms, Bear Creek Orchards, Rogue Aggregates, ODOT, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), The Nature Conservancy, and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Agency members in the group include Jackson County Planning Department, Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District, ODFW, US Army Corps of Engineers (USCOE), Oregon Division of State Lands (DSL), National OAA Fisheries, ODOT, and DOGAMI. Other members include the Rogue Flyfishers Association, Rogue River Guides and the Bear Creek Watershed Council.

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Learn more about the Rogue River Stakeholder Group at:

<http://www.oregongeology.com/news&events/MLRRRogueOct2003.htm>

The Rogue Flyfishers Association includes about 240 members. Its mission is to enhance fishery resources and habitat through conservation, preservation and education. For more information, contact: Gary Graham, Conservation Chairman/Rogue Flyfishers Association - 541-512-1841 - (<http://www.rogueflyfishers.org/default.asp>).

David Haight, Oregon Department Of Fish and Wildlife - 541-826-8774

(<http://www.dfw.state.or.us>)

Frank Schnitzer, Mined Land Regulation and Reclamation Program, Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries - 541-967- 2039 x25

(<http://www.oregongeology.com>)

The Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries is an independent agency of the State, and has a broad responsibility in developing a geologic understanding of natural hazards. We then make this information available to communities and individuals to help reduce the risks from earthquakes, tsunamis, landslides, floods and volcanic eruptions. The Department is also the lead state regulatory agency for mining, oil, gas and geothermal exploration, production and reclamation.

For more information on upcoming events and current projects, contact James Roddey at 800 NE Oregon St., Portland, OR 97232, (503) 731-4100, ext. 242 or DOGA-MI field offices at: 1510 Campbell St., Baker City, (541) 523-3133; 5375 Monument Drive, Grants Pass, (541) 476-2496; and the Mined Land Regulation and Reclamation Program, 229 Broadalbin St. SW, Albany, (541) 967-2039.

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