

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Bob Zybach for the degree of Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies in Forest Science, Anthropology, and Anthropology presented on March 5, 1999. Title: Using Oral Histories to Document Changing Forest Cover Patterns: Soap Creek Valley, Oregon, 1500 - 1999.

Abstract approved:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven Radosevich", written over a horizontal line.

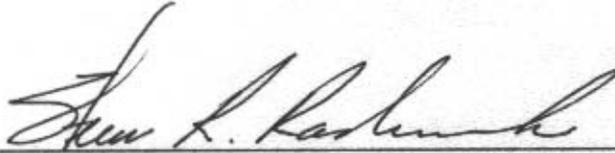
Steven Radosevich

This thesis examines forest history of a portion of the Douglas-fir Region: Soap Creek Valley, a 15,000 acre sub-basin of the Luckiamute River in northern Benton County, Oregon. The primary reasons for the research were to test oral history methodology, document sub-basin scale forest cover pattern changes, and determine basic causes of change. Oral history research methods include interdisciplinary scientific and gray literature reviews, archival research, consultations with local experts, personal observations, and location and/or creation of relevant interviews and interview transcripts. Key findings of this research are: 1) Soap Creek Valley forest cover patterns reflect local human values at any given point in historical time (as modified by local nonhuman disturbances and wild plant and animal species), and 2) oral histories can be an efficient method for documenting and interpreting forest conditions, particularly for the last century of time.

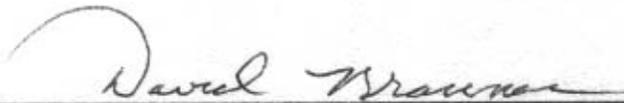
Major findings concerning Soap Creek Valley include: 1) current forest cover patterns are largely a result of savannah afforestation, agricultural practices, and housing developments since 1845; 2) wildlife biodiversity richness is greater now than in preceding centuries; 3) forest trees occur in even-aged stands and groves generally less than 100 years and rarely over 350 years of age; 4) early historical forest trees existed in isolation, groves, and relatively small stands and pockets; and 5) local people and prevailing cultural values have been primary shapers of forest conditions for the past 500 years, and likely the past 10,000 years as well.

Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies thesis of Bob Zybach presented on March 5, 1999

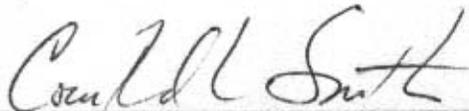
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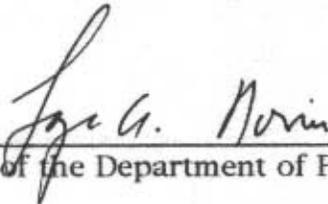
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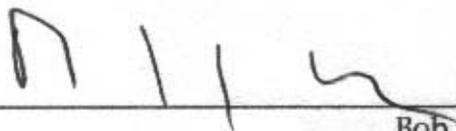
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Head of the Department of Forest Science

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## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

The following list contains acronyms and abbreviations used in this thesis. Acronyms are series of letters, usually capitalized, that represent a series of words; examples include CCC, ESA, and USDA from the list. Abbreviations are accepted shortened spellings of common words and phrases, usually using lower case letters and followed by a period; examples include misc., etc., and e.g. from the text, and OR and Rng. from the list.

AD	<i>Anna Domini</i> . Standard US calendar year.
BP	Before Present Time (in years). Thesis uses 1999 AD.
BT	PLS Bearing Tree. Key reference points for 1852-1914 surveys.
c.	<i>circa</i> . Approximate date or year.
CCC	US Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1941
DLC	OR Donation Land Claims. Property obtained through 1850 law.
ESA	US Endangered Species Act of 1973
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GLO	US General Land Office Survey
HBC	Hudson's Bay Company
OAC	OR State Agricultural College (previous name for OSC)
OR	State of Oregon
OSC	OR State College (previous name for OSU)
OSU	OR State University
PLS	US Public Land Survey, beginning in 1852 for OR and Benton Co.
PSU	Portland (OR) State University
Rng.; R.	PLS Range (approximate 6-mile wide east/west strips)
S. (1)	South of the PLS Willamette Meridian
Sec.; S. (2)	PLS Section (approx. one square mile; 640 acres)
Tsp.; T.	PLS Township (1) approx. 6-mile wide north/south strips, or (2) approx. 36-sq. mile intersections of surveyed Rngs. and Tsps.
UO	University of Oregon
US	United States
USDA	US Department of Agriculture
USDI	US Department of the Interior
USGS	US Geological Survey
WW I	World War I
WW II	World War II
W.W.M.; W.	West of the PLS Willamette Meridian

Using Oral Histories to  
Document Changing Forest Cover Patterns:  
Soap Creek Valley, Oregon, 1500-1999

by

Bob Zybach

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