



Sweet Home, Seven Oak students prep for Forest Field Days

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LEBANON — Students from Seven Oak and Sweet Home schools will learn about sustainable forestry during the annual Forest Field Days May 15-16 at Udell's Happy Valley Tree Farm near Lebanon.

Program coordinator LaRae Ash is expecting 185 Sweet Home students and 165 students from Seven Oak.

"Our program is more than 20 years old, and we typically serve anywhere from 1,500 to 1,700 middle school students in Lane and Linn counties annually, which requires more than 150 volunteers," Ash said.

Forests Today and Forever is a non-profit foundation dedicated to natural resource education.

The Forest Field Days program includes a six-week science and math-based curriculum that exposes students to issues an Oregon family might encounter if they owned forested property.

According to Ash, students are told they inherited 200 acres from their grandmother. They cannot sell the property, must harvest it sustainably and create a five-year land management plan that meets all state and federal regulations to protect water, soil and wildlife, while providing for public recreation and paying taxes.

Students divide up into groups of four. One student is interest in making money through timber harvesting, another wants to make sure all wildlife and habitat is protect, another focuses on health water and soils and the fourth student wants to develop recreational opportunities.

Students will interact with professionals in their specific fields, ranging from timber land owners to soil and water specialists.

Students learn about the many types of soils structures, erosion, riparian areas, water quality issues, how trees are grown and determining their size, and much more.

To learn more about the Forest Field Days, visit www.foreststodayandforever.org or call 541-767-9078.