



**Friends of the Klamath County Library  
Quarterly Membership Meeting Minutes  
18 January 2023  
At the Library and by Zoom**

The meeting was called to order by Judith Izzo, President, at 14:02. About 10 guests attended *via* Zoom and about 18 attendees came to the library. Unknown which FOL Board members were present.

The primary speaker, Bill Ganong, was introduced by President Izzo to speak on “The Bootleg Fire Recovery: One Year Later”.

Bill began his presentation by briefly reviewing parts of his presentation of January 2022. The pictures Bill is showing were taken by his wife, Marie and a cousin. A quick review of the parameters of the 2022 fire in the Sprague River basin included fire pictures. The fire was fed by severe drought conditions and very high temperatures complicated by the gusty west winds that came up each afternoon. More area was burned each day than is usually burned each year. There were a lot of fire fighting resources in the area but they were unable to contain the fire north of the north fork of the Sprague River and out of the Gearhardt Wilderness. Firefighters evacuated the Ganong property. Overnight, the fire burned their property but the cabin withstood the fire – because the fire was on the ground, not in the trees and the cabin is made of siding that is concrete-based. The land around the cabin had been cleared of wood piles and soaked the day before which also helped.

Early on, the Ganongs put their land into the American Tree Farm program which required they thin trees; they took out pines and all juniper. The fire took the small trees but the big trees remained on their land. When compared to the nearby national forest land which had not been thinned, the differences were stark – the national forest land was totally burned. The ground surface there became impervious to water; that land will take a long time to recover. Removing the juniper has brought more pine trees, shrubs and grasses.

Slides of the recovery were impressive – hillsides have greened up, the trees that did burn are breaking down to enhance soil recovery. Willows along creek sprouted (though the elk ate them); they’ve come back already this year. Geese returned; swallows came but without aquatic insects, they didn’t stay; beavers are again building; deer, however, were decimated as were mussels in the creek. Lots of plants are back; slides of flowering species were heartening.

Bill then introduced Charles Erdman from Trout Unlimited to talk about stream restoration in the Sprague watershed. Restoration work has been primarily downstream from Ganong’s property. Charles explained a bit about Trout Unlimited and then talked about the fire effects on the river: fish kill directly, raising water temperatures, erosion, fallen trees into the water. Habitat improvement started before the fire in the valley to bring back populations of Klamath Basin Bull trout which is a threatened species with increased sediment deposition projects and improved transport areas. After the fire, structures were built to imitate beaver dams to increase sediment. He noted that lamprey seem to like the new sediment areas. Sediment areas also raise the water level which promotes plant growth. Restoration efforts will continue in the Sprague watershed as weather permits.

Questions from the audience followed with active discussion of the various topics.

**MEETING ADJOURNED: 15:18**

Respectfully submitted,  
Elaine Deutschman, Secretary  
Friends of the Klamath County Library