

# Douglas County Forest Products

Winchester, Oregon

TPM Member Since  
July 2012



Douglas County Forest Products is an independently owned sawmill located in the scenic Umpqua Valley, near Roseburg, Oregon. The company's mission statement is, simply, "A Commitment to Quality."

Douglas County Lumber Company, now Douglas County Forest Products, was established in 1941 east of Roseburg, led by timber pioneers Sid Comfort and Maurice Hallmark. The original sawmill, five miles up Rock Creek, was diesel powered, and the company did its own logging on federal and private old-growth timberlands. On average, the mill produced about 20,000 board feet a day. The company



*Aerial view of Douglas County Forest Products in Roseburg, Oregon.*



*The log yard seems to stretch out for miles!*

forged through decades of economic upturn and downturn until the mill closed in 1985.

Twenty-nine-year-old Hal Westbrook, who managed his family's veneer plant in Coquille, Oregon, saw the buckling Roseburg company as an investment, and in the late 1985, along with partner Jerry Bruce, purchased Douglas County Lumber Company. "Sid didn't want the mill to just go away, but he didn't want the competitors to have it either," Westbrook said.

When the foreign markets crashed in the mid 90s, the company evolved again. They revamped the mill and switched over to stud production, which is what the mill

thrives on today. Bruce succumbed to cancer in 2002, and Westbrook turned to two new partners; Rick Mathews and John Blodgett; for help and growth.

Currently, Douglas County Forest Products employs 160 people and produces 225 million board feet of lumber annually. The current plant is a model of efficiency and productivity. Every log that goes through the mill is fully utilized, whether it is a unit of high quality studs, chips, sawdust, hog fuel or shavings. The company is still privately held by Westbrook, Mathews, and Blodgett.



*An employee uses the knuckleboom to sort and move logs in the log yard.*

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Today, Douglas County Forest Products produces high quality studs and works diligently to stay a step ahead of the competition. Complacency has no place at Douglas County Forest Products, continual improvement being paramount to its continued success. In addition, Douglas County Forest Products is committed to sound forestry practices that ensure the sustainability of raw material production, providing the highest level of protection for water quality, soils, fish and wildlife habitat and diversity, and aesthetics. The company practices and abides by the Oregon Forest Practices (OFP). The OFP Act, enacted in 1971, is a continuously evolving set of rules and guidelines that must be followed when harvesting timber. The OFP requires that the timber owner obtain permits before harvesting, reforest within two years of harvesting, provide comprehensive riparian protection, maintain soil productivity, minimize road impacts and protect habitat and diversity. The company is proud to say that it maintains strict compliance with these standards.

Furthermore, the company participates in the Oregon Professional Logger program which requires annual training for the sustainable Forestry Initiative. Under the Initiative, all field employees must complete the Sustainable Forestry Training for Logging Operators program. The company is committed to providing a safe place for employees to work. As part of that commitment, the company has been a member of the Oregon Sharp Program for over four years.

Westbrook said he attributes the success and longevity of Douglas County Forest Products to the employees and their strong willingness to always change and evolve. "Our employees almost expect us to come up with some crazy idea to change," Westbrook said. Douglas County Forest Products still continues to evolve and is ready for the next industry challenge.



*DCFP employee feeds material into the system.*



*An employee manages the wrapping process with ease.*



*DCFP maintains a rail spur to ship finished products.*

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