

# Rogue Flavor Guide seeks applications from local food and farming businesses

BY GEORGIA JULIUS

Rogue Valley Food System Network (RVSN) is seeking applications from food and farming businesses in Jackson and Josephine Counties for listing in the 18th annual Rogue Flavor Guide. Thanks in part to a grant from the US Department of Agriculture, sponsorships are available for nine listings of beginning, women-owned, and BIPOC-owned food and farm businesses. (BIPOC stands for Black, Indigenous and people of color.)

The Rogue Flavor Guide highlights local food, beverage, and farm businesses, events, classes, and community groups to help readers source fresh, wholesome, and sustainably produced foods in our communities. The publication also serves to educate and advocate around important local issues. Water use awareness and water-smart farming will be a special feature of this year's guide. Strategies for responsible usage and consumer conservation will be included.

Listings from the Applegate in the 2021 edition included Wooldridge Creek Winery, Banyan Farm, Electric Gardens, the Applegate Evening Market, and the Williams Farmers Market.

Rogue Valley Food System Network is a 2021 recipient of the USDA's Specialty Crop Block Grant. The grant, dedicated to

helping producers overcome obstacles and increase profitability and growth, funded 15 projects statewide for a total of nearly \$2 million. Funds awarded to RVFSN will allow increased distribution of and accessibility to the Rogue Flavor Guide over the next three years and will include sponsorship for Rogue Flavor Guide listings for one beginning, five BIPOC-owned, and three women-owned food and farm businesses.

The Rogue Flavor Guide is a critical component of RVFSN's vision for an equitable, regenerative, and resilient food system for all. Connecting with local farmers and food producers means supporting the local economy in ways beyond the immediately obvious. One study by the New Economics Foundation found that individual funds used to purchase produce through a CSA or farmers' market are twice as likely to stay and circulate within the community than those spent at a supermarket, creating a positive economic impact several times over.

In February 2022, 10,000 copies of the full-color, 68-page guide will be printed and distributed at businesses and events across the Rogue, Illinois, and Applegate valleys. Businesses listed in the Rogue Flavor Guide must be locally owned, and, if applicable, a percentage of ingredients or products must be sourced from local farms, ranches, vineyards, or breweries.

Are you interested in advertising a business, nonprofit, or community group or a one-time event or class series? Rogue Flavor Guide listings start at just \$75 for the year.

Applications close December 15. Learn more and apply at [rvfoodsystem.org](http://rvfoodsystem.org).

Georgia Julius  
[georgia.julius@rvfoodsystem.org](mailto:georgia.julius@rvfoodsystem.org)

# Ecological fuels reduction work resumes in the Upper Applegate Watershed

BY TERRY FAIRBANKS

To meet the challenge of increasing frequency and severity of wildfire fueled by climate change and a century of fire suppression, forest managers implement ecological restoration—cutting trees in overly dense forests, followed by controlled burns.

Last month, L o m a k a t s i Restoration Project began ecological thinning work as part of a broader effort by the Rogue Forest Partners in the Upper Applegate Watershed Project area (UAW). The 52,000-acre UAW planning area is located south of Ruch in the Applegate Valley, primarily within the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest and encompassing adjacent Bureau of Land Management and private lands.

Dr. Kerry Metlen, a longtime Ashland resident, a forest ecologist with the Nature Conservancy, and a key member of the Rogue Forest Partners, explains: "Rigorous science review shows that forest health in the West has declined due to fire exclusion and that active stewardship is needed to restore balance and help forests and communities adapt to future climates. Extensive ecological thinning and intentional fire use are needed to transform our relationship with fire from reactive to proactive."

This science is complementary to aboriginal fire knowledge and indigenous stewardship practices by area tribes that have been using fire to carefully tend the landscape since time immemorial and continue to provide leadership in forest restoration today. Tribal nations with ancestral ties to the area have voiced support of the project. Three tribal representatives currently serve on the Rogue Forest Partners' Implementation Review Team, a group tasked with ensuring forest restoration treatments reflect a range of community values.

In the UAW, after months of technical planning and pretreatment monitoring with partners, Lomakatsi is treating approximately 185 acres this fall on the Siskiyou Mountains Ranger District in the Applegate Valley. The focus on these initial acres is to reduce fire risk in strategic areas by removing surface and ladder fuels—shrubs, small trees, and lower fir and pine branches (often dead)—that, if ignited, could allow a wildfire to spread into the canopy. An additional 1,292 acres of ecological thinning will require the removal of merchantable-sized trees, and while trees were marked for removal this summer, those operations will not begin until 2022.

Any revenue generated from the sale of these by-products of restoration will be reinvested into further stewardship operations in the project area. After the ecological thinning, workers will pile slash for controlled pile burning in the spring or fall. There are also plans to begin conducting



Lomakatsi Lead Restoration Crew Manager Braulio Maya Cortes thins brush around an oak tree as part of the Upper Applegate Watershed Project.

understory prescribed burns this season in the UAW, possibly as many as 1,000 acres by 2025, to help maintain treatments and provide additional ecological benefits.

## Klamath Bird Observatory blog series explores birds as ecological indicators

The mission of the Klamath Bird Observatory (KBO)—to advance bird conservation and halt and reverse the decline of western forest birds—aligns with the Rogue Forest Partners (RFP) goals to reduce the risk of unnaturally extreme wildfires, promote climate adaptation, and restore resilient landscapes in the Rogue Basin.

A new three-part blog series on the RFP website, written in partnership with KBO, provides an overview of KBO's work with RFP using birds as ecological indicators to inform restoration planning and measure environmental response.

The first blog post introduces the idea of birds as indicators and explains how this approach can guide landscape-level planning and inform restoration design within individual forest stands. The second post describes the bird monitoring underway in the Upper Applegate Watershed to study how the bird community responds to the forest restoration. The third part of the series explores a new statistical approach that uses models to quantify changes in forest conditions. This cutting-edge methodology has enormous implications for improving the landscape evaluation of restoration projects to assess ecological change in the places where RFP works.

Restoration and monitoring take quite a bit of time, so stay tuned for future blog posts that will share the results from this critical work as it progresses over the next few years.

Terry Fairbanks  
Executive Director,  
Southern Oregon  
Restoration Collaborative  
Coordinator,  
Rogue Forest Partners  
[tfairbanks@sofrc.org](mailto:tfairbanks@sofrc.org)

Rogue Forest Partners (RFP) is a group of four nonprofits and six public agencies working as one for the communities and forests of the Rogue Basin to reduce wildfire risks, enhance wildlife habitat, and create equitable, sustainable jobs. For more information, visit [rogueforestpartners.org](http://rogueforestpartners.org).