



[HOME](#)

[ABOUT](#)

[OUR PROJECT](#)

[CONTACT](#)

[BECOME A FRIEND](#)

# OUR TEAM

Diverse backgrounds, shared goals

Our board has extensive experience in the fields of forest management, watershed conservation and viable timber economies. We have been meeting since 2015 and collectively have contributed thousands of volunteer hours to our shared mission.

The Forest Bridges Staff is a dedicated group of qualified professionals who are dedicated to the vision of 21st century sustainable forest management.

[CLICK HERE TO MEET OUR STAFF](#)



## Forest Bridges Board

**Paul Beck** is proud to be a fourth generation member of a family that has depended on the forests of Oregon for



Paul Beck, Chair

livelihood, recreation and personal renewal.

Paul was born in Eugene, Oregon, and always had a love for the public lands and landscape of southwest Oregon. Paul spent most of his career as a procurement forester and timber manager of a small family-owned Douglas County sawmill. He considers the forest both his office and his home. Much of his life was spent in the Umpqua, Rogue, Siskiyou, Willamette and Mt. Hood National Forests, and the Medford, Roseburg and Coos Bay Districts of the Bureau of Land Management. Paul has extensive experience with appraisal, bidding and operating timber sales.

Paul currently is or has been board members and chairman of Douglas Timber Operators, American Forest Resource Council and the Federal Timber Purchasers Committee. He also serves as the board chair of the Umpqua Fisheries Enhancement Derby. The Derby is a non-profit whose sole purpose is to raise and allocate money for stream enhancement projects within the Umpqua River system. They are closing on the two million dollar mark of funds raised and allocated.

Currently Paul serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the

Mountain Western Log Scaling and Grading Bureau in Roseburg, Oregon. The Bureau is a member-owned cooperative that supplies independent third party log measurement services to the Forest Products industry in the four western states.



Dean Finnerty,  
Vice Chair

**Dean Finnerty** is the NW Director of the Sportsmen's Conservation Project and Wild Steelhead Initiative manager for Trout Unlimited. He's been working as a national staff member for Trout Unlimited for the past five years. During his tenure with TU, Dean was responsible for working on the previous O&C lands bill in congress as well as the most recent management plan from the BLM on the O&C Lands.

Dean believes that, if properly managed, the 2.5 million acres of O&C lands have the potential of providing not only a reliable source of timber for industry and western Oregon counties, but also provide some of the best public lands for hunting and fishing opportunities for sportsmen anywhere in the northwest.

Dean is a passionate outdoorsman and has been a licensed Oregon fishing and hunting guide for the past

two decades. He lives in Cottage Grove with his wife and five sons and spends as much time as possible at their family cabin along the banks of the Umpqua River near Scottsburg, Oregon.



**Rick Sohn** holds a BA in Biology, an MS in Tree Physiology, and a PhD in Forest Pathology and Mycorrhizae, with a minor in soils. Rick is a Roseburg native, with a strong passion for the forests of the northwestern United States, and has worked in the fields of reforestation and silviculture for over four decades.

He has served and often chaired on the boards of various organizations including Oregonians for Food and Shelter, the Watershed Council of the Umpqua Basin, Oregon Forest and Industry Council Board, Roseburg Area Chamber of Commerce, Western Resources Legal Center and the Douglas County Museum Foundation.

Rick initiated the Forest Bridges concept and collaborative process in 2015. He envisions that through this process, BLM O&C forests can be managed in a more holistic, viable manner, ensuring that they will continue to thrive for generations to come. Rick and his



**Rick Sohn,  
Secretary and  
Acting Executive  
Director**

wife Jacky live in Roseburg, raised three children, and now have three grandchildren.



**Thomas McGregor** has 14 years of experience in education as a teacher, youth corps crew leader, career and technical education coordinator, and is currently serving as Executive Director at Phoenix School of Roseburg. Thomas earned a Master of Nonprofit Management degree from the University of Oregon in 2018. He is also a graduate of the Ford Family Foundation Leadership Institute and earned his Bachelor of Science from the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Northern Arizona University. Prior to moving to Roseburg, Thomas lived for one year in rural Japan teaching in primary and secondary schools after being selected by the Japanese government to serve in the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program as an Assistant Language Teacher.

Thomas McGregor's views were shaped by growing up in Phoenix, which grew from 300,000 in his childhood to 6.5 million people today. He graduated in the High School Class of 2000. Thomas came to work at Phoenix School



**Thomas McGregor,**  
Treasurer

to run the Youth Corps crew. The conservation nonprofit Yew Creek Land Alliance bordered on 3 sides by BLM, and where he chairs the board, influences Thomas' work. Thomas brings a wealth of experience with work crews and monitoring crews.

Thomas currently is the Secretary of the Creating Community Resilience Core Team, a community collective of agencies working to help Douglas County be more trauma informed. He has a strong history of community involvement and volunteerism including serving on the boards of Oregon Youth Corps Trust, Partnership for the Umpqua Rivers, Roseburg Sister Cities, Umpqua Watersheds, and Yew Creek Land Alliance. He also currently serves on Music on the Half Shell Committee and acts as the event's Master of Ceremonies. Each summer he enjoys a week as a member of the Oregon Country Fair Vaudeville Crew at the WC Fields Memorial Stage volunteering his audio engineering skills. He is also a proud member of the Roseburg Noon Rotary Club.

He enjoys living in downtown Roseburg with his wife, Sarah, and daughter Ginger. They all can often be seen

together wandering the Umpqua Valley Farmers' Market.

Thomas finds a good day in the Umpqua is running chainsaw to tend to their small woodlot at their family's cabin atop the Oregon Coast Range and bordering the tall old growth trees of Roseburg District BLM lands near Dillard, Oregon.



**Tim Vredenburg,**  
Board of Directors

**Tim Vredenburg** is also from the Roseburg area. He graduated from Georgetown College with a B.S. degree in Environmental Science. He went to graduate school at Oregon State where his area of emphasis was wildlife management and silviculture.

In 2000 he joined Biological Information Specialists as a wildlife specialist becoming president of the Company in 2004. Through B.I.S, Inc., Tim has planned, coordinated, conducted, and offered quality control for a variety of aspects of biological assessments, including, but not limited to Coho Salmon, Eulachon, Green Sturgeon, Southern Oregon Coho Salmon, Lower and Middle Columbia Steelhead, Spotted owl, Marbled Murrelet and Bald Eagle. He has consulted with state, federal, private, and tribal landowners on issues involving threatened,

endangered and special status species and advises landowners on management related activities. He has conducted ESA section 7 consultation on projects ranging in scale from small bridge replacements and local timber sales to large scale developments on the Columbia River. Tim has consulted on ESA "Take-Avoidance" strategies and planning related to timber harvest with various private timber landowners.

From 2006 to 2012, as a Director of Land, Resources and Environmental Services, he represented tribal interests on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service Level 1 teams. He served as a member of the Governor's Federal Forest Advisory Committee and continues working on the Federal Forest Advisory Adoc Workgroup. During the development of the BLM's Western Oregon Plan Revision he worked with the Cooperator's Work Group and was the only "non-federal" member of the BLM State Director's steering committee. In the fall of 2012, he went to work for the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, as their Director of Forest Management. In his current capacity he is working to develop and expanded timber land base that will provide for the cultural and economic well-being for

many generations to come. He manages the tribe's forest management and program. He currently lives west of Roseburg with his wife, Darcy, and their three young children, Owen, Emma and Asher.



Elin Miller, Board  
of Directors

**Elin D. Miller** is principal of Elin Miller Consulting, LLC and works with her husband, Bill, farming hazelnuts in Oregon. Recently, they also launched a wine grape venture. In October 2017, Elin was elected Chair of the CNFA Board and continues to serve in this capacity. She was also

elected to the Board of Fall Creek Farm and Nursery in 2017 and is now its Compensation Committee Chair. Elin was elected to the Oregon State FFA Foundation Board in 2017 and became President-elect in 2019.

She is currently serving as co-chair of the newly formed Oregon Wine Council. Elin served as Vice Chair of the Vestaron Board, a crop protection corporation in Michigan, up until June of 2019. Locally, she has chaired the Board of NeighborWorks® Umpqua 2014-2016, a not-for-profit corporation. She also serves on Umpqua Bank's Divisional Board. In May of 2011, she won her first

race for public office, elected to the Umpqua Community College Board of Education and served four years including Chair and Vice Chair. Elin was elected to the Marrone Bio Innovations Corporation Board in 2011 and served as its Chair from 2013-2015. The National FFA (Future Farmers of America) Foundation Board elected Elin to serve as Chair in 2015.

Before moving full time to Umpqua, OR, Elin served as Regional Administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency, a Presidential Appointment, with jurisdiction over Alaska, Idaho, Washington and Oregon leading over 600 employees and dealing with some of the most challenging water quality issues nationally. Previously, Elin served as President and CEO of Arysta Life Science North America/Australasia 2004-2006, a spin-off of Chevron. From 1996 to 2004 she held various positions at the Dow Chemical Company including Global Vice President of Public Affairs, VP of Global Pest Management and VP of Asia Pacific.

Elin's earlier government service occurred in the 90's as Director of the Department of Conservation (Senate Confirmed) and Chief Deputy Director of the California

Department of Pesticide Regulation, CalEPA. Elin's background also includes National Vice President of Future Farmers of America (FFA) and Executive Director for the Western Agricultural Chemicals Association. While in California, she was honored to receive the Outstanding Regulator and Outstanding Contribution to Agriculture Awards. She has been honored with various state and national awards including the Lea S. Hitchner Award, the highest award given by CropLife America. Elin was also named one of the "50 Most Powerful Women in PR" by PR WEEK. In 2016, she received the VIP Citation, the highest award given by FFA. She was named to the Oregon Board of Agriculture in November 2020.

Elin was a Rhodes scholarship finalist, Outstanding Woman Graduate and Student Body VP when she received her bachelor's degree in agronomy and plant protection from the University of Arizona in 1982. Elin graduated from INSEAD's Advanced Management Program in France in 2000. Recently she attended Stanford Rock Center in Board Governance and completed an 18-month course in Excellence in Board Governance in 2016.

**Robin Hartmann** is a nonprofit leader with decades of experience in conservation and community outreach. She holds a master's degree in wildland recreation management and a B.S. in forestry. Robin is currently the Executive Director of the Umpqua Valley Habitat for Humanity.

She serves on the Boards of Directors for Habitat for Humanity of Oregon, and also was on the board of Oregon Wave Energy Trust, and the Oregon League of Conservation Voters. In 2011, she was awarded the title of Conservationist of the Year by Umpqua Watersheds. Robin has had a career of consulting for various nonprofit organizations, including the Audubon Society of Portland, the Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition, Pew Charitable Trusts, Umpqua Valley Audubon Society, the Oregon Chapter Sierra Club, The North Umpqua Foundation, the Umpqua Land Exchange Project, The Friendly Kitchen/Meals on Wheels Roseburg and others. Robin was the Executive Director for the Siskiyou Field Institute, a 700-acre adult and youth natural history education organization. She served as the Natural Resources Legislative Assistant for the Office of Congressman Larry LaRocco from 1991-1994.



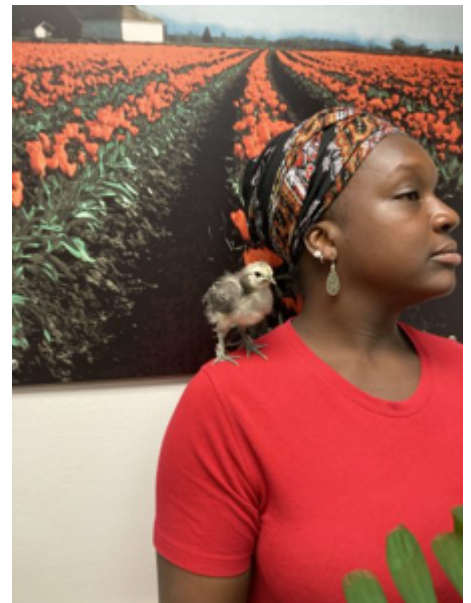
Robin Hartmann,  
Board of Directors

In 1980, Robin hiked the 2,600-mile Pacific Crest Trail from Mexico to Canada. Her deep love for the Pacific Northwest forests has stayed with her through her decades of environmental outreach, and compelled her to join the Forest Bridges board to help it achieve its mission.



**Arielle Reid** is the Director of Policy and Advocacy at NeighborWorks Umpqua, where she has worked since 2016. She has held this position at the organization since 2018, she represents the organization at the regional and national level, while implementing proactive strategies to increase advocacy reach throughout Oregon. She coordinates the organization's race, equity, diversity and inclusion efforts for staff, leadership and the Board. Arielle brings a very broad point of view, beyond forestry, to the Board. As Forest Bridges communicates with the broader public, this perspective will be very useful.

Arielle is multilingual and holds a Master of Arts in Political Science from the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary, as well as a Master of Science in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason



Arielle Reid, Board of Directors

University in Arlington, Virginia. As a Peace Corps Volunteer from 2013-2015, she organized trainings for over 100 community health workers in the rural district of Monapo, Mozambique. While interning with the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union, she conducted research on human rights issues in Hungary and Central Europe from 2008 to 2010. Arielle is active in the fields of human rights advocacy and grassroots mobilization. She is passionate about bringing community organizations together for greater collective impact. She consistently looks for opportunities to foster community resiliency throughout Southwestern Oregon, and beyond.



**Caroline  
Randall,  
Board of  
Directors**

**Caroline Randall** is a fifth generation Oregonian who counts among her friends people in the timber industry and in the conservation community. She is the Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive Officer at Neighborworks Umpqua. She holds a Master's degree in education from Portland State University. She has years of experience in the nonprofit and educational sectors, with an emphasis on social justice activism.

Prior to joining Neighborworks, Randall was the Finance and Operations Coordinator for the Rural Organizing Project. From

2012 to 2017, Randall served in the Student Support Services Program at Umpqua Community College in various capacities, including Director of TRiO. As an advisor, project manager and grantwriter, she was integral in securing largescale funds to benefit students, including those in underserved populations.

Randall is an active volunteer in the community, and is passionate about preserving our local environment as well as helping the rising generation. She is a member of Umpqua Watersheds, and is a career mentor for rural and first-generation college students. In 2011, she received the Umpqua Community College Leadership Award. Randall believes in strengthening underrepresented populations, and is a strong proponent of the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion in all facets and industries.



**Jim Ratzlaff** (1936-2018) attended the University of Kansas on a Navy scholarship and earned a bachelor's degree in petroleum geology. He proudly served as an officer in the Marine Corps and attended George Washington University Law School at night, earning his Doctor of Jurisprudence degree and becoming a member of the Virginia Bar. After working for the NASD in



Washington, DC, Jim was hired by Capital Research and Management Company in Los Angeles, where he worked for 35 years until retirement. His love of nature and fly fishing led him to Roseburg, Oregon, where in 1989 he bought property on the North Umpqua River. His great passion became philanthropy, particularly protecting the environment and helping those less fortunate in the communities in which he lived. A hungry reader and lifelong learner, he was also an avid golfer and fly fisher (he had a beautiful Spey cast), a skilled pilot, an excellent winemaker (though he would never admit it), a fledgeling truffle farmer, and a grand fan of the cocktail hour.

Jim Ratzlaff,  
Former Board  
Chair, *In  
Memoriam*

---



# Forest Bridges Staff



**Jennifer Grafiada,**  
Communications

**Jennifer Grafiada** has over 10 years of experience in marketing and communications. She holds a BA in English from Brigham Young University with minors in editing and Spanish. After living in Las Vegas and Miami, she moved to Roseburg, Oregon, in 2014 and quickly put down deep roots. She loves the verdant landscape, fresh air and dynamic topography of southern Oregon and the passionate people who are helping our forests and communities thrive. She is proud to be a part of the Forest Bridges project as a website, grants and communications consultant. She is also builds websites through her company **Timbertown Media, LLC**, where she helps other non-profits and small businesses in Douglas County and beyond.



**Ahavah Oblak** moved to southern Oregon for a teaching job in 1991, and fell in love with the Siskiyou Mountains. Since then, she has lived rurally in Josephine County, attended Southern Oregon University in Ashland and settled in Eugene to start a graduate program in 2010.

Ahavah holds two master's degrees, both with a focus on participatory, place-based education and Native



**Ahavah Oblak,**  
Development

American studies. After graduating from the U of O in 2012, she began working in the nonprofit world as a grant writer, event planner and executive director and development director for several Lane County organizations. Ahavah also became involved in writing federal grants for tribes in OR, CA, NM and AK, and started reviewing federal grant applications for the DOE, ANA and NEA.

Through her business, Four Winds Educational Consulting, she provides nonprofit consulting, grant writing, curriculum/program development, fundraising support, event planning, community documentation and research. Ms. Oblak brings a familiarity with area nonprofits, a strong background in successful grant writing and development work in Oregon and a love of the outdoors to her position at Forest Bridges.



**Sam Freedman,**  
Forest Policy

**Sam Freedman** is currently pursuing a Master's of Forestry in Sustainable Forest Management at Oregon State University, which focuses on silviculture, fire and forest health to manage forest vegetation dynamics and ecosystem processes for restoration, sustainable timber

production and wildlife habitats. His thesis centers around designing a multiple-yield, timber and food crop agroforestry system (silvopasture) in southern Vermont.

Sam holds a Master's of Science in Ecological Design from the Conway School of Landscape of Design. He received in BA in Cultural Anthropology from Northeastern University, with a minor in Portuguese. Sam is certified in Permaculture Design and has studied regenerative ecological practices in a variety of settings.

Sam has extensive hands-on experience putting design theories into real-world practice. He has conducted site analysis in various conservation areas and created design alternatives to better preserve and utilize natural landscapes and resources. He completed a comprehensive guidebook for city planners, policy makers, farmers and conservationists detailing the role of trees as "living infrastructure" in achieving ecological resilience in Deerfield, Massachusetts. He also has experience in installing and maintaining ecological and edible landscapes, in installing and maintaining living green roofs, and has worked closely with farm managers to seed, transplant, cultivate and harvest organic fruits

and vegetables.

Sam is multilingual and is a certified wildland firefighter. He feels strongly about the importance of intelligent, forward-thinking environmental stewardship and implementing forestry practices that sustain healthy, thriving ecosystems into the future.



#### CONTACT US

522 SE Washington Ave. Roseburg, OR 97470

Phone: 541-430-6912

Email: [info \[a\] forestbridges.org](mailto:info@forestbridges.org)

Web: [Privacy Policy](#)



© Copyright 2020 Forest Bridges: The O&C Forest Habitat Project, Inc.- 2021 | ALL RIGHTS RESERVED | Credit  
to TimberTown Media for web design | Credit to HMH Agency for the logo design |