

## LARIMER COUNTY BEETLE BUSTER WORKSHOP WAS WELL ATTENDED

The Larimer County Beetle Buster Workshop held in Stove Prairie on September 25, 2010 was well attended. Approximately 100 people from the Wyoming border to Douglas County came to the workshop. It was sponsored by Larimer County Tree Farmers, the Colorado Forestry Association, the Ft Collins District of the Colorado State Forest Service and the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources.

Also in attendance were Larimer County Commissioner Steve Johnson (R), who is a former Republican state senator, and State Reps. John Kefalas (D) and Randy Fischer (D), both of Fort Collins.

Consulting forester and member of the board of the Colorado Forestry Association (CFA), Bruce Benninghoff, presented What You Need to Know to Keep Your Forest Healthy. The slides from the presentation were printed in color, courtesy of CFA, so that people had the basic information to take home and share with neighbors. Sharing information with neighbors is the intent of the Larimer County Beetle Buster program. This initial group of concerned citizens are encouraged to reach out to other private land owners, share the information, and encourage them to take a proactive stance in the effort to mitigate the losses attributed to the mountain pine beetle epidemic that is sweeping over Larimer County and other northern front range counties. That effort will be coordinated by the Larimer Co. Natural Resources Department and assisted by Boyd Lebeda's Ft. Collins office of the Colorado State Forest Service.

Bill Ward, owner of the Ward Mountain Ranch, and his ranch manager, Bob Dotson, earned our gratitude for providing excellent facilities for the event – including beetles to study. Thanks again!

After the indoor presentation, there were beetle infested trees and logs available so that people could peel off some bark and observe beetle egg galleries and the state of beetle/egg/larva development first hand. This allowed more detailed discussions between the professional foresters and attendees about the importance of modifying our forests to make them less suitable habitat for the beetles. The importance of annual removal of recently infested trees was also stressed.



During the lunch break a panel discussed experiences and information regarding wildfire mitigation. Suzanne Adams (above) described how community fuelbreaks had protected her neighborhood during two recent wildfires. A CSFS Forester described shaded fuelbreaks and explained the cost-sharing grants offered by the Colorado State Forest Service.



Many vendors were present with equipment to demonstrate their ability to contribute to the battle and control of the beetles. Vendors of wood burning stoves and boilers were also present to help us learn to use the wood in an efficient and environmentally friendly way to heat our homes and shops.



Thanks to Wes Rutt, Tree Farmer Outreach and Education Chairman, for organizing another successful and informative event.