Our yield was 100 students fall quarter! The growth occurred prior to the housing slump and recession we are now in. The 100 students in the program equated to 60 who began Intro class and large numbers in winter and spring classes. Navigation and Mapping had 31 students, and Shrub and Wildflower had 45 students. Students in our Intro class, Natural Resources 100, reported that the Natural Resources Education Education Web site www.naturalresourcemediation.com and word-of-mouth were leading reasons they came to the program. Only a dozen students came through the Veterans Conservation Corps (VCC) this fall. Although GI Bill funding has improved for veterans, they no longer receive stipends for volunteering with the VCC.

When the recession caught up with GRCC in the middle of fall quarter, the college called for cutbacks. GRCC President Rich Rutkowski did not cut positions as did other colleges, but he did ask for spending reductions and that classes run at capacity. Classes had to have a guaranteed 80 percent of capacity to run. As a result, a number of English, math, and other academic sections were cancelled because they did not fill. Many of the Natural Resources classes have 28 seats as the capacity, so 22 students were needed to meet the quota. Our new Urban Ecology and Landscape Planning and Practices classes were cancelled. The Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (IBEST) program for students enrolled in Natural Resources and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) or Adult Basic Education (ABE) was scrapped. “Birdie” class was cancelled, but the fire classes ran under-enrolled because students needed them to graduate and for summer jobs. Because of the high cost per student, the summer trip was cancelled this year.

Cancelling the summer trip with the Tree and Shrub, Shrub and Wildflower, and Wildland Recreation classes created a situation that Professional/Technical Executive Dean Leslie Heizer-Newquist compared to a snake swallowing a pig. We got the students in, now we have to get them down. We hired Mertyn Hearn, class of 2008, to teach Intro to Community Forestry, Intro to Natural Resources, Intro to Soils, and Shrub and Wildflower classes. We also hired Ben Zion, class of 2009, to help with Navigation and Mapping, as he has logging and surveying experience.

The Technology Division’s Water/Wastewater program was eliminated. We now have increased interest in our Natural Resources water quality degree because it qualifies for worker retraining funding. Like the Water/Wastewater program, the GRCC Geographic Information Systems (GIS) program was vulnerable. We forged an educational limited partnership with GIS to protect its valuable resources and brought GIS in under Natural Resources. Dr. Sabah Jabbouri is still working toward tenure, but he gives the Natural Resources program more depth, experience, and professionalism.

Students Sean Morgan and Shauna Harris are teaching a Wilderness Survival class through Continuing Education. Half of the people in their first class were from the local community, and the other 50 percent were current students. See www.campuscrc.net/GreenRiver/category/category.cfm?L=1&MD=5&SortOrder=1 for more information.

Thirteen second-year students are completing internships. They are scattered from Auburn (“green” grant writing) to Montana (USFS timber cruisings), and from Montesano (GIS/inventory) to Wyoming (BLM fire). Federal seasonal positions do not seem to be affected by the economy.

Thirteen graduates walked in commencement, most with their GRCC Forestry suspender on.

Fourteen students earned the AAS in Natural Resources: two earned the Natural Resources — GIS degree; seven earned the Natural Resources — Park Management degree; three earned the Natural Resources — Water Quality degree; three earned the Natural Resources — Wildland Fire degree. GIS/ Natural Resources student Doug Gannon was the Technology Division honoree. Betty Burton earned highest honors.

Despite the cutbacks, we managed to still acquire a new diesel 20-passenger bus, add more forestry equipment, and rebuild the 1978 Chevy 650-gallon Type-3 engine.
Our Solid Timber

GRCC Student Chapter of SAF won national Student Chapter of the Year for 2008 and Second Place for 2009!!

Tess Pinkney authored this year’s Student Chapter of the Year award nomination. She spent a good part of a month collecting information and editing contributions provided to her. Tess and Forestry Club Chair Sven Soholt were honored at the GRCC Club Banquet in June.

Doug Gannon was the Technology Division honoree at commencement and nominated for the GRCC President’s Award. Doug is a 16-year Air Force Reservist, founding member of the Veterans Conservation Corps, and member of the GIS Alliance and Forestry Clubs at GRCC. Doug, who is interested in alternative and sustainable energy, is graduating with an AAS in Geographic Information Systems with a 3.91 GPA. He recently provided solar powered lighting for the log cabin at the Pat Cummins Managed Forest. His analysis of geothermal, wind, and solar power energy locations in Washington has been acclaimed. Doug was recognized as a Trustee Scholar of the All-Washington Academic Team and commended by Governor Christine Gregoire for his service to America and “Green career” focus.

Paula Kaiser created the new Society of American Foresters Student Chapter Web site www.grccstudentsaf.com that placed second in SAF competition. Paula also is responsible for maintaining the job board, the hallway posters, and the lending library.

Dan Alden is a GIS student who helps instruct and assist with anything necessary in the GIS Lab. Without Dan, we wouldn’t know how to create or print anything!

Chris Henderson has been the Wildland Fire Instructor for the past four years. He has been relocated to DNR Pacific-Cascades Region. We appreciate the extra efforts he provided in building our Wildland Fire degree into a recognized Pacific Northwest Wildfire Coordination Group program.

The “Greening” of Community College

The Student Chapter of the Society of American Foresters (SAF) was responsible for the design, implementation, and presentations of a new “Biomass in Washington” display which promotes wood as an alternative energy source. This display is the property of the Washington state SAF, but it has been used on campus and off campus for a number of venues.

Betty Burton, class of 2009, and Meryn Hearn, class of 2008, are working part-time for GRCC on “green” projects. Currently, a biodiesel converter is being set up to use old grease from the Gator Grille to power our new diesel bus.

A “worm farm” composter is envisioned to recycle food waste (except meat and dairy) from the Gator Grille. The worm castings will be used in the Veterans’ Garden and new greenhouse that is planned. Betty is seeking grants that will enhance the Community Forestry program, provide hands-on silvicultural expertise to build skills in forest technicians, provide sample seedlings for learning projects, grow seedlings for GRCC Forests, act as an adjunct to the Veterans’ Garden and present additional therapeutic practices for Veterans in the Natural Resources program.

The cabin at the Pat Cummins Managed Forest now has solar-powered lights inside and outside. With all of our dead and dying Phellinus-diseased trees, we keep looking at biomass fuel possibilities!

The GIS Alliance club chair is Mike Farnum, Vice-Chair is Anna Cavanaugh, Secretary is Marie Matson. Former GIS Alliance Vice-Chair Jessica Larson and Dan Alden competed against PhD students from universities at the Washington State Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (WAURISA) conference and won the top two places. Jessica Larson won first prize and a check for $1,000 for her student project paper titled “GIS Uses in Flood Restoration of Mount Rainer.” Dan Alden won second prize and a check for $300 for his student project paper entitled “Income Distribution in Coal Mine Hazard Areas: Renton, Washington.” The student presentations were really stepped-up a notch from last year. They are getting the attention of GIS professionals in the Puget Sound region.

GIS Alliance hosted the Cascade Orienteering Club Washington Interscholastic Orienteering League Championship again in February, utilizing GIS-produced maps of campus.

Our Solid Timber

Forestry Club and SAF

Outgoing Forestry Club officers were Chair Sven Soholt, Vice-Chair Brandon Larsen, Recording Secretary Betty Burton, and Treasurer Doug Hunter. New officers elected in March were Chair Seth Prigge, Vice-Chair Brett McGinley, Recording Secretary Rebbeah Quinzel, and Treasurer Corey Brass. Brett is a little guy from Forks with the name “Big Timber.” Seth and crew set a new one-day record of five cords of wood delivered for $1,000. Paula Kaiser made yummy cheesecakes that were sold prior to Thanksgiving; Christmas wreaths were made and sold, adding to the revenue stream.

• Forestry Club/SAF participated in parade entries in Buckley, Morton, Auburn, Hoquiam, and Wilkeson. They also had a booth at the Festival in Port Gamble.

• Forestry Club/SAF participated in Welcome Day before fall quarter began. It featured squirrel fishing (with peanuts for bait) outside the Lindbloom Student Center and had the crew cab as a 400-gallon wildland Type-1 engine on display.

• In September, Forestry Club/SAF assisted with set-up and staffing of the “Biomass in Washington” display that you may have seen at the Puyallup Fair.

• They also transported and set-up this display at the Society of American Foresters national meeting in Reno in October and the state conference in Ellensburg.

• In December, Forestry Club donated food, gifts, and cash for “Giving from the Heart” holiday baskets.

• Forestry Club/SAF hosted a forestry learning opportunity for 25 Puyallup High School students in December.

• They attended the SAF leadership conference in Silverton, Oregon. Student Mike Farnum presented a stirring educational forum for GRCC.

• Forestry Club/SAF sponsored a practice competition for high school FFA Forestry and Natural Resources students prior to the State competition. Sixteen teams competed in this seventh annual event at GRCC.

• Forestry Club was the only GRCC club present to welcome Washington Secretary of State Sam Reed and aide Lindsey Pryor on April 14. The Biomass in Washington display was set up and the members discussed alternative energy with Secretary Reed as part of College Civic Week.

• Arbor Day and Earth Day were celebrated the week of April 18-25 with a display that was presented on the second floor of the GRCC student center during the week. Forestry Club sold and planted approximately 1000 tree seedlings. Forestry Club picked up a dozen bags of trash on the school forest trails and parking lots on April 18.

• Biomass in Washington was displayed at the Cowitz County Fairgrounds Earth Day celebration on April 18.

• Forestry Club/SAF teamed up with GRCC’s Veterans Conservation Corps on May 2 for the 24th annual “Green River Cleanup.”

• Forestry Club/SAF has provided a booth at recruiting fairs for promotion of GRCC and the Natural Resources program.

GRCC Student Chapter of SAF officers are Chair Lacey O’Grady, Chair-Elect Phil Hansen, Recording Secretary Betty Burton, and Treasurer Mike Farnum. The GRCC Student Chapter was recognized as the No. 1 national SAF Student Chapter in 2008.