



WASHINGTON FOREST PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

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**Local teacher spends summer learning about the forest products industry,
gaining knowledge to take back to the classroom**

(Tumwater, WA)--Marla Gisi, a Teacher/Librarian, at Tumwater Hill Elementary in Tumwater is one of nine teachers in western Washington who was chosen to participate in the 2007 Teachers on Summer Assignment program (TOSA). The program is designed to give teachers hands-on field study experience with forest products companies. Gisi is spending the six-week job assignment at Weyerhaeuser Company's Vail Operations in Rainier, WA. She will be working side-by-side with people at Weyerhaeuser until August 10, 2007. Her experiences both in the field and in the office allow her to see the whole forestry industry first hand.

Gisi feels fortunate to be working with the team at Vail. "This group of people is amazing. In addition to spending time showing me what their job entails, they have graciously and patiently answered all of my questions. I am most appreciative of their willingness to spend the day teaching me," Gisi said.

Experiences so far include inspecting export logs at the Longview yard, checking first year plantings and invasive species, seeing the harvest crews and marking future harvest sites, walking through a thinning operation, and touring the Mima Tree Nursery and Rochester Seed Orchard.

Gisi plans to take this amazing experience back to her students. She will be able to integrate the knowledge gained into a variety of lessons including research, critical thinking, and media literacy.

The Washington Forest Protection Association sponsors the TOSA program. Each summer, teachers from western Washington apply to participate with area timber companies in a six-week, hands-on work experience. Teachers work with mentors from forest products companies to accomplish research goals on a wide range of environmental topics and studies, from seedling growth and development to product research. Based on their experience, teachers also develop instructional units and activities for the classroom, which are aligned with state Essential Academic Learning Requirements.

We're managing private forests so they work for all of us. ®