



Alumni Newsletter Spring 2002 Volume 20 Number 2

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Dear Friends,



Greetings from the College of Natural Resources. We hope that you are coping with the uncertainty and challenges that have accompanied the economic downturn and the aftermath of the tragedy of September 11. These events have also affected the University of Idaho and the college. We are currently planning for significant budget reductions at the university and college level over the next three years. Part of the university strategy in dealing with these reductions has been to offer incentives for early retirement. We have had 11 of our faculty and staff accept these incentives. They won't all be leaving immediately, but over the next two to three years, the mix of new and older faculty will shift. These changes will cause us to review all our programs to make sure we offer them in an effective and efficient manner.

On the positive side, the college programs have continued to flourish this past year. Both fall and spring semesters saw an increase in college enrollment at the undergraduate level. Employment for our graduates continues to be solid, and several of the agencies and companies that interviewed our students this past fall and early spring provided positive endorsements about the quality and skills of the students. Our top students continue to compete successfully for national awards, such as the Udall Scholarship. The pace of faculty research grants and contracts is currently exceeding that of last year. In addition to allowing us to address issues and problems related to natural resource management in the region, these dollars support the graduate education of students who usually continue their careers in the natural resource agencies and industries of the region.

Much of the year involved the search process to replace Dr. Charles Hatch as dean of the college. Most of you are aware that Dr. Hatch moved from the college to the position of Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies at the university. The search process for a new dean was completed in February when Dr. Steven Daley Laursen,

whom many of you will remember as one of the charter members of the CNR Alumni Board of Trustees, was named dean. He will join the college in August, coming to Idaho after several years at the University of Minnesota, where he served as Associate Dean of their College of Natural Resources. Im sure you will be learning more of Dr. Daley Laursen in future issues, but he is excited to be returning to his alma mater and to the West.

The current budget challenges will bring changes to the college, but they can also create opportunities to look carefully at our curricula, programs and research directions. I am confident that with the administration and faculty of the college and under the leadership of Dr. Daley Laursen, the college will emerge with our programs and graduates strengthened.

Come back to see us when you can. We always enjoy renewing our contacts with our friends and former students.

Leonard Johnson, Interim Dean

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