

My name is John Michael Getz. I live at 88577 4th Avenue, Florence, OR 97439

I am the president of the Oregon Wild Mushroom and Truffle Association. We are a group with diverse interests in the wild fungi resources here in Oregon. We are a new association seeking 501 (c) (6) status.

I have been a commercial harvester for 28 years, a wild mushroom recreational harvester for 36 years, and I have traveled and hunted all types of mushrooms throughout Oregon and Northern California since 1987.

I have witnessed the 'before and after' effects of the wild mushroom industry as vast areas where transformed into intense commercial harvesting operations along with the impacts, both social and environmental. I was quoted in The New Yorker Magazine Aug 20th 2007 on page 65, where I explain the "transformation" that took place in central Oregon on 9-15-1989. After that day, my days of picking Matsutake mushrooms amongst herds of Elk were over. The impacts on the wildlife have been severe. I do not believe that any long term sustainable wild mushroom resource is obtainable without a balance of animal coexistence with commercial harvesters.

I see a great opportunity here to finally professionalize the wild mushroom industry. Wise planning is essential to create an atmosphere where the maximum value of these resources can be realized. Due to the social dynamic structure, and the nature of this resource, it is virtually impossible to rely on enforcement to have any effect on insuring compliance. I am not aware of any person at all, anywhere, ever, who feels that enforcement actually works to insure compliance.

Western Oregon is not a vast land waiting to be explored like central and southern Oregon was 20 years ago. We are already bumping elbows here in western Oregon. Another influx of out of state harvesters will diminish the potential value of this resource, create social tensions, and result in a loss of revenue for local communities.

Keep in mind that it is the local harvesters with years of intimate understanding of the areas that they harvest in, that can effectively steward this resource with a minimum degree of impact. For example, knowing where to step and where not to step. The soils in western Oregon are much softer than the soils on the east slope of the Cascades.

Mushroom companies tend to believe that more harvesters will bring more mushrooms, when in fact the opposite is true. More harvesters with little understanding of fruiting patterns and locations will result in more soil compaction, erosion, human waste, and trampled mushrooms.

When the resource suffers, everybody loses.

In 1992, my great concerns for these resources and the possibility that the Forest Service (management)

was likely to be scaled way back led me to act. In July 1993, I took out a group of scientists from OSU, and some Forest Service personnel from the Siuslaw National Forest to one of my favorite Matsutake mushroom areas. On this outing a botanist explained to me that Washington DC was going to cut off funding if they could not provide a means to inventory and map valuable Matsutake mushroom habitat. So I told her how, and that it could be done year round with 100% accuracy, and without picking a single mushroom. ALLOTROPA VIRGATA is a plant that lives exclusively on Matsutake mycellium. It worked and their funding was granted. My fears of an out of control mushroom industry running wild with no FS management were at ease.

To ensure stewardship and crafting a permit/contract system with the ODNRA, my efforts have been primarily focused close to home the last 20 years. I even produced a harvest technique video in 1994 for the FS to use, and they did.

In 2009, I put together an association of harvesters to collaboratively achieve with the forest service, urgent needed improvements with the ODNRA Matsutake mushroom permit program. The outcome was perceived as a great success by both sides.

I was a member of the OHV designated routes working group for the ODNRA. I represented the mushroom pickers. This working group project lasted nearly 2 years.

Thank you,
John Getz