

## Need For Continuing Education In Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences

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At the University of Idaho, the College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences wishes to be of service to the citizens of Idaho by playing a greater role in continuing education. Last fall, as a first step, a questionnaire was mailed to men in the field to determine the subjects in which they felt they had the greatest need for updating. This station note reports on the results of this survey and will be used by the College as a guide in deciding what short courses to present in the future.

The questionnaire was sent to all alumni of the College who live in the eleven western states. Questionnaires were also sent to non-alumni in the above area, who held professional positions related to disciplines taught by the College. This amounted to 1329 contacts of which 456, or 34 percent of those contacted, returned their questionnaires.

However, some alumni did not completely fill out their questionnaires because they were working in unrelated fields or misunderstood instructions. Therefore, only 368 men returned questionnaires that could be evaluated. Of these 368 men, 60 percent were employed by government, 25 percent by industry, 5 percent were in education, while "other" employment accounted for 10 percent.

The questionnaire listed 48 subjects under the following general areas:

- Biological aspects of forest management
- Technical aspects of wood utilization
- Other aspects of forest management and wood utilization
- Range management
- Fisheries management
- Wildlife management

Each respondent was asked to select the ten subjects he felt had the highest priority for continuing education and rank them in the order of

interest (most important first, etc.). Interest in each subject was evaluated as follows. On each questionnaire the subject marked most important was given a value of ten, next most important, a value of nine, etc. "Total interest value" for each subject was determined by adding all of its points on all questionnaires. Figure 1 on Page 2 shows these results. Also shown is "average interest value" which is "total interest value" divided by the number who rated the subject. Figure 1 reflects the fact that a high percent of our alumni work in the area of forest management.

The same procedure was used to rank the method of learning that the respondents felt would best meet their needs. The results are shown below, listed in order of decreasing preference.

- Short courses (3 days — 1 week)
- Short courses (1 — 2 days)
- Short courses (2 — 3 weeks)
- On the job training
- Correspondence courses

Distance that the respondents lived from Moscow was reported as follows:

Percent of Respondents	Distance from Moscow (miles)
85	100+
6	76-100
3	51-75
3	26-50
3	0-25

In spite of the respondents' long distance from Moscow, "time" was rated as the most important factor influencing participation in continuing education. "Distance" ranked next, while "cost" was considered the least important of these three factors.

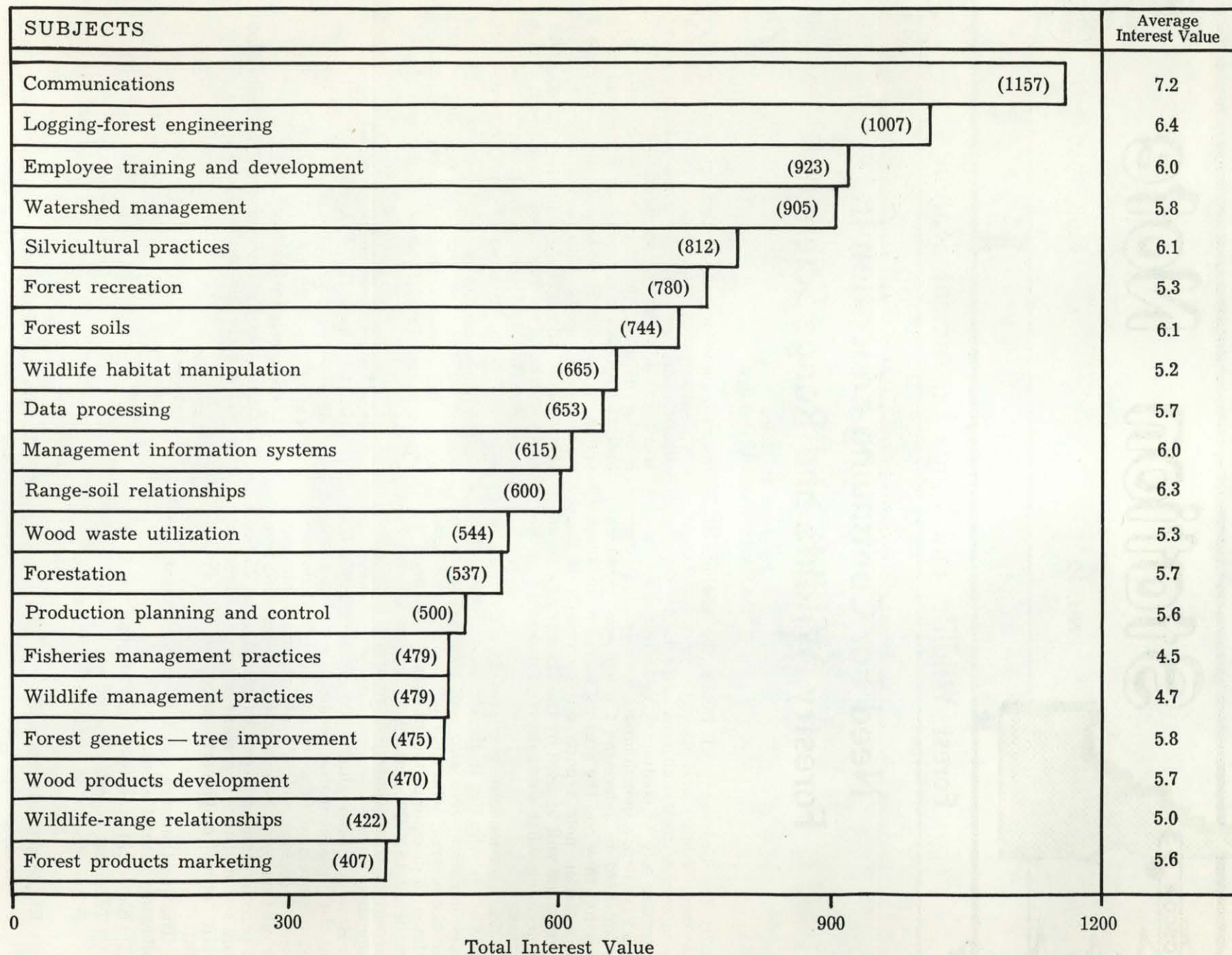


Figure 1. Subjects of most interest for continuing education at the College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences.