

# How the USFS grows millions of seedlings each year

By Greg M. Peters, Forests Magazine

Tucked into the Douglas fir and ponderosa pine forests of Northern Idaho sits the quaint lakeside town of Coeur d'Alene. The former lumber town is now a popular tourist destination drawing families from across the Pacific Northwest and beyond. Gone are the pounding mills, replaced with fancy lakefront hotels and bustling shopping centers.

But it's not hard to find relics of the region's once-thriving industry: Huge logs chained together to form breakwaters protect marinas and lakeside restaurants scattered around Lake Coeur d'Alene—the region's main tourist draw. In the sprawling Idaho Panhandle National Forest that nearly surrounds the town, century-old stumps the size of boulders rot beneath a canopy of trees that themselves seem a hundred or more years old. Both the stumps and the Forest's now abundant trees provide clear evidence of a century of forest management that has played out in this quiet corner of America.

A short 10-minute walk from the box stores and fast food restaurants that skirt Coeur d'Alene's edges is another example of how connected this small city is to the forests that surround it. Here, just off of an unassuming and ordinary street is the U.S. Forest Service's Coeur d'Alene Nursery. Established in 1960, the Coeur d'Alene Nursery straddles the past, the present and the future on a 220-acre plot of land. A squat single-story building greets visitors who enter into a small lobby decorated with a few posters, some t-shirts and hats. Greenhouses, warehouses and fields, some fallow and some flush with small green trees, spread out behind the office, a tapestry of incongruous shapes and colors. An assortment of sheds, tractors, four wheelers and other custom-built

contraptions rounds out the scene.

**Read the whole story**