

# NEWS RELEASE



## Touchmark at Mt. Bachelor Village

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For further information:

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**Three rare pines find new home at Touchmark**  
**OSU DEAN OF FORESTRY COLLEGE TO SPEAK**  
**ABOUT “LIVING FOSSILS” AND**  
**LOCAL CLIMATE CHANGE**

BEND, Ore. — The public is invited to a unique presentation and unveiling Monday, Aug. 13 at 2 p.m. in the new Terrace Lodge Forum of Touchmark at Mt. Bachelor Village, 19800 S.W. Touchmark Way, Bend. Attendees will have the opportunity to see two Wollemi pines and hear Oregon State University (OSU) Dean of the College of Forestry Hal Salwasser talk about climate changes and these rare trees.

There is no charge for the event; seating is limited. For more information, call Touchmark Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Melanie Snow, (541) 383-1414.

According to National Geographic, the Wollemi pine is one of the oldest and rarest tree species. Part of a 200-million-year-old plant family, it was thought to have been extinct for more than two million years and was known only through fossil records. In 1994, a field officer with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, David Noble, was exploring a deep, wild canyon in Australia’s Wollemi National Park when he came upon a strange-looking tree with bubbly bark. Subsequent explorations found about 100 adult trees. Shortly after the discovery, botanists and others decided to keep the exact location a secret in order to protect the trees.

Working with a coalition of interested parties, National Geographic sells cuttings to help preserve the “living fossils,” as the unusual trees are known, as well as conserve other endangered plant species.

Touchmark resident Wayne Gaskins learned about the trees last fall when he read a short article in *The Bend Bulletin* and purchased two: one for himself and one as a gift to Touchmark. The resort retirement community also purchased one to mark completion of the Cliff and Terrace lodges. Currently, the trees are about 12 inches tall; they grow about three feet a year.

“Once they’re about six feet, we’ll use bonsai techniques to keep them a manageable height, since they’ll need to be kept in Touchmark’s new greenhouse during our winters here,” says Gaskins, a retired forester.

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“What’s most important is to keep species from becoming extinct,” Gaskins stresses. “This particular tree was thought to be extinct, and we now have the opportunity to protect it from real extinction.” Gaskins believes there are only a few Wollemi pines in Central Oregon, including the three now at Touchmark.

In addition to serving as OSU’s dean of forestry, Salwasser is director of the Oregon Forest Research Laboratory and professor of Forest Resources and Forest Science at OSU. Prior to joining the College of Forestry in 2000, he held numerous positions with the U.S. Forest Service. He holds a doctoral degree in Wildland Resource Science from the University of California and a Bachelor of Arts in Biology from Fresno State University. Salwasser has published more than 80 professional papers and coedited two books on natural resource issues. He is a former president of The Wildlife Society and a fellow of the Society of American Foresters. In addition, he serves on the boards of numerous organizations working to protect forests and natural resources.

Touchmark at Mt. Bachelor Village offers resort retirement living and a range of homes and lifestyle options. The second phase, composed of the Cliff Lodge and Terrace Lodge, with numerous amenities and services, was completed in summer 2007. Touchmark received a Platinum Award from the National Association of Home Builders recognizing the creative design of the phase-one River Lodge.