

Richard Sniezko, Ph.D., Center Geneticist with the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Region's Dorena Genetic Resource Center

Bio:

Dr. Richard Sniezko has worked in forest genetics and tree improvement since 1977. Since 1991, he has been Center Geneticist with the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Region's Dorena Genetic Resource Center. His work focuses on development of genetic resistance to non-native forest tree diseases as well as genetic variation and genetic conservation in forest trees (1) he has worked with all 9 white pine species native to the U.S., (2) as well as on several other disease resistance programs in the PNW and Hawaii, and (3) has been Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator of the IUFRO 5-needle pine working groups since ~2003, and (4) has started an international working group on genetic resistance that has met in 2011, 2015, and 2018.. His B.S. degree is in forest science is from Humboldt State University, and his Ph.D. in forest genetics is from North Carolina State University.

Tentative Title:

Blister rust resistance and the potential use of biotechnology among the High Five Pines

Story:

Although I started with western white pine and sugar pine, I heard about the plight of whitebark pine early on and helped convince Region 6 to begin disease screening for resistance to whitebark pine (starting in a 2002 trial) – then linked up with Michael Murray at Crater Lake National Park (before he moved to Canada), and Regina Rochefort at Mount Rainier NP to get the Parks involved in resistance work. Visiting the Parks and other whitebark areas is fantastic experience and chance to re-energize! Expanding my resistance work to all the other High Five species and new partners/cooperators became a natural expansion of my work with whitebark pine.