

# Looking Out for the Quaking Aspen

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## Looking Out for the Quaking Aspen, with Dr. Paul Rogers

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Where there are aspens there is Dr. Paul Rogers too. Dr. Paul Rogers is a faculty member in the Wildland Resources Department at Utah State University and Director of the Western Aspen Alliance, a “venture between Utah State University’s College of Natural Resources, USDI Bureau of Land Management, and the USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station and National Forest Systems, whose purpose is to facilitate and coordinate research issues related to quaking aspen communities of the west.”

This episode of *Instead* talks about Pando, the near and “deer” grove of 47,000 aspen trees in Richmond, Utah. Pando is a clonal colony of a single quaking aspen. *But what does cloning mean?* When a quaking aspen wants to reproduce, it flowers and produces a clone of itself. A new tree is then created, with the same genetic makeup, taking the term a “forest of one tree” literal.

Wyatt and Rogers discuss the issue facing Pando, grazing of deer and elk, foraging of livestock, and the impact of human recreation. Despite the slight impacts of human recreation, it is also one of the reasons to work on the process of conserving the forests. Aspen are iconic to Utah Lands, you look at any brochure of a ski resort and you see aspens. Many hiking trails are filled with aspen, and photography shoots up the canyon for wedding engagements or family pictures are filled with aspen tree framing. Aspen forests add value, recreational use, pharmaceutical, and water retention, and especially biodiversity.