Community Forest Case Studies: Models for co-stewardship and intergenerational learning

(Jefferson Land Trust, 2021b)

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary

This report is an accessible, visual guide to help clearly communicate an array of ways to plan and implement community forestry. Community forestry is a burgeoning approach to land ownership, management, and above all, community involvement in natural areas. This project portrays the possible cross-cultural and inter-social co-management systems of community forestry. It supports efforts to connect community members and those interested in planning and managing a community forest.

The WWU Sustainability Pathways Program has taken on developing an anthology of a few community forests in Washington. Specifically, we identify opportunities for equitable and placed-based intergenerational education offered by community forests, as well as collaborative stewardship models with multiple stakeholders. By examining diverse case studies of community forests, we will show many ways to address the needs of a community forest and support stakeholders in their process of planning and maintenance.

Our report includes an introduction to our work with a discussion of community forestry and its importance in a more sustainable future. It introduces the concept of community forests, tracing their evolution since the establishment of the USFS Community Forest and Open Space Program in 2008. We also include our methodology for determining the community forests we researched and what benchmarks we used to compare them. We selected six case studies of community forests in Washington, which are examined in the results section of our report. The results are followed by a discussion of community forests in Washington where we analyzed some important similarities between case studies, differences, main takeaways, and best practices. Finally, our report closes with a funding section that outlines property prices and grants, and a conclusion section.

We identified many important themes in our analysis, such as relationships with tribal governments, education, and youth engagement. Notably, the case studies reveal a spectrum of relationships between community forests and tribal governments, with instances of tribal ownership and management showcasing cultural integration into programming. We found that engagement of youth through educational programming is an important goal for many of these forests, although youth involvement in forest planning and decision-making varies. In addition, the case studies demonstrated the multifaceted value of community forests, with projects blending ecological, social, and economic benefits.

In conclusion, the report highlights the intrinsic value of local connections to the environment through community forest management. By showcasing successful models, exploring diverse goals, and underlining the positive outcomes, the report advocates for sustainable co-management solutions that empower communities to actively engage in preserving, benefiting from, and thriving alongside their natural surroundings.

Introduction

Statement of Need:

Connection to the environment is vital for any community. Within the environment, forests provide much needed habitat, cultural importance, educational opportunities, and economic resources. Community forest management systems offer an opportunity to make a significant change. Going into the future, with climate change in mind, co-management strategies for forests and their resources need to be developed in order to create resilient lands. Western Washington University and students in the Campus Sustainability Planning Studio see a need for the development of sustainable co-management solutions to help bolster local connections to the environment. The Methow Valley and Northern Central Washington area could benefit from co-management solutions due to a high variety of partner organizations that would find use in the management of forests and its need to protect the vital ecosystems which help its economy and people flourish.

Community forests, in the U.S. have been a developing idea since 2008 when the USFS was authorized to create their Community Forest and Open Space Program. They then began its implementation in 2011 (Trust for Public Land, 2021) and were originally focused on combating the growing loss of outdoor recreation and health issues linked to the lack of access. Community forest programs often report that protection against climate change, environmental restoration, providing opportunities for recreation, education, and cultural enrichment directly reflect their development goals (WA State Recreation and Conservation Office, 2023).

Project Goals:

The goal of this report is to compile a set of existing community forest examples and analyze their management structures. Every management plan is different, just as every community forest is different. Our compilation of management structures provides a foundational framework for clear and sustainable community forest management. The hope is that this set of case studies will help provide opportunities for those who are considering the creation of similar management structures in their own communities suffice for any that may consider integration of practices or models from other community forests.

Educational opportunities in community forests are abundant. Due to Western Washington University's interest in community forest and their current involvement in Canyon Lake and Stewart Mountain Community Forests implementation of education initiatives is another goal of this report. Potential organizations in the Methow Valley that would be able to participate within them are the Methow Valley School District, Sustainability Pathways, WWU/MVSD Sustainability Youth Corps, The Colville Confederated Tribe, Okanogan School District, and Wenatchee Valley College.

Background Research:

With the Methow Valley having 1.3 million acres of forest and the potential chance for it to implement community forest practices it is beneficial to dive into the specifics of Washington. A large contributor to community forests in Washington is the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office's (RCO) community forests program which allocates 16.3 million dollars of its budget to the development of these lands. This is done through individual grants that range up

to 3 million dollars. Organizations like the Northwest Community Forest Coalition have gathered other community-based organizations in prospective areas together to help create a more structured community forest management model (NWCFC, 2023) which shows more public support for the creation of these forestry models. In addition, the U.S. Forest Service has envisioned a road map for a community forest and open space conservation program which they provide up to 50% of the funding required for community forest projects and their related community management plans (USFS, 2023). Community forests have backing from government agencies and the community, what visions they share for collaboration are located within these case studies.

The community forests that are explored within this report are:

- Stewart Mountain Community Forest
- Newberry Woods Community Forest
- Nason Ridge Community Forest
- Canyon Lake Community Forest
- Chimacum Ridge Community Forest
- Indian Creek Community Forest

They are all community forests located within the Pacific Northwest and are supported by state and non-profit alike. They share interests in education, environmental restoration, recreation, and sustainable forestry techniques. These structures have then been placed in their management plans: Documents that provide guidance for community partners to develop funding, infrastructure, and assorted programs within their land. The envisioned development of each community forest is highly variable. For example, Indian Creek focuses more on increased tribal development and the integration of Native American culture into programing and site design while Newberry Woods is primarily focused on habitat restoration and educational opportunities without a cultural emphasis. Although they each have different management focuses, they all envision community leadership in forest decision-making and management.

This has been implemented in the community forests by the availability of council meetings for those interested in making a change to the management structures. Community voices have been uplifted and partnerships established for the development of these management plans to live up to the ideals of community forestry. The ideas of community forestry have been applied and foundation structures have been put in place to focus on the development of different policies from a community-based approach, but how does the creation of Community Forests actively make positive change for the communities involved?

The betterment of the forest is created through a shared community understanding of wildlife values from aesthetic, recreation, environmental restoration, and educational uses (Coder et. al, 2011). Not only this but communities more closely connected with their environment can choose to make more environmentally conscious decisions as they see fit instead of outside management controlling the resources. The visible benefits are also cleaner water and air, preservation or restoration of wildlife habitat, stormwater management, and cultural resources for the community's land (USFS, 2023).

As for recreation, the dissolution of what may have been previously private lands and the connection of other public lands allows for greater recreational access (USFS, 2023). It is also then in the hands of the community to determine their plans for hiking, fishing, and hunting within the land. Through community guidance, recreational needs can be more easily met by the establishment of new trail systems and the maintenance of existing ones. This is in addition to the communities also not having to pay fees for their recreational pursuits (Trust for Public Land, 2021).

Educational opportunities are also greatly improved by the establishment of community forests. When introduced, education opportunities are more readily accessible to surrounding public institutions (Allan, Frank et. Al, 1994). Providing these spaces to public institutions allows for the creation of forest laboratory programs within the environmental sciences, biology, forestry, and various other subjects.

Economically, community forestry can be financially productive. It puts the money in the hands of the partners and community that the forest is connected to, which allows for less leakage of wealth out of the community. Sustainable forestry techniques can also be implemented into a forest which leads to healthier production of timber and the protection of the environment.

Methodology

Benchmarking was the primary method we used in our research process. Benchmarking involves strategically identifying crucial criteria related to a particular organization, institution, or process and evaluating them through systematic comparison. By comparing defined criteria across several case studies of community forests, we were able to elucidate their key components.

We compiled and analyzed a total of six community forest case studies, selected using a set of inclusion and exclusion criteria that we defined in consultation with the project sponsor. Potential case studies were initially identified through recommendations from stakeholders and internet research. We reviewed a total of 17 case studies and selected 6 that best matched our inclusion criteria to be included in the final analysis. We determined to use 6 case studies based on time and labor limitations, with the goal of providing a diverse selection of approaches for comparison while remaining focused on the specific essential criteria we identified for benchmarking.

We chose to use benchmarking as our methodology because it offered a systematic way to identify and imagine best practices in the development and maintenance of a community forest focused on our major priorities: education and collaborative management. By clearly defining benchmarks and comparing a series of case studies against these criteria, we were able to distill crucial components of community forests that were in line with our priorities. Simultaneously, we developed a multifaceted portrayal of community forests that can be used in diverse contexts and by many different stakeholders interested in community forests. The benchmarks we included in our analysis and their definitions are described in Table 1.

Benchmark	Definition
Location*	Where is the forest located?
Year founded	Year the community forest became designated as a community forest
Acreage*	Area of the forest in acres
Ownership*	What entity owns the property where the forest is located?
Partners	What organizations and people are included in the management of the forest?
Relationship with Tribal Governments	Are relations documented? How are they formalized? What do they look like in practice?
Community Charter	What documents and/or agreements are used to define and sustain management roles and processes for the forest? What kind of community/leadership charter exists?
Management Focus*	What are the priorities for programs, planning, practices, and management within the community forest (e.g., education, forestry, conservation, recreation, cultural sustainability and engagement)?

Infrastructure	What physical amenities and programs exist in the community forest? How has the infrastructure changed before and after the designation of the land as a community forest?
Methods of Community Engagement in Management and Planning	How does leadership do outreach? What methods do they use to learn from community members (workshops, surveys, regular meetings, etc.)?
Measurements of Success	How do the forests' partners evaluate and monitor their progress and success? What metrics do they use? What does monitoring and evaluation look like? How often do they measure their progress and programs? How do they anticipate and plan for change/growth?
Existing questions about the community forest	What questions remain after reviewing publicly accessible information about this community forest?

Table 1. Benchmarking criteria
*Benchmarks used as inclusion criteria

Online sources, including websites and forest management plans and reports, were our primary resource for analysis of our case studies; however, we also held two stakeholder interviews and contacted community forest projects directly via email and video calls. Their detailed knowledge helped enhance our understanding of individual community forest projects and day-to-day community forest management. We are grateful for their time and expertise.

Results: Case Studies

Chimacum Ridge Community Forest
Nason Ridge Community Forest
Newberry Woods Community Forest
Indian Creek Community Forest
Canyon Lake Community Forest
Stewart Mountain Community Forest

(SMCF Core Planning Team, 2023)

Chimacum Ridge Community Forest

Chimacum Ridge Community Forest sits centrally in the Chimacum watershed, home to many tributaries of Chimacum creek, mixed forests, and wetlands. Here you can find Douglas firs, western red cedars, Sitka spruce, broad leaf maples, and bitter cherries among other tree species. There are also many wild foods and medicinal species such as salal, saskatoon berry, and evergreen huckleberry. The Jefferson Land Trust is currently collaborating with a conservation-oriented private equity firm named EFM that purchased the land in 2015 to become the owners of Chimacum Ridge and establish a community forest. They are near the end of the process and expect to purchase the deed for $5.75 million by the end of 2023 (Jefferson Land Trust, 2021b).

Location:

Chimacum Ridge is in east Jefferson County in the Puget Sound. It is located on the traditional lands of the S'Klallam and Chemakum Tribes. An aerial map of the ridge can be seen in Figure 1 and the location of Jefferson County in the state is shown in Figure 2.
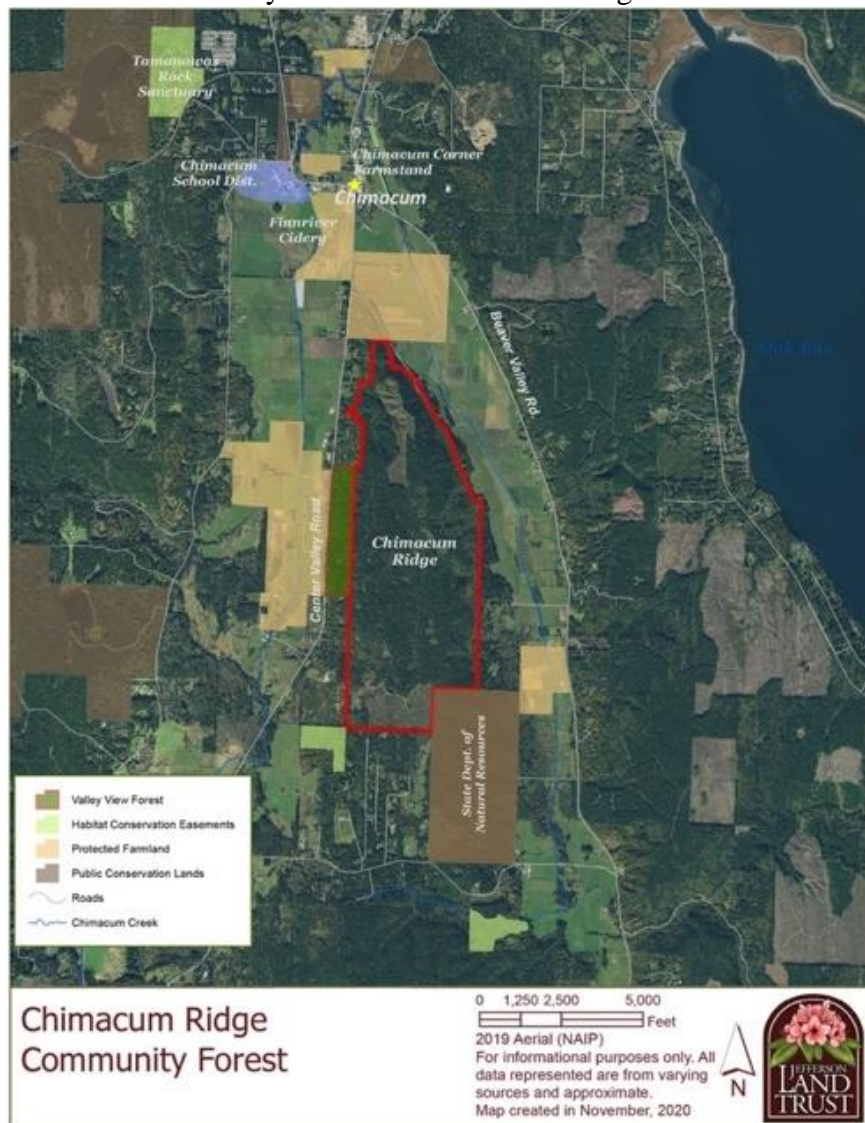

Figure 1. Aerial map of Chimacum Ridge Community Forest (Jefferson Land Trust, 2020)
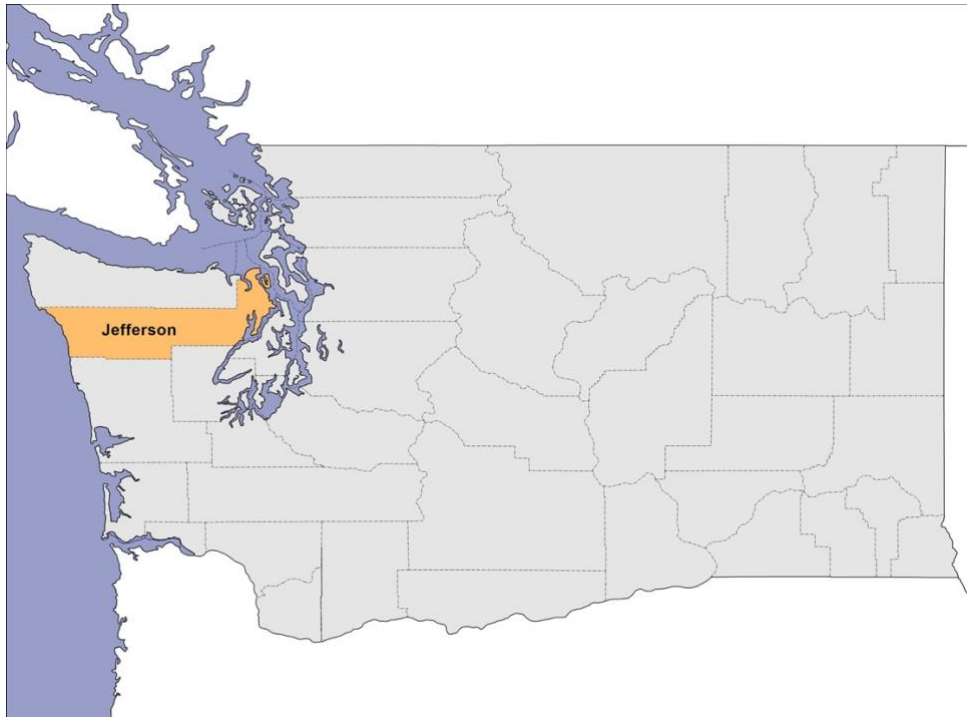
Figure 2. Location of Jefferson County in Washington

Year Founded:
Jefferson Land Trust plans to purchase the land by the end of 2023 and establish it as a community forest in 2024 (Jefferson Land Trust, 2021b).

Acreage:
853 acres

Ownership:
The private equity fund EFM currently owns the land, but the Jefferson Land Trust's long-term plan for the forest is to purchase the land a establish ownership by a subsidiary of the Land Trust (Jefferson Land Trust, 2020).

Partners:
Many partnerships between the community forest and the surrounding community—including with businesses, education institutions, and community organizations—have emerged. These partnerships include North Olympic Development Council, North Olympic Salmon Coalition, Jefferson County Conservation District, Black Lives Matter Jefferson County, the Jamestown and Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribes, Port Townsend School of Woodworking, WSU-Extension, CedarRoot Folk School, Chimacum School District, Northwestern School of Wooden Boatbuilding, and Finnriver Farm & Cidery (Jefferson Land Trust, 2021b).

Relationship with Tribal Entities:

The Jamestown and Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribes are essential partners of the Jefferson Land Trust and the future of Chimacum Ridge. The land trust's Strategic Vision Framework emphasizes the centrality of equity in the long-term management of Chimacum Ridge. It particularly highlights the long-term meaningful partnership with the S'Klallam Tribes. The S'Klallam and Chemakum Tribes and their traditional management practices are included in the Framework's description of the forests' history and local Tribes are explicitly included as primary stakeholders in the Community Forest Principles. The S'Klallam Tribes are interested in harvesting traditional foods and fibers within the forest, and their access to the land is considered a priority within the forest planning process.

Community Charter:

The Jefferson Land Trust developed a set of values revolving around the social, ecological, and economic goals established for the forest and surrounding community, which was approved by the Stakeholders Advisory Group. They define each of these values in the Strategic Vision Framework and visualize them as a wheel as shown in Figure 2 (Jefferson Land Trust, 2020).

Additionally, project leaders have outlined a governance structure to maintain the forest's sustained mission. The land trust will carry out the long-term vision for Chimacum Ridge under its own standards and practices and appoint members to the forest subsidiary and advisory committees. The forest subsidiary will own the forest and supervise its initial establishment and operation, while three volunteer advisory committees will inform planning and policy for the forest's social, ecological, and economic benefits. Finally, a volunteer board of managers will guide day-to-day operations (Jefferson Land Trust, 2021a).

Figure 3. Chimacum Ridge Community Forest Values

Figure 4. Sketch of Chimacum Ridge Community Forest governance from Strategic Vision Framework

Management Focus:

Chimacum Ridge's management priorities focus on ensuring the forest is a place that serves all members of the community forever. Its focuses include:

- Biodiversity and habitat preservation
- Sustainable cultural and economic development, including the provision of renewable resources to local artisans and craftspeople
- Traditional food and fiber harvest practices by local Tribes
- Low-barrier recreational opportunities
- Education for all community members (Jefferson Land Trust, 2021b)

Priorities for community forest recreation and education activities are represented in Figure 4, which were gathered in a survey of project leadership and volunteers.
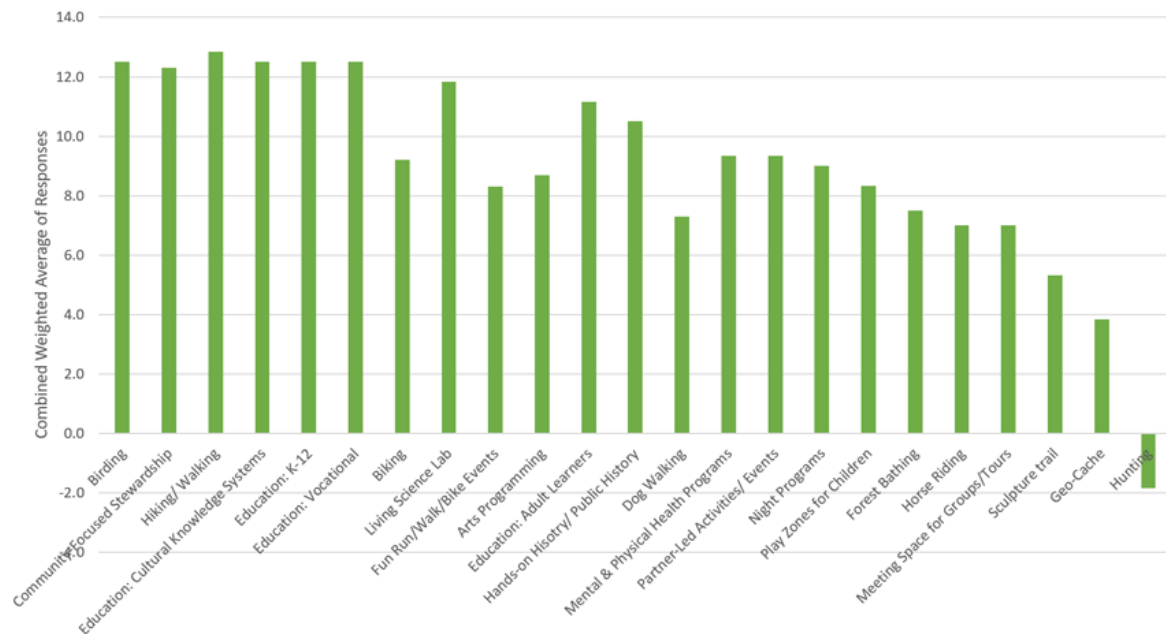
Figure 5. Survey results ranking educational and recreational priorities in the Chimacum Ridge Community Forest (Jefferson Land Trust, 2021a)

Infrastructure:

Currently, approximately 10 miles of logging roads traverse the forest land, but no infrastructure can be developed on behalf of the community forest until its purchase by the land trust (Jefferson Land Trust, 2021b). Eventually, the land trust intends to support public unguided access to the forest. A parking area is in development on an adjoining property that will become the access point for visitors to Chimacum Ridge, and educational and recreational purposes are the current priorities for future infrastructure. The forest will be limited to non-motorized transportation and no campgrounds or other large gathering (>50 people) facilities will be developed.

Methods of Community Engagement in Management and Planning:

The Chimacum Ridge Community Forest Outreach and Engagement Plan helps guide community engagement with the forest. Forest leadership has emphasized the importance of proactively building equity and inclusion into the structure and operation of the forest. So far, these efforts have included partnership with the S'Klallam Tribes during the planning stages and centering tribal interests in the forest's vision and goals. Other outreach activities have included tours of the forest, public meetings, visits to elected officials, and outreach (Jefferson Land Trust, 2020). Community members were also closely engaged during the development of the Strategic Vision Framework, as well as the development of guidelines and strategies for recreation and education within the forest. The National Park Service's Rivers Trail Conservation and Assistance program supported these community engagement efforts.

Measurements of Success:

As a community forest in its early stages, many of the goals for Chimacum Ridge are currently focused on ensuring the land's protection and acquiring the rights to manage its future development. Metrics of progress are in the process of being developed and tested in planning and the early steps of implementation. Additionally, the Jefferson Land Trust manages a 65-acre forest, Valley View Forest, which sits adjacent to the Chimacum Ridge property. At Valley View Forest, a management plan is in use to guide decision-making. This smaller parcel has offered valuable opportunities to implement and revise decision-making that will help inform decision-making processes and progress for the larger community forest once it is under the care of the land trust. Community members are closely involved with developing forest goals, providing feedback, and revising plans and execution (E. Kingfisher, Personal Communication, August 7, 2023).
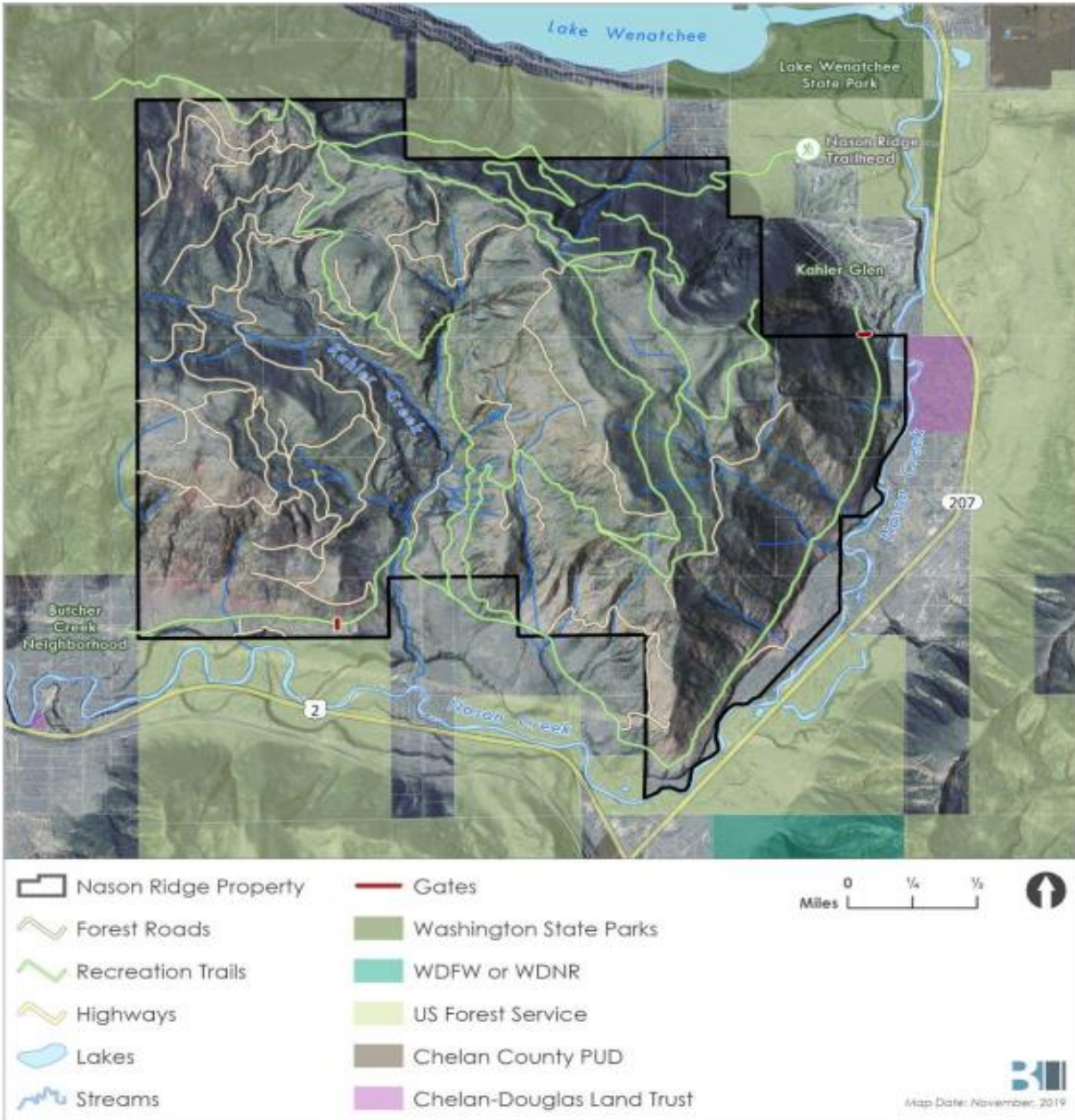
Nason Ridge Community Forest

(Wenatchee Outdoors, 2022)

Nason Ridge is home to many ecologically important creeks of the north-central Washington region. In addition to the ecological importance of these forest lands it is also near two popular ski resorts of the region, Stevens Pass and the city of Leavenworth. These locations, along with the city of Wenatchee, population 35,401, bring in many visitors each year.

Location:

The Nason Ridge Community Forest is south of Lake Wenatchee and Lake Wenatchee state park, approximately 42 miles from the city of Wenatchee.

Figure 6. Nason Ridge Community Forest Map. Nason Ridge Management Plan, 2021

Year Founded:

The Nason Ridge Community Forest was officially established April 14, 2022.

Acreage:

The current acreage of Nason Ridge is 3,714 acres.

Ownership

Nason ridge is publicly owned by Chelan County.

Partners:

Nason ridge has had a long history of transferring ownership and community stewardship. Currently the partners of Nason Ridge are the ones who are listed within the Nason Ridge Community Forest Advisory Committee, these include: WA State Parks, Kahler Glen (Golf Course), Stellerwood, Lake Wenatchee, Yakama Nation Fisheries, Lake Wenatchee Fire District, Nason View, Standing Rock Ranch, Plain Valley Ski Trails, Butcher Creek, Cascadia Conservation District, Wenatchee Valley TREAD, 59-er Diner, Western Rivers Conservancy, Chelan Douglas Land Trust, Chelan County Natural Resource Department, and WA Recreation and Conservation Office.

Relationship with Tribal Governments:

Listed within their management plan, the Nason Ridge Community Forest acknowledges that it is considered cultural lands. They state, "Any proposed ground disturbing activities for recreational development will be presented in writing to the Yakama Nation and Colville Tribes for review and input on possible impacts to cultural resources" (Nason Ridge Community Forest Management Plan, 2019, p. 78). It is listed in proposed future committee participation that both the Yakama Nation and Colville Confederated Tribes be included in future discussions on management.

Community Charter:

For the management of Nason Ridge Community Forest the management plan has four different sections on future management: Forest Management, Riparian Management/Aquatics, Road Management, and Recreation & Public Use.

For forest management the long-term picture that has been envisioned is held within Continuous Forest Inventories (CFI). These documentations will help determine, "species composition, forest productivity, annual growth volumes, and how forest conditions change over time based on management activities" (Nason Ridge Community Forest Management Plan, 2019, p. 35). Additional considerations for CFI objectives are Steep Slope, Riparian Management Areas, Soils, Fire and Fuel Management, Fish, Wildlife, and Species of Concern.

Riparian Management and Aquatics is the next section of management. The objectives here are to ensure healthy vegetation, protect wildlife species located in associated riparian habitats, and restore water quality. Nason Creek is responsible for providing 18% of the annual flow to the Wenatchee Watershed. This means it is vital for Chinook, steelhead, bull trout, and cutthroat trout. Maintaining these resources is an important mission of the partners connected to the forest.

Road Management is important for the forest as there are 33 miles of road located within the area. Continuous management of these roads is important to know due to their effect on accessibility from the public. Accessibility affects the wildlife and recreation use of the area, acknowledging the dynamic of these two sections is important for a healthy ecosystem.

Finally, this brings us to Recreation and Public Use management. It is vital to the success of the Nason Ridge Community Forest to provide access to recreation as that is what brings the community together for this forest. This means maintaining and providing continual access to trails for non-motorized travel such as hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, and biking. They express interest in providing more access for children/educational opportunities, better parking, more signage, and continuation of their winter use signage and maintenance (Grooming trails), and a creation of a cross country ski hut system like the ones used in the Methow Valley. In addition, the committee members who are to manage this aspect need to focus on limits of acceptable change (LAC) within the recreational opportunities listed and funding needed for the desired improvements.

Management Focus:

The management focuses within the forest are already set and clear. This forest is past the stage of brainstorming and on their way to implementation of efforts toward their goals. The focuses that they have stated are recreation and ecological maintenance with educational opportunities intertwined throughout.

Infrastructure:

Nason ridge is already held within a well-developed area. Located right off Highway 2, there are major metropolitan areas located around it. Within the property lines there are numerous amounts of trails and U.S. Forest Service roads that currently exist. The management plan states that development of more infrastructure is held within the future vision of the forest. This includes more trails, parking, and rendezvous huts as aforementioned.

Methods of Community Engagement Within the Forest:

Nason Ridge has historically been used recreationally. The community has been engaged with it since its inception, so when the partners organized the "Save Nason Ridge" campaign community

members quickly got engaged. They met in meetings and were prepared to have their concerns answered and goals met. There were community town hall meetings to include citizens in conversations with legislators, their assistants, and forest specialists.

Measurements of Success:

The management plan states that, "What ultimately results in a successful community forest is community involvement in its long-term management" (Nason Ridge Community Forest Management Plan, 2019). Continued engagement and turnout to community meetings is key to having people enjoy what is offered by this community forest.

Existing Questions about the Community Forest:

How much funding would be needed for proposed development plans?

What does upkeep currently look like within the property?

How have current tribal relationships developed?

Is the USFS a partner?

Newberry Woods Community Forest

(Great Peninsula Conservancy, 2023)

The Newberry Woods Community Forest is an ecologically important area of Kitsap County as its boundaries lie over Anderson Creek, one of many salmon bearing creeks in the state. The Newberry Woods Community Forest is near Newberry Hill Heritage Park and the town of Silverdale, Washington, which is home to nearly 22,000 people.

Location:

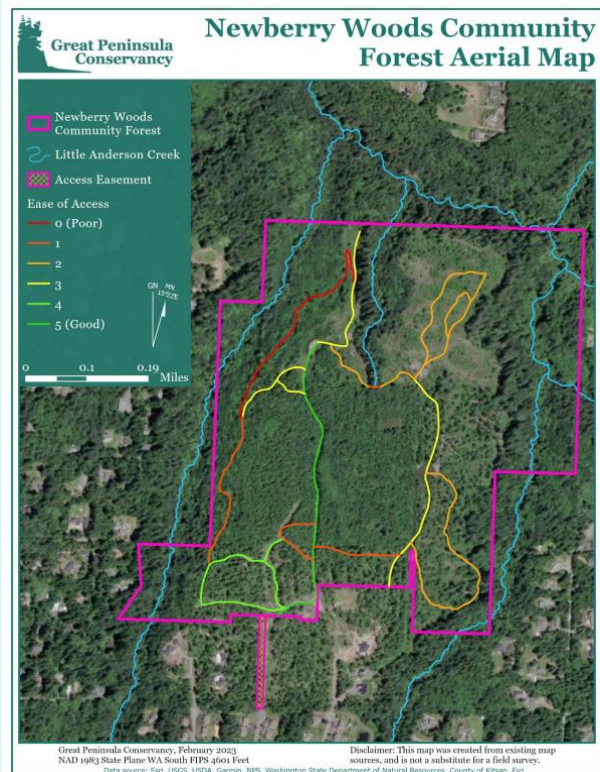The Newberry Woods Community Forest is located within Kitsap County, Washington on the east bank of the Hood Canal.
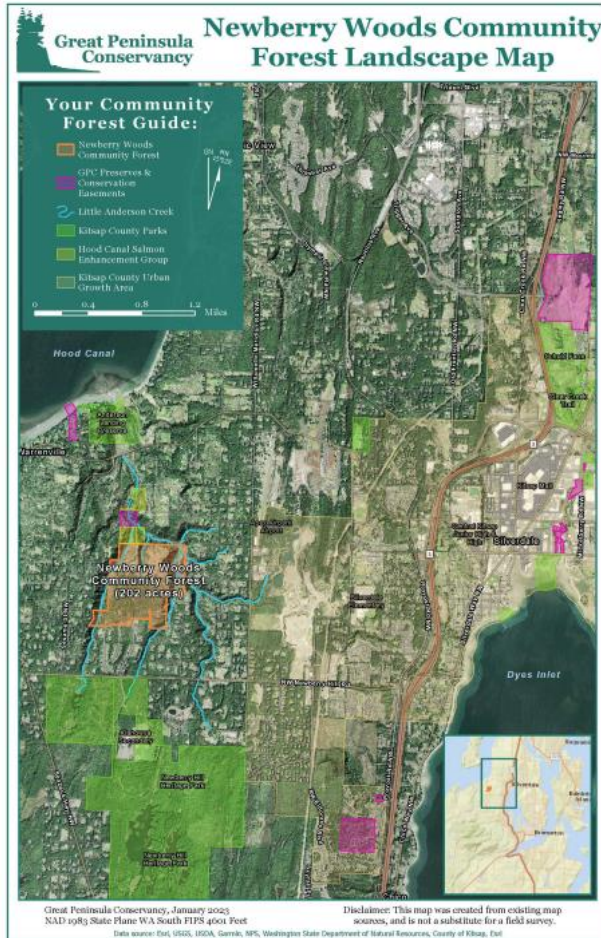

Figure 7(left). Property Map

Figure 8(right). Trail and Access Easement Map. Newberry Woods Interim Plan, 2023.

Acreage:

The existing property is 202 acres.

Ownership:

The Great Peninsula Conservancy (GPC) has current ownership over Newberry Woods Community Forest.

Partners:

The community forest partners include sponsors of the forest, in addition to those on the Community Forest Advisory Team or (CFAT). The current sponsors of the project are the USDA's Community Forest Program, Kitsap County Conservation Futures, the U.S. Navy's Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration program, and the Lindstrom Family. As for the CFAT, it is still in development of who will be included within it.

Relationship With Tribal Governments:

A relationship with tribal governments is not clearly stated within the Interim Plan. However, within the notes for Great Peninsula Conservancy's third meeting for forest planning there is a land acknowledgment for the Suquamish, Squaxin, Nisqually Indian Tribe, Skokomish, and the Puyallup Tribe of Indians. This is the only observed acknowledgement of those who have lived on that land for time immemorial.

Community Charter:

Currently the Community Forest Advisory Team is still in development. During this interim period there is no publicly accessible community charter. Towards the end of August and beginning of September 2023 this information will be made available to the public and clearer roles between partners will be outlined.

Management Focus:

Although there is no community charter directly outlined, Great Peninsula Conservancy and partners have developed some management focuses for the community forest. Their greatest concerns lie in the management of the ecological systems within; this includes forest maintenance and stream habitat restoration, protection, and monitoring. Anderson creek is a vital salmon habitat, and it is important to the conservancy that it is protected. Their next focus is recreation, specifically they want to garner "passive recreation and wildlife viewing" (Newberry Woods Interim Plan, 2023). Their list of which outdoor activities are allowed and prohibited is listed below in Figure 8.

Allowable activities
- Hiking
- Wildlife viewing

Prohibited activities
- Biking
- Equestrian use
- Dog walking
- Hunting
- Camping
- Dumping
- Fires
- Fireworks
- Fishing
- Unauthorized harvest of resources and forest products
- Ground disturbance
- Motorized vehicle use except for accessibility vehicles
- Other activities prohibited by law

Figure 9. Activities permitted in Newberry Community Forest. Newberry Woods Interim Plan, 2023

Their other focus lies within education. Within the first public meeting, notes for public engagement were outlined by community members that focused on education. They expressed interest in environmental education/place-based science, land stewardship, community gardens, etc. to be an important focus for the community forest managers.

Infrastructure

Newberry Woods Community Forest has a trail system throughout it. With the creation of management plans there is hope for more signage throughout and the development of a better maintained trail system. There are no bathrooms on the property and no plans for them have been made thus far.

Methods of Community Engagement in Management and Planning

The Great Peninsula Conservancy currently has intensive methods of community engagement in their management structure for the Newberry Woods Community Forest. Since the beginning of 2023, GPC has held three different meetings with community members who have expressed interest in the forest's management.

1. Within the first, they garnered objectives and community benefits that they envisioned for the future development of the community forest. These objectives and community benefits were each divided into three categories: conservation, stewardship, and public engagement.
2. During the second meeting, these objectives were ranked on important on a scale of 1-5, 1 being low priority and 5 being high priority.
3. Finally, at the third meeting they grouped the highest priority objectives into different clusters. These clusters will be taken on in different orders by the developing Community Forest Advisory Team.

Some other ways that GPC engages the community are through guided tours and community work parties for the property. Through these activities they engage the public directly and hear what they are envisioning. In addition, they encourage people to check the events page on their website to foster the needed community engagement.

Measurements of Success

The measurements of success for this community forest are still in development. They have goals and objectives that they will be striving for once the CFAT is developed and put into place, however in the meantime those goals and objectives are still undecided.

Existing Questions about the Community Forest

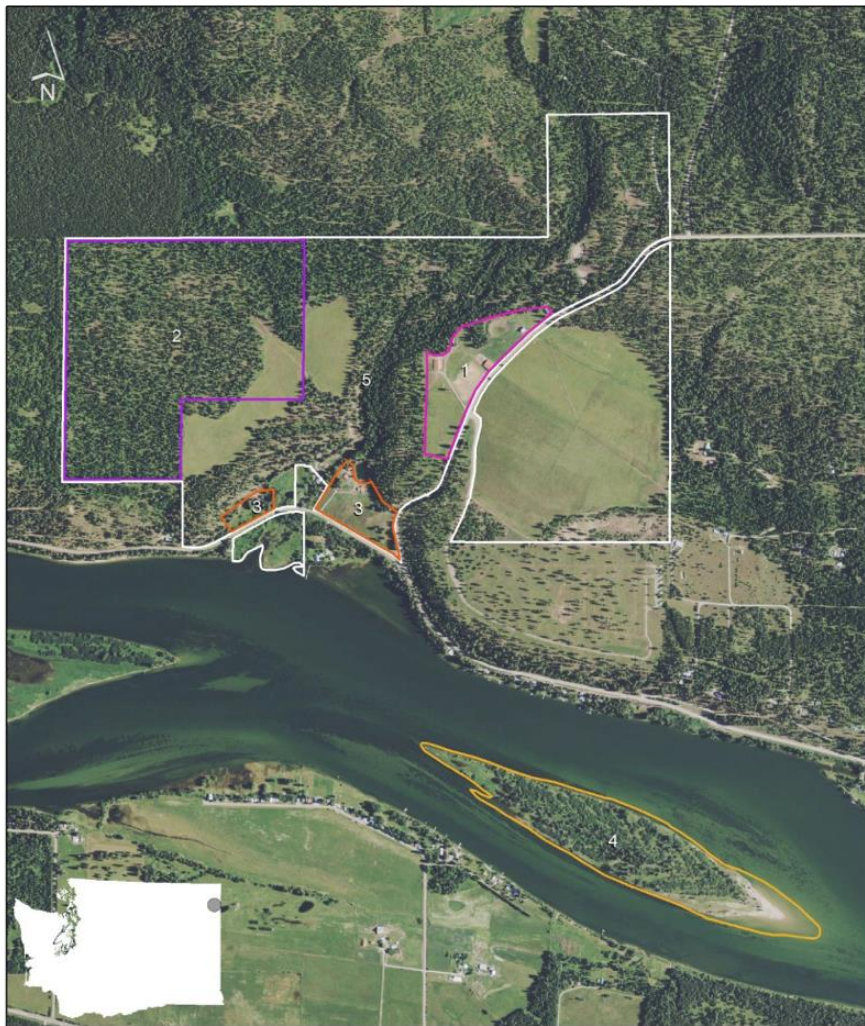How will their CFAT be marketed to the public?

What does continuous funding look like for a community forest this size?

How have the more private funders influenced the developing management plan?
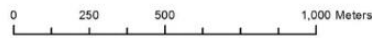
Indian Creek Community Forest

Indian Creek Community Forest is made up mainly of mixed conifer forests, with riparian habitat, following the bank of Indian Creek. Common tree species found in the forest include western white pine, Douglas fir, western hemlock, and western larch. Other flora growing in the forest include ironwood, ninebark, twinflower, Saskatoon berry, uva ursi, and Oregon grape. White tailed deer, Rocky Mountain elk, beavers, river otters, and waterfowl are frequent inhabitants of the land along with many other animals. In addition to its importance to wildlife, Indian Creek serves as an important space for community gathering and connection to people and place (Entz et al., 2016). The Indian Creek property was bought by the Kalispel Tribe in 2012 for $1.6 million, and more land has been added to the community forest since then for $165,000 (M. Lithgow, Personal Communication, August 9, 2023).

Location:
It is located near the Kalispel Reservation on the ancestral lands of the Kalispel Tribe of Indians. The map in the lower lefthand corner of Figure 9 shows its location relative to the geography of Washington state.

Year founded:
The Kalispel Tribe acquired the land in 2012 and developed the initial management plan in 2016.

Acreage:
350

		Acreage	Value (est.)	Contribution
1	Joint Use (BPA/Tribe)	20.0	213,000	87/13
2	CFP (Tribe/USFS)*	133.8	267,566	50/50
3	Housing (Tribe)	14.5	164,192	100
4	Island (Tribe)	56.9	100,388	100
5	balance (BPA)	329.5	957,858	100

*Note: Forest Service cost share at 50% received as program income and dedicated to future land purchases for mitigation.

Data Sources:
NAIP Ortho Image, 2013
Kalispel Natural Resources Department
February, 2016

Figure 10. Aerial map of Indian Creek Community Forest

Ownership:

The forest is owned by the Kalispel Tribe of Indians

Partners:

The Kalispel Tribe Natural Resources Department (KNRD) collaborated with the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program (RTCA) to plan and set into action their goals for the forest. Together they developed an action plan and priorities for education and recreation within the forest. Other key partners include the Department of Natural Resources, Washington State University, and local community members.

Relationship with Tribal Governments:

The Kalispel Tribe of Indians owns the Indian Creek Community Forest and the KNRD oversees its management. The priorities for the property include integrating Tribal language and culture into programming and design, hosting Tribal (Stone et al., 2019) and supporting traditional Indigenous skills and knowledge (*Indian Creek Community Forest*, 2022).

Community Charter:

The KNRD is the primary management institution for the forest, but the wider community is deeply involved in forest planning, engagement, and goals. An advisory committee bridges the dialogue between these two groups and helps to ensure its sustained progress and accessibility. Primarily addressing the recreational and educational components of the forest's management focus, the advisory committee links forest partners, keep the public updated on the forest in an annual report, plan evaluations for the forest's goals, host celebrations for forest successes, and serve as members on ad-hoc work groups. The structure of forest leadership is outlined in Figure 10 (Stone et al., 2019).
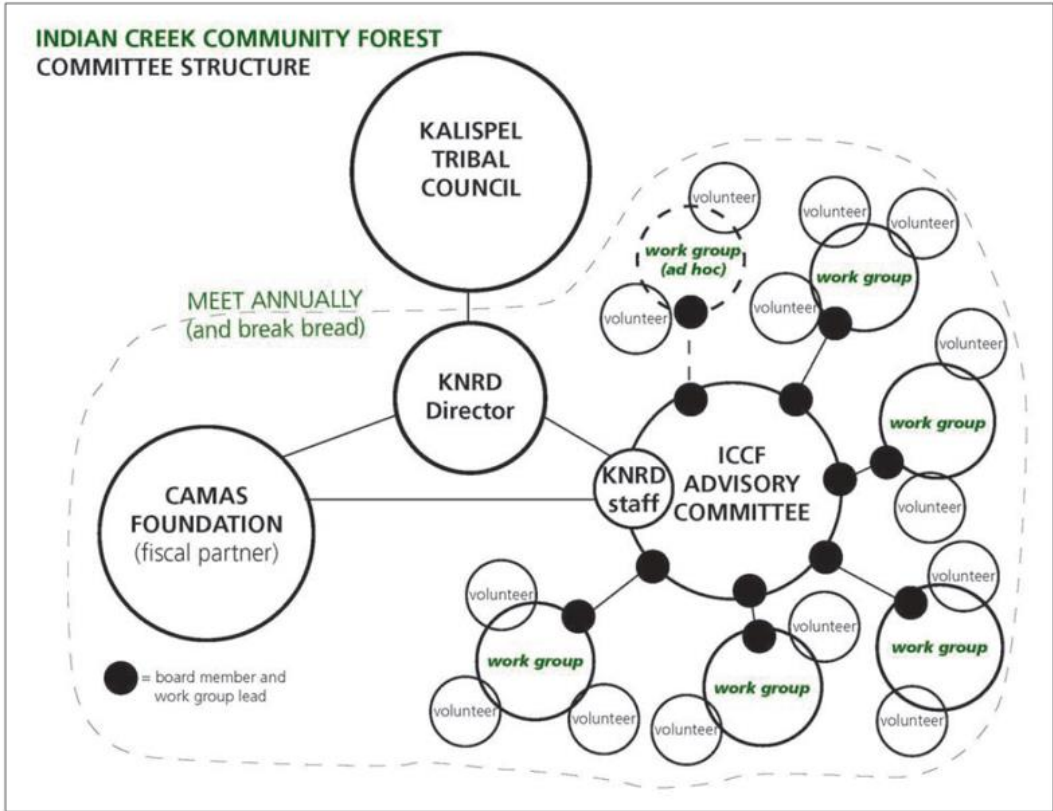
Figure 11. Aerial map of Indian Creek Community Forest

Management Focus:
- Native American cultural sustenance, programming, and education
- Intergenerational education, including job-skill building and hands-on learning opportunities
- Stewardship and conservation
- Recreation
- Community connection and civic engagement

Infrastructure:
Indian Creek has significant infrastructure in the form of programming and built structures. The initial management plan noted the value of existing built structures from agricultural use of the land would be valuable for public education spaces. A native plant nursery was completed in 2013 to support restoration efforts in the forest, and a fishpond was built in 2018 for Tribal use. In addition, the forest hosts forestry research, classes for all ages, workshops, and summer camps along with forest and riparian restoration projects (Entz et al., 2016; Stone et al., 2019).

Methods of Community Engagement in Management and Planning:
In the planning stages, community members were integrated through two workshops and an online survey to begin generating the forest Action Plan. After the development of the initial Action Plan,

forest leadership hosted an open house to receive feedback. Figure 11 depicts stages of community engagement during the planning and implementation efforts.
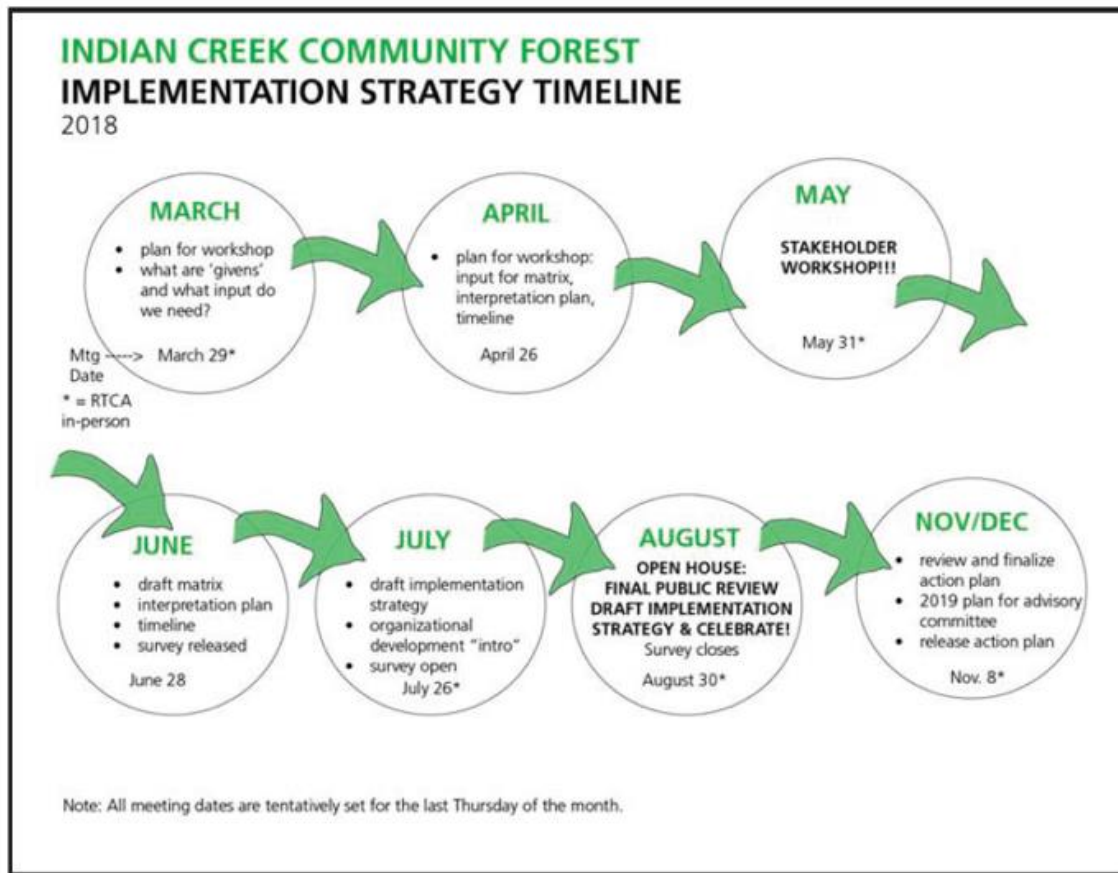

Figure 12. Indian Creek Community Forest Implementation Strategy Timeline

Measurements of Success:

The management plan is organized by S.M.A.R.T. goals (specific, measurable, achievable, results focused and time-bound) to assess progress. Priorities for the forest are categorized as immediate, short-term, and long-term, with S.M.A.R.T. goals that ensure there are specific benchmarks to work towards. For example, to monitor and evaluate conservation success, KNRD measures the baseline conditions of a variety of flora and fauna that are representative for each existing habitat to compare with over time (Stone et al., 2019).

Canyon Lake Community Forest

(Cascade Interpretive Consulting, 2004)

In 1998 the Canyon Lake Community Forest property was bought by the Whatcom Land Trust for $3.7 million. The property is 2,200 acres and includes one of the oldest stands of old growth in the Pacific Northwest, with several 800–1000-year-old Alaska yellow cedar (Whatcom Land Trust, 2003). The community forest also has a 45-acre lake filled with cutthroat trout, numerous streams, and 50-million-year-old palm fossils (Jack, 2023). The excellent habitat provides opportunities to see owls, bears, cougars, diminutive pica, and more (Whatcom Land Trust, 2003).

Location:

Canyon Lake Community Forest is located in Washington in the foothills of Mt Baker, just east of Deming. It is on the ancestral homelands of the Nooksack Indian Tribe. A map of the forest can be found in Figure 12.

Figure 13. Aerial map of Canyon Lake Community Forest

Year founded:

1998

Acreage:

2,266 acres

Ownership:

CLCF is co-owned by Western Washington University (WWU) and the Whatcom Land Trust (WLT). WWU is responsible for reviewing, approving, and monitoring scientific research on the property (Whatcom County, 1998). WLT holds the conservation easement on the property (Cascade Interpretive Consulting, 2004). WWU and WLT jointly coordinate and facilitate environmental education opportunities on the property (Whatcom County, 1998).
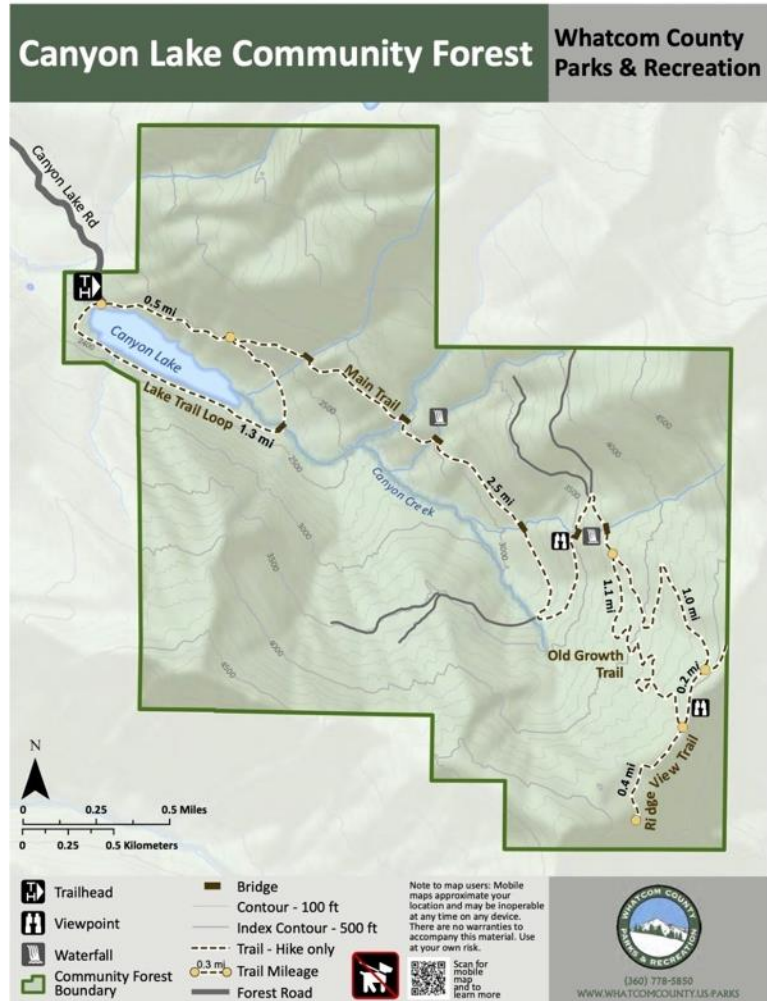
Partners:

The primary partner of CLCF is Whatcom County Parks and Recreation who manages the forest. They are responsible for public access and recreation on the property, which includes the planning and implementation of programs and facilities (Whatcom County, 1998).

Relationship with Tribal Governments:

Currently there are no records available to the public of relationships between CLCF and surrounding tribal governments.

Community Charter:

According to CLCF's 1998 Joint Management Agreement, management of the community forest will be conducted by a Community Forest Management Committee composed of two representatives from Whatcom County, two representatives from Western Washington University, and two representatives from the Whatcom Land Trust. The committee planned to meet no less than twice a year, however at this time there are no evident public records of their meetings. The purpose of the Management Committee is to… (Whatcom County, 1998).

1. Make decisions affecting the interests of more than one of the three entities represented on the Management Committee
2. Undertake long-range planning
3. Keep the various parties informed as to plans and activities of the other parties. No party will undertake a plan or activity potentially affecting the interests of other parties without first consulting those other parties.

Management Focus:

The CLCF acts as a nature reserve for native plants and animals. The conservation easement includes the main property, as well as a parcel along Canyon Lake Creek below the lake. This easement prohibits subdivision of the land, commercial use, and ecologically destructive activity (Cascade Interpretive Consulting, 2004).

(Whatcom Land Trust, 2017)

In addition, the forest acts as a resource for environmental education for WWU students and community members. The Washington Native Plant Society visits the site frequently, as well as WWU undergraduate and graduate students conducting research (WWU, n.d.). Many classes from the WWU College of the Environment visit this site on field trips.

In April 2004 an in-depth interpretive manual was written as a guide for group leaders, docents, and tour leaders to orient and prepare themselves for leading an educational trip to Canyon Lake Creek Community Forest.

Infrastructure:

Infrastructure in the community forest includes 7 miles of hiking trails, equipped with 7 total walking bridges, and several interpretive and navigation signs. There are also a few forest roads leading off the trails (though inaccessible to cars). In addition, the trails connect to a trailhead and parking lot at the main access point (Canyon Lake Road) on the northwest side of the property.

Methods of Community Engagement in Management and Planning:

Once the Whatcom Land Trust decided to buy the Canyon Lake property, the Trust for Public Land put them in contact with the Paul Allen Foundation. They agreed to provide half of the funds needed to buy the property. To raise the rest of the $3.7 million WTL held a press conference in the forest and invited preeminent forest ecologist Dr. Jerry Franklin Professor of Ecosystem Analysis at the University of Washington School of Forestry, to speak about the forest. Many community members were there, including the newly-elected Whatcom County Executive Pete Kremen, and Crown Pacific's timberland manager, Russ Paul (Jack, 2023).

Figure 14. Jerry Franklin speaking at the press conference in CLCF. *Photo courtesy of Rand Jack*

The WLT continues to engage the community in its management by holding a few "Field Fridays" at the property every year. Community members can RSVP to join the WLT stewardship team in completing monitoring site visits. The WLT as well as the WTA also hold work parties here to help maintain the trail system.

Measurements of Success:

Currently there are no records of how CLCF measures success available to the public.

Existing questions about the community forest:

Does CLCF partner with/have a relationship with the Nooksack Indian Tribe? If so, what does that partnership look like?

Is the Community Forest Management Committee still holding meetings?

How does Whatcom Parks measure the success of CLCF?

Stewart Mountain Community Forest

(SMCF, n.d.)

Stewart Mountain is the site of a proposed community forest initiative started in 2017 that aims to adopt approximately 5,500 acres of forestland into local ownership. It will be managed for the use and benefit of the surrounding community (SMCF, n.d). The forest is surrounded by Deming, Van Zandt, Five Cedars, Wickersham, and Acme, which are home to tribal members, along with generations of farmers, foresters, and homesteaders (SMCF Core Planning Team, 2023).

This proposed community forest is important ecologically because it resides in the south fork Nooksack river watershed, home to 1.75 miles of South Fork Nooksack River Shoreline, with 6 Salmon-bearing tributaries, and 40 acres of 125-year-old forest (SMCF, n.d).

Below are the mission and vision for the Stewart Mountain Community Forest (SMCF) as stated on their website:

Vision

Stewart Mountain Community Forest (SMCF) is a vital component of our healthy Nooksack watershed and serves as the common ground where we come together to sustain the land and our connection to one another for generations to come.

Mission

Stewart Mountain Community Forest supports cross-cultural community ties and robust local economies by implementing forest management that restores watershed health as well as protects cultural resources and a rural way of life.
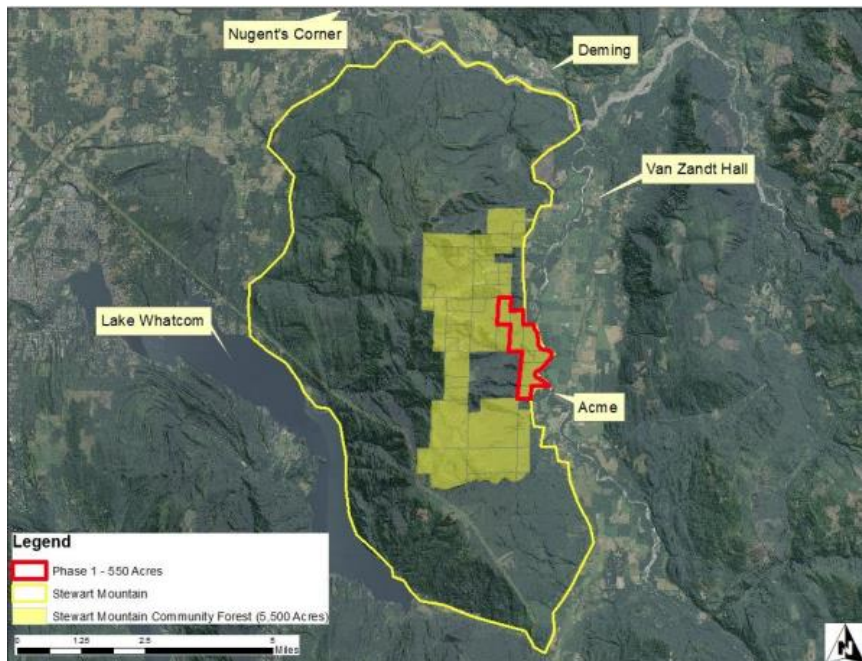
Figure 15. Aerial map of Stewart Mountain Community Forest. Land outlined in red was incorporated in November 2022

Location:

The proposed Stewart Mountain Community Forest is located just east of Bellingham, Washington on the ancestral homelands of the Nooksack Indian Tribe in rural Whatcom County between Lake Whatcom and the South Fork Nooksack River valley (SMCF, n.d).. A map of the forest can be found in Figure 14.

Year founded:

The community forest is still in the planning process and hasn't been officially founded (as of publication).

Acreage:

550 acres are allocated so far for a community forest out of the 5,500 acres proposed.

Ownership:

Currently, 4,950 acres of the proposed Stewart Mountain Community Forest are owned by Conservation Forestry, a for-profit private equity firm that acquires, manages, and harvests large tracts of forestlands (SMCF Core Planning Team, 2023). In 2017 WLT was approached by Conservation Forestry who were interested in passing on the management of the forest. Since then, WLT has bought 550 acres for $1.3 million (in November 2022). They are hoping to incorporate the rest of the 4,950 acres in the next five to 10 years (SMCF, n.d).

Whatcom Land trust bought 550 acres in November 2022 with funds allocated by Whatcom County Council from conservation futures. WLT owns and manages the stewardship of the property and Whatcom County holds the conservation easement that will protect the property long-term (Lee, 2022).

Partners:

The primary partners of the CLCF include Evergreen Land Trust Association, the Nooksack Indian Tribe, Whatcom County, and Western Washington University.

Relationship with Tribal Governments:

Stewart Mountain is located on the ancestral homelands of the Nooksack Indian Tribe. The Tribe is a key stakeholder in the creation of SMCF and has shown interest in exploring opportunities to increase their involvement within this community forest. For example, the Tribe has joined a collaborative group to explore opportunities to acquire more of the property and are an integral part of the management and engagement planning process (SMCF, n.d). In addition, the Tribe's involvement stems from and aligns with their Climate Change Adaptation Plan. (Walker, 2022)

Creation of the community forest will expand access to the Nooksack Indian Tribe's ancestral lands for cultural, ceremonial, subsistence, and commercial uses (SMCF, n.d). The Tribe has 6 main goals regarding the Stewart Mountain Community Forest including but not limited to:

> 1) Maintain and expand use of the forest for Nooksack tribal members by reducing barriers to access for harvesting wildlife and gathering plants and other materials. Secure exclusive access to certain areas for ceremonial and other cultural uses

> 2) Expand the Tribe's influence in the management of our homelands by participating in management of the Stewart Mountain Community Forest and identifying opportunities for tribally owned forest lands.

Community Charter:

SMCF have not determined an ownership model or governance structure yet. However, in May 2023 they did publish a Strategic Vision Framework to define the purpose of the Stewart Mountain Community Forest. It's meant to help guide future decisions for the forest. The framework describes what a community forest is, and the kind of forestry which is envisioned. It explains their process, and articulates their mission, vision, and values. It also includes examples of ownership and governance models and a process for how to move forward (SMCF, n.d).

The framework outlines a 3-stage Planning Process including (SMCF Core Planning Team, 2023):

1) Securing the Base
   i. Continue to seek funding and acquire land
   ii. Develop an initial forest management plan
   iii. Determine long-term owner(s)
   iv. Ends when long-term ownership is determined
2) Establishing the Structure
   i. Work with intended long-term owner(s) to develop governance model and refine forest management plan with community involvement
   ii. Ends when long-term owner acquires property
3) Steward the Forest
   i. Implement governance and management plans as further articulated in Stages 1 & 2
   ii. Continue with monitoring and communications

Management Focus:

The SMCF's focus is on restoring and protecting water resources and biodiversity and offsetting climate change impacts for future generations.

Its preliminary vision is to manage the property as a working forest that balances a variety of ecological, economic, and community benefits such as watershed health, improved water quality, increased water quantity, sustainable forestry jobs, fish and wildlife habitat, and recreational access while offsetting the projected impacts of climate change (SMCF, n.d).

As a working forest, SMCF will use ecologically based forest management with an approach called "Variable Density Thinning". This is a more labor-intensive approach, which yields more lumber per tree, promotes a mixed-age, biodiverse forest, and restores hydrological function (SMCF, n.d). They hope to foster local control and bring in forestry jobs with this approach.

The SMCF also aims to strengthen the watershed's resilience to Climate Change (SMCF, n.d). Through ongoing restoration and stewardship, WLT hopes to recover the South Fork Nooksack River's dwindling salmon populations.

Finally, SMCF hopes to expand community access for cultural uses for the Nooksack Indian Tribe, recreation, and education (SMCF Core Planning Team, 2023). They want to provide a wealth of

opportunities for people of all ages to discover, study, and explore the unique habitats, and be a part of sustaining a healthy, diverse forest for generations to come (SMCF, n.d).

Possible recreational opportunities within the proposed SMCF (which will be explored with the community) could include:

- hiking
- mountain biking
- horseback riding
- bird watching
- mushroom gathering
- plant identification
- tours of local history and lore
- and more!

Infrastructure:

Aside from forest service roads, there is currently no infrastructure in the proposed community forest.

Methods of Community Engagement in Management and Planning:

In 2017 a timber investment company from New Hampshire acquired Stewart Mountain and approached Whatcom Land Trust to see if they would have interest in purchasing land on Stewart Mountain. Key stakeholders joined the Nooksack Indian Tribe to form a collaborative group to explore opportunities to acquire the property and establish a community forest on Stewart Mountain (SMCF, n.d).

In September 2021 a gathering was held at the base of Stewart Mountain, and a Core Planning Team was formed with representatives from Nooksack Indian Tribe, Whatcom County, Whatcom Land Trust, and The Evergreen Land Trust Association. They applied with the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program for help on a Community Engagement Plan, and for the remainder of 2021, gathered early community and stakeholder input to inform the planning process of the forest (SMCF, n.d).

In spring 2022, an Interim Community Advisory Team (I-CAT) composed of people representing the sectors fundamental to this community forest — including forestry, water resources, cultural resources, wildlife habitat, recreation, education, research, youth, and the local community at large — was convened. This group worked to create a shared vision for the community forest and determine how to conduct public outreach.

Over the summer of 2022 a 15-question community survey was conducted. It was distributed to stakeholders and South Fork Valley residents. Outreach included flyers and posters distributed throughout the South Fork Valley and neighboring communities, social media posts on partner organization sites, targeted outreach emails, and word of mouth. The survey closed on October 10 with a total of 119 responses received (SMCF Core Planning Team, 2023).

Key findings included:

> 1. Large majority of respondents (more than 80 percent) had positive feelings about the Stewart Mountain Community Forest initiative.

> 2. Main questions were about long-term ownership, future management practices, funding, and recreational activities and their impact.

> 3. Respondents' main interests in supporting the community forest centered around care for the community, water resources, and salmon and wildlife habitat restoration (SMCF Core Planning Team, 2023).

In August of 2022 a community forum was hosted to gather input for the creation of a Strategic Vision Framework. Researchers from partner organizations conducted a study on best practices from established community forests in the Pacific Northwest. This study provided recommendations for the Stewart Mountain Community Forest (SMCF) ownership and organizational structure (SMCF, n.d).

The draft Strategic Vision Framework, which included the results of the survey, was developed over the fall and winter of 2022-2023 by the Planning Team with the support of NPS Staff, and a released for stakeholder and community review.

In March of 2023 open houses were hosted in to gather final feedback, and the final draft was released in May of 2023 (SMCF, n.d).

Measurements of Success:

Currently there are no records of how CLCF measures success available to the public.

Existing questions about the community forest:

On your website, it mentions that the planning goals for 2023 include developing "a sustainable model for the ownership and immediate management" of the community forest. Do you have any updates on this model as of yet?

Does the community forest have a more specific governance structure laid out at this time?

What are SMCF's hopes to expand community access to the forest for cultural uses and education specifically?

How do the core planning team, I-CAT, and WLT measure the success of the community forest?

Discussion

The six case studies portrayed in our results represent the wide variety that exists among community forests, even throughout the state of Washington. Using the benchmarks we created, we sought to highlight important aspects of community forests and to open a discussion about different structures and approaches used across forests. Each forest offers a unique geographic context, set of interests and needs, and approach to community forestry. This discussion will highlight a few of the patterns we observed across the case studies as well as exceptionalities of individual community forests to underscore a few key considerations for people who work with or are interested in becoming engaged with a community forest.

Relationships with Tribal Governments:

One of the benchmarks that stood out during our analysis was the community forests' relationships with tribal governments. This benchmark was particularly notable due to the wide range of relationships displayed in the case studies and our focus on co-management models.

Indian Creek Community Forest, owned by the Kalispel Tribe and managed by the Kalispel Department of Natural Resources, was the only case study in which the forest was owned by a Tribe and managed primarily by a Tribal entity. In the case of Indian Creek, Tribal interests and culture were central to planning, management, and infrastructure. Feedback from a series of community engagement activities found that one of the most important goals for the forest was to "integrate Native American culture into programming and site design" (Stone et al., 2019, p. 6). Other forests, particularly Stewart Mountain and Chimacum Ridge, took deliberate steps to incorporate Tribal governments during every step of the community forest planning process and aspire to maintain close relationships with their Tribal partners throughout implementation and ongoing management. Concrete steps have been taken to incorporate Tribal interests as members of the community in these two forests, but both forests are still largely in their planning phases. Despite their early stages, Chimacum Ridge and Stewart Mountain provide example models for engaging with Tribal stakeholders and meaningfully upholding these partnerships while recognizing how social injustice has shaped the lands and communities involved with the forest.

Education and Youth Engagement:

All of the forests listed a variety of partners and stakeholders. These partnerships generally reflected the management priorities and goals of the forest community. For example, four of the forests have connections to university programs, helping facilitate their goals to promote educational and research opportunities within the forest. Community forests also have relationships with youth groups, K-12 schools, and with young people individually.

Based on our selection criteria focusing on education in community forests, our case studies often highlighted programming and engagement for youth. Young people's involvement was often mentioned as an interest in or ongoing educational programming, frequently tied in with environmental stewardship, place-based learning, and recreational goals. However, young people themselves were not always clearly involved in forest leadership or decision-making. Two of the case study forests published demographics of their survey participants, revealing that for both, nearly all participants were over the age of 18, and the vast majority were over the age of 40 (Stone et al., 2019; [STEWART MT]). Nevertheless, the two programs that published these demographics

45

were also the only case studies that described uniquely dedicated efforts to involve young people in activity planning or decision-making. Stewart Mountain had a particularly clear method of ensuring sustained youth involvement in the forest, dedicating two of the sixteen positions of their advisory committee to youth. At Indian Creek Community Forest, youth programming also reflected the forest's cultural sustainability goals, contributing to language, knowledge, and skill revitalization and maintenance such as harvesting and fishing practices (Entz et al., 2016; Stone et al., 2019).

Overall, the six case studies analyzed in this report capture the versatile and intersectional value of community forests. Each community forest asserted interests ranging across social, economic, cultural, and ecological sustainability and enrichment, identifying distinct ways their forests serve their unique communities as well as universal, intrinsic values of forested lands. The community forests often took on projects that blended realms of sustainability. For example, several of the forests enhanced ecological well-being with activities that also enriched social and economic aspects of the community, such as Stewart Mountain's work in Variable Density Thinning and Chimacum Ridge's partnerships with community artisans and boat builders to provide local building materials. We hope these case studies and the benchmarks we have outlined offer an array of important considerations for anyone interested in learning more about community forestry or using its design in their community.

UN Sustainable Development Goals:

Figure 16. UN Sustainable Development Goals Infographic

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an international framework used to understand the global picture of sustainability. Initially adopted in 2015, the 17 SDGs outline

priorities for the global community to work towards a more sustainable world. Figure 14 depicts and labels these 17 goals (SDSN Australia/Pacific, 2017). As our case studies identified, Community Forests provide diverse services, with numerous intersections between their benefits and the SDGs, including:

- **Education** in the form of school partnerships, summer camps, interpretative trails, hands-on community events, and much more (SDG 4)

- Physical and mental **health and well-being** through recreation, green space, and connection to place and community (SDG 3)

- Protection of **water** sources that are important for humans and other species (SDGs 6 and 14)

- Habitat for **life on land** through monitoring, conservation, and sustainable management activities (SDG 15)

- Building resilience against **climate** change (SDG 13)

- Traditional **food** harvesting and knowledge, protecting food sovereignty and supporting sustainable food systems (SDG 2)

The inherent interconnectedness of all 17 SDGs and the range of services provided by community forests illustrate that community forests ultimately contribute to all aspects of sustainable development. The vast potential of community forests to further the Sustainable Development Goals emphasizes their versatility and value to communities, both locally and globally.
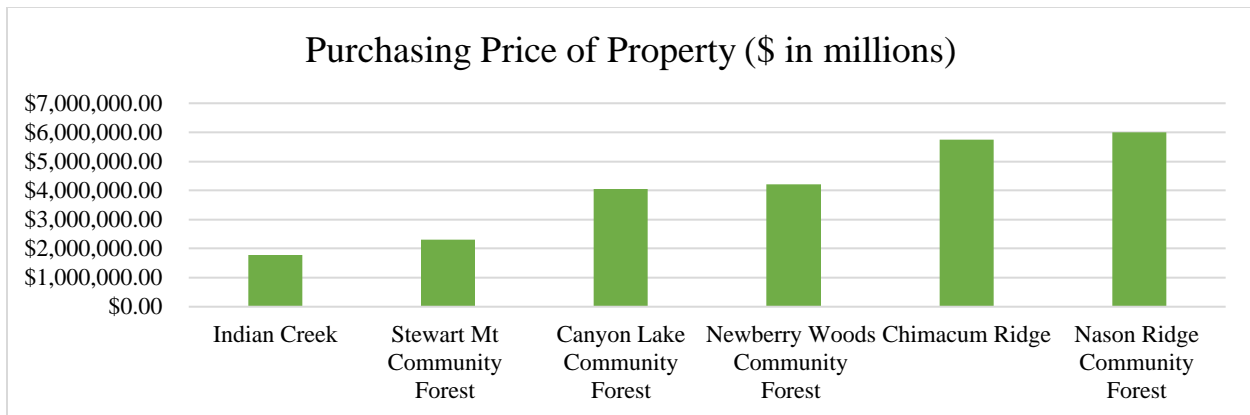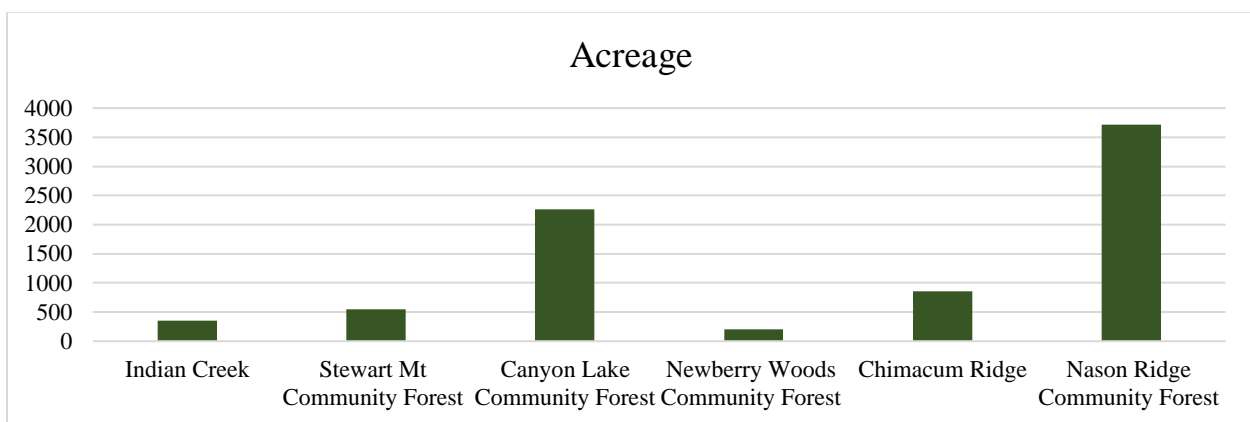
Funding

(SMCF, n.d.)

Case Study Funding Breakdown:

The community forests reviewed in this anthology used multiple sources to acquire their funds to purchase the forest, develop their programming, and continue management of the property. The funding sources for each case study are listed below.

- Stewart Mt Community Forest
  - Conservation Futures Fund
  - Whatcom Community Foundation Grants
  - Washington State Streamflow Restoration Grant
  - National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (NPS-RTCA)
- Canyon Lake Community Forest
  - Western Washington University Foundation (Arco Foundation Grants)
  - Paul G. Allen Forest Foundation
  - Whatcom County Conservation Futures program
  - Flintridge Foundation
  - Panaphil Foundation
- Indian Creek CF
  - National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (NPS-RTCA)
  - US Forest Service Community Forest Program Grant
  - Housing and Urban Development Tribal Grant
- Chimacum Ridge CF
  - National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (NPS-RTCA)
  - Washington State's Community Forest program
- Newberry Woods Community Forest
  - Washington Recreation and Conservation Community Forest Grant
  - USDA Community Forest Program
  - Kitsap County Conservation Futures
  - U.S. Navy's Readiness Environment Protection Integration Program
  - Lindstrom Family
- Nason Ridge Community Forest
  - Western Rivers Conservancy
  - Chelan-Douglas Land Trust
  - WA Recreation and Conservation Community Forest Grant
  - Salmon Recovery Funding Board
  - Chelan PUD Tributary Fund

Graph 1. *Graph depicting the money allocated to purchase each case study.*

Graph 2. *Graph depicting the acreage of each case study when purchased.*

Funding Highlight: National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (NPS-RTCA):

Assistance received by Chimacum Ridge Community Forest, Indian Creek Community Forest, AND Stewart Mt Community Forest

What is the NPS-RTCA?

NPS-RTCA supports locally-led conservation and outdoor recreation projects across the United States. NPS-RTCA assists communities and public land managers in developing or restoring parks, conservation areas, rivers, and wildlife habitats, as well as creating outdoor recreation opportunities and programs that engage future generations in the outdoors (NPS, n.d).

Who can apply?

- community groups
- nonprofit organizations
- tribal governments
- national parks
- local, state and federal agencies

When can you apply?

The application opens in November of each year and closes on March 1st of the following year.

50

Conclusion

Nature's Depths, 2017

Through the analysis of case studies, existing information from governmental agencies, and community-based organizations, we can conclude that establishing community forests within the Methow Valley and greater Okanogan area would be highly beneficial. Its effects on education, environment, economics, recreation, and potential tribal partnerships are positive for sustainable community development. The aspects of community forestry as an example of sustainable community development are also supported by the U.N. development goals.

Within our case studies, the stand-out benefits of community forestry would be the opportunities for place-based education and development of healthier relationships with Tribal partners. This is supported by the presence of educational institutions in each of the community forests that were chosen, all of which wanted to foster environmental education for youth within their communities. This place-based education will help foster a greater sense of care for the environment in generations to come, and community forests are a foundation on which it could be built.

As for tribal relations and potential partnerships we saw a stark contrast between our case studies. The variation of engagement with tribal entities ranged from minimal acknowledgement to full ownership of the community forest, that being Indian Creek. Community forests offer the chance for communities to intertwine and develop working relationships that expand cultural understanding and collaboration.

For the Methow and greater Okanogan communities' community forestry offers additional sustainable paths into the future. To adopt this would mean an expansion of existing partnerships and the creation of new ones, all for the benefit of the land and community.

Appendix A: Stakeholder Interview

During the research and writing process of our report we held a stakeholder interview with Joshua Porter, WWU Sustainability Pathways instructor and sponsor for this report. Below are the questions we asked him and his answers.

1. Can you summarize your goals for this project?
    a. Demonstrating a select range of community forest models to inform possible collaborative approaches to land stewardship
2. What do you hope people will walk away with when they read our final community forest report?
    a. Come away with new ideas about collaborative land management
    b. Seeing ideas within communities
    c. Giving a good idea of what the structures are and what some of the most crucial tools in community forests are (orgs to reach out to if interested)
3. What do you think of the benchmark criteria we have and our case studies?
    a. In each case study, the goal is to highlight "what is unique about this one" in our own distillation
4. How do you think our outline will be different than the one you have on canvas?
5. What is your vision of leadership for the Loup Canyon Forest?
    a. Core: Colville Tribes, multiple federal and state departments, youth development program, DNR, WWU, NC education service district
        i. Core charter could be done with these guys
        ii. Commitment, investment, handling leadership (eventually)
    b. Broader advisory group: extended network involved in stewardship (land trust, school districts involved, local orgs who might use the space)
6. How do you imagine different stakeholders interacting with each other?
    a. Getting inside partner criteria and charter
    b. Taking individuals interested in partnership out on the land
    c. Meets quarterly or couple times a year

Appendix B. Community Forests Directory

During our research, we came across many amazing community forests that were not included in our final selection of case studies. This chart offers the names, websites, and listed contact information for these forests with the hope that they offer a point of connection to others who have gone through the process of planning and implementing a community forest.

Forest Name	Location	Website	Contact information
The Northwest Community Forest Coalition	A coalition of community forests in the pacific northwest	https://www.nwcommunityforests.org/	info@sustainablenorthwest.org (503) 221-6911
Butte Falls Community Forest	Butte Falls, OR	https://www.tpl.org/our-work/butte-falls-community-forest	donor.outreach@tpl.org
Williams Community Forest	Williams, OR	https://www.williamscommunityforestproject.org/about/	info@williamscommunityforestproject.org
Teanaway Community Forest	Cle Elum, WA	https://www.dnr.wa.gov/Teanaway	teanaway@dnr.wa.gov 509-925-8510
Nisqually Community Forest	Busy Wild Creek sub-basin, WA	https://nisquallylandtrust.org/our-lands-and-projects/nisqually-community-forest/	staff@nisquallylandtrust.org 360-489-3400
Klickitat Community Forest	Glenwood, WA	https://www.dnr.wa.gov/KlickitatForest	southeast.region@dnr.wa.gov 509-925-8510
East Moraine Community Forest	Wallowa County, OR	https://co.wallowa.or.us/east-moraine-community-forest/	
Arch Cape Community Forest	Arch Cape, Oregon	https://www.archcapeforest.org/	503-436-2790
Hopkins Demonstration Forest	Beavercreek, OR	https://demonstrationforest.org/	peter.matzka@oregonstate.edu
Gold Hill Community Forest	Chewelah, WA	https://wildliferecreation.org/projects/gold-hill-community-forest/	info@wildliferecreation.org
Mt. Adams Community Forest	Glenwood, WA	https://mtadamsstewards.org/programs/mt-adams-community-forest/	info@mtadamsstewards.org 509-637-3701

| Trillium Community Forest | Whidbey Island, WA | https://www.wclt.org/projects/trillium-community-forest/ | 360-222-3310 \ |

Table 2. Community Forests Directory

Acknowledgements

This project was completed by students from the WWU Sustainability Pathways Fellowship program. We'd like to extend our gratitude to sponsors and community forest partners who helped our analysis of these community forests.

Sponsor

Joshua Porter – Sustainability Pathways Director, Western Washington University

Stakeholder

Erik Kingfisher – Stewardship Director, Jefferson Land Trust

Other Supporters

Alexander Harris – Land and Water Policy Manager, RE Sources

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