



How can your community become a partner with DNR in a Community Forest?

Community leaders are needed to identify at-risk working forests—leaders who will work with their community and DNR to create a long-term vision for the important neighboring working forest

DNR is seeking local partners—cities, counties, land trusts, local foundations or other private groups—with proposals for working forest lands that are at risk of conversion, and which currently provide important community benefits that may be lost.

This isn't just an opportunity for rural communities. Urban and suburban communities may have an interest in forested landscapes that protect their water, nearby habitat and general quality of life. So broader community or regional coalitions may want to work together to propose a forest for the trust.

The initial Community Forest Trust proposals will act as pilot projects to test the criteria and process developed by DNR. The process for outreach to the broader community near the proposed Community Forest Trust parcel will be tested as well. All will be refined as we move forward.

The key factor in the equation is a strong local sponsorship from community partners. After acquisition, the local community will be integral to creating a vision for the forest, and planning the types of activities that will take place over time in the new community forest—including generating revenue.

Please contact **Andrew Hayes, andrew.hayes@dnr.wa.gov, 360-902-1347** for more details or information on how to submit a proposal for a new Community Forest.


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Attached are instructions and timeline for the first round of Community Forest Trust proposals.

PROTECTING WORKING FORESTLANDS AT GREATEST RISK OF CONVERSION



Local partnerships help create Community Forests that balance diverse values and maintain working forests.

Protecting working forestlands at greatest risk of conversion



The very quality of life that drew people to become part of a community next to forest land can be all too quickly lost.



As Washington's population grows, more suburban development occurs in previously forested areas, bumping up against the remaining working forests. As communities foster expectations that neighboring forests and their benefits will remain intact, it is more difficult to manage commercial forests for timber production, and it becomes more economical to convert them to uses other than working forests. Often, the community doesn't recognize what they are losing until the forest next door is cleared for construction—perpetuating the process.

To address this, the state Legislature and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) created a new tool for local community partners to participate in protecting working forestlands that benefit their communities—the Community Forest Trust.

DNR and legislators recognized that when lands are converted from forestry, we lose the vital services they provide in the ecosystem—wildlife habitat, clean drinking water for people and salmon, clean air, carbon storage, views and recreation. Conversion also puts local natural resource-based industries and jobs at risk. Lost are the ecological, financial, and social values these forests provide to the community.

When lands are converted from forestry to non-forest uses, local timber and natural resource jobs are at risk.

The ecological and conservation values these lands provide to the community also may be lost.

Investing jointly in acquiring and managing at-risk forests



For 150 years, working forests in Washington have been a vital part of our economy and culture. However, since the 1980s, in Western Washington alone, 17 percent of forests have been converted to other land uses. As forests vanish, so do many benefits for communities—local timber, natural resources jobs, clean air and water, and recreation.

DNR manages 2.1 million acres of forested state trust lands that have produced billions of dollars of income that supports public schools, other state institutions, and many counties' services. DNR has

tools to transfer suitable trust lands to natural areas and purchase replacement forestland for the trust. DNR also can acquire ecologically significant private forests—from willing sellers—as natural areas. But until now, DNR could not protect forest lands at greatest risk of conversion to development.

Since the 1980s, in Western Washington alone, about 17 percent of forests have been converted to development or other uses.

Local Sustainable Timber Products from Washington's Working Forests

The Community Forest Trust law initiates a new era of strong local engagement to maintain local working forests. Together, communities and DNR can meet the challenge posed by land use changes, and protect these forests in perpetuity.

By investing jointly in acquiring and managing at-risk forests, we can assure that their important benefits continue. Once established, Community Forests will continue to protect stream habitat, contribute to salmon recovery, maintain habitat for native plants and animals, and connect with other parts of the ecosystem. The forests will clean the air and water and provide open space. And community forests often are a place for recreation.

The forests will be managed by DNR with local communities to maintain diverse values by reinvesting in them. Revenue-generating stewardship will pay for itself, and help maintain working forests that support vital natural resources jobs.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION FOR REPRESENTATION ONLY



▼ An example of the type of potential land use conflict that the Community Forest Trust program would help alleviate. Residential development sometimes is not compatible with surrounding natural resources land uses. Development can raise the costs of commercial timber operations on adjacent lands, thereby creating strong incentives to sell those lands. As a Community Forest, state DNR will invest in stewardship of these landscapes, generating enough revenue for managing the lands and planned community access.

POTENTIAL COMMUNITY FOREST TRUST AREA

How does it work?

DNR is completing the details regarding the Community Forest Trust program, and the first set of proposals will be 'pilot projects' to provide the opportunity to fine-tune this process:

- ▶ The Community Forest Trust is a new category of working forestland, to be held by the state and actively and sustainably managed by DNR.
- ▶ Criteria for acquiring private or state trust lands for the Community Forest Trust—and a biennial nomination process—are being developed by DNR.
- ▶ Local community partners will propose forestlands for inclusion, and identify possible uses, management and revenue production objectives.
- ▶ A strategy will be created to acquire state trust or private working forest lands at great risk of conversion to development.
- ▶ DNR will create a ranked list of candidate forests for inclusion in the Community Forests Trust, and submit the proposals to the Board of Natural Resources for consideration.
- ▶ A list of those approved by the Board will be submitted to the Legislature, which will fund the state share of acquisition of some portion of the list.
- ▶ Local community partners, through a variety of means, will provide the local match for acquisition—at least 50 percent of the non-timber real estate value of the proposed forest—as a commitment to preserve the land as a working forest.
- ▶ Each Community Forest will have a working forest management plan, developed by the local community and DNR. The plan specifies financial, conservation, and recreation objectives—with an educational component regarding working landscapes.
- ▶ Community Forest Trust lands must be able to support themselves financially through revenue generating activities, which can include timber production.
- ▶ Enhancements to Community Forest lands, such as habitat restoration and recreation facilities, will be allowed, if they are consistent with management plan objectives.
- ▶ If agreement on management objectives cannot be reached with the community, or the objectives fail to perform as established in the management plan, the lands may be divested from the trust.



Acquiring working forests for the trust

Community Forest Trust lands will be acquired from willing sellers of private forests or existing state trust lands—forests that are at high-risk of conversion for development and have significant local community values.

The lands will be managed by DNR as working forests—for local timber and natural resource jobs, clean air and water, fish and wildlife habitat, for recreation opportunities and education.

People live in communities next to forestland for many reasons—including the quality of life and natural resources-related jobs. DNR wants to work with communities that want to support these values and be a part of sustainable landscapes that include Community Forests.

The following tools can help DNR and communities acquire a Community Forest:

Acquisition Tools

- ▶ Public or private grants
- ▶ Land exchanges and transfers
- ▶ Donations (monetary or land)
- ▶ Community forest bonds
- ▶ Traditional local bonding
- ▶ State or federal funding
- ▶ Conservation futures
- ▶ Conservation easements
- ▶ Transfer of development rights