

**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

AGENDA REQUEST

TO: Board of County Commissioners
Mark McCauley, County Administrator

FROM: Heidi Eisenhour, Commissioner
Malloree Weinheimer, Chickadee Forestry

DATE: August 8, 2022

SUBJECT: Jefferson County Forest Stewardship workshop

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

Since 2019 Jefferson County has been developing a programmatic approach to managing its county-owned forestlands. Recently, in the past year, we have broadened our focus to include interest in Department of Natural Resources managed State Forest Transfer (Forest Board) trust lands that were owned by the county previously and transferred to the state for management about 100 years ago. Timber harvest activities on these lands contribute revenue to multiple interests via Junior Tax Districts for entities like school, fire departments and the library in addition to the county. Other counties, including Kitsap, have requested reconveyance of some of these lands and are managing them as part of their parks department. We have also been engaged in other DNR trust land management issues via the Trust Land Transfer program and Inter-trust Exchanges to protect important habitats such as Tarboo and Dabob Bays.

We are interested in developing an approach to county and state forest lands, with DNR, that delivers for multiple benefits including fiduciary. We believe that a collaborative program will contribute to forest health, climate change adaptation, reduction of fire risk and local jobs not to mention recreation and conservation. This can be achieved through consideration of utilizing alternative management approaches such as selective thinning and longer rotations for key forest stands as well as conservation of critical habitats. This will likely include reconveyance of some State Forest Transfer trust lands.

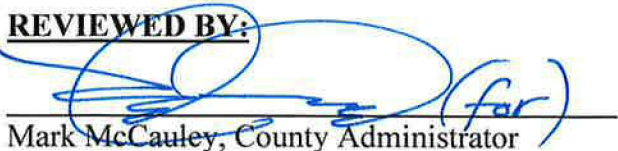
ANALYSIS:

We need to secure a project manager to lead analysis of financial and ecological considerations including short- and long-term projections for these considerations and then to develop a collaborative management approach for Jefferson County forest lands. This analysis should include a review and update of the 2011 report, Forests for the Future.

FISCAL IMPACT: TBD.

RECOMMENDATION: Discuss and develop next steps towards development of a management plan for Jefferson County forestlands.

REVIEWED BY:

 (for)
Mark McCauley, County Administrator

8.2.22
Date

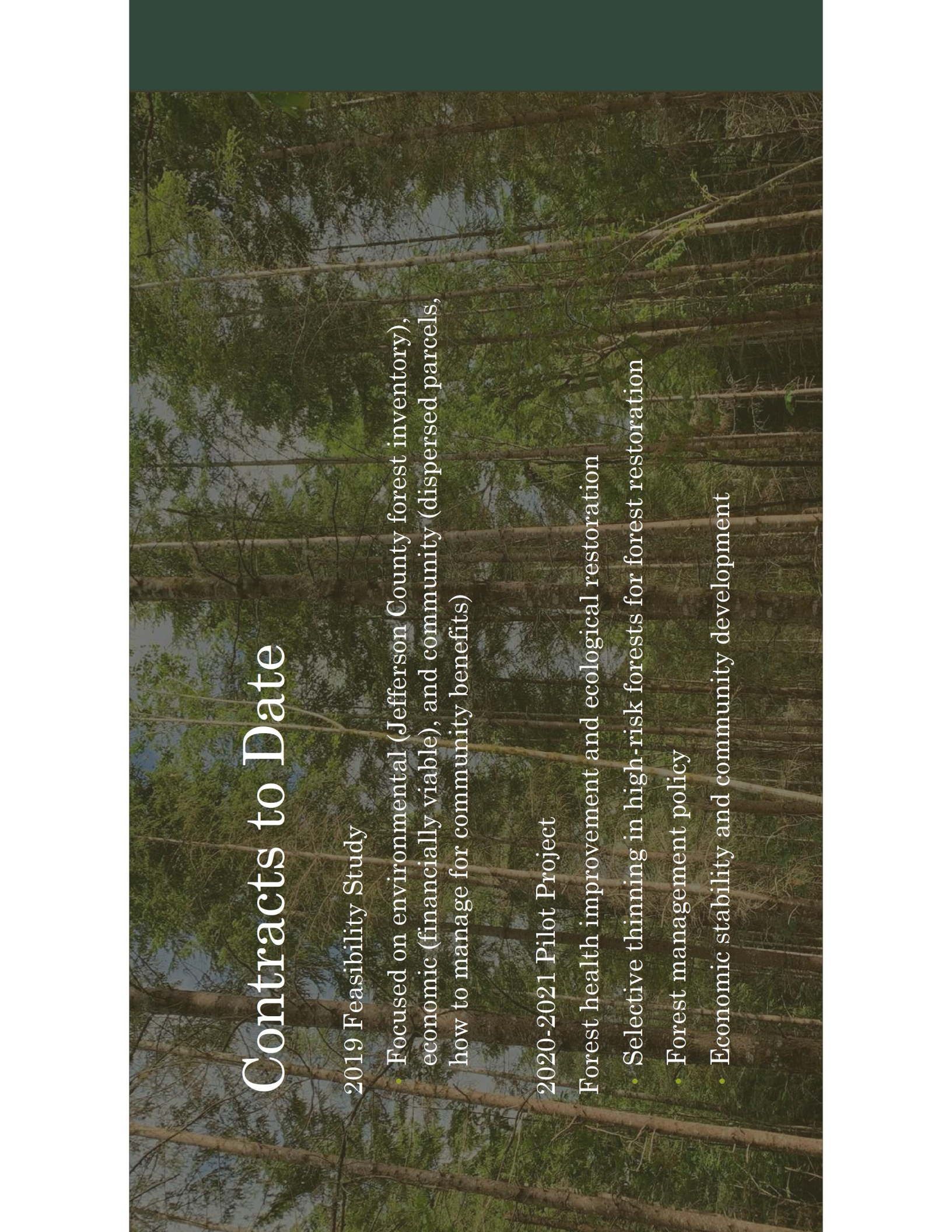


Jefferson County Forest Stewardship Program



Agenda

- History of Program
- Current Contract
 - Objectives & Deliverables
 - Roles
 - Timeline
- Discussion



Contracts to Date

2019 Feasibility Study

- Focused on environmental (Jefferson County forest inventory), economic (financially viable), and community (dispersed parcels, how to manage for community benefits)

2020-2021 Pilot Project

Forest health improvement and ecological restoration

- Selective thinning in high-risk forests for forest restoration
- Forest management policy
- Economic stability and community development

Objectives Completed to Date

- Forest management plans and policies
- Forestry advisors, contractor relationships, community partners
- Local jobs, education on forestry, case studies and metrics, lessons learned
- WoodShed project
- Forest health improvement:
 - Selective harvests for forest health improvement at Gibbs Lake, Chimacum Park, and Trailhead Park
 - 500+ trees planted with volunteers
 - Recognition in PT Leader, Strait Up, Living Future, Portland Airport

Founding Advisors

- Arno Bergstrom, Forester, Kitsap County Forest Stewardship**
Created Kitsap County's forest stewardship program and has run it for 5 years successfully
- Dr. Catharine Copass, Ecologist, Olympic National Park Service**
Specializing in plant community classification and mapping, landscape change detection and vegetation change on the Olympic Peninsula.
- Mike Cronin, retired Forester, DNR and Cronin Forestry**
Experienced forester in Jefferson County, informed the feasibility study and provides continued expertise on forest management
- Owen French, Natural Resource Specialist, WA Dept of Ecology**
Restoration specialist working with North Olympic Salmon Coalition and the Washington Conservation Corps, based in Jefferson County
- Ross Goodwin, Forest Practices, Washington DNR**
Oversees forest practices and ensures compliance to DNR Forest Practices Rules in the region, 10+ years with DNR
- Ian Hanna, Consultant, Altruist Partners, formerly Forest Stewardship Council**
International experience in sustainable forestry and community economic development, based in Jefferson County
- Al Latham, Jefferson County Conservation District Supervisor**
Served as manager/technician at the Jefferson Co. Conservation District for 20 years and currently serves on the Conservation District Board of Supervisors, based in Jefferson County
- Tami Pokorny, Natural Resources Coordinator, Jefferson County Environmental Health**
Manages natural resources and the Conservation Futures program for Jefferson County
- Denise Pranger, retired Director, Northwest Natural Resources Group**
Specializing in forest certification and forest carbon sequestration, based in Jefferson County
- Matt Tyler, Director, Jefferson County Parks and Recreation**
Manages parks and recreation programs, staff, and development for Jefferson County

Harvest Financial Summary

Site	Acres Harvested	MBF	Volume per Acre (MBF)	JC Total Revenue	JC Revenue/Acre
Chimacum Park	38	376	9.9	\$ 86,026.49	\$ 2,263.86
Beausite	100	377	3.8	\$ 28,374.05	\$ 283.74
CG Gravel	14	5.8	0.4	\$ 13,933.81	\$ 995.27
Trailhead	36	144	4.0	\$ (42,557.80)	\$ (1,182.16)
Totals	188	902.80	4.52	\$ 85,776.55	\$ 590.18

County has net revenue of \$85k from harvest revenue
 Chickadee Forestry contract over 2019-2021 totaled \$56k
Roughly \$29k profit margin for forest restoration to County to date



Program Focus Areas

Forest Health

Climate Change Adaptation

Fire Risk Mitigation

Local Wood/Jobs

Recreation & Conservation

Forest Health

- Focus on climate change adaptation
- Increasing biodiversity and structural diversity
- Protecting and enhancing native habitat
- Mimicking and helping to establish natural forest succession patterns in commercial stands



Fire Risk

- Local fire dept partnership
- Model forests for demonstrating Firewise
- Outreach/education
- Grants for continued research on best management
- Selective thinning in high-risk areas



Local Wood & Sustainable Jobs

- WoodShed Project
 - Full chain of custody in county
 - Sustainably sourced timber
 - Expanding local jobs and economy
- Expanding markets in “waste wood,” PT Paper opportunities



Lessons Learned

- Outreach & education – room for improvement...
- Focus areas – Fire, climate change adaptation, carbon, and recreation were biggest areas of interest
- Economic viability – metrics for expanding local wood economy with forest management practices
- Selective harvesting – timelines, costs, and how to budget for restoration projects in the future
- Community partnerships – potential for more growth and opportunities

2022 Scope of Work Overview

- **Continue working with advisors**
- Forest Land Management and Financial Analysis
 - Financial analysis comparison of county management and DNR management
 - Review of Jefferson County lands, DNR lands, and private lands (large scale) for forest health, ecological value, and management needs (if any)
- Short and Long Term Management Scenarios
 - Land ownership: Jefferson County, DNR, or combination
 - Management options: conservation (no harvest, carbon), selective thinning, recreation, mix
 - Public meeting and outreach

Key Advisors

- Mike Cronin, retired DNR Forester
- Arno Bergstrom, Kitsap County Forester
- Al Latham, retired Jefferson County Conservation District
- Ross Goodwin, Dept of Revenue
- Denise Pranger, retired ED of NNRG

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Forest Land Management & Financial Analysis

Review Jefferson County owned lands, DNR lands, and private landownership (broad trends)

Identify:

- Best management use for properties: recreation, conservation, selective thinning, restoration, mix
- DNR management schedule, past management financials, future projections
- Jefferson County carbon, harvest financials, and future projections based on selective thinning

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Criteria used in analysis:

- Forest health and native habitat, natural succession/progression of forest
- Increased carbon sequestration
- Wildlife habitat
- Climate change adaptation
- Fire risk reduction

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Future Management Scenarios

Analysis of financial and ecological projections for different management scenarios:

- Jefferson County – no change in ownership, continue only mgmt of Jeff Co lands
- DNR full reconveyance – Jeff Co takes on all DNR lands (mgmt differences, financial differences)
- Partial DNR reconveyance – which lands are key? Financial and management

5 year projections for each, and 100 year rough projections of each scenario

- Provides management options and financial projections

Future Management Scenarios

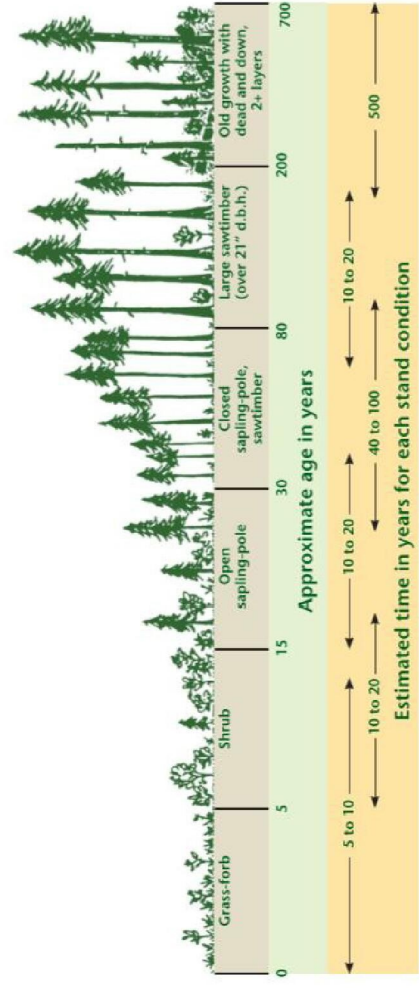


Figure 1. Successional stages in Douglas-fir forests after even-aged harvesting. From Brown (1985).

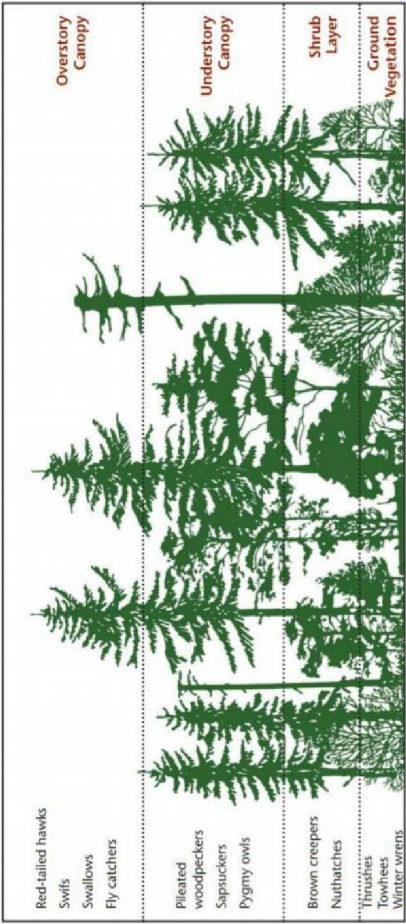
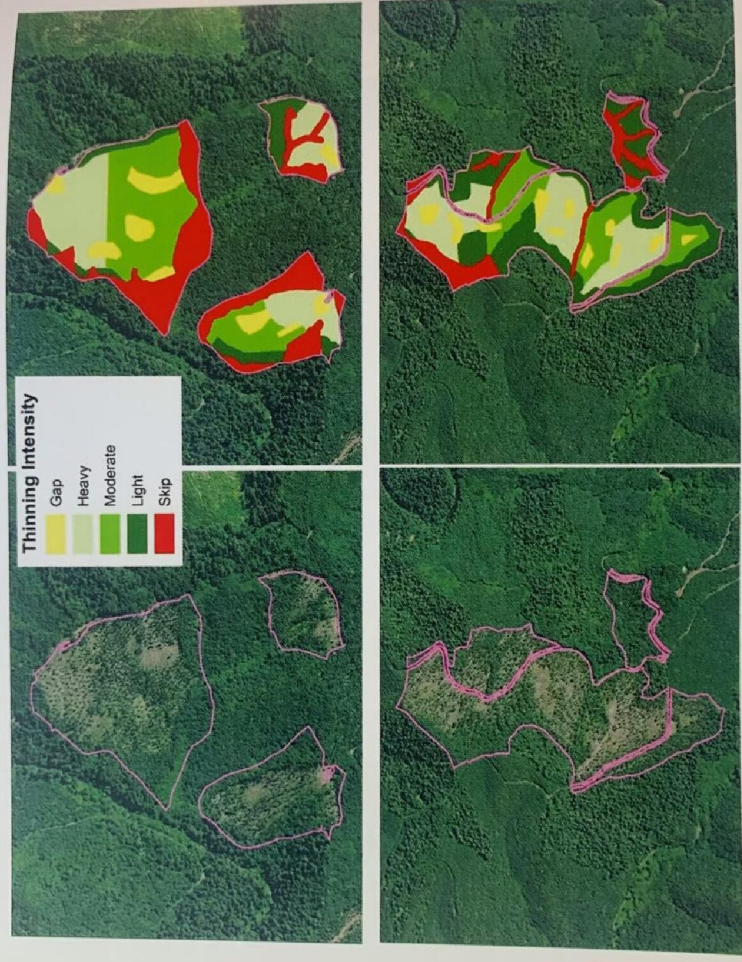


Figure 2. An example of the birds that utilize the vertical diversity in a mature Douglas-fir forest. From Brown (1985)

Future Management Scenarios



Color Plate 8.2. Aerial images of variable density thinning in 40 to 50 year old Douglas-fir-western hemlock stands, illustrating skips, gaps, and varying levels of thinning. In the examples, skips are associated with edges and along streams; more recent applications leave skips in the unit proper. Photo credit: Abraham Wheeler.

Future Management Scenarios



Timeline

- Main contact – communication?
- Public workshop(s) – October/November
 - Facilitator
- Analysis and recommendations completed by end of 2022

Final Thoughts

- Jefferson County Forestry Program is focused on a complex set of functions that are compatible and naturally integrated for using ecological forest management practices.
- Strong team and knowledge base continuing to support and grow this program.
- Future of forests here can be a balanced approach and data shows that we can, and must, focus on multiple interrelated goals for future of our forests.



Thank You