The Usal Forest

A Community

Redwood Forest

Redwood Forest Foundation, Inc.

May 6th, 2014
Redwood Forest Foundation, Inc. (RFFI)

• Founded by community leaders in 1997

• A reaction to California’s “Timber Wars” of the early 1990’s

• 501(c)(3) nonprofit
RFFI’s Vision

To establish community based forests that provide both:

• critical habitat for increased biodiversity and

• improved regional economic vitality
RFFI’s Mission

“To acquire, protect, restore, and manage forestlands and other related resources in the Redwood Region for the long-term benefit of the communities located there.”
Three E’s of Community Forestry

• Ecology
• Economy
• Equity
Who is Our Community?

• Timber industry workers
• Local residents and business owners
• Academics
• Agencies
• Public Officials
• Redwood-lovers
First Acquisition – The Usal Forest

- Purchased in 2007
- 50,597 Acres
- Two watersheds
- 38% Tanoak, 36% Douglas fir, 26% Redwood
- Class 1 rivers - 249 miles; Class 2 - 506 miles; Class 3 - 770 miles
- T&E – Coho & Chinook Salmon, Steelhead Trout and NSO
History

• Historic home of the Sinkylone / Wailaki Indians

• First commercially logged in 1880’s

• Heavy mechanized clear-cutting during the post-World War II logging boom into the 1970’s, 1980’s

• Now dominated by low-value hardwoods with second & third-growth Douglas fir and Redwood
Funding Structure

- Purchased in 2007 with three Bank of America loans totaling $65 million

- Conservation easement funded by the CA Wildlife Conservation Board using voter-approved bond funds

- Supplemented by grants from public and private sources
Governance Structure

• Owned by nonprofit RFFI

• Operated by the Usal Redwood Forest Company (URFC)

• Managed by Campbell Global

• Conservation easement held by the nonprofit Conservation Fund
Conservation Easement Terms

• No development

• No subdivision or granting of partial interests

• 2.9% cap on harvest volume

• Only uneven-aged timber harvesting methods after the 60th year

• Carbon sequestration sales allowed
Original Plan to Reduce the Loan Balance

Sale of Conservation Easement (CE)

Sale of 957 acre Shady Dell property

Carbon Sales

Timber Sales
Then pay the balance with:

• Other income from property
  ▪ Tourism
  • Biochar
  • Firewood
  • Pole sales
  • Electricity Generation
  •?
Current State of the Forest

Gross Acres vs Operable Acres by Stand Age Class

- Gross Acres
- Operable Acres

Stand Age Class:
- 0-30
- 31-45
- 45-60
- 61+

Acres

- 0
- 5000
- 10000
- 15000
- 20000
- 25000

0-30
31-45
45-60
61+
Annual Harvest by Method

URFC CE - Average Annual Harvest Acres by Harvest Method

- **Variable Retention**
- **Thin**
- **Overstory Removal**
- **Selection**

Plan Interval:
- 2010-14
- 2015-19
- 2020-24
- 2025-29
- 2030-34
- 2035-39
- 2040-44
- 2045-49
- 2050-54
- 2055-59
- 2060-64
- 2065-69
- 2070-74
- 2075-79
- 2080-84
- 2085-89
- 2090-94
- 2095-99
- 2100-04
- 2105-09

Avg Harvest Acres/Year:
- 0
- 500
- 1,000
- 1,500
- 2,000
- 2,500
- 3,000
- 3,500
- 4,000
Initial RFFI THPs

Two THPs each in 2012 and 2013

• Primarily selection logging

• Volume
  • 1.2 million board feet - 2012
  • 1.3 mbf – 2013
  • 2.5 mbf project for 2014

• Douglas fir and Redwood
Successes

• Nonprofit Community Ownership

• Combination Private/Public Financing
  • Partnership with Bank of America
  • Conservation Easement using state bond funds

• Permanent Protection - CE

• Community Jobs and Support

• Restoration funded by state and federal grants
Lessons Learned

• Involving a Diverse Community
  • Building a coalition
  • Regional representation
  • Culture clashes

• Modeling & productivity

• Shifts in the Governing Board
Alternative Comparison

Alt 1 Conservation Easement Base
- Selection: 66%
- V.R.: 34%

Alt 3 Intermediate Conservation
- Selection: 30%
- V.R.: 70%

Alt 2 Goal Conservation
- No VR after 20 Years
- No VR after 50 Years

Total Land Base: 50,597
Financial Implications

Total Debt by Alternative

- Alt 1 Conservation Easement Base
- Alt 2 Goal Conservation
- Alt 3 Intermediate Conservation
Jury Still Out

• Three-year moratorium on use of herbicides

• Carbon registration

• Safe harbor agreements