1. Overview of Washington’s Community Forest Trust program
2. The Teanaway Community Forest
3. Community reaction to CFT
4. WA state: challenges and opportunities
5. Looking forward
Community Forest Trust
Legislation

Overview

• Passed by 2011 Legislature as ESHB 1421
• Creates a discrete non-fiduciary forest land trust with lands managed by DNR
• Acquired lands can be private or state trust
• Lands acquired jointly with local partner resources and state capital appropriations
Community Forest Trust

Legislation

Overview continued...

• Emphasis on sustainable, active forest management
• Requires a community working forest management plan
• If management goals cannot be achieved, lands may be divested
Community Forest Trust

Legislation

Minimum program management principles

1. Working forest lands at significant risk of conversion protected

2. Financial and social viability through management objectives consistent with values of the local community

3. Lands maintained in a working status through diverse commodity and non-commodity values
Community Forest Trust

Legislation

Minimum program management principles continued...

4. Generating revenue to, at a minimum, pay for management costs

5. Providing ongoing, sustainable public recreation access

6. Providing educational opportunities for local communities, including showing the benefits of working forests
Funding is flexible

- Acquisition through a variety of means (purchase, gift, donation, grant, transfer, etc.)
- Fee interest or partial fee interest, including conservation easements
- Local financial commitment to acquisition
  - at least 50% of land’s development value
  - Local match broadly interpreted – traditional financing/bonding, land donation, purchase of conservation easements or TDRs
- Remaining funding by state capital appropriation
Community Forest Trust
Legislation

Management plan

• All lands in CFT to be managed under a plan developed after acquisition
• Local advisory committee formed to advise DNR on how to maintain land’s working status and economic viability objectives
• Management activities must provide ongoing revenue
  – To reimburse DNR admin costs, and
  – To fund community conservation/recreation objectives
• If DNR and local advisory committee fail to reach consensus on plan, DNR can adopt a plan
First state community forest

- 50,272 acre commercial timber property north of Cle Elum
- Acquired for conservation as part of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan
  - Collaborative effort to increase water storage capacity for agriculture and restore vital watershed habitat
- $97 million purchase price funded by state legislature in 2013
The Teanaway Community Forest is a 50,272-acre forest situated at the headwaters of the Yakima Basin watershed. The forest will be managed through a partnership between the Washington state departments of Natural Resources (DNR) and Fish & Wildlife, with input from the local community and interested stakeholders.

DNR designed the community forest model, which was approved by state lawmakers in 2011. The model is a tool to involve local citizens in protecting working forests that support healthy communities through grazing, forestry, recreation, and conservation.

The Teanaway property was identified as part of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan as an area of importance to safeguard the Yakima Basin water supply and associated habitat, and to support the economy by preserving working lands and enhancing recreation opportunities. The Basin Plan was developed by a coalition of public and private organizations committed to increasing the quantity and quality of water in the Yakima River Basin.
Teanaway Vision

• Protect and enhance the **water supply** and protect the watershed.
• **Maintain working lands** for forestry and domestic livestock grazing while protecting key watershed functions and aquatic habitat.
• Maintain and, where possible, expand **recreational opportunities** consistent with watershed protection for activities such as, hiking, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, camping, birding and snowmobiling.
• Conserve and **restore vital habitat** for fish (including steelhead, spring Chinook, and bull trout) and wildlife (including deer, elk, large predators, and spotted owls).
• Support a **strong community partnership** in which the Yakama Nation, residents, business owners, local governments, conservation groups, and others would provide advice about ongoing land management.
Community Forest Trust
Program Implementation

Legislature has not dedicated funding to build a CFT program, so DNR is taking outreach-driven approach to program development

• Reach out to potential proponents
• Solicit projects with strong community support
• Select 1-2 pilot projects from nominations to propose for FY 2015-17 capital budget funding
• Use pilot projects to develop CFT program for future program funding and implementation cycles
What is DNR looking for in a community forest nomination?

1. Evidence of conversion pressure
2. Identified sources of funding for local share
3. Broad and diverse local community support for nomination
4. Agreement on management approaches for nominated CF

DNR is seeking a community partnership.
Key stakeholder questions/concerns

- Who owns the community forest?
- Will local or state interests drive the CFT program?
- How much influence does the community have over management?
- Who is the recipient of benefits?
- What will land management look like?
- Local match is too onerous
- Fears of early adoption
- (add yours here!)
Community Forest Trust
Stakeholder Outreach

Key misconceptions

- Communities don’t really want timber harvest
- Lands under high conversion pressure can be managed for commercial profits
- DNR will manage CFT lands like they do trust lands
- Sustainable management of forestlands is cheap
Community Forestry
Policy environment in WA

Funding opportunities

1. Local programs
   - Conservation Futures, parks & open space levies, TDR
2. State programs
   - Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program
   - Forest Practices landowner programs (RHOSP, FREP)
   - Salmon recovery funding
3. Federal programs
   - Community Forest, Forest Legacy, Section 6
4. Private/non-profit investments
Community Forestry
Policy environment in WA

Funding - challenges

1. Many programs that could contribute to local efforts, but few directly focused on community forestry
2. Few ready revenue sources (levies) for local communities to purchase community forests
3. Very aggressive market for forestland
4. Tough economy & strapped budgets
5. Maturity of ecosystem service markets
6. Public funding growing pains
Community Forestry
Policy environment in WA

Broad policy challenges

1. Alarming rates of forest conversion
   - 17% WWA forest converted since 1980s
   - Up to 0.5%/year in some parts of the Puget Sound

2. Lack of clear recognition of the significance of forests to our heritage, economy, and communities
Community Forestry
Policy environment in WA

Broad policy challenges (cont.)

3. State policy & economic framework is not optimized to support working forest retention, particularly for less-than-full commercial management
   - GMA, tax structure, ecosystem service markets, public funding

4. Lack of proven models for working with forest landowners to secure/retain community forests
Community Forestry
Policy environment in WA

Broad policy opportunities

1. Increased acknowledgement of the significance of working forests by conservation/land trust orgs
   – working forest retention as a broader policy framework
2. Tremendous enthusiasm for CFT program
3. The Teanaway creates an opportunity for legislative support and ongoing program funding
Community Forestry
Policy environment in WA

Broad policy opportunities (cont.)

4. Opportunity for leveraging related efforts in furtherance of community forestry
   – Working forest retention, Puget Sound recovery, climate change, recognition of ecosystem service benefits
5. Diversity of community forest models
6. CFT law as resource for regional and statewide coordination
How to create public support for community forestry

1. Need tools to support community forestry
   - Public and private funding sources; partnerships & leveraging
   - Market-based solutions – diverse commodity and non-commodity markets
   - Models for community forestry that can be replicated
   - Regulatory incentives to maintain lands in forestry (GMA, taxes, etc.)
How to create public support for community forestry

2. Create room at the table for everybody
   – Desire to brand *community forestry*
   – One of the strengths of CF is diversity
   – Multiple models can coexist

*Goal* – maintain flow of benefits to the community from forests by managing consistent with community values
Community Forestry

DNR Community Forest Trust website
http://www.dnr.wa.gov/BusinessPermits/Topics/OtherLandTransactions/Pages/amp_community_forest_trust.aspx

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