

CELEBRATING 3 MILLION ACRES CONSERVED



Forest Legacy Program

2024 Biennial Summit

June 11-13, 2024 | Kalispell, Montana

Goals

- Highlight challenges, opportunities, and innovations at the state, regional, and national levels.
- Promote learning by sharing the latest program developments and emerging issues.
- Support and encourage a network of practitioners that draws on our collective knowledge and experience.
- Build and strengthen relationships, find new connections, and improve our sense of community.
- Recalibrate as a community; institutional knowledge transfer – integrate program history to get everyone on the same page.

Agenda

DAY ONE

7:30 New Coordinator Breakfast

New coordinators are invited to join their colleagues for breakfast.

8:30 Welcome to Montana!

We will start our meeting with welcomes from:

- Danielle Okst, Council of Western State Foresters
- Rick Northrup, Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
- Shawn Thomas, State Forester, Montana
- Danny McBride, Regional Director of State, Private, and Tribal Forestry, Northern and Intermountain Regions
- Ben South, Deputy Regional Forester, Northern Region

9:00 Introductions and Agenda Review

Our facilitator, Bill Potapchuk, will lead us through interactive introductions, the ground rules, and the agenda.

CELEBRATING 3 MILLION ACRES CONSERVED

9:30 Learning about (Not Your) Region

Let's take a trip. You will be invited to visit another region to learn more about their conservation assets and challenges (and perhaps some trivia too!)

10:30 Break

11:00 Learning from our Work: Successes and Challenges

Several recent projects will showcase different stages of the FLP project lifecycle – from project development and public engagement to funding and more. Following the presentations, we will engage in table conversations to explore the lessons.

Featured case studies will include:

- **Musket Mountain, Oklahoma.** Focus on project development. Madison Gore, Oklahoma FLP Coordinator and Clint Miller, The Conservation Fund.
- **Pelican River, Wisconsin.** Working with unexpected opposition. Ron Gropp, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.
- **Wasatch Back, Utah.** Raising funds and articulating the role of the county. Jess Kirby, Summit County.

12:15 Lunch

1:30 Learning from our Work: Successes and Challenges (continued)

In this second segment, several shorter lightning talks will take center stage and feature specific aspects of projects. They include:

- **Stimson Timberlands Legacy Project.** Building a multi-state project. Alan Front, Conservation Pathways.
- **Michigamme Highlands.** Partnerships and working directly with the landowner. Kerry Heckman, Michigan Department of Natural Resources.
- **Georgia Project Pipeline.** Closing Projects within the 2-year goal. Mark McClellan, Georgia Forestry Commission.
- **Assessing the Feasibility of Easements for Oregon's FLP.** Lori Bell and Christina Helige, Oregon Department of Forestry.
- **East Honolulu Project.** Using REPI funds. Katie Friday, Region 5.

2:15 The What and Why of Project Due Diligence

We will review due diligence through three lenses: project readiness, appraisal pre-work, and project durability. Amy Singh (Regions 6 and 10 Program Manager) and Rob Schott (Region 5 Regional Appraiser) are our speakers.

3:00 Equity Considerations from the Strike Team

Our program has significant Justice40 obligations. We also have internal equity issues, such as varying capacity across states. In this session, we will start with an opening presentation by Alice Ewen (Assistant Director, Cooperative Forestry,

CELEBRATING 3 MILLION ACRES CONSERVED

Landowner Assistance) focused on providing level-setting. Then, we will move into small group conversations focused on specific topics:

- **Addressing issues of match.** Some worthwhile projects struggle with finding sufficient match funds. How do we address that challenge? Jackson Moller, Washington Office.
- **State-to-state differences** in developing competitive projects. Claire Harper, Washington Office.
- **Tribal engagement:** Engage in a discussion that broadens our understanding of how the Forest Service and state agencies can partner and engage with tribes as we share best practices. Hannah Bergemann, Washington Office.
- **Describing benefits to disadvantaged communities:** Describing benefits to disadvantaged communities: How do you write a stronger description in your proposal and use government-sponsored data tools for equity-related information? How do you build the logic for projects that serve underserved communities? Andi Giardina, Washington Office.
- **Brief writing.** Discuss best practices and hear tips from seasoned colleagues for improving the quality of your proposals and chances at panel. Neal Bungard, Region 9.

4:30 Field Trip Orientation

Kris Tempel (Regions 1 and 4), Leah Breidinger (Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks), and Rick Northrup (Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks) will provide background on our field trip.

5:00 Adjourn

5:30 Optional Happy Hour

DAY TWO FIELD TRIP

The field trip will begin at the FH Stoltze Land and Lumber Company office, where we will tour the mill and discuss forestry operations. In the late morning/afternoon, we will take a chairlift to the summit house at Whitefish Mountain Resort where we can view many of the FLP properties and get an idea of the scope of the landscape-scale conservation in Montana. Presentations will include wildlife habitat connectivity (Jim Williams, Heart of the Rockies), an overview of FLP conservation accomplishments in NW Montana (Kris Tempel, USFS), benefits of the Haskill Basin and Trumbull Creek CE projects to the City of Whitefish's water supply and recreation economy (Mayor John Muhlfeld), and the Whitefish Lake Watershed Project and its benefits for School Trust Land forestry operations (Dave Ring, DNRC Stillwater Unit Manager).

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Then, we will wrap up the day with dinner at Whitefish Lake Lodge, where we will present the Conservation Excellence Award. Our banquet speaker is Scott Kuehn, a retired forester from Pyramid Lumber and former logging sports world record holder. Scott will share some highlights on Montana's logging history and discuss the value of keeping private forests as working forests and the importance of sawmill retention.

DAY THREE

8:00 **Networking Breakfast**

The networking breakfast will feature a mixture of topical and open-ended tables for conversation.

9:00 **Reflections and Agenda Review**

9:30 **Inside the Beltway**

What's happening in DC? National Program Managers Claire Harper and Scott Stewart will join Lesley Kane Syzmal from the LWCF Coalition and William Kelleher from The Conservation Fund to help us understand the federal policy and budget landscape.

10:15 **Break**

10:30 **The Nuts and Bolts of State Forest Action Plans**

Claire Harper and Lindsay Nystrom, Massachusetts Program Director, will provide an overview of the State Forest Action Plans and State Forest Coordinating Committees. Liam Krause, Region 9, will also report on data gathering regarding how states engage with their State Forest Stewardship Coordination Committees.

11:15 **ESMs in Old and New Easements.**

Carbon credits and agreements can be perplexing. We will focus on strategies to evaluate their interaction with old and new FLP easements. Speakers include:

- Mark Faulkenberry, Urban and Community Forestry Bureau, New Hampshire
 - Clint Miller, State Director, Missouri and Regional Director, Central Midwest, Conservation Acquisition, The Conservation Fund
 - Kate Sudhoff, Forest Legacy Program Coordinator, Vermont
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12:15 **Lunch**

1:30 **Breakout Sessions**

Participants will choose a session for a more focused conversation on specific topics.

- **Easements: Approvals, Amendments and Violations.** We will discuss some of the common issues with the administration of easements. Liz Petruska, Washington Office.
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CELEBRATING 3 MILLION ACRES CONSERVED

- **How to use land trusts to support your work.** Participants will focus on the opportunities and challenges of working with land trusts. Natalie Conlin, Forest Legacy Program Coordinator, Utah and Liz Barber, Forest Legacy Program Coordinator (MS, LA, TN).
 - **Geospatial Data.** A refresher on existing tools (CEJST, TNC Resilience) and an intro to new tools (OSI carbon, Tribal Data) for project proposals and AONs. Rebecca Lilja, FLP/CFP National Information Specialist.
 - **Tribal engagement:** Engage in a discussion that broadens our understanding of how the Forest Service and state agencies can partner and engage with tribes as we share best practices. Hannah Bergemann, Washington Office.
 - **Describing Benefits to Disadvantaged Communities:** How do you write a stronger description in your proposal and use government-sponsored data tools for equity-related information? How do you build the logic for projects that serve underserved communities? Andi Giardina, Washington Office.
 - **Maps for Proposals.** Good maps are a critical part of good proposals. We will discuss mapmaking for proposals. Andrew Fotinos, Region 8.
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2:30 Working with Partners. Building a Focus.

The values that underlie our work on land conservation continue to expand. And partners remain absolutely essential to our work. In this session, we are engaging three long-time partners to kick off a conversation on working with partners to build clarity around our intent and action. Speakers include:

- **Barry Dexter**, Consultant for Stimson Lumber Company (recently retired after working many years for Stimson)
 - **Dick Dolan**, Northern Rockies Director for Trust for Public Land
 - **Ryan Lutey**, Executive Director of Vital Ground Foundation
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3:45 Closing Reflections | Next Steps

Steve Koehn, Director, Cooperative Forestry and Scott Stewart, FLP Program Manager, will lead us in closing reflections.

4:00 Adjourn
