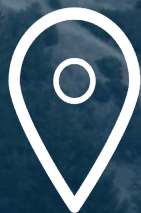




WESTERN FORESTRY
LEADERSHIP COALITION

FOREST LEGACY IN THE WEST





THE FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM

The conversion of forest lands to non-forest uses is a threat throughout the United States. As forested areas are fragmented and diminish in size, the benefits they provide to the public, wildlife, and local economies decline. Expansion of the wildland-urban interface also threatens both the environment and human life. The loss of public access, forest management, wildlife and fish habitat is a concern across the nation.

In recognition of these issues, the Forest Legacy Program (FLP) was created in 1990. FLP is a conservation program administered in partnership by the USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) and state agencies. The purpose of the FLP is to identify and conserve environmentally and economically important forested areas threatened by conversion to non-forest uses.¹

FLP is funded by the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which invests earnings from offshore oil and gas leasing to conserve important land, water, and recreation areas. The passage of the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) in August 2020 provided permanent funding for LWCF.^{2,3}

FLP encourages the protection of privately owned managed forest lands through conservation easements (CEs) or land purchases (fee simple). Landowners who participate in the program either sell their property outright or retain ownership and sell only a portion of the property's development

rights. The use of a CE, a perpetual legal agreement, allows the land to remain in private ownership while ensuring that its environmental values are retained. By incentivizing landowners to keep their forests as forests, FLP preserves public benefits, encourages sustainable forest management, and supports forest product markets.

Protecting forest lands maintains a wide range of public benefits, including water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and forest product industries. In addition, many projects include public access and recreation opportunities. Since its inception, FLP has conserved over 2.8 million acres of forest land across 53 states and territories.⁴ As private forest lands continue to face increasing conversion pressure, FLP remains a critically important conservation tool.

References:

¹ <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/private-land/forest-legacy/program>

² <https://lwcfcoalition.org/about-lwcf>

³ <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/gaoa>

⁴ <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/private-land/forest-legacy>

(Front Cover Photo: John Birchard; Header Photo L: Joe Carrillo; Header Photo R: Richard Drake, HI DLNR)



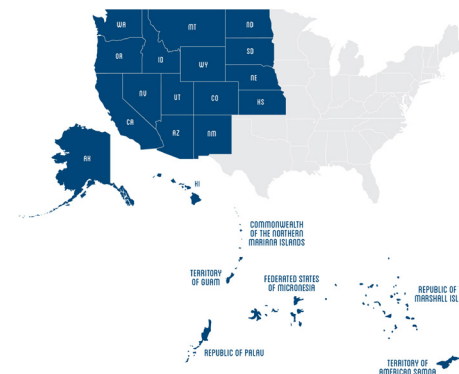
WESTERN FOCUS

In the western United States, the Forest Legacy Program (FLP) is crucial to the preservation of working forests, protection of communities from wildfire, and the conservation of wildlife habitat.

As forest lands are converted to non-forest uses, the forest products industry, and the rural communities they often support, are directly impacted. Beyond forest products, the outdoor recreation opportunities enabled by the FLP provide substantial [economic benefits](#) to communities through tourism, hunting, and fishing.

Increasing population pressure is a theme across western metropolitan areas, from Salt Lake City to Seattle. As the need for housing grows, so does the threat of conversion to non-forest uses of private forest lands. This conversion is increasingly dangerous as the west grapples with climate change and wildfires that burn far more intensely and for longer durations than historical norms. Developing forest land often means substantially increasing the area of the wildland-urban interface (WUI), an area that states and localities already struggle to manage safely. Fighting wildfires in these areas is also significantly more challenging and costly than elsewhere. FLP is used throughout the west as a tool to reduce community exposure to the WUI.

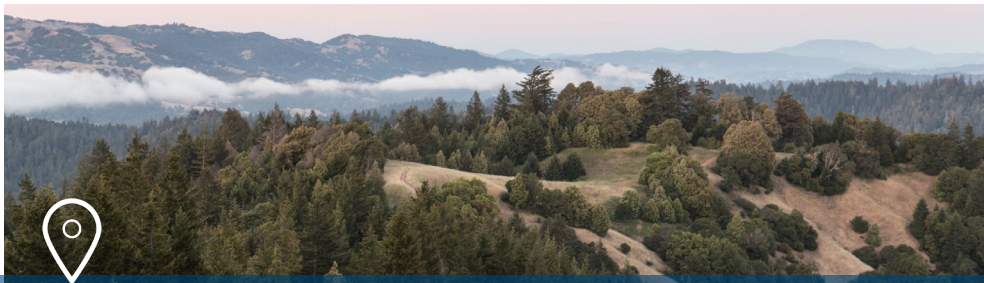
The west is home to numerous species that are both unique to the North American continent and critically threatened by habitat loss, including grizzly bears and wolves. FLP supports the conservation of these species by permanently preserving some of the last large tracts of forest land in the west that provide critical habitat and migration routes. Through partnerships with private landowners, state forestry agencies, and nonprofits, FLP enables the conservation of far greater acreage than otherwise possible.



Throughout the United States and its territories, FLP is an important conservation tool. In the west, it is particularly valuable to preserve working forests, support rural communities, and assist in the continued survival of threatened and endangered species.

The narratives in this publication aim to inform readers of the benefits of FLP across the western states.

(Stories finalized September 2021.)



STATE OF CALIFORNIA: MAILLIARD WORKING FOREST

The Mailliard Working Forest is the largest non-industrial, privately-held redwood forest in the world. It has long been a top conservation priority for the State of California.

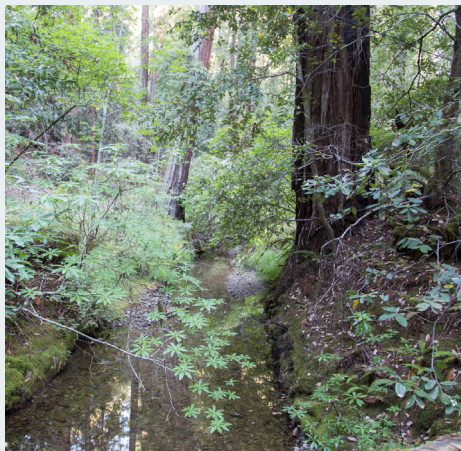
In 2018, the USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program (FLP) enabled the purchase of additional acres to complement other conservation easements (CE) that protect the forest for both environmental conservation and timber production.

The property was at considerable risk of conversion to non-forest uses, including vineyards, illegal marijuana production, and residential subdivision. The resulting forest fragmentation would have made forest management under a single management plan financially unfeasible, leading to an overstocked and unhealthy forest at high risk of wildfire. It would have also negatively impacted the watershed and reduced the economic value of the forest. Without protection, the property could be legally subdivided into 19 lots.



3,720 acres secured through the Forest Legacy Program, 83% of which is forested, to bring total land conserved to **15,000 acres**.

Conservation of the Mailliard Working Forest ties into numerous strategic initiatives. The State of California has set one of the most ambitious greenhouse gas emission reduction targets in North America. As old-growth redwoods store more carbon than any other tree, this project will be a significant asset to the state in achieving its goal by sequestering carbon. The project lands are also adjacent to other protected areas, including The Conservation Fund's Garcia River Forest, the Mailliard Redwoods State Natural Reserve, and designated Critical Coastal Areas.



According to the California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project, the Mailliard Working Forest supports 12 plant and eight animal species of special concern, including the northern spotted owl.

Environmental benefits of the project include the protection of endangered species, coast redwood habitat, and rapidly diminishing wetlands, a much-needed commodity in drought-stricken California.

Mendocino County ranks second in the state for timber value and fifth overall for timber production. This project ensures that 12,800 acres of working forest will continue to support the local resource-based economy.



Protects 28 miles of stream for Endangered Species Act-listed coho salmon and steelhead as well as the watersheds of both the Garcia and Navarro River headwaters.

"Safeguarding this landscape has been a decades-long priority for the League and our partners, and it is a huge conservation achievement all around,"

— **Sam Hodder, Save the Redwoods League President and CEO**

Keeping large forested lands in a single ownership encourages active management. Active management keeps forests healthy, supports local timber economies, and reduces future wildfire suppression costs.

341 animals, including **41 species of concern**, and **59 special status plant species** occur on the property.

These include: golden eagle, Black-tailed deer, and Townsend's big-eared bats.



In the case of the Mailliard Working Forest project, the CE secured by CAL FIRE and partners accomplishes all this in addition to the protection of numerous endangered species and one of the largest remaining old growth redwood forests in the world.

Reference:

<https://www.savetheredwoods.org/project/mailliard-ranch/facts/>

AT-A-GLANCE



Total contiguous protected lands: **82,000 acres**.



The project lands will support six local mills. Each mill employs **30 or more workers**.



Project ensures **12,800 acres** of working forest will continue to support the local resource-based economy.



Protects **10 endangered species**, including: tidewater goby, foothill yellow-legged frog, Sonoma tree vole, bald eagle, and northwestern pond turtle.



Mailliard Working Forest sequesters **802,000 metric tons** of carbon.



Supports **12 plant and eight animal species** of special concern, including the northern spotted owl.

Top L: Mailliard Forest. (Photo: John Birchard); Middle L: Mailliard Forest Creek. (Photo: John Birchard); Middle R: Mailliard Forest Old-Growth Redwood. (Photo: John Birchard)

For more information, visit
<https://www.fire.ca.gov/grants/forest-legacy/> and
<https://www.savetheredwoods.org/project/mailliard-ranch/>.



STATE OF COLORADO: BANDED PEAK

The Navajo River Headwaters conservation easement protecting 16,723 acres is the culmination of a 20-year public-private effort to conserve 50,000 acres of southwest Colorado and northern New Mexico. Threatened by the expansion of nearby tourist destinations, the property's conservation through the USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program (FLP) ensures its continued protection of an essential watershed, critical wildlife habitat, and an active timber and hunting economy.



Since the 1990s, the threat of land conversion to non-forest and non-agricultural use has been on the rise as the economy shifted from timber and agriculture to tourism and recreation for second-home owners. Local zoning allowed the property to be subdivided into 35 acre parcels. Without the FLP, this conversion would have inevitably disrupted the headwaters region of the watershed. The nearby tourist destinations of Durango, Pagosa Springs, and Wolf Creek Ski Area have all contributed to the region's rapid population growth. From 2010-2017, the county's growth rate was double the national average.

The privately-owned project lands are surrounded by 3.75 million acres of national forests and wil-

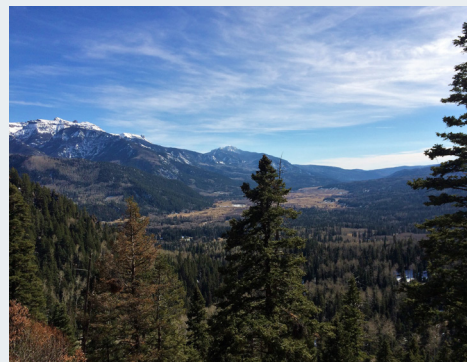
derness, including a shared 38 mile boundary with USDA Forest Service lands. The property is bordered by the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail for 10 miles and is part of an important viewshed for thousands of visitors.



Property is surrounded by the **South San Juan Wilderness, San Juan National Forest, and Rio Grande National Forest.**

The implementation of the Navajo River Watershed Plan, including the conservation of this property, has required numerous partners, including Colorado State Forest Service, USDA Forest Service, The Conservation Fund, Archuleta County, Great Outdoors Colorado, Colorado Parks & Wildlife, Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust, Colorado Open Lands, Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, local residents, and nonprofits.

As part of the San Juan-Chama Water Project, the project lands protect a critical watershed on both sides of the Continental Divide and supply water to Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Taos, the Jicarilla Apache Reservation, Southern Ute Reservation, and agricultural lands in the Middle Rio Grande Valley.



Wildlife species found on the property include elk, mule deer, Canada lynx, peregrine falcon, river otter, boreal toad, black bears, bighorn sheep, mountain lions, bald eagle, osprey, red-tailed hawk, and a species of cutthroat trout that is unique to the San Juans.

Sensitive plant and insect species protected: **Great Basin silverspot butterfly, Pagosa bladderpod, and New Mexico butterfly weed.**



Preservation of the property supports the county's largest industry: tourism, which brought in \$65 million in 2017, fueled by the spectacular scenery and recreational opportunities of the area. Private hunting on the project lands also generates significant annual revenue, with further income accruing to the local community from visiting hunters.

The forested property has supported the local timber economy with \$450,000 in gross annual sales in recent years, including commercial timber and Christmas tree sales.

Part of the Tierra Amarilla Land Grant from 1832, the conservation of the property is historically significant. With only two owners since the early 1800s, the property looks today as it has for centuries.



Rising 4,000 feet from the valley floor, the Navajo River Headwaters property is framed by the Continental Divide's San Juan Mountain Range to the east and the Chalk Mountains to the west. This scenic landscape is a critical water source for over a million people, provides important habitat for numerous plant and animal species, and supports a thriving tourism and forest products economy in southern Colorado. The conservation of the property ensures that these benefits are guaranteed in perpetuity. The additional funding for FLP through the Great American Outdoors Act will allow for the conservation of similar properties and landscape scale initiatives to proliferate in Colorado.

AT-A-GLANCE



Tract size: **16,723 acres.**



Project lands are surrounded by **3.75 million acres** of national forests and wilderness.



Property is **82% forested** with aspen, cottonwood, ponderosa pine, fir, spruce, and Gambel oak.



Project lands include **33 miles** of streams, including **5 miles** of the Navajo River, and **850 riparian/wetland acres.**



Recent timber and forest product sales have generated **\$450,000 in annual economic benefits** for the local economy.



Critical **water source** for over a **million people.**

Top L: River valley. (Photo: Christine Quinlan); **Middle L:** Banded Peak. (Photo Courtesy of John Fielder); **Bottom L:** Looking across forestland on the NHR3. (Photo: Claire Harper, USFS); **Top R:** Banded Peak. (Photo Courtesy of John Fielder)

For more information, visit
<https://csfs.colostate.edu/forest-legacy-program/>.



FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA: YELA VALLEY

In Tafunsak, Kosrae State, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Yela Valley Forest Legacy project already conserves the heart of the largest intact ka (*Terminalia carolinensis*) forest in the world.

The USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program (FLP) has enabled the first conservation easement (CE) in Asia and the Pacific (outside Hawaii). The project is crucial to the protection of the valley as ancestral lands may move from public to private ownership due to a constitutional amendment in Kosrae. The Yela Valley's watershed directly impacts downslope mangroves and coral reefs, which have high economic and cultural value. The project lands are identified for protection in the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and the FSM Strategic Development Plan: Environment component. The FLP offers the best means for this necessary protection to occur.



Adjacent lands have already been converted to agriculture and agroforestry. The Yela Valley was recently threatened by the construction of a dam that would pipe water through the mangroves for export to developed countries. There are no zoning restrictions that would limit this development. The area is also desirable for residential development due to its gentle slope, proposed access, and proximity to the airport.

The FLP's support of the Yela Valley ties into other initiatives, including the Micronesia Challenge Initiative, a regional intergovernmental effort to preserve both forest and marine resources. The Nature Conservancy Conservation Initiative identifies FSM as "home to some of the most biologically diverse forests and coral reefs in the world" and places the Yela Valley into two formally-defined Areas of Biological Significance. At the local level, the Kosrae Land Use Plan identifies the Yela Valley as a "Special Consideration District" for priority conservation of the entire valley's ka forest. The Kosrae Biodiversity Conservation Strategic Action Plan, calls for priority conservation of the Yela Valley and ka trees.

Endemic to the FSM, the **ka tree** (*Terminalia carolinensis*) is habitat for numerous local birds, including several endangered species and the state bird (the Dusky White-eye).



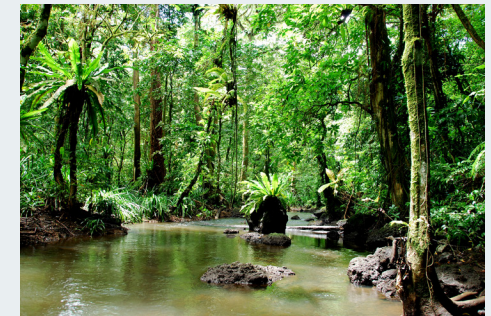
The piloted use of a CE in Kosrae has inspired the expansion of the FSM's Assessment of Need in Pohnpei and Yap island-states and supports the use of CEs elsewhere to magnify conservation efforts throughout the Pacific. The FSM, Palau, and the Marshall Islands are all former UN Trust Territories now in a Compact of Free Association with the US, which makes them eligible for S&PF programs. The protection of the Yela Valley ties into land-

scape-level conservation work occurring in Kosrae that includes the designation of inland peaks as the "Sleeping Lady" park.



Protecting the Yela Valley yields benefits, including ecotourism and education, as the landowners host tours for tourists and schoolchildren. The valley includes one of the most intact wetland-dominated watersheds left in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, where many freshwater wetlands have been converted to rice or taro, and mangrove wetlands have been filled or converted to shrimp ponds.

The valley provides important services to reduce sedimentation on the coral reefs and support the mangroves, which in turn protect the coast from erosion and mitigate climate change. While the forest type of the Yela Valley is productive, the management plan for the Yela Valley calls for preservation to maintain the limited ka forest left. The adjacent mangrove forests are sustainably harvested for timber and fuel.



Through the connection between forests and adjacent reef health, this project also supports the scuba and snorkeling industries in one of the most pristine parts of the world. The easement restricts harvest of native species and conserves the native ecosystem. It allows controlled public access to the property for hunting feral pigs and gathering non-native fruits and plants that still grow there.

Land ownership in the Pacific Islands often looks different from ownership on the mainland. The first CE in the Pacific covers a tract still owned by over one hundred descendants of a single original owner. However, as the Yela Valley project shows, even in places where maintaining ancestral lands is a priority, the FLP can still provide the right tools to support conservation and its environmental, economic, and cultural benefits.

Reference:

¹ <http://sfrc.ufl.edu/facultysites/ewel/pubs/Tropical-Peatlands/Drew%20et%20al%202005.pdf>

AT-A-GLANCE



Kosrae is an island 2,957 miles southwest of Hawai'i.



The Yela Valley Forest Legacy project **conserves the heart of the largest and most intact ka forest** in the world.



According to a 2005 study¹, ka forests annually provide over **\$3.1 million** worth of goods to Kosrae.



The Yela Valley is home to the **endangered Micronesian Imperial Pigeon, Kosrae fruit bat, and endemic Flying Fox**.



The Yela Valley is home to **five endemic plant species**.

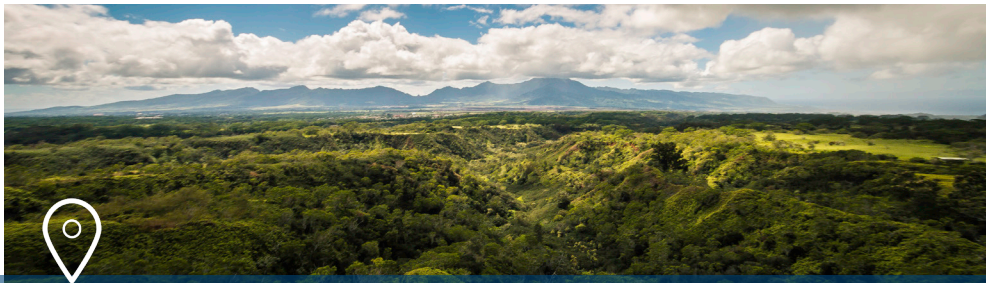


Project **allows controlled public access to the property** for the purposes of hunting feral pigs, and gathering non-native fruits and plants.

Top L: River and swamp areas. (Photo: KIRMA); **Bottom L:** Landowner family member and YELA staff member during acquisition William K. Wil-liam, leaning on the buttress of a ka tree. (Photo: Michael Conner); **Top R:** Yela Sign Ambassador featuring (L to R): Lance Isaac Nithan, Former Kosrae U&CF Coordinator; Maxson Nithan, Kosrae State Forester; Dr. Tholman Alik, landowner family member and YELA executive director during the acquisition; and US Ambassador to the FSM, Hon. Robert Riley. (Photo: Kathleen Friday); **Top R:** Yela River. (Photo: Kathleen Friday)

For more information, visit

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r5/communityforests/?cid=fseprd477256>.



STATE OF HAWAII: HELEMANO WILDERNESS AREA

The Helemano Wilderness Area (HWA) Forest Legacy project was a complex acquisition that took over five years of partner collaboration with the USDA Forest Service, other partners, and multiple funding sources. This property now provides increased access for recreation and native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices as well as environmental benefits and a new source for forest products. The acquisition also furthers the goals of the State of Hawai'i related to economic, agricultural, and water sustainability.

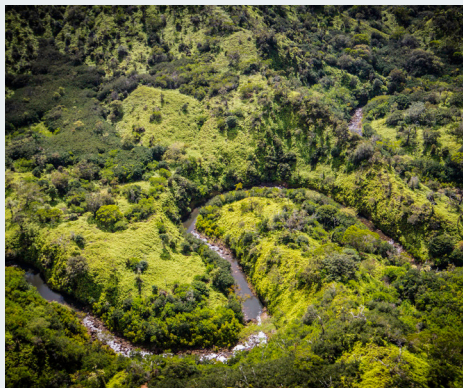
O'ahu has lost more forestland to conversion to non-forest uses than any other island in the State of Hawai'i. Conversion to suburban development and high intensity agriculture threatens the health of the watershed on Hawai'i's most populous island, as well as the supply of water for residential and agricultural use.

Nearby land is also conserved in perpetuity by the Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, including the Ewa and Waiahole Forest Reserves, Kahana State Park, and the federally owned O'ahu Forest National Wildlife Refuge. HWA expands these protected forest lands and provides crucial access to the actively managed watershed forests of the Ko'olau Mountains Watershed Partnership that bring together landowners across the entire eastern mountain range of O'ahu.



Tourism in Hawai'i is worth an estimated **\$13 billion a year** from 10 million tourists annually.

The acquisition of HWA provides public lands on the most populous island and epicenter of tourism. Only thirty minutes from the famous Waikiki Beach and city of Honolulu, HWA is a prime location for



the preservation of open space and development of new recreational opportunities. Currently, there is only one developed camping area in O'ahu's Forest Reserves. The HWA project aims to provide additional trails and campsite development, including ADA-accessible sites.

In spite of demand from local woodworkers and artisans, there are no state timber areas in O'ahu. Forest management of HWA provides an opportunity for forest product development thanks to its accessibility and potential for high yields. Cultural practitioners will benefit from increased access to traditional Hawaiian and Polynesian forest products for lei, garlands, medical uses, and other cultural practices.

"These areas of Helemano and upper Wahiawā, sitting at the foothills of the Ko'olau mountains, combine native forest, watersheds, and good soils in an accessible central location to create an ideal setting to support our communities' physical and spiritual sustenance."

— Suzanne Case, Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources



HWA is one of 13 priority watersheds designated by the County Board of Water Supply for its high aquifer recharge and water production qualities, on which a third of O'ahu's population relies.

HWA provides habitat for 37 state and federally-listed threatened and endangered species, including the elepaio bird, seven invertebrate species, and 28 plant species as well as the official state land mammal, the Hawaiian hoary bat.

AT-A-GLANCE



O'ahu population: **991,778 residents, 8 million tourists** per year.



The acquisition of HWA **provides public lands on the most populous island** and epicenter of tourism.



HWA contains **21 miles of streams** and their tributaries, the largest drainage basin in O'ahu.



Provides habitat for **37** state and federally-listed threatened and endangered species.

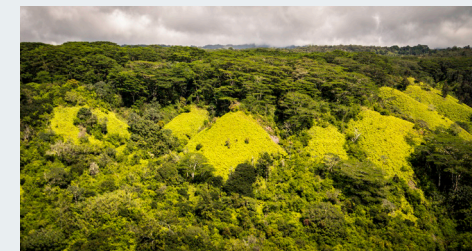


Secures **six miles of public access** to the historic Poamoho Ridge Trail that was constructed in 1934 by the Civilian Conservation Corps.



Project lands link **17,288 acres** under active forest management.

Through the power of partnerships, including the Trust for Public Lands, state and federal agencies, nonprofits and associations the acquisition of the HWA demonstrates how the Forest Legacy Program can be leveraged to complete complex but critically important land acquisitions that support the environment, the community, and the economy.



"This complex land purchase is the product of many years of focused work by a team of professionals across public and private sectors."

— Marigold Zoll, O'ahu Forestry and Wildlife District Manager

Community engagement was key to the acquisition of the HWA and will be key in the long-term stewardship to Malama aina (to care for the land).

Top L: Aerial of Helemano Wilderness Project area. (Photo: Richard Drake, DLNR); **Middle L:** HWA contains over 20 miles of streams and tributaries. (Photo: Richard Drake, DLNR); **Top R:** HWA provides public access to the Poamoho Ridge Trail. (Photo: Richard Drake, DLNR); **Top R:** Aerial of Helemano Wilderness Project area. (Photo: Richard Drake, DLNR)

For more information, visit
<https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/forestry/lap/forest-legacy/>.



STATE OF IDAHO: HALL MOUNTAIN-KOOTENAI VALLEY

The Hall Mountain-Kootenai Valley (HMKV) Forest Legacy project builds on two decades of conservation work to conserve nearly eighty thousand acres within 25 miles of the project lands. The project is a successful demonstration of the value of collaboration in achieving landscape scale impacts.



In partnership with three local land trusts, 21 Conservation Easements (CEs) were secured to protect 5,439 acres in this two-phase project.

Over the last two decades, Idaho has experienced population growth at double the rate of the national average, and the sale of forestlands to real estate developers is at a record high. In the absence of the USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program, economic drivers would have inevitably led to forest fragmentation. This, in turn, would have permanently severed important critical wildlife linkages and weakened the local timber economy as land-use changes threaten their supply.



The project lands lie within two internationally-recognized wildlife corridors, connect over two million acres of USDA Forest Service land, and secure linkages between the Selkirk and Purcell Mountains. The HMKV lies within the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative, which aims to restore and reconnect habitat to allow wildlife to roam between Canada, Idaho, and Montana. By protecting a critical linkage area, the HMKV project achieves a conservation goal of international significance.

Benefits of the HMKV project range from extended habitat protection for endangered species to support for the local timber economy and public access to recreation.

The project lands are located within a two-hour haul distance from five large timber mills that rely on private forest lands for 74% of their timber supplies.

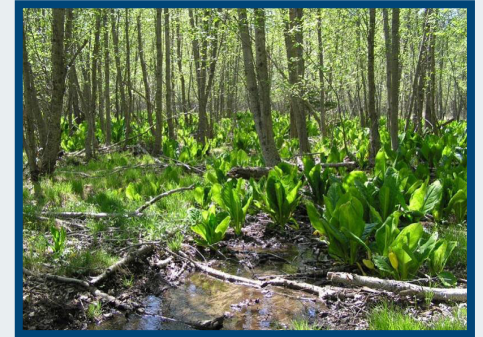
Recreation is an important driver of the Idaho economy. More than 589 thousand hunting and fishing licenses are sold in the state with only 1.83 million people, and the outdoor industry is the second-largest industry in Boundary County. The project provides permanent, non-motorized public access to a majority of the project lands.

The project lands also protect the drinking water supply and are culturally significant to the Kootenai Tribe.

“The Hall Mountain Project is a tremendous accomplishment and benefit for our Boundary County community. Protecting over 5,400 acres of working forestland and wildlife habitat, and some of the most critical undeveloped lands in this landscape, provides vital support for the county’s rural economies dependent on the timber industry.”

— Kennon McClintock, North Idaho Field Representative

Thanks to the Forest Legacy Program, teamwork, and a shared vision for conservation, the HMKV is a significant achievement with positive impacts for northern Idaho’s wildlife and economy.



The working forestland of the HMKV will continue to contribute to the thriving timber industry, provide critical habitat to resident populations of threatened and endangered species, and provide thousands of acres for public recreation opportunities.



Habitat protected for seven federally-listed species including the grizzly bear, woodland caribou, Canada lynx, bull trout, sturgeon, burbot, and wolverine.



AT-A-GLANCE



The HMKV project protects 5,439 acres.



Productive forests contribute \$9.5 million every ten years to the economy.



Forests contain 19.5 million board feet (MMBF) of standing timber and produce 2.1 MMBF per year.



Forests support 75 full-time jobs in timber and other sectors.



Project provides public access to 3,528 acres.



Project lands are located within a two-hour haul distance from five large timber mills that rely on private forest lands for 74% of their timber supplies.

Top L: A view of the Kootenai River Valley and the snow-capped Selkirk Mountains from Hall Mountain. (Photo: Robyn Miller, The Nature Conservancy); **Middle L:** Forested tract under the conservation easement. (Photo: Karen Noerr); **Bottom L:** One of the project tracts overlooking the Kootenai Valley. (Photo: Janet Valle, USFS); **Top R:** A unique 100-acre hardwood wetland protected on a Hall Mountain tract is home to several wildlife species, including grizzly bear. (Photo: Kennon McClintock, The Nature Conservancy); **Middle R:** Canada lynx captured on remote camera in the Purcell Mountain range close to the HMKV project area. (Photo: Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game)

For more information, visit
<https://www.idl.idaho.gov/forestry/forest-legacy-program/>.



STATE OF KANSAS: BALDWIN WOODS

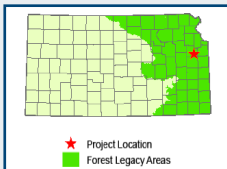
In 2016, Baldwin Woods became the first and only USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy project in the State of Kansas. It exemplifies the power of public and private partnerships in conservation, especially in a state with limited conservation resources.

“The Baldwin Woods Preserve ... is a biological treasure of local, regional, and national significance. Expansion of the preserve, facilitated by the Forest Legacy Program and partnerships with multiple agencies and landowners, has enhanced the conservation value of the preserve, and expanded opportunities for public outreach, education, and research in the environmental sciences.”

— Bryan L. Foster, Director University of Kansas Field Station



Baldwin Woods was named a National Historic Landmark in 1980 by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior and is widely recognized as a site of biological significance.



It lies within an ecotone, or border region, where the North American eastern deciduous forest meets the tallgrass prairie.

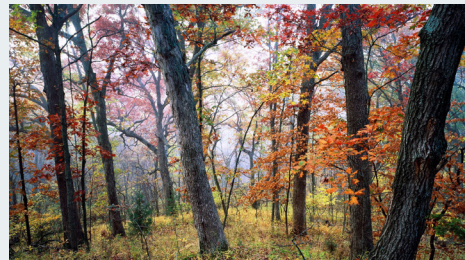
Many species found within Baldwin Woods are living at the western extreme of their geographic range, and thus subtle shifts in climate may impact their populations in Baldwin Woods before the rest of their range sees any changes. This makes the project lands extremely valuable to researchers who study ecosystem dynamics and climate change.

Baldwin Woods provides important habitat for the southern flying squirrel, red-bellied snake, and smooth earth snake (both snakes threatened).



Only a small portion of native forest remains in Baldwin Woods. Historically, the loss of forests in Kansas was the result of conversion of forested land to agricultural land. Today, the biggest threat is conversion to residential development. If the Baldwin Woods Preserve were not protected by the Forest Legacy Program and other entities, the nation would risk losing both a nationally recognized research area and one of the last pockets of long-term managed native forests in Kansas.

“The Baldwin Woods Forest Preserve” is managed as part of the University of Kansas Field Station for research and education by the Kansas Biological Survey & Center for Ecological Research (a KU ecological research unit).



The selection of Baldwin Woods for a Forest Legacy project was endorsed by the State Stewardship Coordinating Committee. The State of Kansas then partnered with multiple organizations and four altruistic landowners in order to complete the project.

“The Baldwin Woods project provided an extraordinary opportunity to serve as a partner in a project that protects a truly unique landscape ... Because of this effort, Baldwin Woods (Forest Preserve) will be protected for future generations and will work to inspire the preservation of additional woodlands and prairies that are unique to Kansas and to our nation as a whole.”

— Jan Shupert-Arick, Douglas County Heritage Conservation Council Program Coordinator



Baldwin Woods preserves one of the oldest native forests in the state, provides habitat for numerous species, creates new recreation opportunities, and acts as an important research station for climate change.



At this property, and across much of Kansas, walnut, oak, and hickory are losing ground to other more shade tolerant species.

Kansas does not have state policies or programs to protect land from conversion to non-forest uses. The USDA Forest Legacy Program provided that important opportunity for the protection of Baldwin Woods.

AT-A-GLANCE



166 acres protected.



At least 25 species of reptiles and amphibians occur on the property.



Baldwin Woods includes nearly 80 species of woody plants, half of which are trees.



156 recorded species of birds on the property.



Property includes more than 500 species of flowering plants and ferns.



Site is home to 100 kinds of bryophytes (mosses), 200 different kinds of macrofungi, and 200 kinds of lichens.

Top L: Rice tract in the foreground, Baldwin Woods tract in the background. Facing WNW. (Photo: Kansas Forest Service); Middle L: (Photo: Kansas Biological Survey & Center for Ecological Research); Bottom L: (Photo: Edward C. Robison III Photography); Top R: (Photo: Claire Harper, USFS); Bottom R: (Photo: Edward C. Robison III Photography)

For more information, visit <https://www.kansasforests.org> and www.biosurvey.ku.edu.



STATE OF MONTANA: KOOTENAI FORESTLANDS

The Kootenai Forestlands Conservation Project builds on a legacy of private forest conservation in the State of Montana. The project put in place a conservation easement (CE) administered by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks to protect 22,295 acres of productive timberland and wildlife habitat. The property remains a working forest in private ownership and provides numerous year-round benefits.

“Stimson Lumber Company applauds the vision and partnership of multiple organizations to complete this important Forest Legacy project on this unique Montana landscape. Maintaining working forests, protecting wildlife and providing public access are consistent with Stimson’s core values.”

— Andrew Miller, Landowner, Stimson Lumber Company President and CEO

The parceling out of forestlands makes sustainable forest management difficult. Conversion to non-forest uses impacts the local wood product economy, alters the environment, increases wildfire risks, and removes public benefits of forestlands. Wildlife suffer habitat fragmentation and loss of connectivity to larger landscapes, and the public loses access to recreation. Opening the project lands to conversion would have negated cooperative management



opportunities and extended the wildland-urban interface (WUI) further into the Kootenai National Forest.



FLP projects in MT and ID protect a total of 358,000 acres, with 260,000 acres of FLP conservation in MT and another 98,000 acres of conservation in ID.

The Kootenai Forestlands Conservation Project supports a number of conservation initiatives. The property lies within the Cabinet-Purcell ecoregion, one of North America’s largest remaining intact ecosystems and the site of multinational cooperation to advance landscape-scale conservation. The project lands were also identified as critical to the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative and a priority landscape for the Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative.



As a working forest, the property supports family-wage employment in the wood products industry and generates millions of revenue dollars for the area. Through the production of 4 million board feet of timber, the project lands support 20 full-time workers and generates an estimated \$5.25 million in economic activity.

The property generates millions in personal income for local residents through free, year-round public access for big game hunting, hiking, bird watching, snowmobiling, and other outdoor activities. It maintains the scenic viewshed marketed by Lincoln County and the Montana Tourism Council as “Rich, Rare, Remote.” The property is also part of an established Archaeological District as a historic trade and travel corridor between the Great Plains and the Pacific Northwest.

The project lands are part of the last remaining intact habitat for Endangered Species Act Threatened species, including grizzly bear, Canada lynx, and bull trout. The State of Montana has also identified the area as high priority for habitat protection of gray wolves. The preservation of large, resilient landscapes is critical to the survival of these species. The property also

includes 14.5 miles of spawning and rearing streams for a Montana species of concern, the westslope cutthroat trout. The property provides key habitat for 43 species identified by Montana’s 2015 Wildlife Action Plan as in greatest conservation need.

The Kootenai Forestlands Conservation Project exemplifies Montana’s goal for the Forest Legacy Program: to conserve and enhance land, water, wildlife, and timber resources while providing for working forests and public benefits.

Reference:

¹ Short, Karen C. 2017. Spatial wildfire occurrence data for the United States, 1992-2015 [FPA_FOD_20170508]. 4th Edition. Fort Collins, CO: Forest Service Research Data Archive. <https://doi.org/10.2737/RDS-2013-0009.4>



The project lands are part of the last remaining intact habitat for Endangered Species Act Threatened species, including grizzly bear, Canada lynx, and bull trout.

AT-A-GLANCE



42 miles of streams will be permanently protected to preserve the health of the Kootenai River.



480 acres of riparian habitat and 331 acres of wetlands will be permanently protected.



Stimson Lumber is projected to generate **\$53 million dollars** in economic activity over the next decade.



Property includes **14.5 miles** of spawning and rearing streams for a Montana.



Through the production of 4 million board feet of timber, the project lands support **20 full-time workers**.



Property provides key habitat for **43 species** identified by Montana’s 2015 Wildlife Action Plan as in greatest conservation need.

Top L: Project lands adjacent to Turner Mountain Ski Resort. (Photo: Chris Deming, TPL); **Middle L:** Grizzly bear with her two cubs at a USFWS monitoring site on the project lands. (Photo: Wayne Kasworm, USFWS); **Bottom L:** Expanding private residential development adjacent to the project lands. (Photo: Chris Deming, TPL); **Top R:** Bull trout habitat in Pipe Creek. (Photo: Kim Annis, MFWP)

For more information, visit

<https://fwp.mt.gov/>, <https://y2y.net/>, and <https://greatnorthernlcc.org/>.



STATE OF NEBRASKA: CHAT CANYON

The Chat Canyon Wildlife Management Area was the first Forest Legacy project in the State of Nebraska. It opened in 2014 as the state's first Forestry and Wildlife Management Area acquired through the USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program. To achieve this, the project brought together the USDA Forest Service, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Nebraska Environmental Trust, the National Wild Turkey Federation, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. It was the culmination of a 12-year effort by the Nebraska Forest Service to implement the Forest Legacy Program in the state.

"It's an absolute gem, frankly. Literally, the river runs through it, and there's a whole array of environments: prairies, wet meadows, riparian forests, ponderosa pine forest and mixed pine bluff."

— Scott Josiah, Former Nebraska State Forester and Director



Chat Canyon was threatened by conversion to non-forest uses when it was put up for sale by the property owner. Due to the location along the Niobrara River and proximity to Nebraska's only designated "Wild and Scenic River," there was a high probability that the property would be subdivided into river lots, leading to forest fragmentation.

Sandhills Prairie and Chat Canyon evolved under a

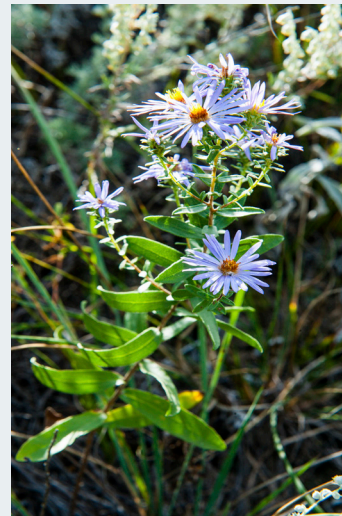
disturbance ecosystem in which the primary driving force was periodic fire and intermittent grazing by native ungulates. The conservation of Chat Canyon ties into the area's management plan, which focuses on mimicking these disturbances to increase the productivity and enhancing wildlife habitat, wildlife populations and wildlife-related recreational opportunities while keeping this working forest working. The overall management objectives include outdoor recreational and educational opportunities while conserving, enhancing, and sustaining the diverse wildlife, fish, and plant resources. The Samuel R. McKelvie National Forest protects approximately 116,079 acres in the area adjacent to the 456-acre Forest Legacy Chat Canyon property.

Environmental benefits of this project include the protection of both animals and plants. Chat Canyon is essentially a remnant ecosystem from the Ice Age. As a result, it is home to an incredible diversity of plant and avian species that are not found widely in the rest of north-central Nebraska. The property hosts high numbers of nesting Yellow Breasted Chats, an at-risk songbird that is increasingly uncommon and has virtually disappeared from eastern Nebraska. Other species of concern protected by the acquisition include Ovenbird, Brown Bog Sedge, northern redbelly dace, and Plains topminnow. The area is also home to one of the few intact ponderosa pine forests in the state.



The property hosts high numbers of nesting **Yellow Breasted Chats**, an at-risk songbird that is increasingly uncommon and has virtually disappeared from eastern Nebraska.

Economic benefits focus on recreation. The project lands provides public access to the Niobrara River,



which attracts visitors for canoeing, kayaking, rafting, fishing, photography, and primitive camping. The Niobrara River is a popular destination for floaters who start by Chat Canyon and continue downriver to the designated Wild and Scenic Area.

Current wildlife management is geared towards game species with an emphasis on providing recreational opportunities involving youth and special-needs hunts. These species include greater prairie chicken, sharp-tailed grouse, and wild turkey. Big game includes

white-tailed deer, mule deer, and elk. The Nebraska Forest Service is working to develop and support markets for small diameter forest products that may be produced by the property's mixed coniferous and mixed hardwood forests.

Chat Canyon is now a permanent addition to protected public lands in Nebraska. It clearly demonstrates how the Forest Legacy Program can be used successfully to combine forestry and wildlife management objectives in the biological crossroads of the Midwest.

The project lands support public access to the Niobrara River, which attracts visitors for canoeing, kayaking, rafting, fishing, photography, and primitive camping.



AT-A-GLANCE



Tract size **456 acres**.



2 1/4 miles of scenic frontage along the Niobrara River.



First Forest Legacy project in the State of Nebraska.



Habitat for three "tier 1" at-risk bird species: **Bell's vireo**, **pipit plover**, and **interior least tern**.



Chat Canyon is now a **permanent addition** to protected public lands in Nebraska.



Area is home to one of the few **intact ponderosa pine forests** in the state.

Top L: Chat Canyon Sunrise. (Photo: Eric Fowler); Bottom L: (Photo: NEBRASKAland Magazine/Nebraska Game and Parks Commission); Top R: (Photo: NEBRASKAland Magazine/Nebraska Game and Parks Commission); Middle R: Chat Canyon Niobrara. (Photo: NFS staff)

For more information, visit
<https://nfs.unl.edu/forest-legacy>.



STATE OF NEVADA: ASH CANYON GATEWAY

Nevada's first Forest Legacy project, the Ash Canyon Gateway project, sits between Carson City and Lake Tahoe. A cooperative project between the USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program, Carson City, and the Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF), the project secures Carson City's only public motorized access from the east into Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park backcountry. Threatened by conversion to non-forest use by population growth, the Ash Canyon Gateway project supports local strategic initiatives and complements adjacent protected lands. The benefits of the project range from watershed and threatened and endangered species protection to economic, historic, and cultural benefits.



The project lands are critical habitat for **goshawk, spotted owl, bald eagle,** and a variety of **squirrel** species.

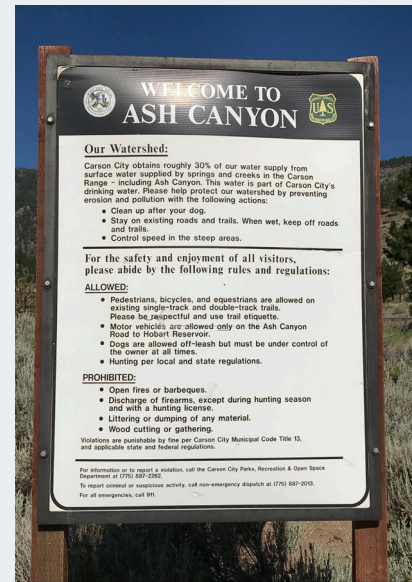
The 111 acres of the Ash Canyon Gateway project are among the most visible in the Carson Range from the valley floor. This watershed is considered critical by the city, but more than the view was threatened by residential development. In addition, the private sale of this parcel would have limited public access to the backcountry of Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park. Furthermore, the project lands have a Wildland Urban Interface Hazard Rating of 'extreme' under the local Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and fire history along the Carson front makes clear the importance of proper management. Without the conservation plan in place from NDF, the project lands were at greater risk from the threat of wildfire.

Ash Canyon Gateway is a textbook example of successful and strategic collaboration. Since 1996, Carson City has managed an Open Space program aimed at preserving the scenic landscape of the city as well as access to recreation. Open space lands

also provide environmental benefits, including watershed protection, reforestation, flood attenuation, and wildlife habitat. The Ash Canyon Gateway lands were designated priority by the Carson City Open Space plan, and Carson City Open Space provided the 25% match necessary to acquire the property. Surrounding land owners, Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park and the USDA Forest Service Carson Ranger District, supported the acquisition as increased public access through Ash Canyon leverages the recreation benefits of the adjacent lands to the public.



The project is located at the headwaters of one of the domestic water sources for Carson City. As such, watershed protection is one key environmental benefit. Public access to recreation, secured in perpetuity, is another key benefit. It also preserves a high elevation mixed conifer forest that is only found in Nevada along a short length of the Carson Range. The Carson Range harbors the greatest



The area is key winter range for mule deer and provides a temporary home to black bears, mountain lions, bobcats, and numerous game birds.

species diversity of any mountain range in Nevada. The project lands also have cultural value as the site of numerous Basque arborglyphs, dating to the early twentieth century and carved by sheepherders into aspen nearly two-hundred years old.

Partnerships between the landowners and key agencies, from nonprofits

to local government, were critical to the success of the Ash Canyon Gateway project. Protecting, in perpetuity, expanded public access to Nevada's Lake Tahoe backcountry is a tremendous success for the Forest Legacy Program in the State of Nevada.



AT-A-GLANCE



Tract size **111 acres**.



Nevada's first Forest Legacy project, sits between Carson City and Lake Tahoe.



Without the conservation plan in place, the project lands were at greater risk from the threat of wildfire.



Protects expanded **public access** to the backcountry of Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park.



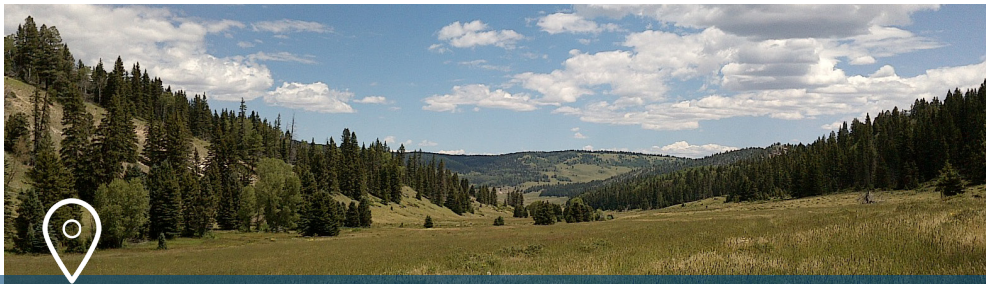
Located at the headwaters of one of the domestic water sources for Carson City, **watershed protection** is a key environmental benefit.



Muscle Powered, a local nonprofit focused on pedestrian and bike advocacy, provided support to the project.

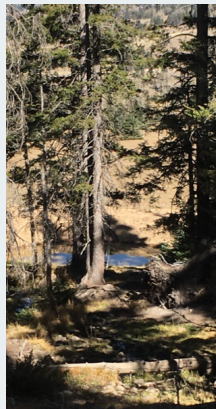
Top L: The eastern side of the Sierra Nevada Mountain range is typically dry as exemplified in this photo. The Ash Canyon Project helps conserve Nevada's watershed and riparian ecosystem in a highly developed corridor. (Photo: Michelle Roberts); **Middle L:** A hiker enjoys the trail that has a riparian ecosystem on one side and the sagebrush step ecosystem on the other side. (Photo: Michelle Roberts); **Top R:** Sign welcomes recreationists as they approach the Canyon on a dirt road leading West out of Carson City. (Photo: Michelle Roberts); **Middle R:** Sagebrush, tobacco brush, willows, and Jeffrey's pine are some of the vegetation that greets visitors. (Photo: Michelle Roberts)

For more information, visit
<http://forestry.nv.gov/forestry-resources/forest-legacy/>.



STATE OF NEW MEXICO: UPPER RIO CHAMA RIVER WATERSHED

Adjacent to the Carson National Forest, the three-phase acquisition of the Upper Rio Chama River Watershed property, enabled by the USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program (FLP), The Trust for Public Land, and the Forest Trust, took nearly a decade to complete. It now protects 11,655 acres of working forests and riparian areas. The project buffers the National Forest from the encroachment of private property development, reduces the wildland urban interface and associated wildland firefighting costs, preserves unique old growth forest, and supports a critical watershed.



As a working high mountain ranch, the property has been in the ownership of the same family for 44 years. With concerns about future management, the landowners wanted to pursue permanent protection of the property through the Forest Legacy Program. Without this, the property was at risk of fragmentation into 59 parcels of 140 acres, reducing the likelihood of active forest management.

The Upper Rio Chama River Watershed lies within the Northern Rio Grande Natural Heritage Area, designated by Congress in 2006, as well as within the federal multi-state, multi-partner Upper Rio Grande: Mi Tierra Encantada Collaborative Landscape. Situated within the viewshed of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDT), protection of the property supports the CDT's management plan. The Rio Arriba County Comprehensive Plan encourages the use of conservation easements to protect critical lands, including the property, within the County's Headwaters Zoning District.

The property is also ranked in the Statewide Forest Resource Assessment as a "priority working landscape," a large, unfragmented block of land with high economic potential, which is at risk of conversion to non-forest use, and in the 2021 Forest Action Plan as a "priority watershed". The property is also enrolled in a Natural Resources Conservation Service conservation reserve program to enhance the riparian habitat.



Economic benefits of this project include both forest products and hunting access. 75% of the mixed conifer and spruce-fir forests can be commercially harvested and are under active management. According to the 2013 Chama Healthy Forest and Wood Utilization Study, the area holds considerable potential for commercial biomass utilization. The property also supports a healthy population of big-game species, including elk. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in 2011 the estimated economic impact of hunting in New was \$620 million. Managing the property's elk population for hunting is a boon to the local economy. The landowner alone accrues \$90,000 per year from the activity.



Potential habitat for 12 additional species of management concern is also present on this property.

In the arid southwest, the Rio Chama, which flows into the endangered Rio Grande, is a critical resource for both the traditional villages of the Tierra Amarilla Land Grant as well as New Mexico's largest city. 90% of Albuquerque's domestic water supply comes from the Rio Grande. The protection of the unfragmented, high, forested mountain project lands ensures their continued ability to act as "water factories" for the rest of the state.

Through a decade of persistence and patience, all 11,655 acres of this property are now covered by conservation easements. Protection of the Upper

Rio Chama River Watershed through the FLP ensures the public will continue to reap the benefits, from forest products to watershed protection, of this scenic property in perpetuity.

"The Lloyd/Estrin/Hill family is deeply grateful that, through the Forest Legacy Program, we have been able to protect the precious resources of the 11,655 acre High Country Ranch."

— Robert Estrin

Property is habitat for 48 observed species; those in need of special protection include Rio Grande cutthroat trout, Canada lynx, Mexican spotted owl, boreal toad, boreal owl, and northern goshawk.



AT-A-GLANCE



11,655 acres of working forests and riparian areas.



Project protects 18 miles of tributary creeks, including 13 miles of Rio Chama headwaters.



Eastern edge of the property is adjacent to 18 miles of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail.



Property was at risk of fragmentation into 59 parcels of 140 acres, reducing the likelihood of active forest management.



Property has been in the ownership of the same family for 44 years.



Property supports a healthy population of big-game species, including elk.

Top L: High Country Ranch Fall late summer 2017. (Photo: Joe Carrillo); Middle L: Water catchment. (Photo: Henry Carey); Middle R: Hunters 2018. (Photo: Joe Carrillo); Middle R: Creek 2017. (Photo: Joe Carrillo)

For more information, visit
<https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/sfd/forest-legacy/>.



STATE OF OREGON: EAST MORAINE WALLOWA LAKE

The East Moraine of Wallowa Lake is one of the world's most perfectly formed glacial landscapes and an icon of eastern Oregon. Through the USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program (FLP), Wallowa County acquired 1,533 acres of this landscape to conserve its ecological, cultural, and economic significance in perpetuity. This conservation initiative has been supported by a remarkable coalition of local and state government agencies and nonprofits, resulting in additional lands along the East Moraine being protected since the FLP property was acquired.

"The East Moraine captivates locals and visitors alike. It's among the crown jewels of Oregon ... and a geologic wonder ... the Moraine is an iconic viewshed and its preservation will contribute to bringing tourists to the county, maintaining this vibrant part of the economy."

— The Observer Newspaper



Zoning of the property allowed for the building of 15 homesites including three on the Moraine's iconic crest. In addition, a conference center and associated outbuildings along with a private dock on the lake could have been built. If the forest lands had been converted, the idyllic landscape would have been fragmented, losing its rural character, with it the loss of 1,791 acres of public access.

Protection of this property is part of a larger effort by Wallowa Land Trust, Wallowa Resources, Wallowa County, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, and Oregon Department of Forestry to conserve the entire East Moraine, some 3,000 acres.

The Wallowa County Comprehensive Land Use Plan highlights the open space and habitat values of the project lands, and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife maps the area as important game habitat. Identified as a "high fire risk," protection of the property is key to supporting Wallowa County's Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Managing the landscape as a working forest, instead of opening it to development and the expansion of the wildland-urban interface, is critical to managing wildfire risk, wildlife habitat, and ecological benefits.



The East Moraine provides high quality habitat and is a key wildlife corridor between the valley floor and the mountains.

The ecological benefits of the conservation of the East Moraine include the protection of habitat for numerous species, including gray wolves, an important Oregon species in recovery, and Spalding's catchfly, a federally recognized threatened wildflower. Habitat is also supported for several species listed in the Oregon Conservation Strategy: hoary bat, long-legged myotis (bat), ferruginous hawk, and white-headed woodpecker. Protection of the property also supports the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Mule Deer Initiative by providing critical winter habitat for this declining species.

For over 16,000 years, the Nez Perce have lived in the Wallowa Valley. The project lands, which lay within the greater Wallowa Lake basin, are considered sacred to the Nez Perce, Umatilla, Cayuse, and



Walla Walla peoples. The area was a central summer encampment with a nearby fishing area, and today Old Chief Joseph's gravesite is located at the south end of Wallowa Lake, clearly visible from the project lands, which have great cultural significance.

As an active working forest, the project lands are managed under the guidelines of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

The property will be managed by a multi-resource management plan that was created by a coalition of local land management experts to include forest management, graze management, public recreation, and cultural resources. Periodic timber harvests and land management activities will continue to support the local economy.

As a community forest owned by Wallowa County, harvested timber supports the Integrated Biomass Energy Campus, an economic catalyst project developed to create a market for small diameter logs.

Aside from forestry, the property supports the local economy through livestock grazing and is a critical component of the Wallowa Lake viewshed, the area's primary draw for tourists and recreators. Nearly a million people visit the county each year to enjoy the area's iconic landscape and public lands.

The East Moraine is a crucial element of a landscape that is both an incredible example of glacial history, a working forest, and a tremendous tourism draw for eastern Oregon. The Forest Legacy Program ensures that its ecological, economic, and cultural benefits will be preserved in perpetuity.



AT-A-GLANCE



Property is adjacent to **1.7 million acres** of protected lands.



Visitors generate **\$26 million** in local revenues and **10% of local employment**.



Property **provides habitat** for: elk, red foxes, coyotes, bobcats, cougars, marmots, bald eagles, and blue grouse.



Habitat is supported for several species listed in the **Oregon Conservation Strategy**.



Integrated Biomass Energy Campus supports **26 full-time jobs**.



Property supports the **local economy** through livestock grazing and is a critical component of the Wallowa Lake **viewshed**.

Top L: Iconic moraines glacial landscape. (Photo: Leon Werdinger); **Middle L:** The East Moraine forest will continue to support public access and educational events. (Photo: Dave Jensen); **Top R:** (Photo: Wallowa Moraines Partnership); **Bottom R:** The Moraines have long held cultural significance. (Photo: Rick McEwin)

For more information, visit

<https://www.oregon.gov/odf/aboutodf/Pages/grantsincentives.aspx>.



STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA: GOOD EARTH STATE PARK

Completed in 2014, South Dakota's first proposed Forest Legacy project preserves the largest intact forest within the Blood Run National Historic Landmark. The property is both historically and ecologically significant, and its conservation through the USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program led to the creation of the Good Earth State Park, a new destination for both the local community of Sioux Falls and international tourists.



Project protects **236 acres** and complements an **additional 536 acres** of protected lands, including the **12 acres** of the Spring Creek Tract II in 2016 and **1.2 acres** of the Vanderpan addition in 2017.

The National Park Service (NPS) designated the Blood Run National Historic Landmark (Blood Run NHL) as a nationally significant cultural heritage site in 1970. In the 1980s, the National Congress of American Indians passed a resolution supporting its preservation. Unfortunately, the property's landmark designation does not ensure protection, and Blood Run was consistently listed on the NPS's "Landmarks at Risk" report since 1985 due to a lack of funding. This risk was compounded by local population growth in Sioux Falls and the increasing



risk of conversion from intact forest and agricultural land to subdivision for residential dwellings.

The property was identified as the highest priority by the Governor for the President's America's Great Outdoors Initiative in 2011. Its acquisition and establishment as a state park complements nearly 536 acres of land already protected in South Dakota and Iowa within the Blood Run NHL. Consistent with the State Forest Action Plan's focus on the conservation of bottomland forests, the property is managed with an emphasis on reforestation of cropland to expand the forested area, restore native grasslands, and support biological diversity.

The unique combination of wooded wetlands along the Big Sioux River, 160 foot high river bluffs, upland and bottomland forests, native prairie grasslands, and surrounding rolling farmland create a rare island of natural habitat for neo-tropical migratory birds like wood thrush.



Recreation drives economic activity on the property, particularly through the creation of Good Earth State Park. On average, 50,000 visitors enjoy the park each year, and 2020 saw an increase of more than 10,000 visitors over the previous year. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, wildlife watchers spend nearly \$167 million a year in South Dakota.

According to over a century of academic and government research, Blood Run NHL is the largest documented site of Oneota culture. The property was in use from 1300 to 1750 A.D. as a ceremonial and trade center. A woodland-dependent culture, the Oneota were drawn by the area's forests which were home to food sources and building materials.



Species found on the property include the state-endangered lined snake, the silver-haired bat, which is a species of greatest conservation need as listed in the South Dakota Wildlife Action Plan, and the river otter.



AT-A-GLANCE



South Dakota's **first proposed Forest Legacy project**.



Preserves the **largest intact forest** within the Blood Run National Historic Landmark.



Project protects **1.6 miles** of frontage along the Big Sioux River and **50 acres** of floodplain.



On average, **50,000 visitors** enjoy the Good Earth State Park each year.



Acquisition of **236 acres** of Blood Run NHL led to the creation of Good Earth State Park.



Property now provides a critical link to **760 acres** of contiguous protected habitat.

Top L: Picture taken with drone of Good Earth State Park forest. (Photo: SD Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources); **Bottom L:** Trail through Good Earth State Park forest. (Photo: SD Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources); **Middle R:** The view of the Big Sioux River from an overlook deck. (Photo: SD Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources); **Middle R:** Blood Run project site. (Photo: Claire Harper, USFS)

For more information, visit

<https://danr.sd.gov/Conservation/Forestry/ForestLegacyProgram/default.aspx>.



STATE OF UTAH: GREEN CANYON

The Green Canyon Forest Legacy project lands in northern Utah have been owned by the same family since 1906. The current landowner has a strong conservation ethic and looked to the USDA Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program, in partnership with the State's Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands (FFSL), to ensure his property would be maintained to protect important environmental values and natural systems. The result is the preservation of an important local viewshed, protection of wildlife, and continued public access to recreation.

"My family and I are pleased that future generations will be able to work the ground, hunt, fish and enjoy the property as my family has for over 100 years. With all of the development pressure occurring in Cache Valley it is comforting to know that when valley residents look up towards Blacksmith Fork Canyon, they will not see our foothills dotted with new residential subdivisions."

— Jon White, landowner



Due to the difficult economic conditions of logging and ranching in Utah, the landowner was incentivized to sell the project lands for the development of sub-divisions, especially as the region becomes increasingly urbanized. However, he elected to continue his family's tradition of land stewardship by pursuing a conservation easement (CE) through the Forest Legacy Program.

Green Canyon was identified as the highest priority for land conservation in the 2010 Utah Statewide Forest Resource Assessment. Its protection complements adjacent lands, including the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest, Millville Wildlife Management Area, and Hardware Ranch Wildlife Management Area.

The environmental benefits of the Green Canyon project range from wildlife conservation to watershed protection. While no packs are yet established in northern Utah, wolves have been seen on the property. The last known grizzly bear in the state was last observed near the project lands, which are considered prime bear habitat and are located just 90 miles south of the Yellowstone grizzly bear situation II recovery zone. Green Canyon is also home to numerous osprey and bald and golden eagles. It provides critical winter range for mule deer, elk, and moose. Two local cities, Paradise and Hyrum City, rely on Green Canyon for water, the quality of which exceeds state standards.

The property provides habitat for several of Utah's Species of Greatest Conservation Need, including **Columbian sharp-tailed grouse** and **Bonneville cutthroat trout**.



Public access that is preserved through the Green Canyon CE includes fishing, boating, hiking, biking,

and camping along the Blacksmith Fork River. The Bonneville Shoreline Trail, which, when completed, will run from Idaho to central Utah along the shoreline of the ancient (now drained) Lake Bonneville, also crosses the property. For more than 130,000 residents of the Cache Valley, Green Canyon's preservation also preserves the scenic viewshed.



The project provides public access to 4.5 miles of the Blacksmith Fork River and the 280 mile Bonneville Shoreline Trail.

Since 1906, Green Canyon has been stewarded by the White family and supplied forest products, cattle, and sheep to Utah, southern Idaho, and western Wyoming. With a CE in place through the Forest Legacy Program, the property will continue to be carefully managed as forest land to provide forest and non-forest products as well as support local wildlife populations, preserve a picturesque viewshed, and provide continued access to recreation.



"The whole process was fantastic ... I really enjoyed the experience of working with the Division (FFSL) through the application and closing process. My goal was to keep the property undeveloped for winter habitat for deer and elk, and I believe we achieved that."

— Jon White, landowner

AT-A-GLANCE



Tract size **5,574 acres**.



Home to **osprey, bald and golden eagles**, and provides critical winter range for **mule deer, elk, and moose**.



Green Canyon Forest Legacy project lands have been owned by the same family since **1906**.



Two local cities, Paradise and Hyrum City, **rely on Green Canyon for water**.



Identified as the **highest priority** for land conservation in the 2010 Utah Statewide Forest Resource Assessment.



Property will continue to be carefully managed as forest land to **provide forest and non-forest products**.

Top L: Southwest corner of property overlooking aspen stands to the south. (Photo: Morgan Mendenhall, FFSL); **Bottom L:** Green Canyon property with Blacksmith Fork River in foreground. (Photo: Utah Division of FFSL); **Top R:** Green Canyon landowners planting trees. (Photo: Morgan Mendenhall, FFSL); **Middle R:** 1) Field of bluebells flowering in spring in Lopez Basin, 2) Top of Green Canyon on east edge of property with aspen leaves, and 3) Winter view of property from Blacksmith Fork Canyon. (Photo: Morgan Mendenhall, FFSL)

For more information, visit
<https://ffsl.utah.gov/forestry/private-landowner-forestry-assistance/forest-legacy/>.



STATE OF WASHINGTON: SOUTH PUGET SOUND COASTAL FOREST

In collaboration with the USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and The Trust for Public Land worked with landowner Green Diamond Resource Company to protect approximately 20,000 acres of private forest lands in Mason County, near Puget Sound. Without protection, this land would have been at risk of conversion to non-forest use due to population pressure from nearby metropolitan areas. Protected, this working forest supports the local economy as well as critical habitat.

“Mason County’s proximity to Puget Sound and Hood Canal makes it an attractive development opportunity,” explained David Walters, Vice-President of Acquisitions and Business Development at Green Diamond. “By removing development rights on Green Diamond’s land in this area, we ensure working forests will continue to be an important part of the economy in this region.”

The project provides benefits that reflect the priorities of stakeholders, including rural communities, conservation groups, and local tribes.



The South Puget Sound Coastal Forest project protects over **55 miles** of stream riparian habitat, including over 30 salmon-bearing miles, and over 1,500 acres of wetlands.

“The working forestland protected by this (conservation) easement supports the vital recreation, environmental and economic values that make south Puget Sound an attractive place to live, work and play,” said WA DNR Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz. “Collaborating with like-minded partners in forest conservation ensures that this



forest will continue to provide benefits to the public and the environment.”

Streams protected by the project empty into vulnerable commercial shellfish tidelands, including those in Oakland Bay, Hood Canal, and Case Inlet.

Forest conversion threatens water quality, which is essential to the local shellfish industry’s survival. Securing a conservation easement on the property safeguards downstream water quality for shellfish on 1,400 acres of tidelands in Oakland Bay for more than 20 shellfish companies and 2,000 recreational and tribal harvesters.

“This conservation easement is a critical step in helping to protect the water quality in the nearby inlets,” said Bill Taylor, President of Taylor Shellfish. “The easement will help to ensure that these inlets will continue to produce shellfish for tribal harvesters, recreational harvesters and shellfish farmers. The easement will not only benefit the environment in the long term but also the local economy.”

Healthy, productive waters for salmon and shellfish are important for the Squaxin Island Tribe and Skokomish Tribe ways of life.

The project supports the region’s forestry industry, which provides 8% of Mason County’s direct jobs



and 7.5% of its direct wages. The project lands support over 100 direct and indirect jobs worth over \$5 million in wages.

“Working forests are a major part of Mason County’s economy, and this project helps to ensure a healthy forest products industry here for many years to come,” said Blayde Fry, Vice President and General Manager at Green Diamond.

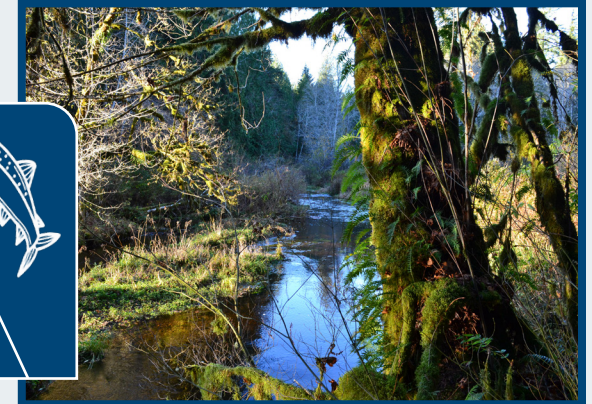
Green Diamond is donating over 21 miles of trail easements across the project’s footprint to provide increased public access to recreation in perpetuity.



Permanently secures public access for hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and other non-motorized outdoor activities.

The South Puget Sound Coastal Forest project demonstrates the utility of the Forest Legacy Program in supporting local economies that are not strictly dependent on forestry-related activities.

Preserves habitat for state species of concern and federally threatened and endangered species including **Puget Sound Chinook salmon** and **Puget Sound steelhead**.



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Supports over **100 jobs** worth over **\$5 million** in wages.



Helps safeguard water quality for shellfish on **1,400 acres** of tidelands for more than **20 companies & 2,000 harvesters**.



Supports the region’s forestry industry, which provides **8%** of Mason County’s direct jobs and **7.5%** of its direct wages.



Secured public access on **22,353 acres**.



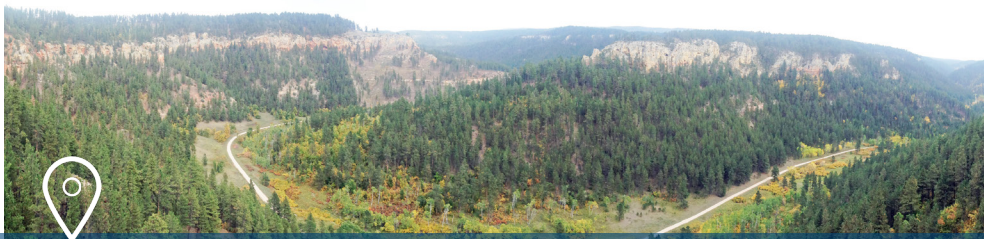
Green Diamond is donating over **21 miles** of trail easements.



Created a **10-mile** long conservation corridor connecting the project’s **20,000 acres** to over **24,000 acres** of state, local, and private lands.

Top L: Aerial photo of project site in the foreground with Mt. Rainier in the background. (Photo: Justin Reznick); **Middle L:** Area south-east of project site shows example of conversion of adjacent forests. (Photo: Justin Reznick); **Top R:** Taylor Shellfish harvests manila clams in Oakland Bay, downstream from the project site. (Photo: Darcy Kiefel); **Bottom R:** A salmon-bearing creek and adjacent riparian area that the project protects. (Photo: Eric Schallon)

For more information, visit <https://www.dnr.wa.gov/leaving-legacy-forests>.



STATE OF WYOMING: GRAND CANYON OF THE BLACK HILLS

The USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program (FLP) enabled the State of Wyoming to permanently protect 4,714 acres of scenic canyonlands on the western edge of the Black Hills National Forest in partnership with nonprofits, including the National Wild Turkey Federation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and The Nature Conservancy. The acquisition enhances public access to and management of 1.2 million acres of national forest, protects valuable water resources and supports habitat.

The Black Hills is a unique ecoregion where four biomes (Eastern Deciduous Forest, Western Coniferous Forest, Boreal Forest, and Northern Mixed Grass Prairie) converge. This convergence leads to a mix of plant and animal life not found elsewhere. With 480

foot cliff habitat intermixed with pine and riparian hardwood forest, the Grand Canyon of the Black Hills provides habitat to a wide array of wildlife, especially bats, songbirds, and raptors. In the arid west, water resources are particularly valuable, and the property is rich in hydrologic and riparian features.

An internationally renowned tourist destination, the Black Hills region faces intense pressure from residential buyers. The landowner had developed a subdivision master plan that would have fragmented the property, but upon seeing PBS's "The National Parks: America's Best Idea," he sought a conservation option. Had FLP not enabled the State of Wyoming to make the purchase, the property would have been sold on the open market. Residential development would have extended the wildland-urban interface 15.5 miles into a canyon where firefighting is difficult and expensive.



The Grand Canyon of the Black Hills provides habitat for the **threatened northern long-eared bat, black-backed woodpecker**, and 143 other species of greatest conservation need, including **northern goshawk, least weasel, and smooth green snake**.

The acquisition of the Grand Canyon of the Black Hills supports strategic initiatives of the State of Wyoming and partners, including nonprofits that have identified the property as a focus area for conservation. The State of Wyoming's "Connect People to Forests" initiative is supported through the protection of the property's public access values. The acquisition complements adjacent public lands by connecting 7,313 acres of an outlying parcel of

USDA Forest Service land to the main body of the Black Hills National Forest. This creates a protected landscape that extends 43 miles across both South Dakota and Wyoming, including a 22-mile shared boundary with the Black Hills National Forest.

The forest products industry is the largest employer in Crook County, accounting for 25% of employment. The largest employer is a timber mill with an annual output of 40 million board feet (MMBF). As part of the historic Moskee Ranch, the project lands have been managed for timber for nearly a century. Ensuring the project lands continue to be maintained as working forest is critical to the continued success of the local forest products industry.



Forest products are valued at **\$200 million** annually. The Black Hills account for **45%** of the statewide timber harvest in Wyoming.



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16.7 miles of perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral streams, 5 major springs, 2 reservoirs.



28 acres of riparian habitat, 8 acres of wetlands, 9 acres of montane ferns.



The property is **90% forested**. Ponderosa pine, the principal timber species, comprises **95%** of forest cover.



Employs **1,400 people** and provides **\$120 million** in salaries and contractor payments.



Travel and tourism provided **350 jobs** and generated **\$29.3 million** 2013.



Provides habitat for **63 birds, 30 mammals, 8 reptiles, 4 amphibians, & 38 plants** identified as Wyoming Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

Top L: Canyon provides striking views for visitors traveling along the county road. (Photo: Wyoming Game and Fish Department); **Bottom L:** Commanding view of the property and county road from the Natural Arch. (Photo: Toni Kahnke); **Middle R:** 480 foot limestone cliffs provide valuable habitat for bats and raptors. (Photo: Wyoming State Forestry Division)

For more information, visit

<https://wsfd.wyo.gov/forestry-assistance-programs/wyoming-forest-legacy-program>.



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