WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

NATURAL RESOURCES

ForestForward

STEPPING INTO SUSTAINABILITY BY CONSERVING OUR MOST VITAL FORESTS

"As our forests and landscapes continue to evolve, our methods and practices must evolve alongside them.

We are leveraging the best minds in forestry to take the biggest step forward for conservation in a generation."

DAVE UPTHEGROVE
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS

A BOLD STEP FORWARD FOR FOREST CONSERVATION. DNR is conserving 77,000 acres of structurally complex forests, including 10,300 acres of older forests on DNR land. The department will continue to meet our responsibilities to schools and local governments by innovating and diversifying the way we generate revenue from these lands. Leveraging DNR's globally recognized leadership in sustainable land management, we will pursue strategies other than traditional industrial harvests to ensure these carbon-dense, habitat-rich forests are available for future generations.

OUR CLIMATE, OUR HABITATS, OUR COMMUNITIES CAN'T WAIT FOR US TO ACT, AND NEITHER CAN FUTURE GENERATIONS. These forests are workhorses for capturing climate pollution and are critical for healthy, bio-diverse ecosystems. Ensuring they become the old growth of tomorrow while developing and implementing innovative management practices across these lands is the next step in the Agency's world-leading sustainable forest management practices. Guided by DNR's ecological expertise, we will put Washington State on a path to achieve desirable habitat outcomes faster while expanding and diversifying the sources of revenue for schools and local governments.

USING THE BEST AVAILABLE METHODOLOGY, a team of DNR foresters, data scientists, and forest ecologists developed an updated inventory of forest types across DNR lands. That model identified 106,000 acres of structurally complex and older forests. At Commissioner Upthegrove's direction, DNR staff used this data to identify 10,300 acres of older forests—all that remain on forest lands managed for timber—as part of the 77,000 acres of structurally complex forests to conserve. The remainder of those acres will be available for harvest to ensure we meet our responsibilities to schools and local governments during this transition to more innovative and diverse management strategies.

FORESTFORWARD STRATEGIES

Enter Carbon Markets

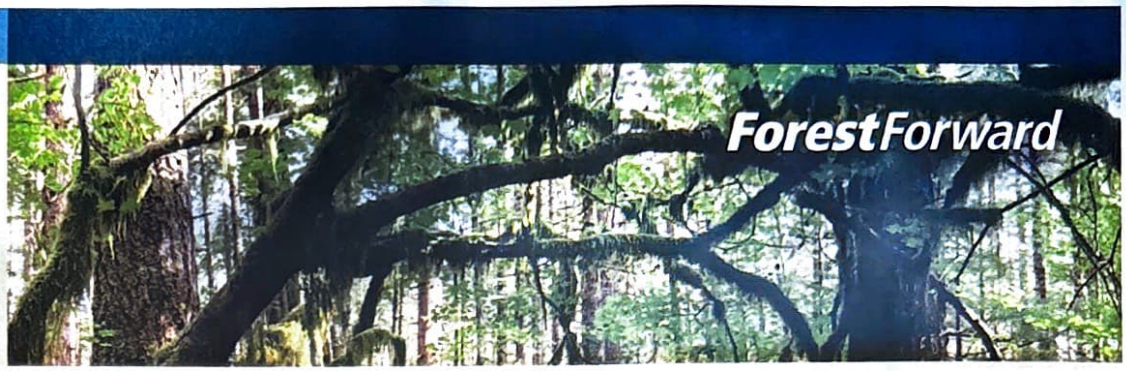
Pursue Additional Ecosystem Services

Promote Mass Timber Markets

Acquire Additional Forests

Maximize Return on Certified Forest Products

NATURAL RESOURCES

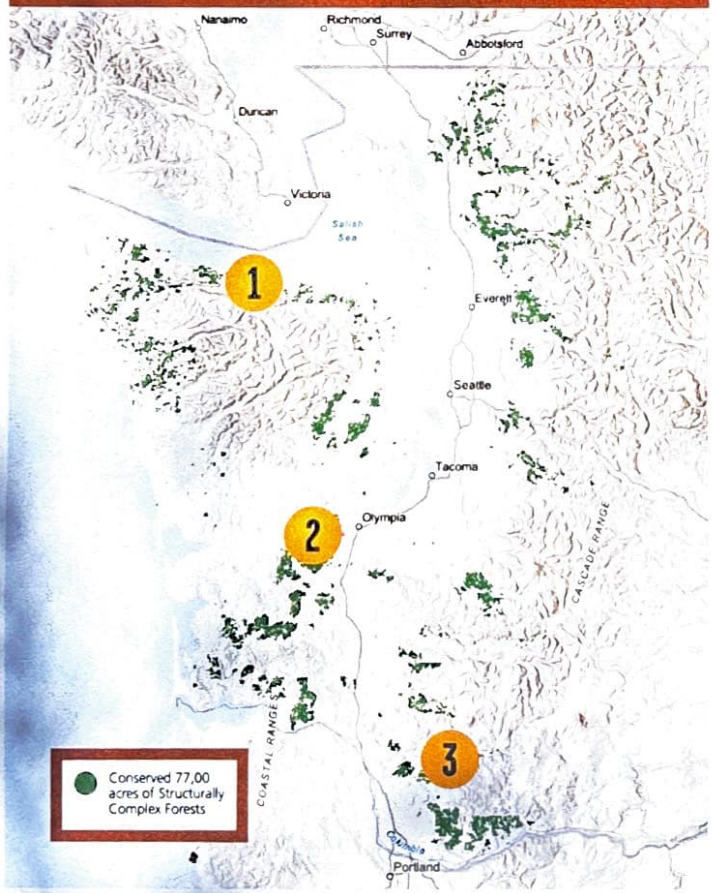


A NEW LOOK AT WASHINGTON'S OLDER FORESTS

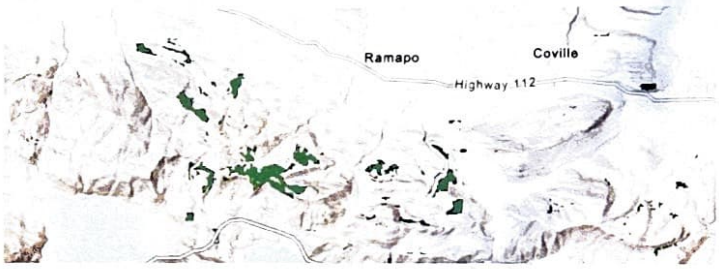
In early 2025, DNR's world-leading team of foresters and forest scientists developed and implemented a new tool at to inventory state-owned forests and identify the structurally complex forests. These forests, regenerated naturally across western Washington, are vital to sequestering carbon, supporting critical habitat, ensuring healthy ecosystem functions, and providing the biodiversity that is essential to the health of our state.

DNR scientists combined cutting edge technology with old-fashioned field viewings to identify these forests and develop tools to allow anyone to see where these forests are, and how they are being managed. This information ensures field staff will be able to apply consistency, transparency and alignment with policy frameworks to their management of state lands at the ground level.

STRUCTURALLY COMPLEX FOREST FINDER



1 OLYMPIC REGION



2 SOUTH PUGET SOUND REGION

3 PACIFIC CASCADE REGION

ONLINE TOOLS ALLOW ANYONE TO SEE FOREST DATA

In addition to the maps showing structurally complex forests, DNR scientists have also produced a datacube for public viewing. This tool allows anyone to see the forests scientists identified, how many are conserved through Commissioner Upthegrove's order, which county, region or habitat conservation plan (HCP) planning unit they are in, and which jurisdictions receive funding from them.

TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE VISIT: dnr.wa.gov/forestforward