

# Pathways to Successful Stewardship



Case Studies from the Lower 48  
Josephine County, Lakeview and White Mtn.

# Overview

- Common challenges
- Josephine County
- Lakeview Stewardship Unit
- White Mountain Stewardship Contract
- What's different?
- Recap of critical commonalities



# Common Challenges

## Key ecological challenges

- Forest structure altered due to management legacy
- Decline in ecosystem health
- Lack of ecosystem resilience to disturbance/perturbations
- Population decline among key species in the balance



# Common Challenges cont.

## Key socio-economic challenges

- Communities experiencing high rates of poverty
- Ecosystem-dependent economies
- Public lands based communities
- Human health and property at-risk
- Conflict
- Eroding capacity
- Infrastructure not matched to need

# Common Pathways to Success



## Key ecological threads

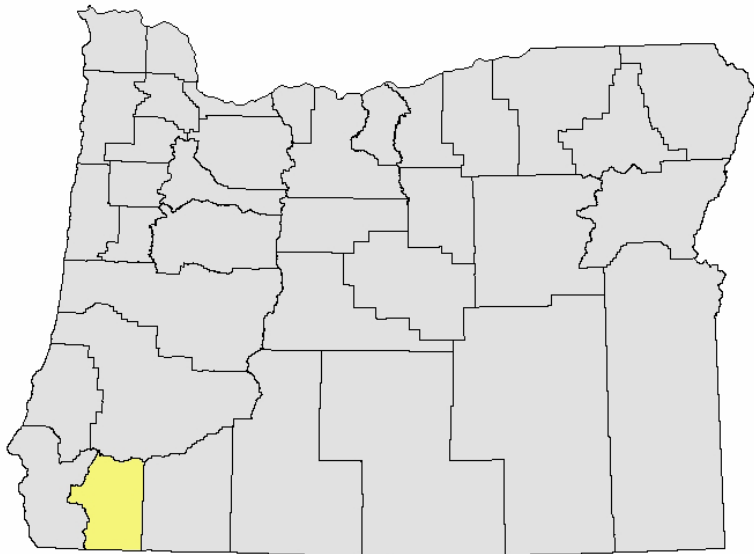
- Scientific justification for restoration
- Need to mechanically harvest small and/or young trees to achieve desired outcomes
- Prescribed treatments enhance both forest resilience and habitat conditions

# Common Pathways to Success cont.

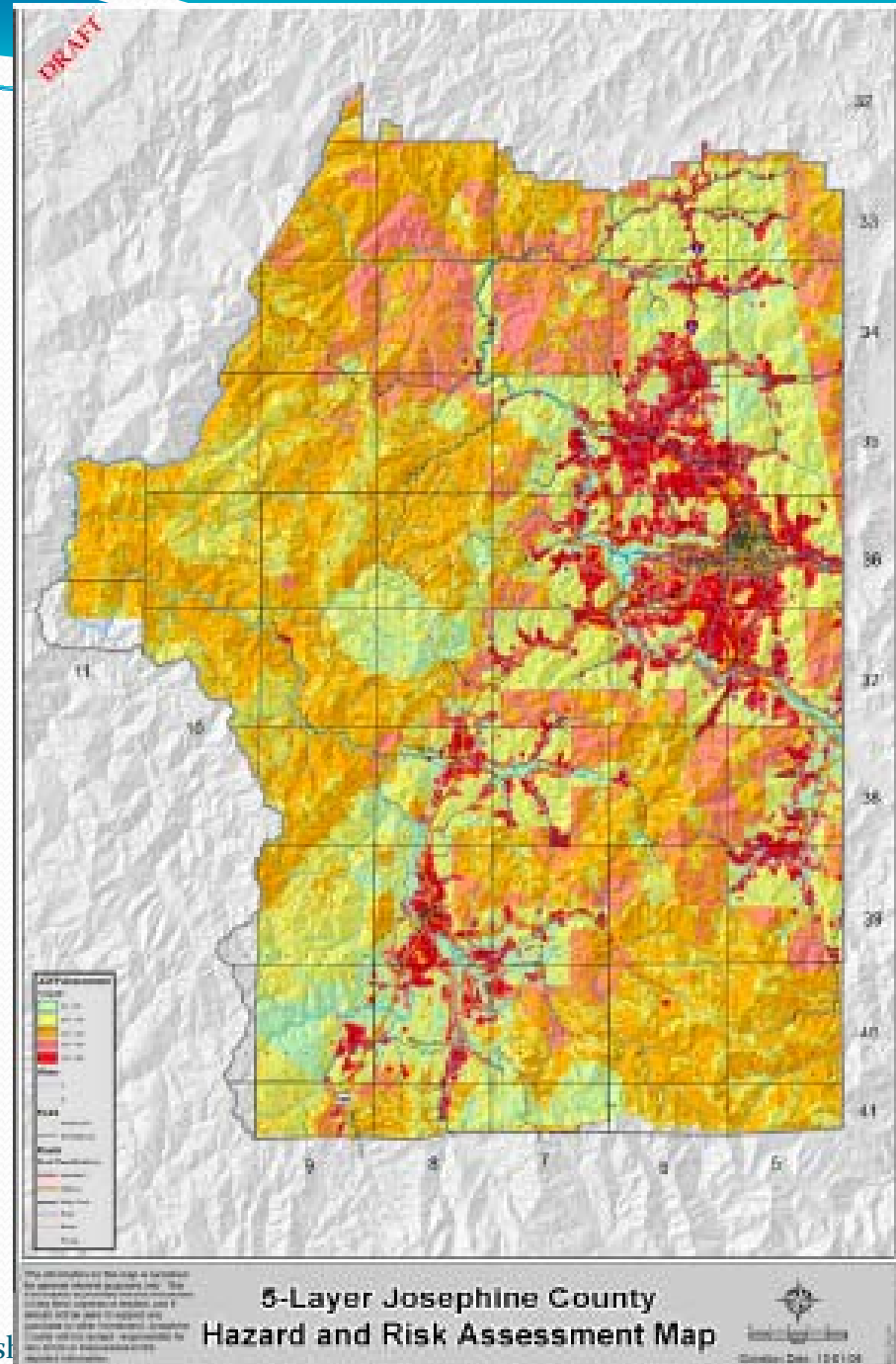
## Key Socio-economic threads

- Dedicated communities
- Strong and dedicated partners from every sector
- Zone of agreement
- Demonstrate success and learn in partnership
- Coalition garners high-level political and institutional support
- Capitalize on public policy and assistance programs
- Scale up while maintaining balance
- Consistent program-of-work
- Well-designed contracts
- Monitoring

# Josephine County



# Community Fire Plan





May 18, 2009

Advancing Stewardship on the Tongass

# Plan Goals

- Landscape treatment
- Coordinate defensible space and fuels reduction projects on public and private land
- Increase access to fuels reduction resources



Photo by Neil Benson, Josephine County Integrated Fire Plan



# Understanding the Workforce

- Need to know:
  - Capacity (interest, equipment, experience, limitations)
  - Contract preferences (size, length, \$)
  - Deal killers
- Preferences considered in contract
  - Contactors' interests represented



# Start small and scale up

- Meyers Camp--233 acres
  - Simple but went no bid
- Page Mtn.--650 acres
  - Narrow in scope but collaborative
- Butcherknife Slate--6000 acre
  - Broader in scope and collaborative
- Hope Mtn Stewardship Agreement
  - In place when Stimulus \$\$ showed up!

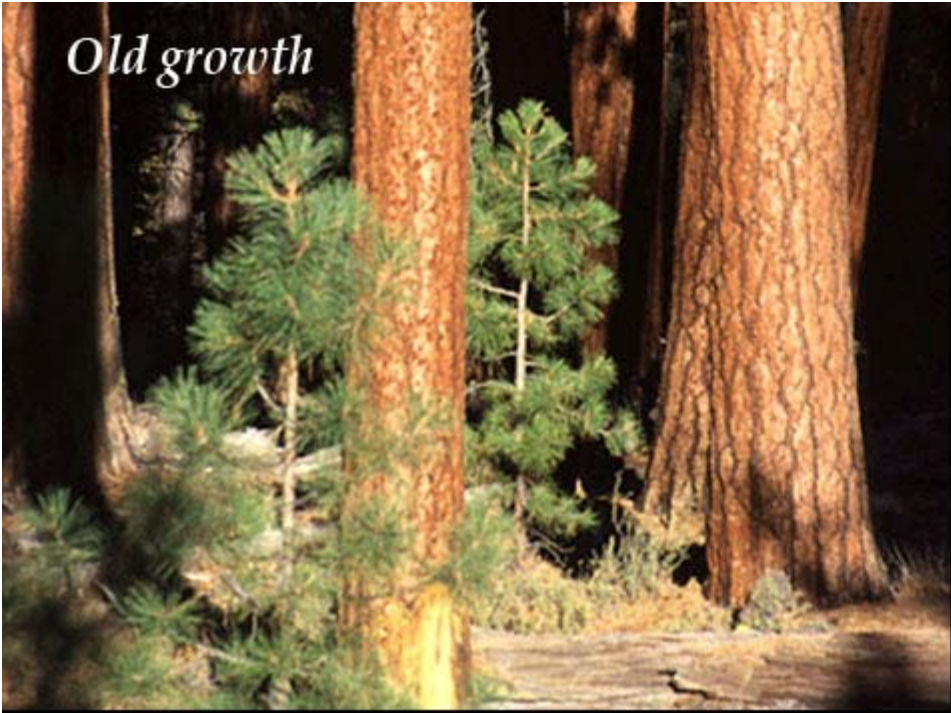
# Josephine County

- Strong forum for collaboration
- Still struggling small diameter removal
  - Strong interest in bio-brick manufacturing
- Partners working together outside of stewardship
  - Hope Mtn. Demonstration project
- Capturing lessons learned through monitoring



# Lakeview Federal Stewardship Unit





*Old growth*



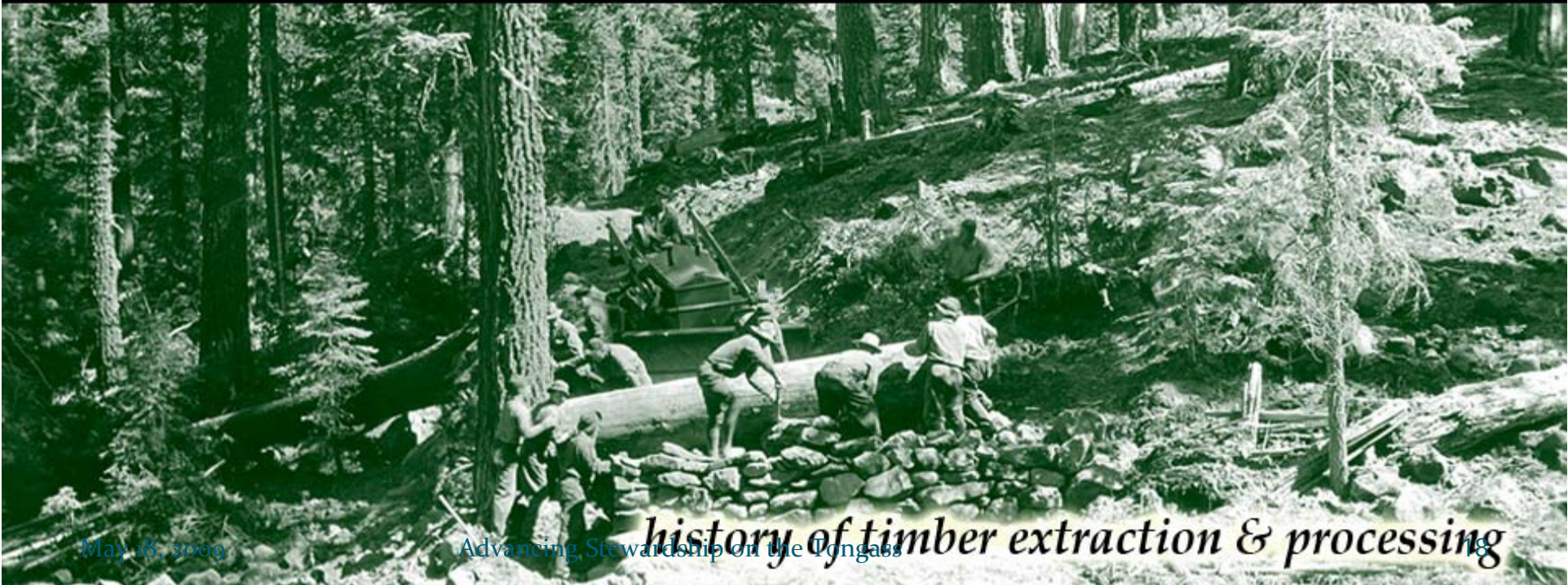
*Cattle grazing*



*Healthy riparian areas*



*Diversity of wildlife*



May 18, 2009

Advancing Stewardship on the Tongass

# Lakeview Federal Sustained Yield Unit

- Foster community stability by providing a stable supply of timber to local mills
- Local mills have right of first refusal on federal timber
- Paisley mill closes in 1996.



Paisley's Fremont Sawmill, located along Chewaucan River, is a major employer.

# Community Responds to Mill Closure

## Sustained Yield Unit Committee explores options...

- Collaboration with multiple interests
- Gain political support – local, state and federal
- Forest certification...
- Reauthorization of SYU as federal Stewardship Unit.



# New Focus Leads to New Avenues

- Forest management ability hindered without markets for restoration by-products
- Increased interest in hazardous fuels reduction and woody biomass – departure from historic approach to timber and fuel management
- Strong industry and environmental partners
- Sawmill expressing interest in small-diameter utilization
  - Needs a steady supply of small diameter material to retool



# Lakeview Stewardship Strategy

- Strategy accelerated rate of fuels reduction & restoration
  - From 3,000 acres to 8,000 acres annually
- Applied scientifically defensible and socially agreeable strategy to stands and landscape
- Committed to rigorous biophysical and social monitoring
- Identified a biomass facility as a promising and critical opportunity

# Initial Stewardship Project

- Repackaged timber sale
  - 8 mmbf with a value of \$750,000
  - Thinning, road closure, aspen release
  - Extract small diameter trees to the landing
- Theory was applied, demonstrated, and it worked



# Industry Invests

- Collins Companies Small Diameter Log Sawmill in Lakeview
- Memorandum of Understanding Signed
  - Minimum of 3,000 treatment acres per year inside and outside of the Lakeview Federal Stewardship Unit
  - Test ways of reducing the cost of business



# Sustained Yield Restoration Stewardship Project

- Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) Stewardship Contract, IRSC
- Multi-year contract, with a 10 year duration
- Single prime contractor awarded on best-value basis
- Applies only to Lakeview Federal Stewardship Unit
  - Prioritized Treatment of Watersheds
  - NEPA is not complete for all 10 years worth of work
- Scope of the Contract
  - Minimum orders of \$100,000 and \$25,000,000 maximum



# Lakeview Conclusions

- Committed partners created new opportunity
- Collaboration enabled landscape-scale approach
- Commitment to monitoring enhanced learning and built additional trust
- 10-year contract provided surety of supply for private investment
- Market for low-value material lowers harvesting costs and increases acres treated

# White Mountain Stewardship Contract



Map of Arizona showing the location of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests

# Community and Forest Health in Peril

- Forest shut down due to environmental concerns in early and mid 1990's
- Mill closures and loss of management capacity across the region
- Wildfire impacts on forest ecosystems and communities increasing over time



# Foundation of Collaboration

- A citizen-based Natural Resources Working Group, formed in the mid 1990's
- Completed Blue Ridge Demonstration Project in 1997 to demonstrate “zone of agreement” for treatments





# Conditions Ripe for Action

- Rodeo-Chedeski fire in 2002 burned over 450,000 acres across White Mountain region
- Destroyed 465 homes and lead to evacuation of 30k people
- Lead to public outcry, political action
- Enabling policy in the form of Stewardship Authorities and the Healthy Forest Restoration Act in 2003
- Community capacity in place due to history of shared learning and open collaboration

# The White Mountain Solution



- Use a 10 year stewardship contract to....
- Reduce wildfire danger in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)
- Conduct landscape-scale ecosystem restoration
- Reduce costs/acre
- Support local economies
- Encourage new industries with committed supply

# The White Mountain Stewardship Contract

- Performance-based Service Contract
  - Award range: \$19–\$91 million over 10 yrs.
- RFP heavily considered
  - Biomass utilization
  - Contribution to local employment
- Prescription based off ERI model
  - Blue Ridge project wrapped into contract
- Indef. Delivery Indef. Quantity (IDIQ)
- Min. 5,000 ac./yr (budgeted)
- Max. 25,000 ac./yr
- Multiple task orders can be issued each year



# Outcomes to-date

- Contract awarded to Future Forest, LLC – joint venture b/w contractor and pellet manufacturer – both have grown considerably
- Over 100,000 NEPA ready acres
- Over 20,000 acres treated to-date
- Costs are 30-50% lower than pre-contract
  - (avg. \$425/ac last year)
- Multiparty Monitoring Board established
  - \$35K/yr appropriated to support



# Outcomes Continued...

## Supporting Existing and Establishing New Local Industry...

- 3 Woody Biomass Utilization Grants awarded to local enterprises
- Small log mill added
- Pellet mill size increased, added in NM
- 3mw bioenergy plant on-line
- 20mw plant planned
- Molding mill reopened
- Local log home business supported with local supply
- Proposed OSB and flooring plants



# White Mountain Conclusions

1. New model – communities create the collaborative forum
2. Community capacity, wood utilization capacity, and agency organizational capacity had to be built – together these amount to “stewardship capacity”
3. Zone of agreement critical
4. Successful stewardship contracting is only one critical step on the path to achieving a broader vision of social, economic and ecological sustainability

# What's Different?

- While they have more in common than they have differences.... These elements are useful in considering tradeoffs
  - Lakeview – Collins Company invested in small-log mill without “guaranteed” supply – target 3000 acres/year with only \$100,000/yr guaranteed = \$33/acre. This has delayed construction of biomass-to-energy facility
  - White Mountain – Future Forest LLC. Is guaranteed \$2500 acres/year at a current average cost/acre of \$425 = \$1,062,500. While it has catalyzed significant investment, this has used up a considerable portion of the regions implementation budget

# Recap of Critical Commonalities

- Clear ecological and social need – defensible scientifically and politically
- Open and transparent collaboration with all relevant stakeholders present – early and often!
- Long-term commitment to growing zone of agreement
- Demonstration of concepts
- Agency, conservation, community and business champions
- Worked with existing contractors and businesses
- Commitment to developing reliable program of forest work and wood fiber supply
- Commitment to monitoring, shared-learning, and adaptation

# Now it your turn! Successful Stewardship Won't Happen Without You!



**Watershed Research & Training Center**  
Hayfork, CA

