

# Elliott State Forest Briefing



Oregon State  
University

# Elliott State Research Forest Proposal

**OSU has developed a proposal that is consistent with the State Land Board's vision for the future of the Elliott State Forest...**

- Public ownership and access
- Complete decoupling from the Common School Fund
- Continued habitat conservation planning
- A working forest for local and community benefit

## **Why is OSU Interested?**

We believe that research on the Elliott will inform conservation and management decisions into the future that will help protect endangered species, mitigate climate change, meet resource demand, and engage the public in science, recreation, and education that supports an informed democracy.

## How did we get here?

**The Elliott State Research Forest (ESRF) proposal was developed and refined through copious input from a diverse array of research scientists, stakeholders, and members of the public.**

Collaborative process included:

- Local community members (listening sessions held in 2019)
- Local tribal nations
- Stakeholders (recreation, timber, conservation, education)
- DSL Advisory Committee members
- Science Advisory Panel members
- OSU Exploratory Committee Members
- A variety of experts from inside and outside of the University

## An Elliott State Research Forest Serves all Oregonians

### Some outcomes of the research plan:

- Advances critical **climate action by storing carbon**. Will sequester 60,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions annually.
- Creates the **largest forest reserve** on the Oregon Coast at ~34,000 acres.
- **Increases acres of forest over 100 years old** by 50% by the year 2070.
- **Supports local economies** by providing ~17 MMBF of timber annually.

## An Elliott State Research Forest Serves all Oregonians

### More outcomes of the research plan:

- Protects **all fish bearing streams** and ~84% of all non-fish bearing streams.
- **Protects critical habitat** for endangered species.
- Allows continued **public access for recreation**.
- **Serves the school children of Oregon** by creating a dedicated landmark for the teaching of forest ecology and management.

***The only way to generate the knowledge needed for Oregon to thrive is through research.***

## Proposal Details - Guiding Principles

As part of the OSU proposal development process, and to meet Land Board's vision, the DSL ESRF Advisory Committee and OSU created guiding principles for:

- Forest Governance
- Conservation
- Recreation
- Educational Partnerships
- Local and Regional Economies
- Tribal Partnerships



Photo of the ESF from Scott Harris

## Education Opportunities at the ESRF

### General opportunities

- Leveraging and partnering with existing OSU programs
- Establish a link with the Marine Studies Initiative to engage in forest to ocean educational activities.
- Establish and host Traditional Ecological Knowledge education programs
- SWOCC-OSU joint position to strengthen instructional capacity to deliver SWOCC curricula
- Joint, summer intensive field camps for community college students

### K-12 opportunities

- Develop, host and lead field trips for K-12, community colleges, and universities
- Develop and host OSU STEM Academy summer camps
- Develop and host Environmental Leadership and youth forestry skills development courses
- Develop and promote K-12 educational opportunities with ONREP, OFRI, Outdoor School.

### Extended education opportunities

- Utilize the Elliott Forest as an outreach resource to educate the public and tourists
- Opportunities to engage in industry continuing and professional education.
- Partnering on adult learning / citizen science opportunities on the Elliott.

## Research Possibilities at the ESRF

**The landscape-level research design allows for numerous types of research including:**

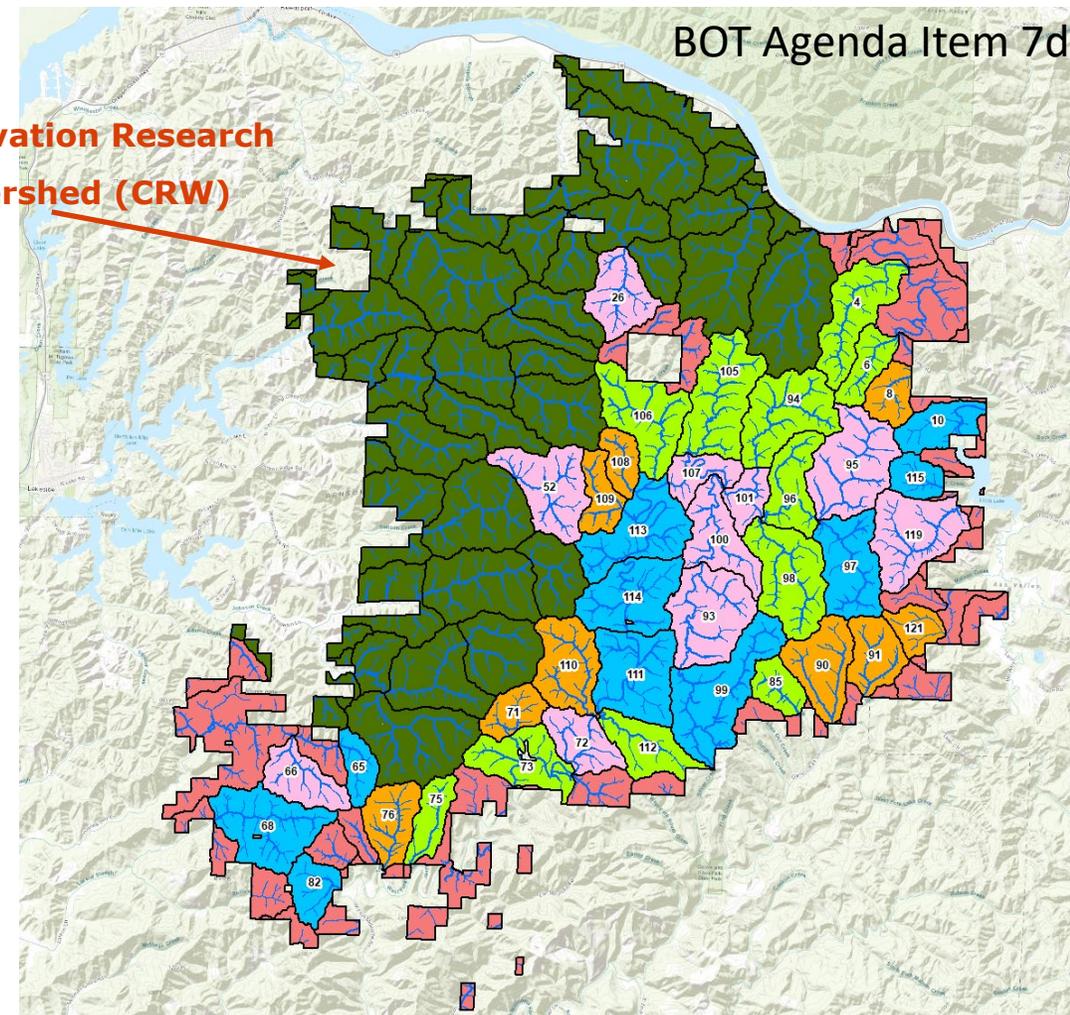
- Carbon & climate change
- Working forests and sustainable economic growth
- Biodiversity and at-risk species (Marbled Murrelet, Spotted Owl, Coho salmon)
- Riparian and aquatic ecosystems
- Water and air quality
- Disturbances such as landslides, windstorms and fires
- Socioeconomic and cultural aspects of forest management and forest policy
- Forest stand structure (early successional and old growth)

## Research Design

The Northwestern ~34,000 acres of the Elliott (CRW) will be put into a “reserve” status (shown in green).

There will be **no harvests** in this area following the **conservation-oriented** thinnings to former plantations (stands less than 65 years old).

Conservation Research  
Watershed (CRW)

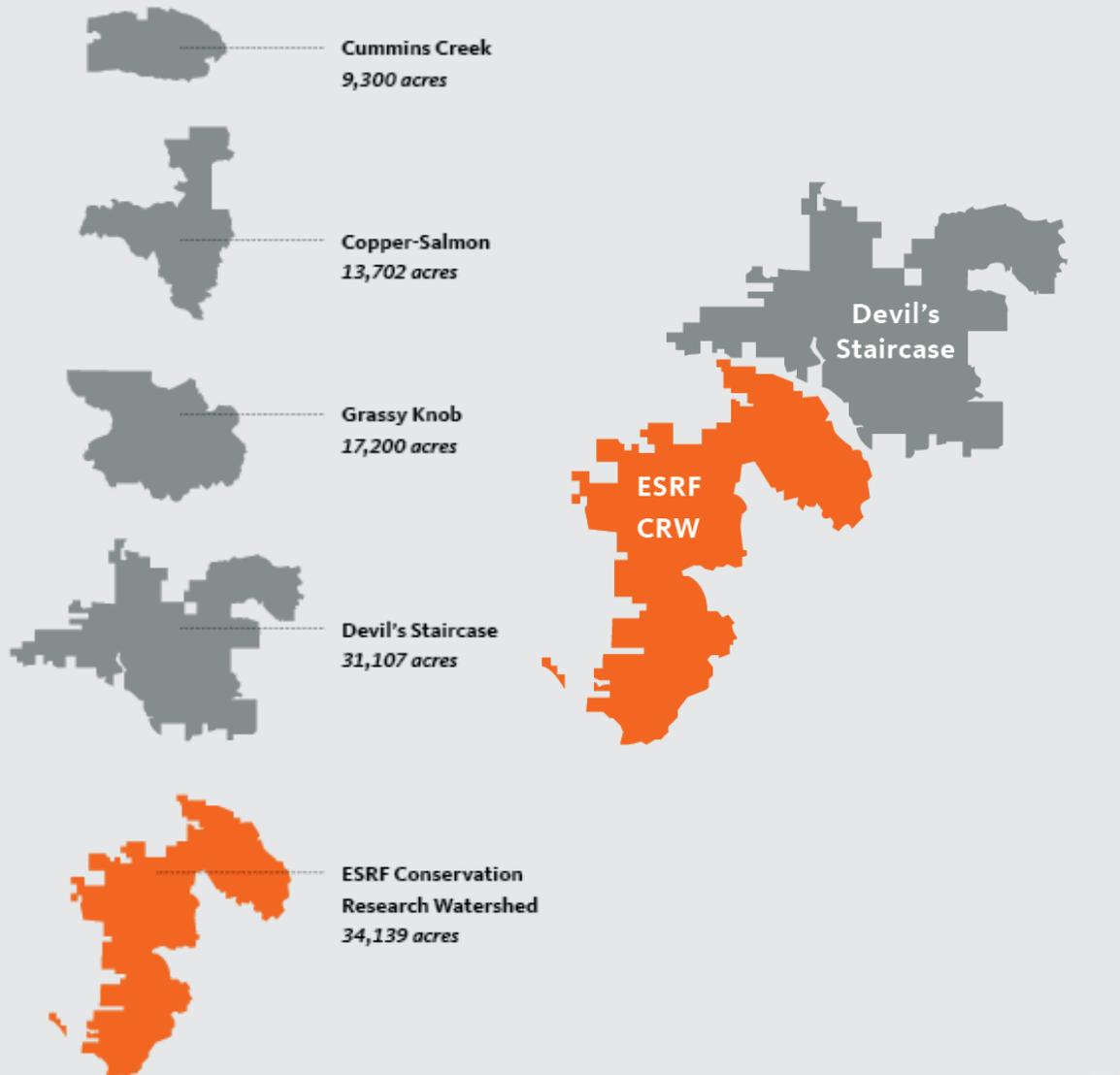


August 25 Watershed Assignments

## Creation of a New Reserve Network

**The ~34,000 acre CRW and the recently established Devil's Staircase Wilderness area are nearly adjacent and together, would create a ~66,000 acre reserve, the largest in the Oregon Coast Range.**

Left: Size of the four largest wilderness areas in the Oregon Coast as compared to the Conservation Research Watershed.



# Creating Older Forests

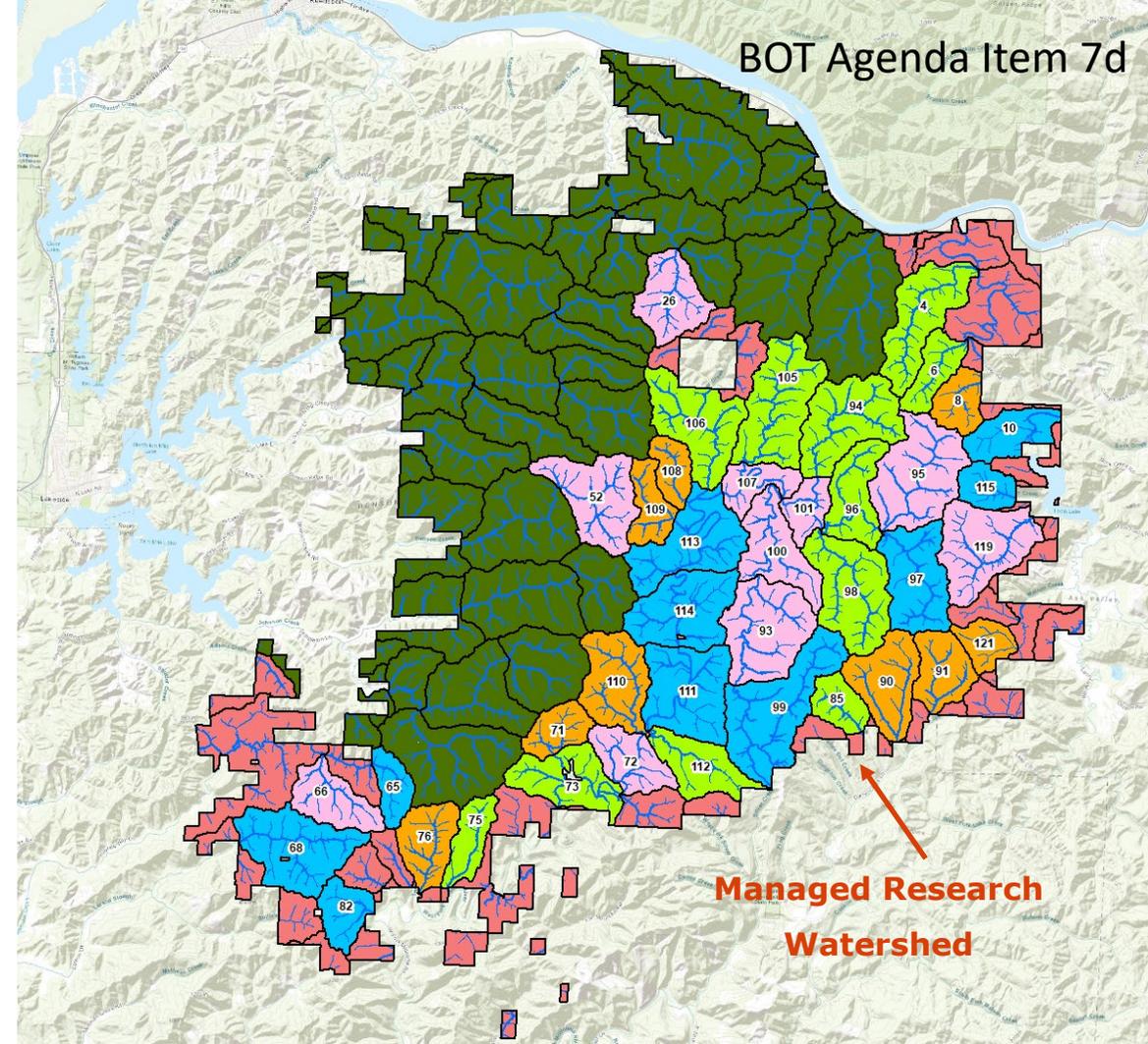
In 50 years, ~60,000 acres (73%) of the forest will be older than 100 years, an almost 50% increase in the number of older forests relative to today.



## Research Design

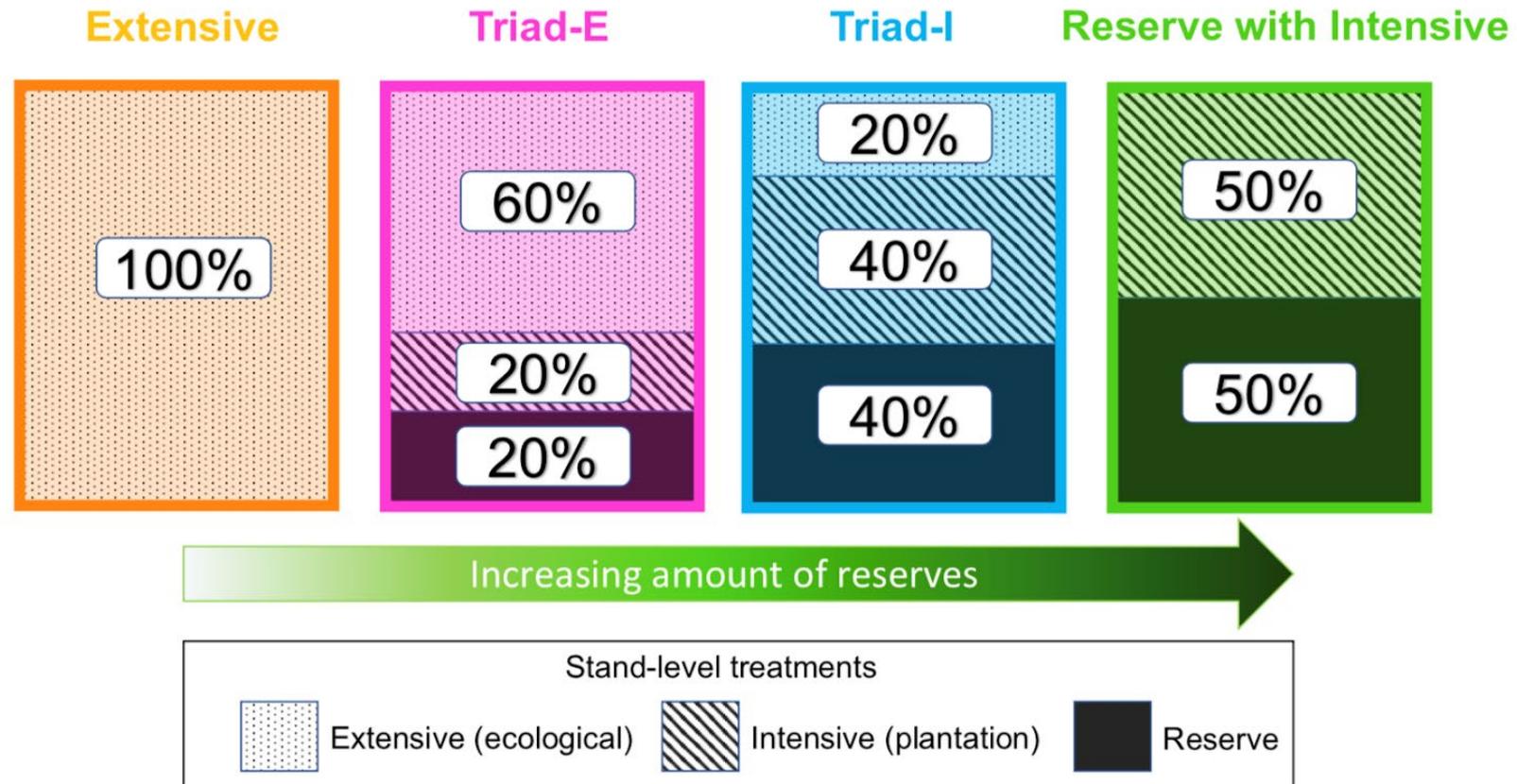
**The Southeastern ~45,000 acres of the ESRF (MRW) will be divided into sub watersheds.**

The proposed research design utilizes the size of the ESRF to integrate a spectrum of forest management practices across the landscape in varying proportions and arrangements.

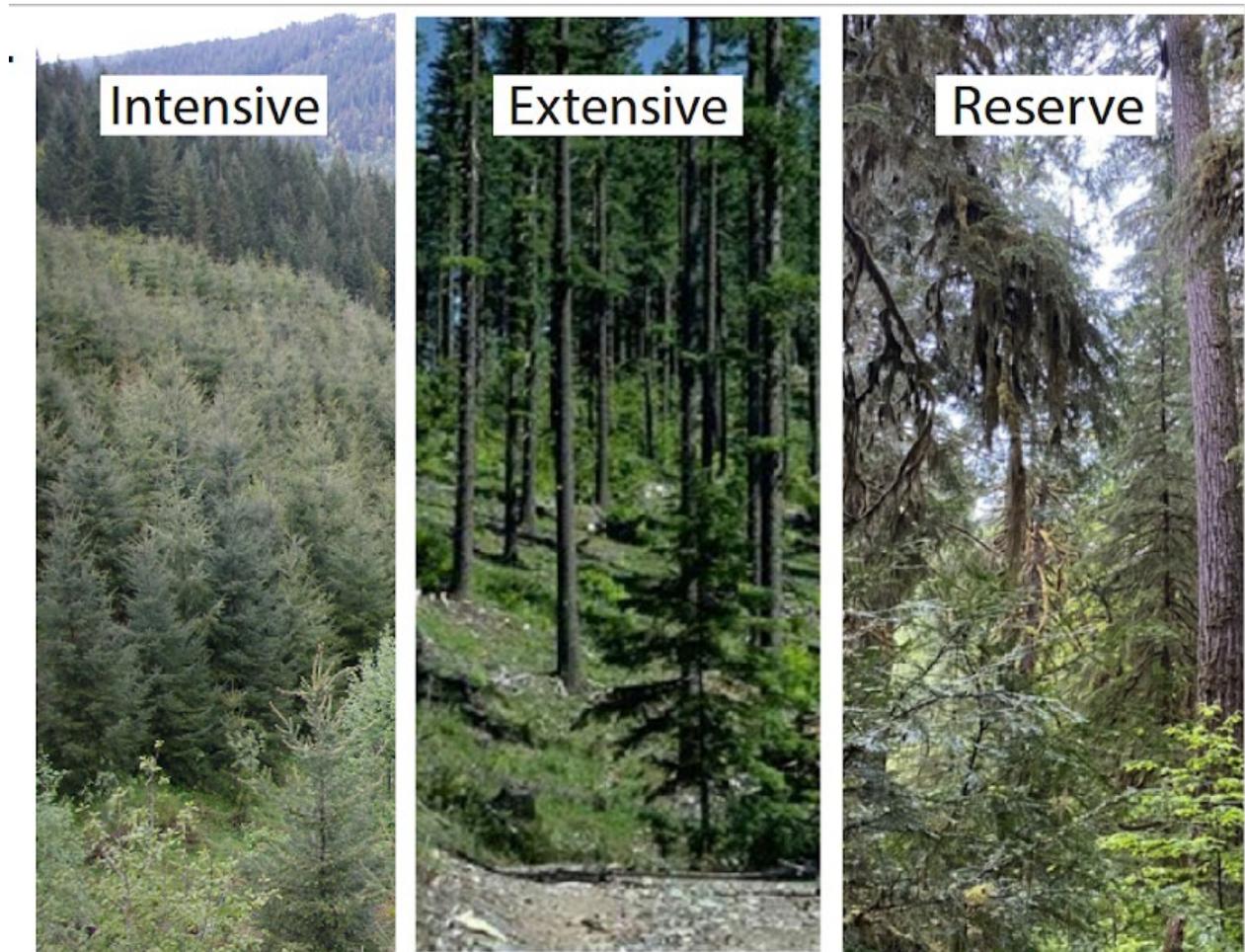


August 25 sub watershed allocation

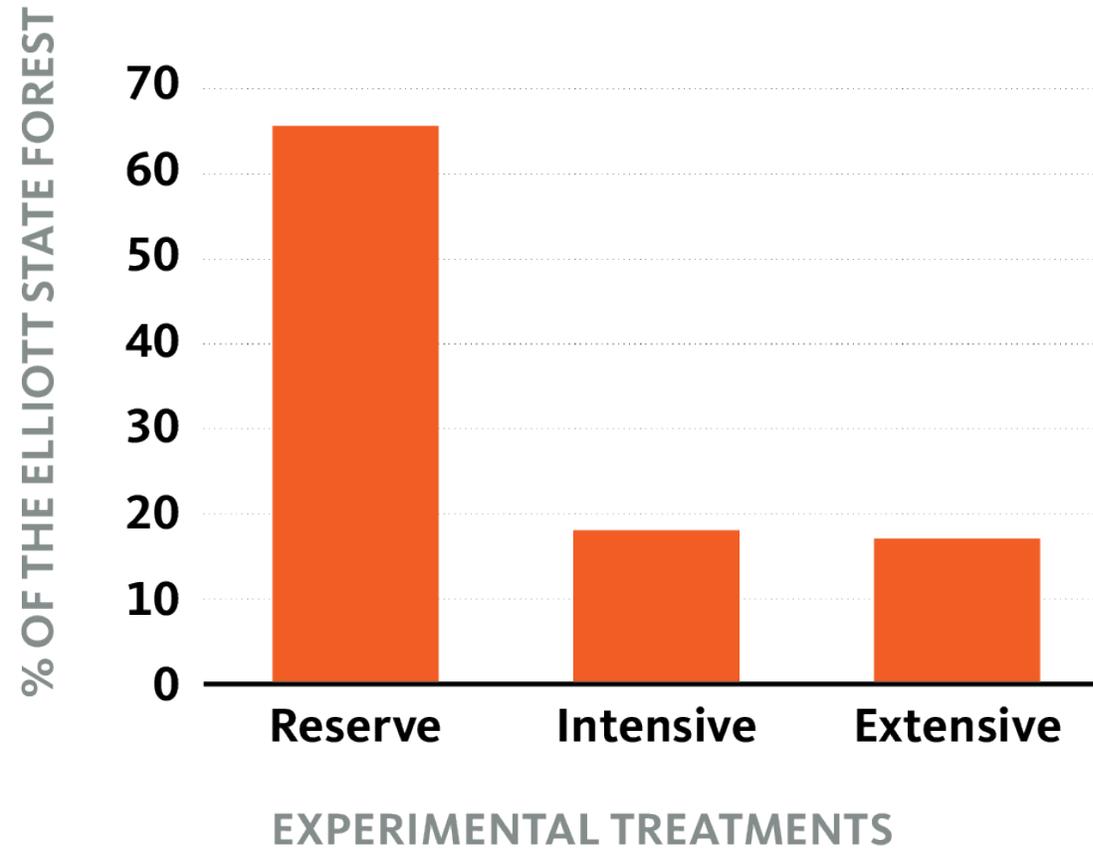
## Triad Landscape-level (Subwatershed) Treatments



# Stand Level Treatments



# Percentage of ESRF allocated to stand level treatments



## Annual Harvest Volume

The harvests conducted as a part of the research design will be relatively small.

**~1% or 735 acres\* of the ESRF will be harvested per year.**

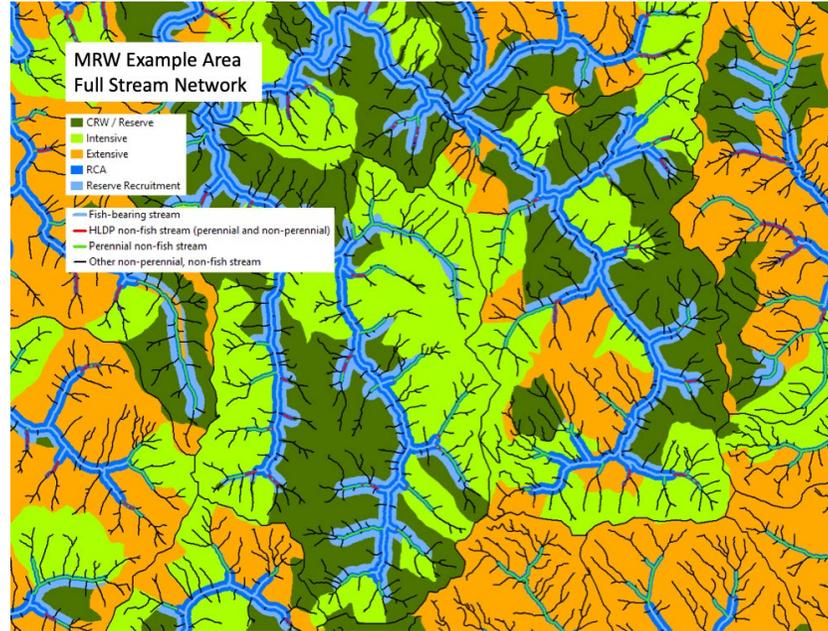
This includes conservation-oriented thinnings conducted in former plantations in the first 20 years. After thinnings are completed, less than 1% of the forest will be harvested annually as a part of the research design.

\*Annualized over a fifty-year period, assumed sustained or even flow harvest acreage

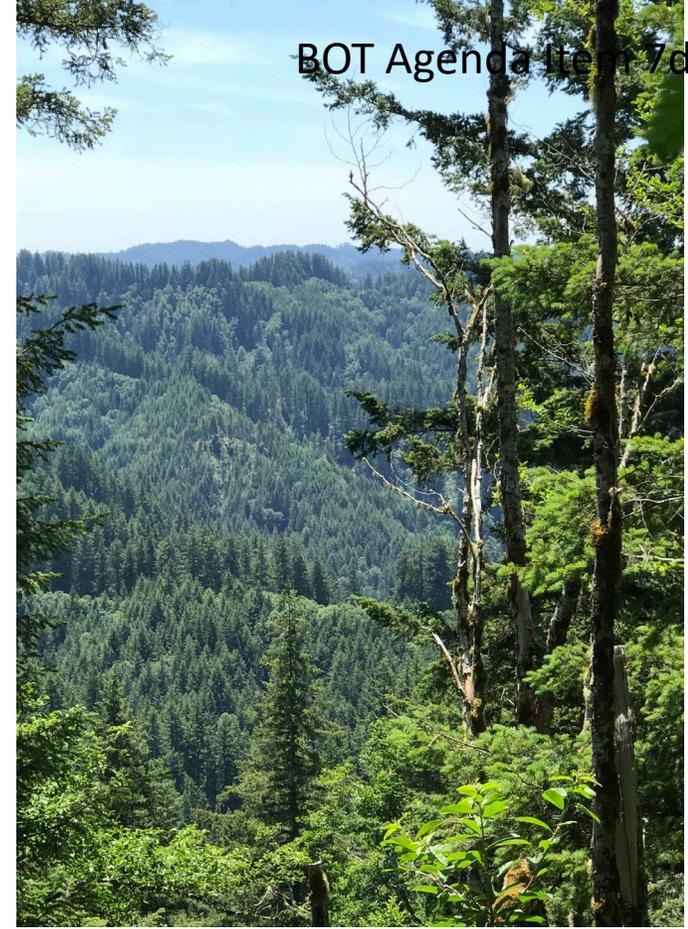
# Aquatic and Riparian Area Strategy



Ensuring high wood delivery potential



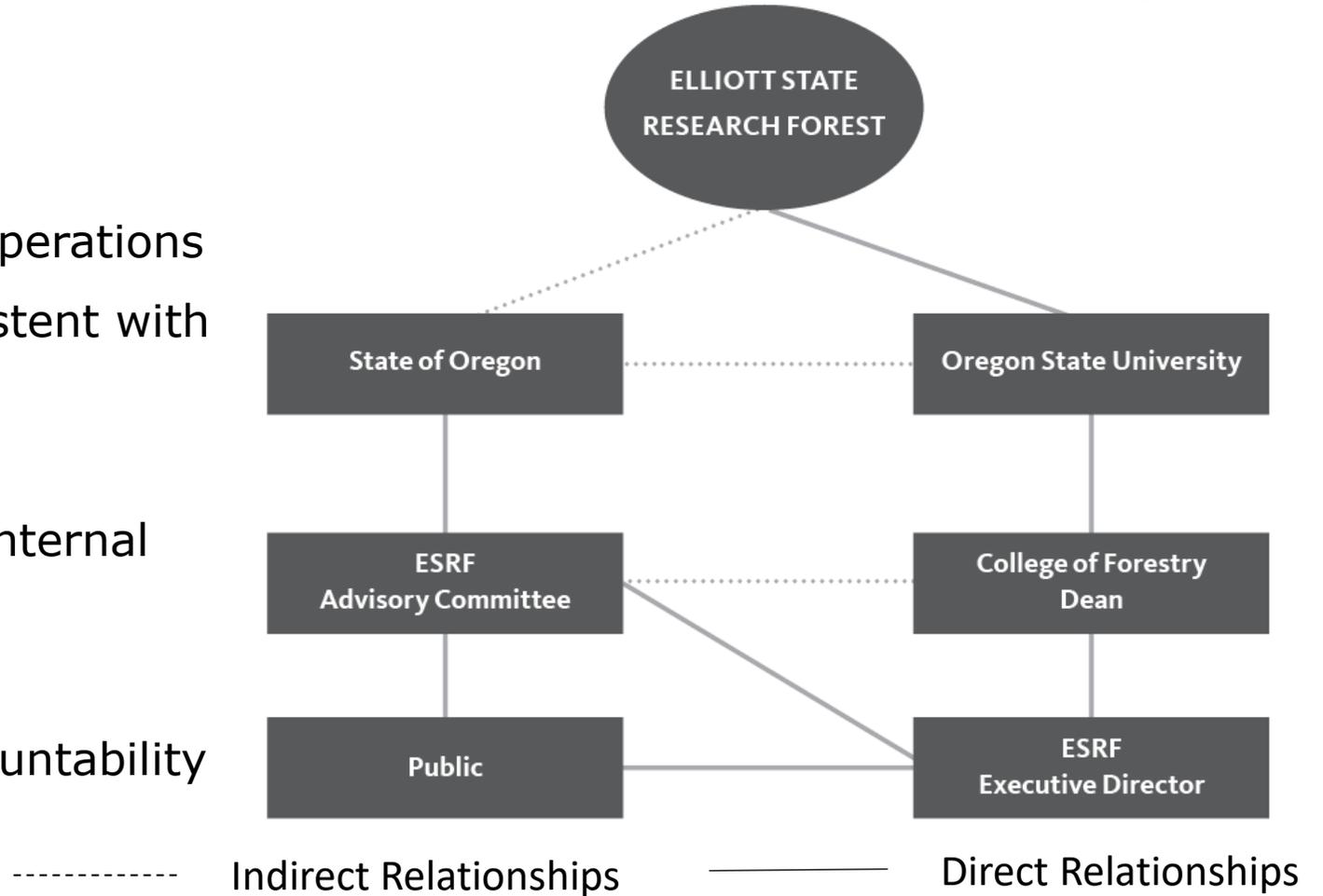
Riparian Conservation Areas 50-200'



Steep slopes/headwalls –  
84% streams partial -full retention

# Governance Structure

- OSU manages research and forest operations on a publicly accessible forest consistent with the research forest operations
- Advisory committees: stakeholder, internal research, external research
- Principles for transparency and accountability to the public



# Financial Overview

The aim is to be financially self-sufficient as a research forest from revenue generated through harvesting operations and other alternative sources.

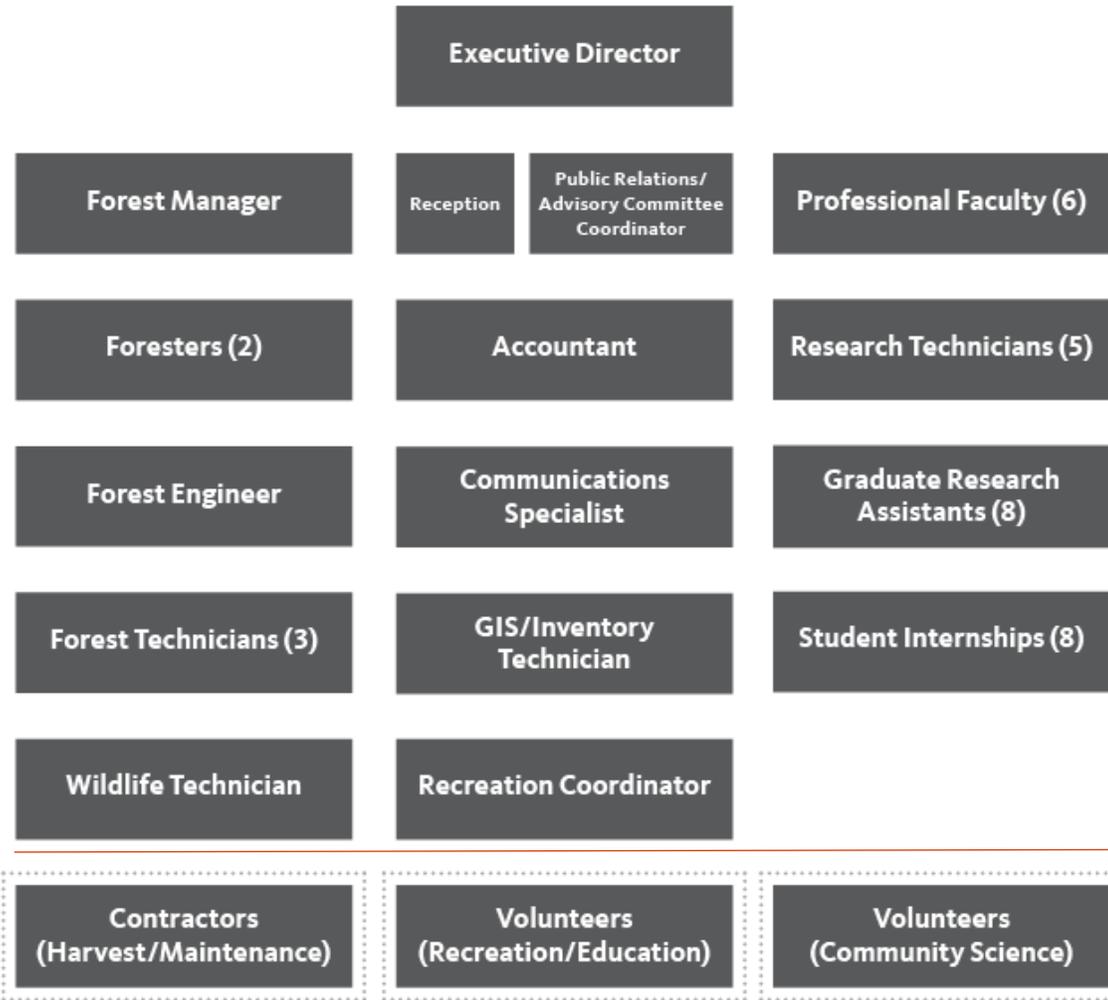
Note: this does not include start up costs (~\$35 M)

ESRF Financial Analysis - Annual	
Category	Estimate
<b>Total Harvest Revenue (MMBF Harvested)</b>	<b>\$5.7M (16.6 MMBF)</b>
<b>Forest Management and Operations Costs</b>	<b>-\$2.3M</b>
<b>Net Harvest Revenue</b>	<b>\$3.4M</b>
<b>Research Management and Operations Costs</b>	<b>-\$5.5M</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>-\$2.1M</b>

# Annual Harvest Volume

Table 2. Average Annual Harvest Volumes and Acreage				
Category	Harvests in Intensive	Harvests in Extensive	Harvests in Reserve*	Total
Average Annual Harvest (MMBF)	10.6	3.9	2.1	16.6
Range Over First 50-years (Annual MMBF)	1.4-17.2	0-10.7	0-6.6	N/A
Average Annual Harvest (Acres)	349	216	171	736
Range Over First 50-years (Annual Acres)	64-489	0-747	0-548	N/A

\*Restoration thinnings in reserve treatment areas are scheduled to be completed within the first 20 years.



**Personnel Funded by the Forest (>26.0 FTE)**

**Community Engagement**

## Key Considerations

- Opportunity for the state of Oregon & alignment with university's mission
- Land conveyance terms
- Financial sustainability
- Natural disturbances
- Legal challenges after transfer
- Carbon market participation

## Next Steps

- Agreement reached on an administrative review hearing process
- Assurance of adequate resources to cover the university's working capital needs, research start-up costs, and annual operating costs
- An investigation by OSU and DSL of the opportunity of entering the carbon credit market
- Development, with input from an ESRF Advisory Committee and adoption by OSU, of a forest management plan
- Collaboration by OSU and DSL on the finalization of the Habitat Conservation Plan
- Decoupling of the Elliott State Forest from the Common School Fund prior to transfer to the university as the ESRF