

LAKEVIEW STEWARDSHIP UNIT/SPRAGUE WATERSHED

OREGON

Northwest Fire Learning Network

1.7 million acres



A controlled burn reduces lodgepole encroachment into meadows at Sycan Marsh

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THE NORTHWEST FIRE LEARNING NETWORK expanded in 2007 to engage the Lakeview Stewardship Group, a 10-year-old collaborative that has been working to develop a biomass cogeneration plant in the Lakeview Stewardship Unit. This group found that the FLN process provides the action mapping tools as well as integrated modeling efforts that help the group test collaborative management goals through time. The Stewardship Unit is about 500,000 acres. Analysis at this scale provides a model that, when expanded to the Upper Klamath Basin watershed, will protect communities and restore forests and wildlife habitats over three million acres in 2010.

The Cascade Range boasts myriad forest systems from the upland areas of ponderosa pine, with mixes of true fir, Douglas-fir and lodgepole pine, to lower-elevation juniper and sagebrush with some juniper grasslands. Stream valleys and the broad, sediment-filled structural basins generally have extensive marshes. This vast system hosts threatened fish and newly discovered aquatic species, and is a vital nesting spot and migratory stopover for thousands of waterfowl and other bird species.

As in many other forests on the Cascades' east side, years of fire exclusion and problematic land uses have resulted in lodgepole pine becoming dominant over many acres of the forest. Such stands are more susceptible to drought stress and associated outbreaks of insects and disease, which increases the risk of large-scale wildfires. Working together, stakeholders have embarked on the first 10-year stewardship contract on Forest Service land in Oregon, and on planning that will ensure the long-term health of both the forests and the human communities in the region.

LANDSCAPE GOAL

The partnership envisions a sustainable forest ecosystem that, through a new understanding of the interrelationships between the people and the land, will ensure quality of life for present and future generations. Partners and local communities will work together to accelerate the restoration of fire-adapted ecosystems while protecting communities from wildfire.

DEMONSTRATION LANDSCAPE



Hairy woodpeckers nested in the area the first season after a controlled burn

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LANDSCAPE PARTNERS

Collins Company
Defenders of Wildlife
Fremont Sawmill
Klamath/Lake Forest Health Partnership
Klamath Tribes
Lake County High School
Lake County Resource Initiative
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Oregon Department of Forestry
Oregon Solutions
Private landowners
Sustainable Northwest
The Larch Company
The Nature Conservancy – Oregon
The Wilderness Society
USDA Forest Service – Fremont-Winema National Forests
USDA Forest Service – Pacific Northwest Research Station
Watershed Councils

LANDSCAPE ACCOMPLISHMENTS & OBJECTIVES

The landscape team's work on a spatially explicit implementation action map for Lakeview Federal Stewardship Unit began in 2008. In the latter part of the year, the Fremont-Winema National Forest, the Pacific Northwest Research Station and the Klamath Tribes all indicated that the analysis area should be expanded to encompass the Sprague Watershed / Sycan Marsh and areas of interest to the Klamath Tribes. The project is thus evolving into one with the potential for guiding management over a significant multi-jurisdictional geographic area.

A stand layer map for the whole forest was completed in 2008. This important GIS layer was created using eCognition; it was edited and proofed by Forest Service staff, and has support from them. This stand layer will be the foundation for summarizing analysis results and values across the landscape. This approach and foundation was chosen by the Lakeview group, and the product was jointly created by the Forest Service Region remote sensing shop, local Forest Service and the Conservancy.

Analysis of threats to wildlife focal species has been initiated; the key characteristic of a focal species is that its status and trend provide insights to the integrity of the larger ecological system to which it belongs. Forested wildlife species have been classified to unique forested communities using a system that includes vegetation structure and size as well as canopy closure. Biologists from the Regional Office, Forest and District level of the Forest Service as well as from the state of Oregon have worked with the Conservancy to project the forest restoration needed to sustain wildlife populations.

Partners from this landscape also attended VDDT modeling training in Portland in early 2008 with partners from three other Northwest FLN sites; the workshop covered applications of management scenario modeling specifically tailored to FLN landscapes.

A biophysical setting map was also completed by the Forest Service in early 2009; with this, the project is ready to develop a local Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) map and a restoration implementation map.

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