2022 Groundbreaking Research

Population Growth Analysis
Three takeaways:

1. The overall change in rural population mirrors the divergence in rural and urban economies seen across the U.S. Population loss or weak growth occurred across all Oregon rural areas.

2. Almost all average or strong rural population growth between 1990 and 2020 occurred near urban areas or in the Willamette Valley.

3. Three areas (circled red) with high percentages of private corporate forests saw population loss or weak population growth. Those areas are Clatsop-Columbia counties, the Philomath to Newport corridor, and Coos County.

Coos County forests are 62% privately owned. If any county should benefit from unrestricted logging it’s Coos County. Yet, Coos County had the worst performance for population growth of all western Oregon counties. The county actually lost population between 1990 and 2020.

One thing is clear from the CRA’s 1990 to 2020 population research: Corporate companies that dominate rural timber do little for local economies. The land’s wealth is colonized and sent to distant investors or local timber and milling elites. This is the economy built since 1980 and the rise to dominance in the U.S. of the neoliberal economic agenda.