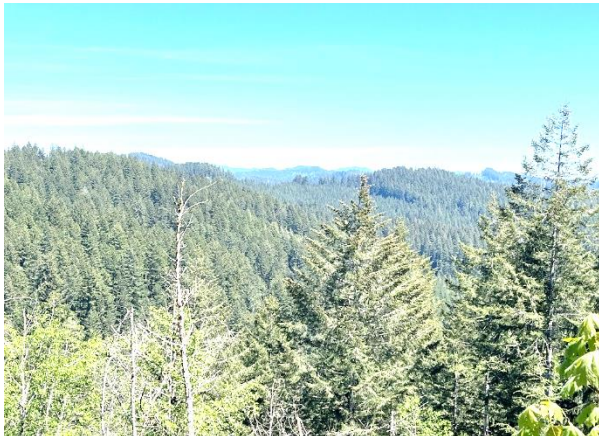


Siuslaw National Forest Ground-Truthing

The Forest Visit

Updated October 25, 2024

Information, Materials & Tools



Coast Range Association

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Project Goal

Documenting Siuslaw National Forest's mature and old growth forest as comments into the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) amendment process and, previously, Management Plan amendments for old-growth forest protection. The information gathered in this project and the people mobilized will be crucial in shaping future Siuslaw National Forest management as both plan amendment processes are implemented at the forest level.

Section I. Forest Visit Form & Instructions

The forest visit form records your forest visit information. The form is meant to be submitted into the upcoming NWFP amendment process. The Forest Service NWFP amendment processes will have a public comment webpage where you may type comments AND upload the forest visit form(s). The form is meant to be saved as a pdf file and uploaded to the Forest Service comment page.



We ask that you send copies of all your forms to the Coast Range Association. Please send to willow@coastrange.org

Sample Completed Form

Siuslaw National Forest Documentation Form

Forest Stop Name: Jones-FS 2300-1

Date of visit: 10-1-2024

Use any name you wish (i.e. your first or last name), followed by the road number. Put FS before the road number. Multiple stops on the same road, road number followed by 1, 2, 3, etc.

Name Example: Jones-FS 2300-1

Latitude and longitude of where you stopped:

GPS DM or DMs location. **Latitude:** 44°34'44"

Longitude: 123°16'58"

The above location example is for the First Alternative Co-op, Corvallis north store. Make sure **Location is turned on** in your I-Phone or Android.

Compass Direction of forest stand to visit from road (Check One)

N NE E SE S X SW W NW

Elevation: 425 ft.

I-Phone compass and the recommended I-Phone GPS app, *GPS Tracks*, all provide the altitude of your location.

Road Number from official Siuslaw Road Map: FS-2300

Two Location Questions:

What are the closest main highway(s)?

An example might be Yachats River Road & Hwy 101

What is the closest town? Yachats

Choose a typical tall canopy tree to measure. See graphic below.

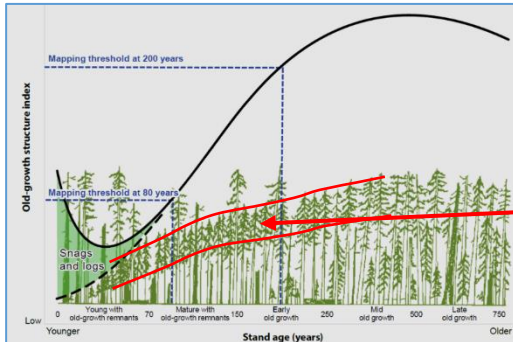
Measured Tree Circumference in inches: 155 = Diameter in inches: 49 dbh

Inches circumference divided by 3.141 = diameter in inches.

For example, if the tree is 182 inches around, it is a hair less than 58 inches in diameter.

The measured tree is a (check one) Doug fir Western Hemlock Other

Attention: A group of similar height trees will make up the tall trees in the stand. This is the dominant canopy. Measure a **typical** or **average** tree of those tall trees.

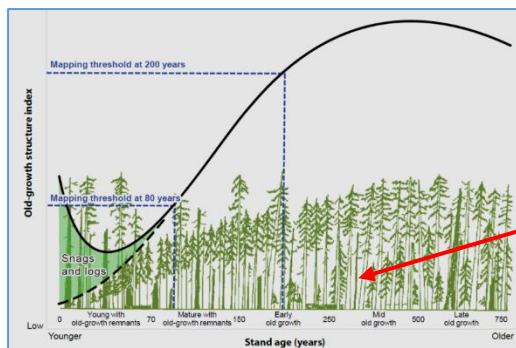


The dominant canopy of tall trees

Typical tall tree species-check one. Doug fir: Western Hemlock:
Don't know:

Place an X next to the name of all tree species present in the stand. Doug fir:
Hemlock: Cedar: Sitka Spruce: Alder: Big Leaf Maple:

Is a **shade tolerant understory** of Hemlock or Cedar present? Yes: No:



Shade tolerant understory
Usually hemlock and/or cedar

Attention - Keeping Track of the right form to the right photos.

Suggestion 1: Write the name of your forest stop on a piece of paper and hold it in the forest's view when taking the photo.

Insert Stand Photo. Attention: Your smart phone will often take a picture that is 2,000 by 3,000 pixels. If possible, reduce the pixel size to 800 x 600 range **before** placing it in the form document. If you use the Microsoft operating system, **Paint** is the app to use for changing a picture's pixel size.

Stand Photo Name is the
Forest Stop Name: Jones-FS 2300-1



Photo of Measured Tree:
Jones-FS 2300-1



Join a Siuslaw Action Group

Summary of Action Group Purposes

1. **Ground Truthing** the Siuslaw National Forest's (SNF) remaining mature and old growth forest and forest conditions.
2. **Educate** and alert your local community about the (1) Plan amendment processes, (2) Siuslaw National Forest management issues and (3) the location and benefits of local mature and old growth forest.
3. **Expand** the circle of people aware of the Siuslaw's mature and old growth forest and involve them in the plan amendment process.
4. **Celebrate** your community's Siuslaw native forest for its majestic beauty and wonder.

Sign up for an Action Group Here:

<https://coastrange.org/actnow/>

Ground Truth the Siuslaw National Forest's (SNF) remaining mature and old growth forest?

We have asked people across western Oregon to self-organize and ground truth native forest in the Siuslaw National Forest. The materials and guidance provided by the Coast Range Association are sufficient for a fun and productive forest visit. We do not expect people to bushwack through the forest. Instead, we ask you to select forest sites near the Forest Service Road system. Generally, that means stopping at a natural stand where the trees are 30 inches in diameter or greater.

Ground truthing involves documenting your location, taking a few photos, measuring a representative tree and filling in the CRA's forest visit form. We hope to have a large number of stands identified by citizens to validate and/or correct the agency's satellite forest data. Our goal is to then have people submit their forest visit form(s) to the Forest Service's Northwest Forest Plan amendment comment portal.

Summary of Project Actions

1. Acquire the materials described in this document and self-organize a forest visit.
2. Let us know you intend to do a forest visit or have accomplished a forest visit.
[Use this link](#)
3. Carefully read the instructions in this document to prepare for a forest visit. Use the forest visit checklist on the next page.
4. Visit your selected area and document as many forest stands as time allows. It is easy to visit three to five forest stands in a four-hour visit.
5. If you have questions, write CRA forest visit organizer Willow willow@coastrange.org
Put **Forest Visit Question** in the email's subject line.
6. Submit your site visit materials and comments to the Forest Service's **public comment portal** for the Northwest Forest Plan amendment
7. Send copies of all your forest visit forms to willow@coastrange.org

FOREST VISIT CHECKLIST

1. Note - The Coast Range Association (CRA) has a webpage for letting staff know you intend or have gone on a forest documentation visit.
<https://coastrange.dm.networkforgood.com/forms/forest-visit-notification>
2. Go to the CRA webpage <https://coastrange.org/coast-range-association/siuslaw-action/support-materials/>
3. Download the **Forest Visit Form** in the format that works for you. Microsoft Word, Apple Pages or a text document.
4. Read this document carefully. Make sure to read the Forest Safety section.
5. Download & study the appropriate (North, Central or South)Forest Service Road Map.
6. Study road map and plan your route.
FYI: It's always good to have a full Siuslaw road map with you as well; available at FS ranger stations.
8. Turn on LOCATIONS in phone settings for camera, GPS App, & compass.
9. Double check your equipment: cloth measuring tape, etc.
10. Drive to your target Forest Service road and area.
11. Stop at a forest stand of your choice and begin the process.

You may download blank forest visit forms as a Microsoft Word document, an Apple Pages document or a text document at the CRA website.

[The blank forms are here](#)

If you use a paper copy during the forest visit, you will need to fill in a copy at home on your computer so you can upload the document to the Forest Service's comment portal/website.

Tools, Maps and Files Described

1-**Camera** (A good cell phone camera is sufficient)

2-Flexible cloth **tape measure** or use the rope method

KSEIBI Fiberglass Tape Measure - 66ft length for about \$15.

Many hardware stores have a 100 ft cloth tape measure in the \$25 range.

3-**GPS** on your cell phone

If you have a relatively recent I-Phone, the Compass app tells you the latitude and longitude of your location.

For more options if you own an **I-Phone**, we recommend **GPS Tracks**. [Here's the link](#)

GPS Tracks provides GPS location, compass direction and elevation in one view. The GPS location is given in one of five measures (Dec, DM, DMs, MGRS, UTM). **Use the DM or DMS measure** for the site visit form.

If you own an **Android phone** here are two suggestions:

Polaris GPS Navigation. While the app is free, ads and access to your phone's data is the price paid. [Here's the link](#)

Back Country Navigator GPS PRO (\$15)

<https://www.backcountrynavigator.com/>

Getting around the Siuslaw National Forest

Siuslaw Forest Roads

All Forest Service roads are numbered by two or more digits. Main roads are generally numbered with two digits i.e. the 58 road. Roads that spur off a main road will likely have an additional two or more digits i.e. 5870. Some roads will have six or more numbers.

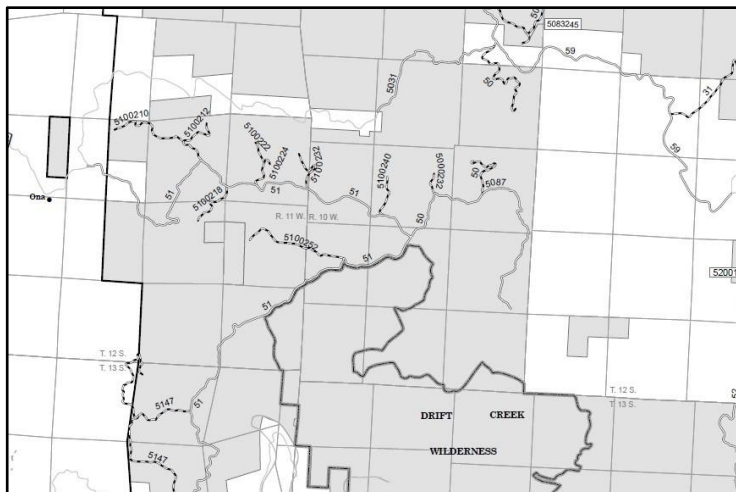
While all Forest Service roads have a number, many roads in the forest may not be marked. It's a good idea to carefully plan your route. Note the general distance between road junctions and whether the upcoming road will be to your right or left.

Forest Service roads are divided between roads usable by higher riding vehicles and roads recommended only for very high-riding vehicles (the clearance between the bottom of the vehicle and the ground). **Avoid doing your forest visit in a low riding vehicle such as a typical sedan passenger car.**

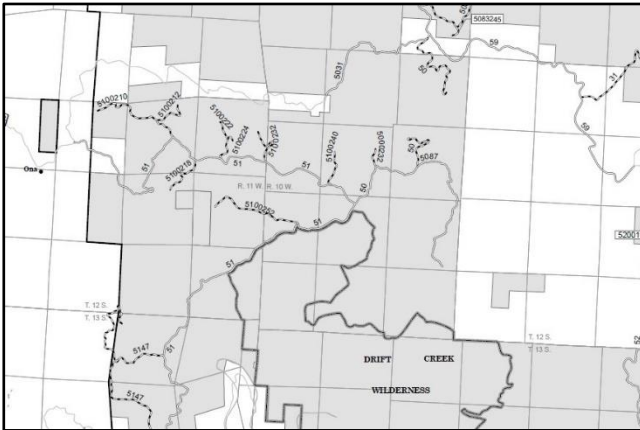
Forest Service roads may be closed or not properly maintained or overgrown with vegetation. According to the Forest Service, the roads indicated on the three official Siuslaw road maps are usable by appropriate vehicles. Some usable roads may be behind closed gates or temporarily blocked. Such roads are not closed to people hiking in to visit the forest.

Carefully read the information on the Forest Service Road Map. Check the Siuslaw National Forest website for current road closures and more here:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/siuslaw/alerts-notice>



Select a Forest Area to Visit



Select a forest area to visit. This should be a relatively small area such as Forest Service land in the Beaver Creek watershed (map to the left) or Tillamook County east of Hebo/Beaver.

Download a Road Map

The Forest Service has three (North, Central & South) detailed road maps for the Siuslaw National Forest. The maps identify every usable Forest Service road by its official ID number. The map is a downloadable pdf file from the CRA website.

Download the North road map here:

[Link to North Siuslaw Map](#)

Download the Central road map here:

[Link to Central Siuslaw Map](#)

Download the South road map here:

[Link to South Siuslaw Map](#)

Here are some forest stand photos we took with an I-phone:



Beamer Creek forest



Beamer Creek forest



Forest area off of Road 58

A tip on measuring a tree's circumference

Using a tape, measure the circumference of the typical tree at breast height. An alternative to a flexible tape is a length of rope wrapped around the tree. Mark where the rope meets itself and then measure the rope length using a regular construction tape measure. Siuslaw NF dominant Douglas fir trees are generally in the 30 to 50 inch diameter range. When you have the inches around the tree, divide the number by 3.14 to get the tree's diameter.



Safety in the Forest

If you are not familiar with traveling within Forest Service land it is good idea to read the agency's recommendations. Here's a Forest Service webpage with many recommendations. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/visit/know-you-go>

Here is the Siuslaw National Forest's main webpage: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/siuslaw/>

The Siuslaw has a page of alerts and notices here:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/siuslaw/alerts-notice>

Many areas of the Siuslaw National Forest have no cell service and you may not see another vehicle for hours. In other words, plan for being on your own and capable in an emergency. Bring water, food and good walking shoes. A first aid kit is important to

have. Over the decades, the Siuslaw National Forest has not encouraged visitors into the interior of the forest. Make sure your cell phone is charged and the vehicle's gas or batteries are full. We strongly recommend travelling with companions unless you are a seasoned backroads forest traveler.

Driving & Forest Roads

The number one tip for safely driving single lane gravel forest roads is GO SLOW. Such roads are built to yield the right of way to an oncoming vehicle using a turn out. Loose gravel can be like driving on marbles and excessive speed is to be avoided. Handle a blind curve as if a log truck was around the corner. Take the outside track going uphill and the inside track going downhill. If the road appears wide enough for two vehicles stay in your lane. Always be ready to yield the right of way. Park off the road when stopping to view the wonders and vistas. National Forest roads are maintained (or not) by the U.S. Forest Service and should be used with caution. Lastly, be sure to check your spare tire before going into the forest. It is important to have a person on the trip who is comfortable changing a flat tire.

Weather

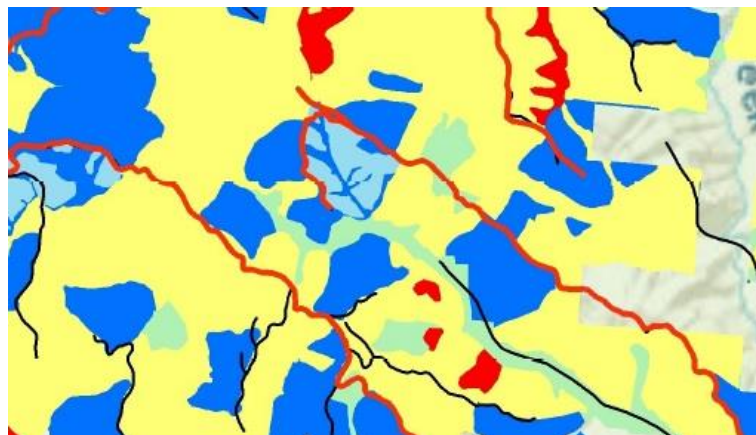
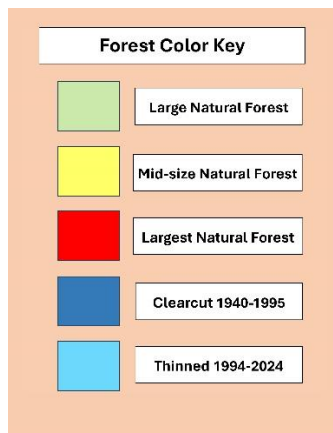
The weather can be rainy and windy. Always be aware of weather conditions and the forecast before going into the forest. We advise not visiting the forest if windy and rainy conditions exist. Always have your raingear on a trip if there is a chance of rain. Having a chainsaw may get you past that one small tree across the road.

Coast Range Association (CRA) Forest Maps Siuslaw National Forest

Attention: If you find these maps confusing then ignore them.

The CRA's forest stand and road maps were created from Forest Service data. These are our maps where we identify:

- a. Remaining natural forest areas (green, yellow or red).
- b. Plantations established before 1995 (dark blue).
- c. Areas thinned since 1994 (light blue).
- d. Major Forest Service roads (red line)
- e. All other roads (black line). Note: the only roads the Forest Service represents as usable are roads on the official Forest Service Road Map.



The maps are very detailed with nine overlapping maps for the entire Siuslaw.

North Action Group Maps

Lincoln City inland & south Tillamook County

[North Action Group Area 1](#) (Cloverdale to Beaver and east county)

[North Action Group Area 2](#) (Salmon River area to Cloverdale)

[North Action Group Area 3](#) (East of Lincoln City)

Central Action Group Maps

Newport to Searose Beach south of Yachats

[Central Action Group Area 1 Map](#) (Seal Rock to Waldport)

[Central Action Group Area 2 Map](#) (Waldport to Yachats)

[Central Action Group Area 3 Map](#) (Yachats to Heceta Lighthouse)

South Action Group Maps

Florence to Reedsport and inland areas

[South Action Group Area 1 Map](#) (Siuslaw River area and north)

[South Action Group Area 2 Map](#) (Inland from Siltcoos Lake)

[South Action Group Area 3 Map](#) (Smith River & North)

USGS Topo Maps (for free)

A useful resource for exploring is free electronic USGA topo maps. They provide an impressive level of detail including an aerial photo that can be turned on or off.

Here is the link to the topo maps: <https://store.usgs.gov/map-locator>

“The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) publishes maps for the Siuslaw area at 1:24,000 scale. USGS maps at this scale are commonly called 7.5-minute quadrangle maps. Maps at 1:24,000 scale provide detailed information about the

features of an area, including the locations of important buildings and most campgrounds. Footbridges, fence lines, and private roads are often shown.

Google Earth Pro and Coast Range Association Map Files

The CRA's Siuslaw's map information (the color maps above) can be viewed in Google Earth Pro using files downloaded from the CRA's website. The files will **not open viewing Google Earth in your browser** – they only open using the program **Google Earth Pro**. So, first download the free Google Earth Pro program. Do not confuse Google Maps with Google Earth Pro. They are different programs.

Download Google Earth Pro at this link:

<https://www.google.com/earth/about/versions/#download-pro>

Second, download the CRA's Google Earth forest files

For this project, there are seven files to potentially download and open in Google Earth. The good news is that using the Google Earth files is very simple.

When the Google Earth program opens on your computer, the view is an aerial photo of the land. Each file you download is an information item from our color stand maps.

Below are the file links. To open a link press control and double click on the link:

1. **Large** mature native forest stands (green).
[Go to the file here](#)
2. **Larger mid-size** mature native forest stands (yellow).
[Go to the file here](#)
3. The **largest** mature native forest stands (red).
[Go to the file here](#)
4. Areas that were past clearcuts and are now plantations (dark blue).
[Go to the file here](#)
5. Areas that have been thinned since 1994 (light blue).
[Go to the file here](#)

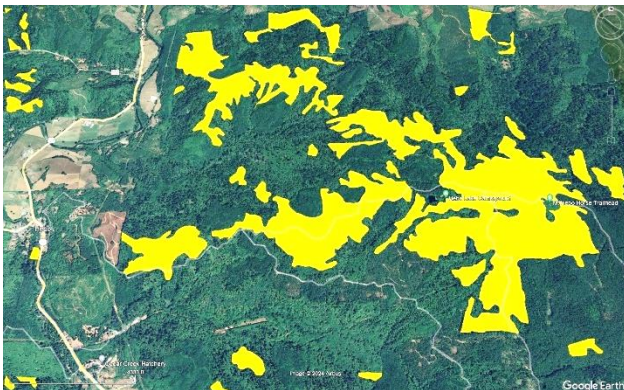
6. A file of SNF roads (red line).

[Go to the file here](#)

Download all six files into a folder. With the **Google Earth program open** and zoomed to western Oregon, click on one or more files. The feature will appear on your screen in Google Earth. Remember, don't click on the Google Earth file unless the Google Earth program is open and running. Once you have the files open, save the view.



Ordinary Google Earth Pro view of an area east of Hebo in south Tillamook County. Forest Service-14 road is seen across the view. FS-14 is also known as Mt. Hebo Road.



Same view as above with the midsize (yellow) forest layer showing. The yellow color can be made more or less transparent by adjusting the setting.

How much Native Forest is left?

The Siuslaw National Forest as of 1994*

Ranger District	Mature Conifer	Clearcut	Other
Alsea District	63,638	43,565	1,495
Hebo District	94,807	47,844	4,200
Mapleton District	131,205	63,194	4,337
Waldport District	87,701	45,926	2,760
Totals	377,351	200,529	12,792
	63.9%	33.9%	2.2%

Excluding the Dunes National Recreation Area, the Siuslaw National Forest (SNF) area covers approximately 590,700 acres. As of 1994, 34% had been clearcut since 1940.* According to a 1994 watershed analysis written by Siuslaw National Forest staff, the above table summarizes the forest conditions before the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP).

* North Fork Siuslaw Watershed Analysis, 12-16-1994. Available at:
https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5194228.pdf

Since the NWFP went into effect, SNF management committed to an agenda of forest restoration through three strategies: 1. No further cutting of native forest. The agency refers to the 64% not previously clearcut as **natural** stands. And, 2. Commercial “thinning” in the older plantations of the 200,000+ acres previously clearcut. The agency refers to such areas as **managed** stands. 3. A road program that closed many unnecessary roads and improved other roads to lower their impact on streams and salmon habitat.

Since 1994, Siuslaw management closed the Alsea and Mapleton ranger stations and consolidated operations in Waldport.

How much and where older forest exists has huge implications for forest management. **That is why the citizen forest documentation project is so important.**

As part of the old growth amendment process, the Forest Service has released various documents. One document is titled DRAFT Ecological Impacts Analysis Report. Deep in the document are pages of tables that state the agency’s estimate of remaining old growth forest for most of the nation’s national forests. Below is a snippet of page 109 where the **Siuslaw National Forest’s old growth estimate is stated.**

As you can see there is a range to the estimate of between 171,000 acres and 239,000 acres. The estimate comes from Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) plots that exist across Oregon and the nation. In western Oregon, there is a two-acre plot for every 2,500 acres of forestland. Each two-acre plot is examined in detail by counting and measuring trees, noting tree species, inventorying ground vegetation, etc. The number of plots for the Siuslaw National Forest is about 240.

The scientists then estimate a likely range of old growth forest from the plot data. The same holds true for how much of the remaining mature forest may exist.

This report is incorporated by reference in full for the Draft EIS for Amendments to LMPs to Address Old-Growth Forests Across the NFS

Region	NFS Unit	Old-growth Estimate (1,000 acres)	95% Confidence Interval (1,000 acres)	Percent of Forested NFS Lands as Old-growth
6	Okanogan	299	231 - 366	19%
6	Olympic	199	161 - 236	34%
6	Rogue River	255	206 - 304	41%
6	Siskiyou	269	221 - 317	26%
6	Siuslaw	205	171 - 239	35%

Because of the large range in the area of old growth forest and uncertainty of where such forest exists, the Coast Range Association began the citizen-based, self-organized forest documentation project.

Thank you for being part of the project. Every stand of natural forest citizens like you can document and submit as a comment to the plan amendment process advances the chance that adequate native forest protections occur.



Coast Range Association
coastrange.org