




**Community Engagement on Oregon Forests**  
**Initial Themes**

January 4, 2023



Oregon's Kitchen Table strives to include all Oregonians in the decisions that affect their lives, with a particular focus on reaching, engaging, and hearing from Oregonians who have been left out of traditional public processes.





***Oregon's Kitchen Table is committed to engaging a broad range of community members in public decisions.***

We work with organizers, translators, and interpreters so materials and online and in-person consultations are available for Oregonians who speak a wide variety of languages and learn in a variety of ways.

We recognize that people bring all different levels of knowledge and familiarity regarding issues / policies. We use approaches to ensure those who may not have as in-depth knowledge can still respond and share what they believe and have experienced.



# Oregon Forests Community Engagement Goals

1. Hear from people from across the state about their values related to Oregon forests.
2. Hear from Oregonians who have not traditionally been included in policy conversations about forests.



# Overview of Community Engagement Efforts (to date)

## Planning & Design

- Community connector interviews
- Sessions with engaged stakeholders
- Framing issue and trade-offs
- Working with community organizers to design culturally specific outreach & engagement

## Engagement Activities

- Survey in 9 languages
- Culturally specific community conversations, organizing, and other activities, including events
- Youth outreach and youth-specific conversations
- Upcoming Community Conversations (February)

## Results

- OKT takes input from all forms, analyzes, identifies common themes and unique perspectives from communities
- Initial reporting of results; expanded report to come after Community Conversations



# Participation

- Over 4,000 people participated from every corner of the state
- 3,870 people responded to the OKT survey
- Approximately 200 people participated in a self-organized community conversation
- Over 100 people participated in an interview or small-group conversation



## *What We Heard: Observations*

- Harsh tone in open-ended questions
- Many shared values but differing in the specifics (e.g. sustainability and healthy forests)
- “Forest management” is a contested term
- People are thinking about and considering others’ views and experiences
- Interest in Traditional Ecological Knowledge

## *What We Heard: Common Themes*

- People feel immense pride and cherish their relationships to forests; but there is also a sense of grief and loss
- People are thinking about both past and future generations' connections to forests
- Relationships with Oregon forests are tied to identities
- Wildfire concerns are top of mind



## *What We Heard: Trade-Offs or Areas of Tension*

- People want to see a balance among forest-related activities. They also recognize the complexity in achieving that balance.
- Beliefs that others misunderstand the science of forests
- Wide range of views regarding safety
- Conflicting views on motorized vehicles in forests

Recreation is a key way many Oregonians connect to forests; however, they're willing to balance recreation against other interests.

# How People Connect to Oregon Forests

- How people are already connected:
  - For recreation (87%)
  - For enjoying wildlife and nature (86%)
  - For clean air and water (81%)
  - That forests exist (80%)
- How people want to be more connected:
  - Recreation (63%)
  - Protect and take care of water, plants, fish and wildlife in forests (57%)
  - Learn how to prepare for and respond to extreme events (38%)

**The majority of Oregonians who participated feel either very (74% of survey respondents) or somewhat (20%) connected to Oregon forests**



# What Will Make More Connections Possible

- Forest protection activities
- Education
- Traditional Ecological Knowledge
- Access (physical infrastructure, language)
- More person-to-person contact or guidance

**Tension: Access vs. Protection**

# Safety

- Wide range of feelings and perspectives regarding safety
- Different experiences with what would make people feel safe

**Dependent on identity and experience**



## Extreme Events

- Wildfire (and other climate-related disasters)
- Broad concerns about forest health
- Disagreement about how to prevent extreme events

**3/4 of people are thinking about ways to avoid and prepare for extreme events in forests**

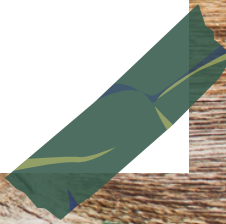


## Discussion Questions

What strikes  
or surprises  
you about this  
input?

How can you  
use it in your  
work going  
forward?

What  
outstanding  
questions do  
you have for  
Oregonians?





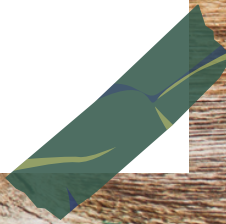


# Ongoing Community Engagement

Upcoming  
Community  
Conversations  
in February

Following up  
and reporting  
back

Areas for  
focused  
engagement





*Thank you!*

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