



Elliott State Research Forest - Compiled Guiding Principles Working Draft

Each principle is a reflection of stakeholder input synthesized and reconciled to provide overarching statements of suggested direction for management of the Elliott State Research Forest in the context of the primary research mission.

RECREATION

- **Ensure Public Access Into the Future.** The Elliott State Research Forest (“forest”) will remain accessible to the public for a variety of uses from multiple established entry points, by both motorized and non-motorized transportation, but not all places at all times.
- **Promote Recreational Access and Use that is Compatible with Research and Ecological Integrity:** Public use of the forest will be supported and managed for different recreational opportunities consistent with a management plan reflecting stakeholder interests and historical activities in concert with public safety, ongoing research, harvest, and conservation of at-risk and historically present species.
- **Support and Promote Diverse Recreational Experiences:** The Elliott State Research Forest recreational program will leverage partnerships within the local community and others to accommodate multiple and diverse recreational uses to provide a range of user experiences within the context of a working forest landscape. Recreational planning will not favor any one recreational type over another but will seek to ensure high-quality experiences on the forest by managing to minimize the potential for conflict between users while safeguarding research and management objectives, and conservation values.
- **Partner with Stakeholders and Manage Locally:** Elliott State Research Forest recreation programs will be managed by local staff who live in the community and work with stakeholders to enhance and protect the identified values of Elliott recreationists.
- **Conduct Research on Sustainable Recreation Practices.** An Elliott State Research Forest recreation program will support relevant research on recreation and eco-based tourism, with the goal to advance scientific knowledge and inform the general public on the opportunities and impacts of balancing multiple interests within forested landscapes.
- **Cultivate Multi-Generational Respect for the Forest.** Utilizing a collaborative approach to partner with schools, organizations, and volunteer groups recreation planning and management will seek to create more opportunities for engagement and a more widely informed forest-user community that is vested in the future of the Elliott State Research Forest.

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EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- **Seek and Incorporate New Educational Partnerships.** An Elliott State Research Forest will offer opportunities to leverage and integrate existing local and state educational programs and institutions that support and generate forest-based research and knowledge.
- **Expand Accessibility to Forestry Education.** An Elliott State Research Forest will provide and promote a diversity of values, and in doing so will leverage efforts by OSU's College of Forestry to engage students with diverse social, economic, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds in forestry education programs.
- **Serve Students at All Levels of Education Through Programs on the Forest.** OSU will seek to foster and establish a programmatic link with K-12, community colleges, informal collaborative educational initiatives, and educational programs at other universities so that the forest becomes a resource for students at all educational levels.
- **Integrate and Demonstrate Elements of Traditional Knowledge in Educational Programs on the Forest.** Through active partnerships with local Tribal Governments, the Elliott State Research Forest will seek to provide demonstration areas that use traditional forest management practices and focus on Traditional Ecological Knowledge outcomes for use in educational programs.
- **Foster Public Awareness and Understanding of Sustainable Forest Management.** Management and research actions on the Elliott State Research Forest will seek to promote broader understanding and awareness of the role of healthy working forest landscapes to local economies, resilient ecosystems, innovative competitive products, and healthy communities.
- **Develop an Educational Partnerships Plan.** The Elliott State Research Forest will work with stakeholders to develop a plan to foster and implement educational partnerships consistent with the foregoing principles and will implement it pending available resources.

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LOCAL AND REGIONAL ECONOMIES

- **Operate as a Working Forest While Managing for Research.** The Elliott State Research Forest will be owned and managed as a working forest that produces wood supply as a by-product of research, consistent with the mission of the Institute for Working Forests Landscapes at Oregon State University College of Forestry.
- **Be Financially Self-Sustaining.** The financial model of the forest should incorporate traditional and innovative options for generating revenue to support forest management, and research programs without requiring continued funding support from outside sources.
- **Generate Consistent and High-Quality Timber Harvest.** A sustainable supply of wood volume will be produced over time as a by-product of the research program on the Elliott State Research Forest. Quality should be prioritized over the quantity of harvest.
- **Support Employment Opportunities for Local Communities.** The Elliott State Research Forest should not be managed from a remote location. Management and operation of the forest should be located in proximity to the forest and promote local partnerships that provide opportunities to local businesses and residents of Coos and Douglas counties.
- **Study and report on the Relationship between the Research Forest and Local Economies.** The connections between OSU, the Elliott State Research Forest, and local economies should be documented and reported with transparency over time.

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CONSERVATION

- **Improve Conservation Status of At-Risk Species.** The Elliott State Research Forest will undertake studies, research, and associated forest management activities that seek to improve the conservation status of at-risk species and the ecosystems upon which they depend.
- **Implement Science-Based Conservation Efforts to Enhance the Productivity and Conservation Values of the Research Forest.** In adhering to the academic mission of Oregon State University, and to ensure the sustainability of any management or activity that occurs on the landscape, all conservation decisions or proposed projects on the Elliott State Research Forest will be rooted in the best available scientific data.
- **Manage for Multiple Conservation Values to Maintain and Enhance Essential Elements of a Forest Ecosystem.** With a holistic, ecological approach, management of the Elliott State Research Forest will support the protection and enhancement of at-risk species and preservation of biodiversity, along with promoting improved natural hydrologic function and opportunities of carbon sequestration.
- **Preserve and Proactively Steward a Diversity of Forest Structures.** Management of the Elliott State Research Forest will emphasize key ecological areas ranging from early seral to late-successional forest structure in the context of the greater landscape. The future growth of the forest should encompass diverse objectives of biological quality and resilience for future adaptability.
- **Collaborate with Local Partners for Monitoring and Restoration of Habitat.** Management planning for the Elliott State Research Forest will partner with local conservation stakeholders to maintain transparency and mutual trust that protection of sensitive natural values will be prioritized.
- **Management Decisions Will Not Be Driven by Potential Financial Returns.** The integrity of the research objectives and conservation values on the Elliott State Research Forest will not be compromised by the presence of active management and economic influences on the forest.
- **Conduct Innovative Research on the Intersection of Forest Ecosystems Functions and Climate Change.** The Elliott State Research Forest will provide a unique opportunity to conduct innovative research on the role that native, mature, and managed forests can play in ameliorating the impacts of climate change for sensitive species, water quality/retention, and carbon sequestration.

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FOREST OPERATIONS GOVERNANCE

- **Accountability.** The history and unique public nature of the Elliott Forest requires placing a premium on establishing a governance structure that will provide clear lines of accountability for forest management decisions that support research programs and articulated public values into the future. This structure should include formal and informal mechanisms that ensure commitments and principles are honored in the context of fiscal and operational management of the forest over time.
- **Transparency.** Management of the Elliott Forest requires a commitment to transparent operations and decision making that will maintain and enhance public support for the research forest over time. This includes clear and defined processes for governance and oversight, clearly defined pathways for public inquiry and input, and accessible information related to forest operations.
- **Representation.** An Elliott State Research Forest governance structure should engage and incorporate multiple interests and partnerships that reflect key public values the forest will represent over time. Representation of these values in governance of the forest should be balanced, accountable, and transparent with regard to fiscal and operational management of the forest to support research programs over time.
- **Decision Making.** Regardless of governance structure, decision-making processes directing the fiscal and operational management of the Elliott State Research Forest must be accountable, transparent, and open to input while also empowered to operate the forest efficiently and effectively to meet identified objectives.