

General Plan for Matteson Property

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Overview of College of Forestry Research & Demonstration Forests

The College of Forestry manages over 14,000 acres of forest land around the state. All of these parcels were donated to the College of Forestry with the first donated by Mary McDonald in 1926.

Overall the Research Forests are comprised of 8 parcels of land, the largest being the 11,200 acre McDonald/Dunn Forests just on the north edge of Corvallis. All of our lands are examples of “working

forests” that provide a variety of benefits to the College of Forestry and to the general public.

Our lands encompass a variety of forest types found in the coast range, Willamette valley fringe, western Cascades foothills, and in eastern Oregon ponderosa pine and mixed conifer forests. This diverse span of forest types provides a range of teaching and research opportunities where various contemporary and new forest management methods are demonstrated. These lands provide outdoor living laboratory for forestry and natural resource students and faculty.

History of Active Management

We have a long history of active management on our Research & Demonstration Forests. Our goal is to create a biologically diverse and sustainable teaching, demonstration and research forest with a management emphasis. Since the acquisition of our first parcels in the 1920s, we have been demonstrating the role that forests play and how they can be managed to sustain a variety of values and benefits.

Teaching & Research

The Research & Demonstration Forests are used by University professors as an outdoor teaching laboratory. Students across Oregon State University come out to the Forest to learn about forest ecology, wildlife, soils, recreation, protection of streams and water, and traditional and new forest management techniques. Students are also learning how forests support other important values like aesthetics, carbon sequestration, and the capture and release of water. We also have a number of short and long term research studies going on, where the results are directly applied on the Forest and are communicated to students, forest managers, and the public.

Income & Timber Harvests

All of these lands are actively managed to provide income to the College of Forestry. In turn, these funds are used to support new teaching and research initiatives within the College. Collectively the sustainable annual timber growth on our forested parcels is about 6 million

board feet of timber. In the last few years we have been harvesting about 3.2 to 6 million board feet. The amount varies depending on log prices and other factors.

How the Matteson Property Fits Within OSU Research Forests

We see the Matteson property as a very good fit for our teaching, research and public engagement mission. We will utilize this property to demonstrate how small forest parcels can be actively managed to provide income while sustaining other non-timber values over time. This parcel will be a model for other forest landowners and the public to learn from. We propose that this forest be named the “Ruby P. Matteson Demonstration Forest,” with a sign placed at the entrance to the property. Proceeds from timber harvest will be used to support the management and improvement of the land, as well as to support teaching and research at the College of Forestry.

To make the land more usable for management and for year round enjoyment for public, one of the first tasks to be completed will be to improve the road system throughout the property. This will include rocking and installing proper road drainage features (culverts). This will reduce sedimentation and protect water quality. Another task is to control invasive species like Scotch broom, which can take over areas and suppress native vegetation. Fortunately, current levels of Scotch broom are low and located in a few spots that can be easily treated.

All of our lands are management for non-motorized walk-in recreation, which includes hikers, runners, horseback riding, and mountain bikes. And we would allow public access to this property in a similar fashion. Because of the potential for vandalism and other damage, we do not allow access by power-driven vehicles (motor bikes, ATVs, etc.). This reduces the risk for fire and the potential for bringing in invasive weeds.

This property provides a prime opportunity to demonstrate state-of-the-art forest management methods. The property will be used by Extension Forestry & Natural Resources Program for Extension classes and tours on a variety of topics that include: thinning, reforestation, wildlife habitat enhancement, and methods of timber harvest. We plan to set up demonstration areas to show to the public different thinning methods and tree spacing as well as to show how forests are harvested and replanted. We have a local Extension Forester who can help lead these outreach efforts. There is also a great opportunity to develop interpretive stops and displays for the recreating public so they can learn about the benefits of forests and forest management.