



Community Forest Training Program: Community Engagement & Visioning

January 6, 2026

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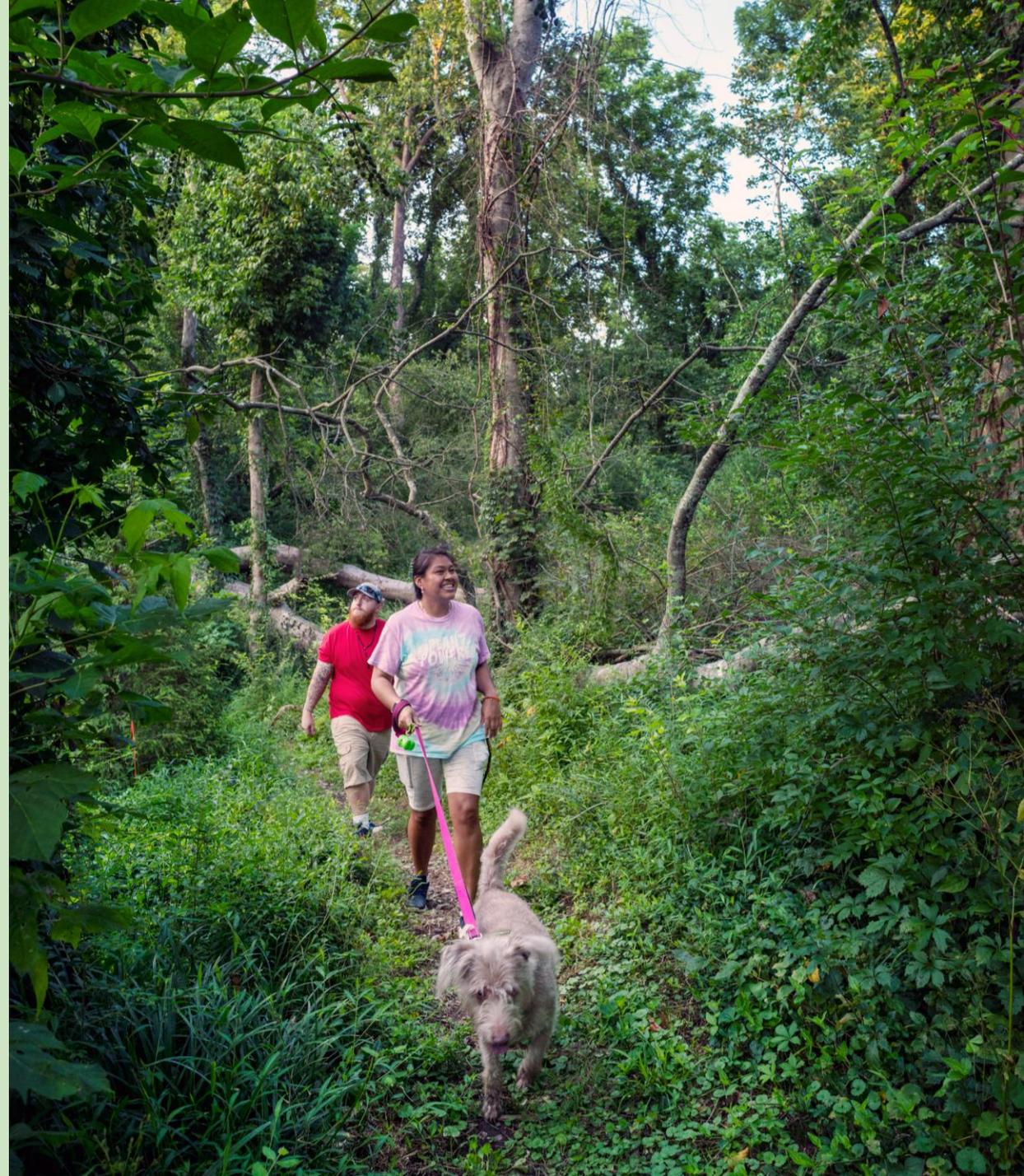
Welcome!

Warm-Up Poll: Which of the following community outreach strategies have you used for a community forest or other conservation project? (Select all that apply.)



Agenda

- Session 2 Recap
- Overview: Community Engagement & Visioning
- Case Study: Butte Falls Community Forest
- Q&A
- Brainstorm Activity
- Next Steps



Community Forest Training Program: Series Overview

5-month, virtual workshop series designed to provide land managers with the **strategies, skills, and resources** needed to create and sustain community forests.

Session Dates:

- November 4: Principles of Community Forests
- December 2: Ownership, Governance, and Funding
- January 6: Community Engagement and Visioning
- February 3: Management and Stewardship
- March 3: Project Implementation



Community Forest Ownership & Governance

Who can own a community forest? How are decisions made about a community forest?

4 basic structures, with nuances:

Municipal Ownership

1. Volunteer-based Governance (Selectboard, Conservation Commission)
2. Professionalized Management (Parks, Forestry)
3. User Group Management/ Operation

County Ownership

1. Professionalized Governance
 - Elected officials dictate staffing

Nonprofit Ownership

1. Land Trust Ownership (local or regional)
2. User Group Ownership
3. Partnership with municipality or county

Tribal Ownership

1. Tribe Ownership
 - One or multiple tribes
2. Tribal Nonprofit Ownership

Community Forest Funding

How are community forests funded?

Federal & Regional

- USFS Community Forest Program
- USFS Forest Legacy Program
- Wetlands Reserve Program
- NFWF Mitigation Funds
- Cooperative Endg. Species Grant
- Scenic Byways Funds
- Appalachian Regional Commission Area Development Funding

State and Local

- State Conservation / Open Space Funds
- Municipal Bonds
- Clean Water Funds (SRF)
- Community Economic Development Funds

Private

- Philanthropy
- Private Grants
- Private Investors (land banking or shared revenue streams)

Revenue Generation

- Responsible Extraction (timber, etc.)
- Recreation
- Carbon Credits



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Community Engagement & Visioning for Community Forests



Community Engagement & Visioning

Why is broad community input critical for community forests? How do you build broad support?

- ❑ **It's not a *community* forest without *community* engagement.** Public ownership, input, and management is what sets community forests apart from other conservation projects.
- ❑ **The character of the community will influence the character of the community forest.** Community members must be bought into the long-term vision for the land in order for it to produce meaningful benefits. An established community vision sets the stage for management and stewardship.
- ❑ **Everyone needs a seat at the table.** Go beyond your usual suspects – actively seek out new stakeholders. A comprehensive, sustainable community vision means casting a wide net and bringing people into the process who may never have participated in conservation work before.
- ❑ **Be mindful of your message.** Whether you're engaging user groups or elected officials, clear and intentional messaging around the benefits and values of a community forest is critical for cultivating support.
- ❑ **Conflict is a when – not an if.** Conflict is to be expected when you're building consensus among diverse perspectives. Being prepared to manage conflict effectively is an essential component of a community forest process.

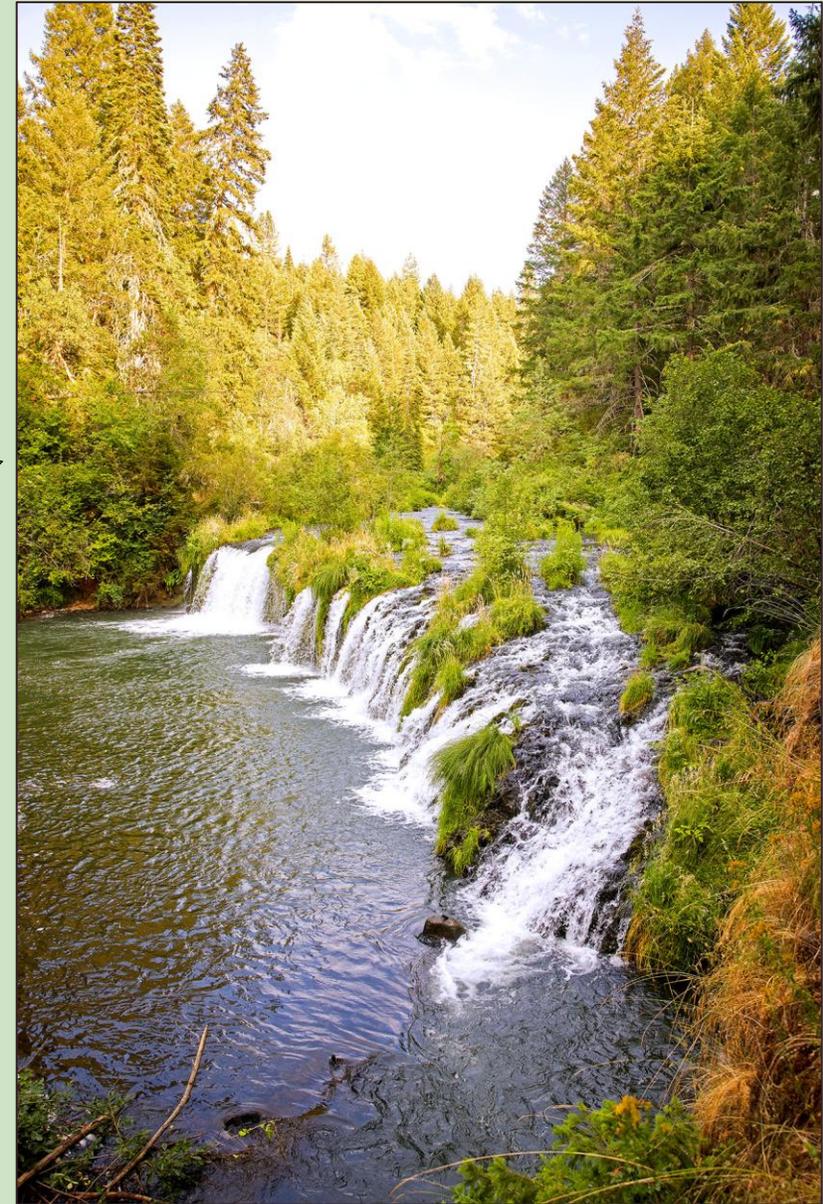
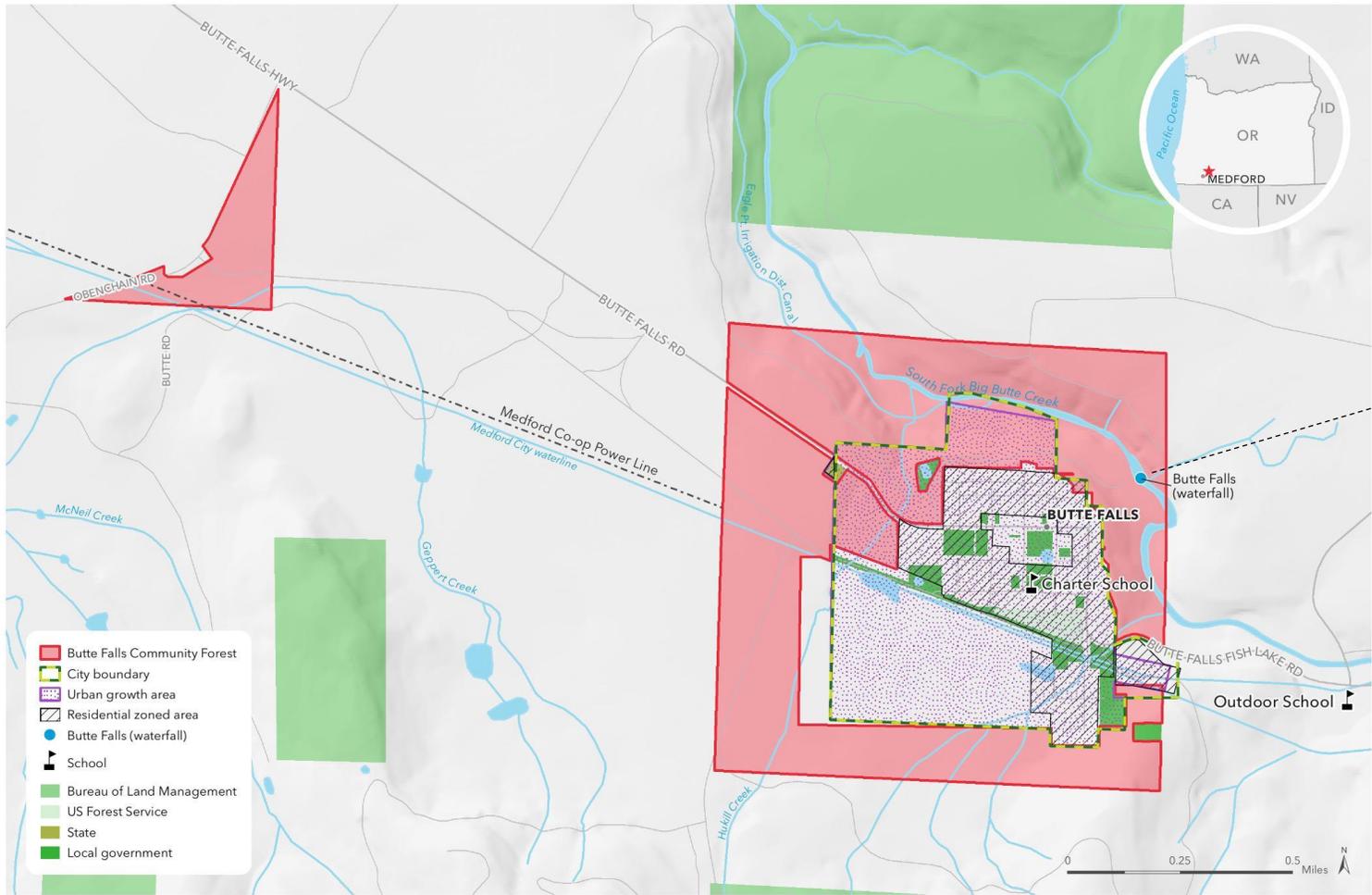


Butte Falls Community Forest, OR

Kristin Kovalik, Trust for Public Land



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Butte Falls Community Forest

JACKSON COUNTY, OREGON

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Project Overview

Butte Falls, a small town located in southern Oregon (pop.450) had a big goal – create a community forest with an emphasis on:

- **management for forest health;**
- **drinking water and natural resource protections;**
- **fire resilience;**
- **environmental education;** and
- **recreation-based economy.**

When 430 acres of private forestland with historic and environmental significance became available, the Mayor contacted TPL to assist with the purchase and Oregon Solutions to assist with the community engagement.

The Town was committed to a **collaborative approach** to build a sense of **community ownership** around the project and establish a **decision-making process** for the future management of the land.

Community Engagement: Partners

Butte Falls Community Forest Stakeholders

- Oregon Solutions
- City of Butte Falls
- US Forest Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- Private Foundations
- Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians
- OR Department of Forestry
- OR Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Travel Oregon
- Rogue River Watershed Council
- Jackson County Representatives
- Southern OR University
- Southern OR Regional Economic Development
- OR State Representatives

Subcommittees

Recreation/Trails

Forest Management

Fundraising

Economic Development

Education/Health

Community Engagement: Deliverables



Butte Falls Community Forest Plan

Prepared for:
The Trust for Public Land
and Town of Butte Falls



Prepared by:
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Lessons Learned & Takeaways

- Be honest about **capacity**.
- Engage with **humility**.
- Set realistic **expectations**.
- **Celebrate** milestones.
- **Overcommunicate**.
- **Visibility** and **appreciation** goes a long way.



Q&A

Please share your questions in the chat!



Reflection

For the next few minutes...

1. **Brainstorm** the list of **stakeholders** in your community you might engage for a forest project. Think beyond your usual suspects.
2. Then, **brainstorm** some **strategies** you might try to engage this list throughout a community forest process.
3. In small groups, pick one newer or hard-to-reach group from your list and **share**:
 - What strategies will you use to get them engaged?
 - How will you build long-term buy-in?

Share feedback, ask questions, and switch speakers.

Questions?



Community Forest Training Program: Session 3 Exit Ticket



Complete your Exit Ticket!

Click the link below or the QR code to complete your exit ticket before you log off today:

<https://forms.office.com/r/bj3sT8DM5S>



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Next Steps

- Complete the Exit Ticket:
<https://forms.office.com/r/bj3sT8DM5S>
- Report-Out Slides & Recording
- Launching Tomorrow:
Community Forests: A Quick-Start Guide!
- **Session 4: February 3, 2026**
Management & Stewardship

Thank You!