



Mt. Adams Community Forest seeks funds to purchase new property to protect habitat, public access and local forestry jobs

Mt. Adams Resource Stewards (MARS), a 501(c)(3) organization working with several rural communities and a diverse group of stakeholders to develop the Mt. Adams Community Forest Project in Washington's southern Cascades, is seeking financial support to assist in the purchase and permanent conservation of the Pine Flats Tract in the Glenwood Valley. The Pine Flats Tract, a 280-acre property currently owned by a timberland investment organization, straddles the scenic Trout Lake-Glenwood Highway and the access road for the Conboy Lake National Wildlife Refuge headquarters (see attached map).

The property is dominated by upland habitats – primarily stands of ponderosa pine that are slated for logging by the current owner over the next year. MARS has been granted 90 days to raise \$50,000 toward an option agreement that will provide MARS the remaining time necessary to fundraise and close on the project.



Conservation of the Pine Flats Tract is critical for protecting important wildlife habitat, rare plants and the ecological integrity of the spectacular Conboy Lake NWR. In addition to buffering the refuge, the property serves as an important linkage between public lands at higher elevations on Mt. Adams, the refuge and the Klickitat River Canyon. This connectivity functions as a migration corridor for Rocky Mountain elk and black-tailed deer and corridors of this nature are considered to be of tremendous value to many species during a time of an increasingly changing climate. Several species identified in Washington's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy either use the property or stand to benefit from conservation and restoration practices that MARS plans for the property upon acquisition. These include white-headed woodpecker, pygmy nuthatch, flammulated owl and American badger. One of only two

known populations of a rare plant in Washington, Suksdorf's milk-vetch, is located on the property as well.

The project also presents an opportunity to prevent housing development from sprawling into native forest along one of Mt. Adams' more scenic roads. Public access for recreational purposes will be protected, and ecosystem-based forest management will allow for thoughtfully designed, selective timber harvests that will continue to support local forest-related businesses. The project represents a positive step forward for communities that once had a contentious relationship with federal agencies around refuge land acquisitions and protected species. While the idea of expanded federal or state ownership of land in the area would be challenged, many citizens have taken great pride in the effort to protect working forestlands for multiple uses, including habitat conservation. The Mt. Adams Community Forest was officially established in 2011 with an initial purchase of the 100-acre Mill Pond property in the Glenwood Valley, protecting wetlands and productive forestland, as well as an invaluable recreational resource for residents and visitors to the area.



Mt. Adams Resource Stewards

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