



# Ashland Forest Resiliency

## An All-lands Restoration Project

[ashlandwatershed.org](http://ashlandwatershed.org)



Photo by Sean Bagshaw

### What is AFR?

AFR began on U.S. Forest Service land and now includes *all lands* in a cohesive strategy that better reduces the critical risk of severe wildfire in a changing climate, secures clean drinking water, and protects forests, wildlife, habitat, people, property, local economy, and quality of life.

### The best of its kind.

This innovative solution to a complex problem is a model for forest restoration, community safety, coexistence with fire, and climate adaptation. Success results from collaboration in active forest restoration, broad public engagement, and by aligning local, state and federal investments.

### Recognition.

#### 2015-2020 Funding Awards:

**U.S. Forest Service**— \$7 million

**Natural Resources Conservation Service**— \$4 million

**Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board** — \$6 million

**TOTAL: \$17 million** for critical federal, City, and private lands surrounding Ashland.

## A Model of Collaboration

Since 2010, the Ashland Forest Resiliency Stewardship Project (AFR) has reduced the threat of severe wildfires in a high value landscape through collaboration among a large and diverse group of governmental bodies, environmental organizations, citizens, private businesses, and community groups. A commitment to achieving shared goals on a larger cohesive landscape reduces the risk from high severity wildfire in a changing climate, secures drinking water, and sustains forests that provide for critical wildlife habitat and a high quality of life for residents. Including key private and municipal land is essential to success across the landscape.

### *A shared landscape and shared stewardship.*

Over a decade ago, conflict prevented pragmatic work to reduce a mounting fuel load and a forest health and community safety crisis. Today, multi-party monitoring, workforce training, and community engagement build transparency and trust in a cohesive and adaptive approach for wildfire and climate resilience in both the ecological and social landscape. Federal and state investments expanded the partnership to encompass critical private lands, creating an all-lands model under the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy.



[ashlandwatershed.org](http://ashlandwatershed.org)



## Measurable success.

Work remains to complete an all-lands approach that sets the stage for cost-effective, landscape-scale controlled burns. Forest thinning and proactive burning minimize effects of inevitable wildfires, providing more beneficial fire, and increased citizen and firefighter safety. Success has been greater than anticipated, and growing:

- 10,000 acres of landscape-scale fuels reduction and forest restoration
- 13 million board feet of restoration by-product logs (average diameter 13 in.), with over 3,500 log truck loads delivered to local mills, sustaining jobs
- \$6 million reinvested from by-product logs into AFR work
- 17 direct full-time jobs annually, multiplying to 107 jobs with indirect and induced work in the local economy
- Critical habitat sustained

## Treasured landscape.

The Ashland Watershed and surrounding forest is an invaluable natural resource providing an array of community benefits. Ashland is a tourism and recreation hub; its mountain biking, trail running, and Oregon Shakespeare Festival are an economic engine generating more than \$30 million annually.

## A new investment model.

The project has aligned complementary local, state, and federal co-investment. The City's utility surcharge generates \$175,000 annually to maintain gains through reintroduction of "good fire" to maintain reduced fuel levels. Awards from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board expanded the project with 9,000 added acres of treatment on and adjacent to federal land – an "all-lands" approach to address wildfire risk, adapt to climate change, and benefit a larger population in a 53,000-acre forested area centered on the city's municipal watershed.

## Community engagement, youth, workforce training.

Field trips provide for public and independent technical review. Over 3,000 local youth have participated in classes and field activities on watershed ecology and forest stewardship. Each summer, 20 local high school students participate in hands-on experiences, inspiring interest in natural resource careers. For the adult forest workforce, training is embedded in the ongoing operations, elevating knowledge, experience, and leadership.



Photos by: The City of Ashland, Dave Clayton, Darren Campbell

## Contacts.

Chris Chambers, (541) 552-2066, [chris.chambers@ashland.or.us](mailto:chris.chambers@ashland.or.us)

Bill Kuhn, (541) 618-2057, [wkuhn@fs.fed.us](mailto:wkuhn@fs.fed.us)

Darren Borgias, (541) 708-4989, [dborgias@tnc.org](mailto:dborgias@tnc.org)

Marko Bey, (541) 488-0208, [marko@lomakatsti.org](mailto:marko@lomakatsti.org)

Andrew Dutterer, (503) 986-0034, [andrew.Dutterer@oregon.gov](mailto:andrew.Dutterer@oregon.gov)