



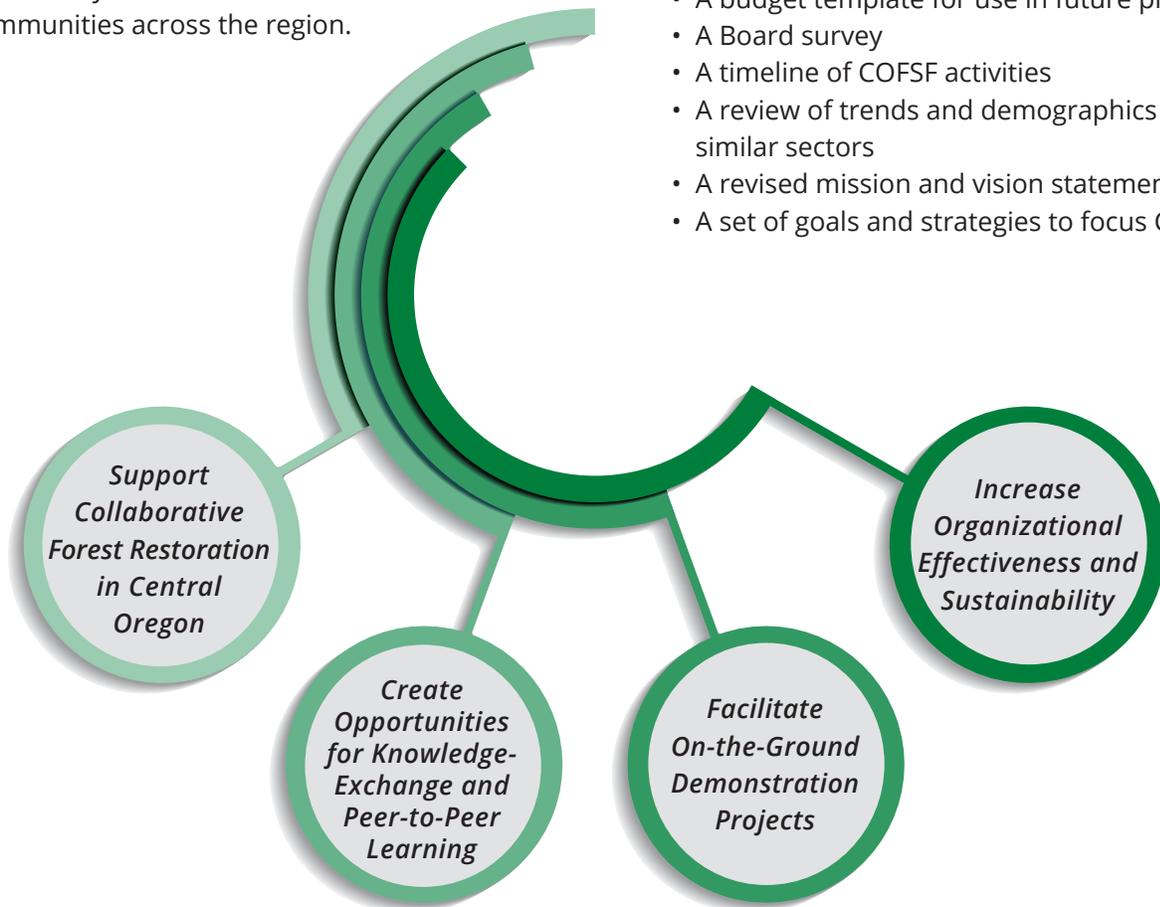
STRATEGIC PLAN

**CENTRAL OREGON FOREST
STEWARDSHIP FOUNDATION**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE

Since the Central Oregon Forest Stewardship Foundation's (COFSF or "the Foundation") inception in 2010, much has changed. Collaboration has become increasingly recognized at local, state, and federal levels as an effective strategy for increasing the pace and scale of forest restoration, opportunities to support on-the-ground forest restoration at meaningful scales have expanded, and the Foundation itself has experienced staff and Board transitions. In light of these changes, COFSF launched a strategic planning process in the summer of 2016 to review, refresh, and refocus its mission to better serve partners, stakeholders, and communities in the region. The planning process was designed to explore and clarify COFSF's primary purpose and to identify goals and strategies to increase the quality and quantity of forest restoration and stewardship at scale to support healthy and resilient forests and communities across the region.



PROCESS

To begin the strategic planning process, Board and staff interviewed a range of stakeholders and partners, soliciting diverse feedback on the Foundation's work-to-date and identifying opportunities for improvement and expansion. The Board and staff also took an in-house survey to identify what has been working well and existing barriers and challenges.

Following this information-gathering phase, Board and staff participated in two 6-hour facilitated work sessions on October 3, 2016 and November 4, 2016, as well as various small working group sessions over the subsequent 4 months. In that time, the Board and staff completed the following:

- A list of suggestions and insights from stakeholders and partners regarding opportunities for future COFSF programs and activities
- A budget template for use in future planning
- A Board survey
- A timeline of COFSF activities
- A review of trends and demographics in similar sectors
- A revised mission and vision statement
- A set of goals and strategies to focus COFSF's work

OUTCOME

After reflecting upon the insights collected during this process, COFSF adopted a new Mission Statement that expands its focus beyond simply supporting forest collaborative groups in Central Oregon. This new mission statement includes additional methods of advancing regional forest restoration and stewardship goals. It states:

“The Central Oregon Forest Stewardship Foundation advances innovative leadership, bringing expertise and resources to increase the quality and quantity of forest restoration and stewardship through information sharing, demonstration projects and supporting collaborative practices.”

Accompanying the new mission statement, the Board also drafted a Vision Statement:

“Catalyzing creative solutions to restore healthy and resilient forests and communities across the region.”

A budget template was developed to support COFSF to secure needed resources and track program expenses and needs over time. This budget will be populated and piloted over the coming year.

In March 2017 the draft plan was presented to the Board for review and approval. After minor modifications, the plan was finalized and approved in April 2017.

As with all plans, this is a living document that guides COFSF's programs and services. As needed, changes and modifications will be made to adapt to emerging opportunities as well as changed in the Foundation's capacity.

GOAL 1: *Support Collaborative Forest Restoration in Central Oregon*

Collaborative forest restoration groups in Central Oregon have access to the resources (financial and technical) necessary to ensure they are sustainable, effective, and inclusive, resulting in ecologically, economically, and socially viable forest restoration and stewardship projects.

GOAL 2: *Create Opportunities for Knowledge Exchange and Peer-to-Peer Learning*

Diverse stakeholders, including forest restoration practitioners, land managers, and community stakeholders are well-informed, engaged, and connected through active peer-to-peer learning networks, resulting in opportunities for knowledge-transfer and innovation that supports efficient and effective implementation of forest restoration and stewardship practices.

GOAL 3: *Facilitate On-the-Ground Demonstration Projects*

On-the-ground demonstration and pilot projects showcasing innovative tools and best practices to achieve forest restoration and stewardship outcomes are available and can serve as a model for other collaborative groups, practitioners, land managers, and stakeholders across the region.

GOAL 4: *Increase Organizational Effectiveness and Sustainability*

COFSF is a productive and sustainable community nonprofit organization with strong partnerships, diverse funding streams, and robust organizational structures, policies, and practices that support collaborative forest restoration efforts now and for years to come.

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY

OVERVIEW

The Foundation was originally established as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) in February 2011 with a mission to provide financial support and resources for collaborative forest restoration groups with a mission to restore and steward forest resources on Central Oregon's public and private lands utilizing ecologically sustainable and economically viable methods. The first group to receive COFSF support was the Central Oregon Partnership for Wildfire Risk Reduction (COPWRR). Over the following years, with the growth and evolution of collaborative forest restoration efforts in Central Oregon, COPWRR dissolved and the Foundation shifted its support to newly emerging collaborative groups like the Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project (DCFP) and the Ochoco Forest Restoration Collaborative (OFRC), providing grant development, fiscal administration, and strategic leadership. More recently, COFSF has also undertaken a handful of special projects to support collaborative effectiveness and to enhance the knowledge, experience and peer-to-peer learning among diverse forest restoration practitioners and collaborative stakeholders.

THE EMERGENCE OF COLLABORATION IN CENTRAL OREGON

The origins of collaborative forest restoration in Central Oregon can be traced back to the summer of 2000 and one of the worst wildfire seasons on record in the U.S. West. In response to local concerns over wildfire risk, community safety, forest health concerns, restoration need, a handful of small-scale demonstration projects emerged across Central Oregon, including the Metolius Basin Project. At the same time, community-based organizations like COPWRR began to emerge with a focus on enhancing coordination and communication among diverse organizations and civic entities to increase local capacity to plan and implement a shared wildfire risk reduction strategy across agency and organizational jurisdictions.

Alongside COPWRR, with its focus on wildfire risk reduction and economic utilization, grew the Upper Deschutes Basin Fire Learning Network (FLN), with an emphasis on fire-adapted forest restoration, and Deschutes County's Project Wildfire (PW), focused on community wildfire planning and mitigation.

Working separately, each of these efforts addressed different dimensions of the forest restoration and wildfire challenge. These efforts and smaller-scale demonstration projects like Glaze Meadow also helped advanced more formal, multi-stakeholder forest collaborative efforts in Central Oregon that eventually led to the formation of the Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project and the Ochoco Forest Restoration Collaborative.

THE GROWTH OF LOCAL FOREST COLLABORATIVE GROUPS

Thanks to success with early forest collaborative efforts in Central Oregon, in 2009, when Congress appropriated \$40 million dollars for collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forested landscapes under the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP), members of the Fire Learning Network, COPWRR and Project Wildfire jointly applied for and received funding to launch the Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project (DCFP). The DCFP is a community-based, stakeholder-driven forest restoration collaborative that works in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service to restore 257,000 acres of the Deschutes National Forest.

In 2010 DCFP received the first of 10 years of annual appropriations (roughly \$1 million annually) to begin implementing the plan to restore forest and watershed resilience within the Central Oregon CFLRP landscape. The money allocated for this restoration effort provided for project implementation and monitoring, yet it did not fund the collaborative coordination, staffing, or other essential support functions which are foundational to effective collaborative engagement.

The regional need for funding to support effective collaborative efforts increased with the establishment of the Ochoco Restoration Forest Collaborative (OFRC) in 2012. OFRC convenes diverse stakeholders to support effective and timely forest restoration work on the Ochoco National Forest. Members work together to create and implement a shared vision to improve the resilience and well-being of forests and communities in the Ochoco Mountains. Early OFRC efforts to provide collaborative recommendations on the Wolf Project helped increase trust and transparency in the group and catalyzed the growth of the collaborative to take on ever larger and more complex projects across the Ochoco National Forest in the years to come. However, as with COPWRR and DCFP, OFRC recognized a need for sustainable funding to support the coordination, staffing, and support necessary to the growth of the nascent collaborative group.

FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF COFSF

Awareness of the critical need for sustainable funding to support effective collaborative process and capacity led to the creation of the Foundation in 2010. The purpose of COFSF was to provide financial support and resources for collaborative forest restoration collaborative groups with a mission to restore and steward forest resources on Central Oregon’s public and private lands utilizing ecologically sustainable and economically viable methods. COFSF was granted its 501(c)3 nonprofit status in February 2011. Since the Foundation’s inception, the Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC) has provided staffing and administrative support services to COFSF,

including executive directorship, fiscal accounting and management to an all-volunteer Board of Directors. Recently, COFSF has contracted with a private individual to oversee its fiscal administration.

In 2014, the COFSF Board began a process to review and revise its bylaws to reflect the “sunsetting” of COPWRR, the growth of forest collaboration in Central Oregon, and the increasing regional needs within the realm of forest restoration and stewardship. This process sparked conversation about opportunities to continue growing the mission of COFSF, expanding the diversity of programs to reach a wider audience of potential partners, and strengthening internal organizational structures necessary to support this evolution.

The Board and staff of the Foundation have positioned COFSF for a successful and sustainable future. In 2016, the organization performed an audit, reviewed its history, and sought funding to develop a new strategic plan. The planning process culminated in this document and includes a revitalized mission and vision and an expanded set of goals. The planning process also helped reenergize COFSF founders, board members, and staff with ideas opportunities for future growth. Many of the interviews conducted during the planning process, and summarized below, point to interest in more collaboration in Central Oregon and beyond, strengthening partnerships, and keeping our precious and beautiful Central Oregon forests healthy and resilient for future generations.



STRATEGIC PLAN

GOAL #1 *Support Collaborative Forest Restoration in Central Oregon*

Collaborative forest restoration groups in Central Oregon have access to the resources (financial and technical) necessary to ensure they are sustainable, effective, and inclusive, resulting in ecologically, economically, and socially viable forest restoration and stewardship projects.

Strategy 1.1: Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project (DCFP) Support

COFSF supports the effectiveness and success of DCFP by providing strategic leadership, fund development and administration, science and topical expertise, and staff capacity.

Strategy 1.2: Ochoco Forest Restoration Collaborative (OFRC) Support

COFSF supports the effectiveness and success of OFRC by providing strategic leadership, fund development and administration, science and topical expertise, and staff capacity.

Strategy 1.3: Collaborative Resource Support

COFSF ensures collaborative groups have access to resources and tools that enhance the effectiveness of collaborative efforts (i.e. Aspen Restoration document).

GOAL #2 *Create Opportunities for Knowledge-Exchange and Peer-to-Peer Learning*

Diverse stakeholders, including forest restoration practitioners, land managers, and community stakeholders are well-informed, engaged, and connected through active peer-to-peer learning networks, resulting in opportunities for knowledge-transfer and innovation that supports efficient and effective implementation of forest restoration and stewardship practices.

Strategy 2.1: Learning Exchanges (Workshops)

COFSF engages diverse practitioners and other stakeholders in learning from and sharing between experts, practitioners, and engaged stakeholders to facilitate sharing of best practices and innovations that support efficient and effective forest restoration planning and implementation (i.e. Implementation Efficiency Workshop).

Strategy 2.2: Learning Tools (White Papers)

COFSF develops and distributes documents, resources, and tools that facilitate information exchange between experts, practitioners, and engaged stakeholders to support efficient and effective forest restoration planning and implementation (i.e. Aspen Restoration document).

Strategy 2.3: Learning Platforms (Online Sharing)

COFSF develops and maintains an online learning platform to collect and disseminate knowledge of efficient and effective forest restoration planning and implementation strategies.

MISSION

The Central Oregon Forest Stewardship Foundation advances innovative leadership, bringing expertise and resources to increase the quality and quantity of forest restoration and stewardship through information sharing, demonstration projects, and supporting collaborative practices.

GOAL #3 *Facilitate On-the-Ground Demonstration Projects*

On-the-ground demonstration and pilot projects showcasing innovative tools and best practices to achieve forest restoration and stewardship outcomes are available and can serve as a model for other collaborative groups, practitioners, land managers, and stakeholders across the region.

Strategy 3.1: Demonstration Projects

COFSF engages stakeholders in hands-on learning opportunities that showcase best practices and invite practical discussions and problem-solving (i.e. field trips, pilot projects).

VISION

Catalyzing creative solutions to restore healthy and resilient forests and communities across the region.

GOAL #4 *Increase Organizational Effectiveness and Sustainability*

COFSF is a productive and sustainable community nonprofit organization with strong partnerships, diverse funding streams, and robust organizational structures, policies, and practices that support collaborative forest restoration efforts now and for years to come.

Strategy 4.1: Sustain and Diversify Funding

COFSF expands its base of funders and implements campaigns and initiatives to solicit funding from the private sector.

Strategy 4.2: Increase Clarity of Roles and Responsibilities

COFSF utilizes MOUs or other agreements with all appropriate entities, including DCFP, OFRC and COIC, to clarify roles and responsibilities.

Strategy 4.3: Bolster Organizational Structures, Policies, and Practices

COFSF develops needed policy documents, such as an operations and staffing plan, to ensure capacity to accomplish COFSF's goals, strategies, and activities consistent with its new mission.

Strategy 4.4: Strengthen and Diversify Existing and New Partnerships

COFSF continues to build new partnerships that enhance our ability to accomplish the COFSF mission.

Strategy 4.5: Create Organizational Identity and Local Awareness

COFSF creates a marketing and communication plan, increasing organizational identity, visibility, and awareness across the region.



Central Oregon Forest Stewardship Foundation

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