

MEMORANDUM

To be presented at the September 16, 2026 City Council meeting

Date: September 16, 2026

To: Arcata City Council

From: Forest Management Committee (FMC)

Re: Forest Management Committee Annual Report to the Arcata City Council for 2025 Activities (January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025).

Forest Management Committee (FMC)

Chair: Yana Valachovic
Vice Chair: Dennis Halligan
Eamon Engber
Danny Hagans
Ken Hoffman
Erin Kelly
Jack Naylor
Staff Liaison: Mike McDowall

Community-based forestry is a participatory approach to forest management that strengthens communities' capacity to build vibrant local economies—while protecting and enhancing their local forest ecosystems. By integrating ecological, social, and economic strategies into cohesive approaches to forestry issues, community-based approaches give local residents both the opportunity and the responsibility to manage their natural resources effectively and to enjoy the benefits of that responsibility. -Aspen Institute

Introduction

The Forest Management Committee (FMC) advises the City Council (Council) and City Commissioners on topics relating to forestry, ecology, and wildlife on City-owned forestland. In addition to making recommendations to the City Council on potential amendments to the City's Forest Management Plan, Committee members also review the City's timber harvest operations before they are filed with the California Department of Forestry and conduct a post-harvest field review when operations have been completed.

The following information is a summary of the various projects and activities that involved the Forest Management Committee and the Environmental Services Department during the 2025 calendar year. The Committee meets every other month on the second Thursday at 7:00 am or at the call of the chair and also conducts public field trips and evening meetings or workshops on occasion.

General

- The City with guidance from the Forest Management Committee manages the Arcata Community Forest System for the long-term goals of promoting a healthy, late-seral forest ecosystem for wildlife and ecological benefits as well as providing quality of life resources (e.g. trails, access to natural areas) for community members. Management priorities include watershed restoration, wildlife habitat, recreation, carbon sequestration, and timber harvest revenue. The City of Arcata manages three separate tracts of Arcata Community Forest System (ACFS) that together comprise approximately 2,449 acres and include the Arcata Community Forest Tract (ACF), Sunny Brae Forest Tract (SBF), the Jacoby Creek Forest Tract (JCF).
- Timber harvests on City forestlands are developed to improve the health and ecological functioning of forest stands as well as to provide revenue for continued management of the forest and other priority projects such as land acquisition (both forestland and urban open space), road & trails upgrades, and new recreational opportunities. Approximately 25% of the Arcata Community Forest System's land base is held in no-harvest reserves which include riparian areas, and other sensitive habitats. Planned annual harvests are approximately less than one-half of the annual growth increment, therefore, the forests are accruing volume, structural complexity, and age over time at a significantly faster rate compared to non-managed forestland and most private timberlands in the western United States.

Key Highlights (2025):

- Completed inventories for three registered voluntary carbon sequestration projects: Sunny Brae Forest, JCF Barnum & JCF Lucchesi
- Investment in forest infrastructure:
JCF Upgrades: Three culvert replacements, new bridge & two rock ford stream crossing upgrades
- Completed timber harvest:
Contributed revenue & implemented the above forest infrastructure improvements
- Continued trail improvements:
Including Sunny Brae Forest's Beith Creek Trail re-route & improved alignment

Committee Meeting Dates (2025):

(6 total meetings held)

- January 9, 2025 -- Regular Meeting
- March 13, 2025 -- Regular Meeting
- May 8, 2025 -- Regular Meeting; Canceled
- June 6, 2025 -- Special Meeting
- July 10, 2025 -- Regular Meeting; Canceled
- July 31, 2025 -- Special Meeting
- September 11, 2025 -- Regular Meeting
- November 13, 2025 -- Regular Meeting

Committee Activities, Projects & Field Trips

- The Committee received a presentation from Green Diamond Resource Company on Barred Owl removal & management (Jan. '25).
- The Committee received a staff report on the Open Space, Parks and Trails Special Tax 2023-2024 Priorities & Outcomes and provided recommendations for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (Jan. '25).
- The Committee selected two representatives for the Open Space Special Tax Ad Hoc Group. Committee members D. Halligan and E. Kelly volunteer as representatives for the 2025-2026 Ad Hoc group (Jan. '25).
- The Committee received staff reports on City Carbon Projects (JCF-Barnum; CAR 935) and 2024 JCF timber harvest completion (Jan. '25).
- The Committee reviewed CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone Mapping for Arcata; no actions taken (Mar. '25).
- The Committee received staff reports on the Forest Stewards Guild's Pacific West Gathering, Northern Spotted Owl Surveys, and Notice of Timber Operations (NTO #24) and JCF culvert replacements (Mar. '25).
- The Committee received report from E. Sinkhorn (Director of Environmental Services Dept.) and committee member D. Halligan on February's meeting with the "Measure A" Open Space Special Tax Ad Hoc Group (Mar. '25).
- The Committee conducted a pre-harvest inspection of proposed 2025 JCF timber operations; NTO #24 (June '25).
- The Committee participated in a field trip to ACF to view & discuss Potential Elder Trees & the proposed ACF Bike Skills Park. Field trip co-hosted by Marie Antoine & Stephen Sillett (Cal Poly Humboldt: Dept. of Forestry, Research Associate & Professor respectively). (Sept. '25)
- The Committee reviewed and provided input in the City's Draft Spotted Owl Resource Plan (SORP). The Committee also formally recognized the biological significance of Barred Owl management as part of an overall regional strategy to help in the recovery of N. Spotted Owl and motioned support for City staff to work with adjacent landowners on Barred Owl management actions (Nov. '25).
- The Committee received staff reports on: Completed 2025 timber harvest (NTO #24), upcoming 2026 Climate Action Reserve Carbon Project Verification (CAR 575, CAR 694, & CAR 935), and Redwood Park boundary management (Nov. '25).
- The Committee approved past committee minutes from all applicable meetings. Minutes approved as follows: 1/9/25, 3/13/25, 6/6/25, 7/31/25, 9/11/25, & 11/13/25 (November Minutes approved during the FMC January 2026 meeting)

“Measure A” Ad Hoc Committee & FMC Priority Projects:

- The Forest Management Committee provided input for the Open Space, Parks and Trails Special Tax (Measure A) priorities in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation Committee and Wetlands and Creeks Committee. The Committee accepted the offer by Committee members Dennis Halligan and Erin Kelly to be part of the Special Tax Ad Hoc Group for 2025-2026. (June '25)
- In February 2025 the Special Tax Ad Hoc Group discussed potential Open Space, Parks and Trails Special Tax (Measure A) priority projects for 2025-2026, and confirmed priorities related to FMC, Parks & Rec and Wetlands & Creeks. The Ad Hoc Group supported \$45K towards Jacoby Creek Forest (Sec. 30) culvert improvements to be implemented under NTO #24. During the adoption of the 2025/26 budget, the City Council adopted these Measure A budget recommendations.
 - o *See photos on page 8--Forest Projects JCF road improvements*

Environmental Services Forest Related Activities & Projects

Timber Harvest:

- City staff completed the 2025 Timber Harvest in JCF (NTO #24; JCF Section 30, Compartments J-1 & J-2). Areas harvested were all located in the Jacoby Creek Tract of the City's existing NTMP; Non-Industrial Timber Management Plan 1-99-NTMP-033 HUM. The 2025 summarized harvest specifics were as follows:

2025 log buyer information:

- o Willits Redwood Company: \$850/MBF for <15" redwood, \$975/MBF for 15-23" redwood, \$1,150/MBF for >24" redwood
- o CW Wood Products: \$750/MBF for 8-15" redwood
- o KP Custom Mill Works: \$600/MBF for 8-15" redwood, \$1,050/MBF for >16" redwood
- o North Fork Lumber Company: \$600/MBF for Douglas-fir, \$405/MBF for fir

2025 harvest summary:

- o Notice of Timber Operations (NTO): NTO #24; Jacoby Creek, Section 30
 - o Licensed Timber Operator (LTO): Ford Logging/Pacific Earthscape; utilizing both cable yarding and ground-based tractor.
 - o Total harvest area: ~24 acres
 - o Total harvest volume: ~440 MBF
 - o Total sale of timber for 2025: \$319,341.16
 - o Redwood: ~233 MBF net
 - o Douglas-fir: ~136 MBF net
 - o Grand Fir/White fir: ~34 MBF net
 - o Total contract with LTO: \$291,963.56
- With the completed successful harvest, the City made a significant investment in forest road infrastructure in the Jacoby Creek Forest through NTO #24 which addressed deferred maintenance, enhanced water quality, and ensured access through Section 30 for decades to come. The NTO included the placement of a new bridge over Hoot Creek, replacement of four aging culverts, and installation of one rock ford. FMC members supported the purchase and design of the bridge and siting of bridge abutments.
 - o *See photos on page 8--Forest Projects JCF Hoot Cr. bridge replacement*
 - o *See photos on page 9--Forest Projects 2025 Timber Operations*

Carbon Projects with Climate Action Reserve:

- Climate Action Reserve Projects: The City maintains three voluntary registered carbon sequestration projects through Climate Action Reserve (CAR). All City forest carbon projects were initially registered with Climate Action Reserve (CAR) in 2012 as Improved Forest Management projects. Plots are re-measured approximately every 12 years. Adherence to the CAR's standards ensures emission reductions associated with projects are real, permanent and additional.
 - o CAR 575: Sunny Brae Forest Tract (Sunny Brae parcel)
 - o CAR 694: Jacoby Creek Forest Tract (Lucchesi parcels)
 - o CAR 935: Jacoby Creek Forest Tract (Barnum parcels)

While the City focused in 2025 on completing carbon project inventories to support reverification of carbon stocks through the Climate Action Reserve, the City did deliver 786 metric tonnes of forest carbon to several buyers contributing \$27,234 of revenue to the Forest Fund. Cal Poly Humboldt University offset carbon emissions from their university-funded travel via the purchase of a significant number carbon offset credits from the Arcata Community Forest. A local business located in Arcata also purchased a significant number of credits to offset business travel emissions. Following reverification in 2026, City staff anticipate many more offsets to be available for purchase in late 2026.

Forest Roads/Trails/Watershed/Vegetation Projects

- In 2025, City staff completed a reroute of a section of the multi-use Beith Creek Loop Trail in the Sunny Brae Forest Tract. The southern portion of the Beith Creek Loop Trail was originally constructed along an old, very steep skid trail. Natural Resources staff rerouted the trail and decommissioned the old skid trail. The trail reroute provides a more sustainable grade, enhanced drainage and a more enjoyable trail experience.
- In 2025, City staff, with support from youth with the Humboldt Composite Mountain Bike Team, designed and completed environmental compliance for the Landing Chaser Skills Park in the Arcata Community Forest for mountain bikers of all ages to progressively grow their technical biking skills. The proposal for such a skills park originated from a high school student who hoped for a local space to practice technical trail features found elsewhere in the state but not in the Humboldt Bay area – features such as skinnies, drops, berms and rocky climbs. Landing Chaser Skills Park was planned within an existing forest landing at the junction of Trails #9, #4 and Peanut Butter – further focusing mountain bike specific features in the ACF at this central location which has helped to alleviate trail user conflicts on multi-use trails elsewhere in the forest. (The skills park has recently been completed in summer 2026.)
- Over 18 miles of roads and trails continue to be maintained at a high standard. City staff continue to improve signage within the forest to encourage further use of cellular based maps for navigating the trail system and maintaining safe biking speeds. Continued outreach on shared recreational trail use occurs via hardcopy fliers and kiosk signage.
- City Natural Resources (NR) staff annually maintain all safety upgrades on mountain bike specific trails, reapply trail surface rock where needed and maintain all road & trail drainage features and infrastructure. Additionally, NR staff responds and addresses all citizen reports/requests for fallen trees, vegetation growth and trail concerns.

Environmental Services Forest Research and Monitoring

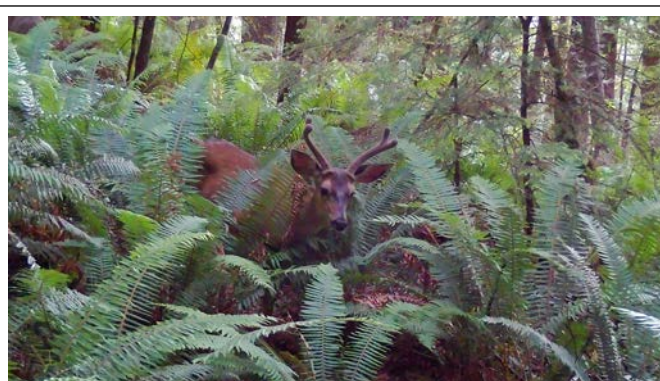
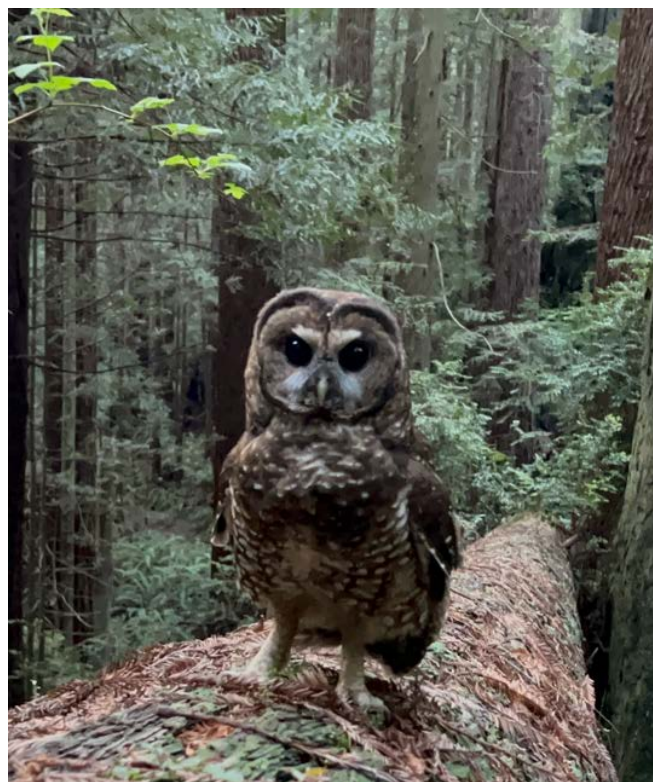
- City staff continued to monitor for various forest wildlife species. Staff completed annual surveys for Northern Spotted Owl, Barred Owl and other Species of Special Concern on all City owned forestland. Annual owl survey information is shared with applicable adjacent landowners in a cooperative manner to help facilitate ongoing efforts for spotted owl recovery. Annual owl survey information is also provided to State and Federal agencies as well as the California Natural Diversity Database.
 - o See photos on page 7-- Forest Research and Monitoring

2026 Planned Committee and Forest Related Activities

(Some 2026 planned activities may have been completed at time of presenting this report)

- FMC to continue to work with staff on finalization of Spotted Owl Resource Plan (SORP)
- FMC to continue to provide recommendations in areas of specialized technical expertise.
- FMC to continue to provide recommendations on recreational forest management policies.
- FMC and City staff to conduct a field trip in fall to visit the completed 2025 timber harvest (NTO #24, JCF-Section 30). Committee members will complete a post-harvest inspection and provide recommendations to staff as needed.
- FMC to conduct a field trip to the proposed 2026 timber harvest area (NTO #26, JCF-Section 30). This NTO is anticipated to be initiated in late August '26 and will be reported on in the 2026 Forest Committee Annual Report.
- FMC to provide technical expertise in forest road maintenance and culvert upgrades associated with the proposed 2026 timber harvest (NTO #26)
- FMC to continue involvement in the Non-Industrial Timber Management Plan (NTMP) amendments and finalizing the draft Forest Management Plan update
- FMC to coordinate with other City advisory committees on matters of mutual interest such as the Redwood Park Master Plan and Open Space, Parks & Trails Special Tax expenditures oversight.
- City staff and FMC to continue to strengthen cooperative partnerships with State and Federal agencies, Cal Poly Humboldt, Indigenous Tribes, USFS Redwood Sciences Lab and College of the Redwoods to involve students, faculty and scientists in additional forest research projects. Additionally, ES staff to continue work with Cal Poly staff on long-term upper Jacoby Creek Forest data sharing and planning.
- Continue to strengthen working relationships with the Wiyot Tribe through targeted outreach.
- Complete verification for all City carbon projects: Sunny Brae Forest (CAR 575), JCF Lucchesi (CAR 694) & JCF Barnum (CAR935). Pre-verification additional fieldwork to be performed by City staff.
- Seek cost share funding from the California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP) or other grant sources for habitat, road and timber stand improvement work.
- Continued collaboration with adjacent landowners on cooperative road use agreement and road improvements for City forestlands.

2025 Forest Research and Monitoring Photos



Northern Spotted Owl, Roosevelt elk, mountain lions, black bear & black-tailed deer

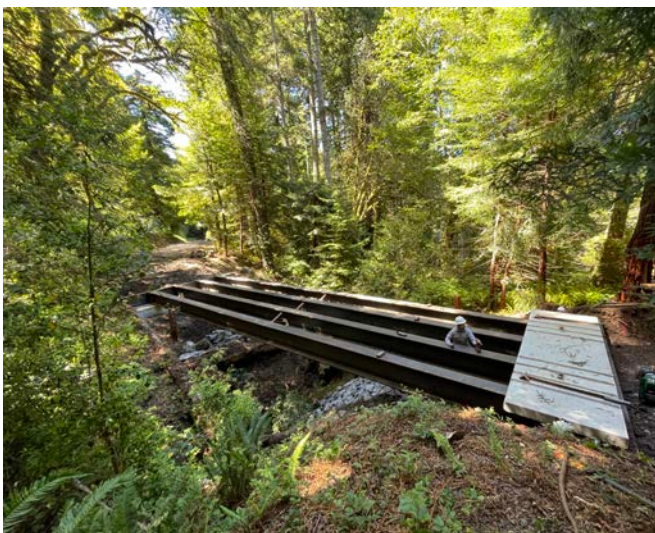
2025 Forest Project Photos



Upgraded replacement of a 30" culvert with new 36" culvert in JCF (as part of NTO #24; Crossing X-B)



JCF Hoot Creek Bridge upgraded replacement (Original bridge installed ~1987)



2025 Forest Project Photos Continued



Timber operations 2025 with cable yarding equipment (NTO #24)



Completed 2025 timber harvest areas (NTO #24)



City of Arcata Forests

Arcata Community Forest Tract - Sunny Brae Forest Tract - Jacoby Creek Forest Tract
1-99NTMP-033 HUM

Arcata Community Forest Tract

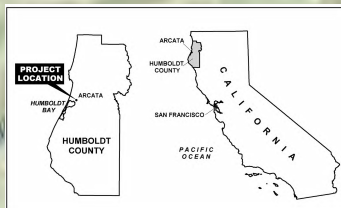
USGS 7.5 Minute Topographic Map: Arcata North & South Quadrangles
Section 27 & 28, T6N, R1E, HB&M

Sunny Brae Forest Tract

USGS 7.5 Minute Topographic Map: Arcata South Quadrangle
Section 34 T6N, R1E, HB&M

Jacoby Creek Forest Tract

USGS 7.5 Minute Topographic Map: Arcata South & Korbelt Quadrangles
Sections 24 & 25, T5N, R1E
&
Sections 19, 30, 31, 32, & 33, T5N, R2E, HB&M



National Geographic, Esri, Garmin, HERE, UNEP-WCMC, USGS, NASA, ESA, METI, NRCAN, GEBCO, NOAA, increment P Corp.

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