

Redwood Futures Events Synthesis

In early October 170 community leaders gathered at a regional summit for the Conversation of 100 in northern California and there began to outline of a sweeping plan to revitalize the health and productivity of our redwood forests and the ecological and human systems that rely on them.

¹Initial conversations focused in ten areas.

- Restoring forest conditions
- Increasing the value of redwood products
- Supporting ongoing conservation and restoration efforts
- Improving the regulatory process for better outcomes
- Alleviating threats to redwood forest ecosystems
- Creating revenue for ecosystem services
- Improving management on public lands
- Capitalizing on bio-energy opportunities
- Increasing revenues from tourism
- Increasing regional collaboration

All conversations were robust and several of the working groups identified actionable ideas for moving forwards. Notes from the initial conversations are available at www.rffi.org.

Several participants felt it would be beneficial to continue the conversations closer to home in order to engage a larger number of people within their respective counties. On January 30th, 2010, the buckets of work created at the Conversation of 100 were brought to a community meeting in Mendocino County and specific countywide strategies were created. Approximately 80 Mendocino County community members participated. A similar meeting was held in Southern Humboldt in February. This group of 40 used information from previous meetings to shape strategies appropriate for their region. The following tables show the strategies that came out of each event. In an attempt to work collaboratively by linking overlapping projects, similar established efforts in Mendocino and Humboldt Counties are included in the tables.

¹ These ten areas of focus were developed at the Future Forests II conference held Humboldt County in 2008. Please see the final page for a list of topics developed at Future Forests II.

Education		
Event / Group Origin	Strategy (ies)	Contact (s)
Humboldt State University	Engage youth in the dialogue about forestry science, economics and stewardship as well as provide them hands on, in the woods experiences. Create a university based training institute on redwood forest policy pertaining to carbon sequestration.	
Mendocino College	To organize and conduct at least one, possibly two, forest site tours for the RFFI/MendoFutures organizers and workshop/meeting participants.	Carol Mordhorst Sharon Edell
Redwood Forest Foundation Inc.	RFFI is working with schools, universities, vocational training educators and Native American representatives to develop educational, vocational and cultural programs that will use Usal as a learning laboratory.	Lin Barrett

Restoration		
Event / Group Origin	Strategy (ies)	Contact (s)
Humboldt State University	Describe the future forest conditions we are striving for and how progress toward those conditions can be measured.	
Mendocino College	Develop a project-oriented restoration network with an initial task of organizing a "Restoration Summit" where we invite individuals and groups involved in restoration to meet and discuss ideas, projects, etc.	Lisa Bolton
Southern Humboldt	Develop a big picture of "Future Desired Conditions" in our forests	Richard Gienger
Redwood Forest Foundation Inc.	RFFI is advocating a plan developed in conjunction with other landowners for an injection of capital to fund "shovel ready" jobs restoring the natural infrastructure of California's Redwood Region as a means of stimulating the economy	Art Harwood Lin Barrett

Biomass

Event / Group Origin	Strategy (ies)	Contact (s)
Humboldt State University	Create biomass research and demonstration projects that explore the feasibility of forest-based energy production systems while evaluating their economic and ecological implications.	
Mendocino County Woody Biomass Working Group	Conduct a feasibility study that looks at locating a biomass facility at several different locations throughout Mendocino County in order to assess the proper scale and technology for a biomass facility based on environmental, economic and social characteristics of each location.	Judith Harwood
Mendocino County Coastal Biomass Group	Study the feasibility of, and attract investment towards, locating a 15MW combined heat and power plant at the old G.P. bark dump site near Ft. Bragg.	Jere Melo
Mendocino College	Identify possible products and services that are derived from sustainably managed forests with an emphasis on small diameter trees for building.	Tim Easterbrook
Southern Humboldt	Use local Fire Safe Councils as the vehicle for putting together hazardous fuels reduction packages for landowners that combine grants, the sale of products (by-products), private investment on the part of the landowner, and regulatory guidance.	Cybelle Immitt Bill Easterwood

Capacity Development

Event / Group Origin	Strategy (ies)	Contact (s)
Mendocino College	Seek out municipal bonds, forestry bonds and restoration money from NGO's, Foundations and Private-for-profit groups by creating a Case Statement for funding, consulting financial experts and connecting up with appropriate people to pursue these funds. In addition, pursue smaller capacity building funds to push the Redwood Futures agenda forward.	Art Harwood
Southern Humboldt	Find equity to fund a restoration plan with projects, budgets and deliverable outcomes that involves other RedwoodFutures and community groups.	Art Harwood

Policy

Event / Group Origin	Strategy (ies)	Contact (s)
Mendocino College	The policy working group focused on two areas for action steps in the coming months. First is a certification program for the region to be developed in conjunction with the California Redwoods Association; the second seeks to enlist the direct involvement of the County of Mendocino in the Redwood Futures Initiative.	Win Bowen

Outreach

Event / Group Origin	Strategy (ies)	Contact (s)
Southern Humboldt	Create the new narrative about the future of redwood forests.	
Mendocino College	Create sustained media, school and community outreach through the use of a Power-point presentation, film, website, promotional plan, digital stories and by writing a story about what a restoration economy would look like.	Steve Zuieback

Open Space

Event / Group Origin	Strategy (ies)	Contact (s)
Mendocino College	Investigate, and propose recommendations for, the creation of one or more sustainably funded agencies that will create special districts that enhance quality of life and economic opportunities in our County.	Art Harwood

Land Use and General Plan

Event / Group Origin	Strategy (ies)	Contact (s)
Southern Humboldt	Humboldt County Board of Supervisors Members and staff will present changes to the General Plan that are consistent with the environmental, economic, and social goals of forest restoration.	Clif Clendenen

Silviculture/ Economic Viability		
Event / Group Origin	Strategy (ies)	Contact (s)
Humboldt State University	Develop an understanding of the economics of growing trees longer (in the belief that older forests will produce better habitat, more robust ecosystems and higher quality wood).	
Southern Humboldt	Create a better understanding of the economics of extended rotations to assess costs and benefits of a transition to growing older, bigger trees.	John Rogers

Youth Opportunities		
Event / Group Origin	Strategy (ies)	Contact (s)
Humboldt State University	Engage youth in the dialogue about forestry science, economics and stewardship as well as provide them hands on, in the woods experiences.	
Southern Humboldt	No clear strategy was developed, but the group talked about guided tours, merging cultural practices with ecotourism and agri-tourism and using Deborah Giraud (UC extension) as a source to help landowners evaluate eco and agri-tourism opportunities.	Peggy Hoaglin

There were several topics from the initial conversation at Humboldt State University that were not specifically developed into strategies at any of the Redwood Futures events. These topics, and organizations currently working in these areas, are listed below:

Humboldt State University Initial Conversation Topics that were not Developed into Strategies at any Redwood Futures Events	
Topics	Collaborating Organizations
Increasing the value of redwood products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mendocino Redwood Company • Humboldt Redwood Company • Redwood Forest Foundation Inc.
Creating revenue for ecosystem services i.e Carbon Markets, Easements etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redwood Forest Foundation

Improving management on public lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jackson Demonstration State Forest • Bureau of Land Management • U.S. Forest Service
Increasing revenues from tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redwood Forest Foundation • National Geographic Geo-tourism • Bureau of Land Management
Increasing regional collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redwood Futures Leadership Team
Improving the regulatory process for better outcomes	
Alleviating threats to redwood forest ecosystems	

1 Topics From Future Forests II

Topics	Description
Infrastructure	Does our region have the best configuration and quantity of infrastructure to meet our needs? This group might focus on milling capacity, access, secondary manufacturing facilities, transmission lines, etc. While this is a broad topic the conversation could be designed to meet the needs of the producers involved.
Recreation/ Tourism	<p>The natural and agricultural lands of Humboldt County provide the opportunity for agricultural, nature and heritage tourism. Such tourism might include farm stays, farm tours, small-scale campsites, forest tours, bird watching, etc. Developing these tourism opportunities could provide alternative sources of revenue to landowners, additional jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities.</p> <p>RFFI in conjunction with community members from Mendocino and Humboldt counties is developing plans for a variety of activities to develop recreational opportunities on the Usal Redwood Forest that are consistent with the protection of ecological and archaeological attributes as set forth in the proposed conservation easement</p>
Marketing	What opportunities exist to brand and identify agricultural and forest products produced from the region?
Regulations	Policy options, incentives and/or reforms needed to support a viable and sustainable forest products industry.

Monetizing Ecosystem Services	<p>This group could work to determine how private landowners could receive greater economic benefits from the sale of services that they provide through their stewardship of their ranch and forest holding. The public trust resources (or ecosystem services) that Humboldt County landowners provide range from open space, clean water, wildlife habitat to climate stabilization. What markets or incentives exist to reward landowners for these services? Two topics discussed at the workshop in some detail included carbon credits and the transfer of development rights. These topics could be the starting point for the conversation around these newly emerging markets.</p>
New Product Development	<p>Several product concepts were put forward at FFII for which markets and/or processing capacity do not yet exist at an appropriate scale. What are the opportunities for Small scale value added processing? How can we move forward to support development of these product concepts? Topics identified include several energy related topics (e.g. biofuels, bio-oil, biowaste), composting, wood pellets, cultivated mushrooms potentially on tanoak logs, log kit homes, etc.</p>
Energy (with an emphasis on biomass)	<p>A conversation focused on assessing challenges and brainstorming possibilities for transforming local biomass resource to sustainable industry and energy.</p>
Public Lands	<p>USFS & BLM lands have tremendous need for forest health thinning but there is a need to speed implementation. This group would try to use the Weaverville Community Forest model and look for places to duplicate that effort in eastern Humboldt County. This group would also try to foster re-employment of displaced forest workers in forest health projects, not traditional timber sales.</p>
Restoration	<p>This group would work to determine how best to support the restoration of habitats back to their original condition to provide greater productivity, stability, and usefulness of natural resources.</p>
Facilitating the Conversation	<p>Humboldt Futures is a volunteer-based process serving as “honest brokers” for countywide issues. Their overriding goal is to involve the community in a way of operating through varied connection and conversations that result in systemic and sustainable solutions for Humboldt County.</p>
Maximizing Value from Traditional Wood Products	<p>Creation of a wood products cooperative. Jim Robbins gave a great presentation at FFII on the value and benefits of pruning. What techniques are appropriate for your situation? What needs to be tested?</p>