

MEMORANDUM

Presented at the June 21, 2023, City Council meeting

Date: June 21, 2022

To: Arcata City Council

From: Forest Management Committee (FMC)

Re: Forest Management Committee Annual Report to the Arcata City Council for 2022/23 Activities (July 1, 2022- June 30, 2023)

Forest Management Committee

Chair: Dennis Halligan,
Vice Chair: Michael Furniss
Danny Hagan
Ken Hoffman
Jack Naylor
Erin Kelly
Yana Valachovic
Staff Liaison: Mike McDowall

Introduction

The Forest Management Committee advises the City 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 (FMC) during fiscal year 2022/2023. 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.

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

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.

Activities & Projects

- By unanimous vote the Committee re-elected Dennis Halligan as Chair and Michael Furniss as Vice Chair (no change).
- The Committee provided input on the Redwood Park Improvement Plan, specifically on vegetation management and forest outreach/trailhead signage.
- The Committee provided input on the construction of the second leg of the "Jump Trail" in the ACF.
- The Committee provided input on the City's Gateway Area Plan, specifically on maintaining diversity of local larger diameter milling opportunities and support for relocation of existing businesses as part of potential rezoning of Barrel District.
- Environmental Services staff completed the Fickle Hill crossing and trailhead improvements of the Arcata Ridge Trail; linkage now complete for ACF and SBF of the Arcata Community Forest System.
- The Committee provided input and further refinement a 5-10 year priority list for the Arcata Community Forest System and Forest Management Committee. City staff maintain corresponding maps to compliment the priority list.
- The 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. Some projects identified in fiscal year 2022/2023 as priority projects were forwarded to fiscal year 2023/2024. These projects include but may not be limited to: Margaret Lane Trailhead Improvement, ACF Trail 9 Alternative and Forest Road Improvements.

- Forest improvement priorities that were recommended to City Council for inclusion in Fiscal Year 2023-24 budget were:
 - Margaret Lane Trailhead improvements (SBF Tract)
 - Alternate trail to Trail 9 between Trail 3/3.5 (ACF Tract)
 - Forest road and culvert upgrades (ACF and JCF Tracts)
- The Committee provided expertise for Non-industrial Timber Management Plan (NTMP) amendments for the Jacoby Creek Forest, amending the Kline-LaForge parcel and Swaner parcel into the City's existing NTMP. The amendment for Kline-LaForge was successful in 2022 and the Swaner amendment is pending in 2023.
- A 2022 timber harvest was completed for the Kline-LaForge parcel in the Jacoby Creek Forest Tract. Approximately 320 thousand board feet (MBF) net scale was harvested. The harvest was predominantly redwood (~260 MBF) and Douglas fir (~58 MBF). Logging costs for the harvest were ~\$104,000. The sale of timber yielded \$356,873 in revenue for the City's Forest Fund which covered the City's operational expenses to manage the Community Forest in 2022/23.
- The Committee provided additional project ideas to be added by City staff to the 5-10 year Forest Priorities list. Project ideas included but may not be limited to: Creation of Working Forest Management Plan (WFMP), Fire Management and Soil Restoration for Forsythe the parcel (Arcata Tract)
- Delivered 94 metric tonnes (mT) of forest carbon (as per Climate Action Reserve Tonnes) to various buyers; the sales generate \$1,859 for the City's Forest Fund. The Environmental Services Dept. continues to provide carbon offsets available for purchase by individuals and businesses.

Research and Monitoring

- City staff continued to monitor for various forest wildlife species. Staff completed annual surveys for northern spotted owls and barred owls 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.
- City staff continued the City's second measurement of carbon plots located in the Sunny Brae Forest Tract. Re-measurement and modeling of the data is ongoing and will continue into the 2023/2024 fiscal year. The SBF project is registered through Climate Action Reserve as Improved Forest Management Project CAR 575.
- City staff initiated the City's second measurement of carbon plots located on the Lucchesi parcel of the Jacoby Creek Forest Tract (CAR 694). A professional services contract with BBW Associates of Arcata for field work assistance in the carbon inventory was established. City have been working cooperatively with BBW on the inventory process and the fieldwork is expected to continue into the 2023/2024 fiscal year.
- All City forest carbon projects were initially registered with Climate Action Reserve (CAR) in 2012. Plots are re-measured approximately every 12 years.
 - CAR 575: Sunny Brae Forest Tract (Sunny Brae parcel)
 - CAR 694: Jacoby Creek Forest Tract (Lucchesi parcels)
 - CAR 935: Jacoby Creek Forest Tract (Barnum parcels)

Roads/Trails/Watershed/Vegetation

- Over 18 miles of roads and trails continue to be maintained at a high standard. The City improved signage within the forest to encourage further use of cellular based Avenza 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 staff continued field work on the second leg of the ACF “Jump Trail”. Redwood Coast Mountain Bike Association and the Humboldt High School Composite Mountain Bike Team provided volunteer assistance on trail workdays. City staff also maintained the safety upgrades on the existing “Jump Trail” segment. Committee recommendations for the trail work and improvements have been ongoing and helpful in facilitation of the new alignments and decommissioning of old alignments.
- Several community workdays involving hundreds of volunteer hours helped the city remove invasive plants, maintain & improve trails and assist with litter cleanup.

2023/2024 PLANNED ACTIVITIES

- Conduct a field trip to visit the completed 2022 timber harvest in the JCF (Kline-LaForge parcel). Committee members will complete a post-harvest inspection score and provide recommendations to staff as needed.
- Conduct a field trip to the proposed 2023 timber harvest area in JCF (Swaner parcel).
- Continue to be involved in the Non-Industrial Timber Management Plan (NTMP) amendments.
- Continue involvement with recreational trail construction and other identified trail priorities (e.g. Margaret Lane trailhead ramp, new trail alternative to Trail 9 and full completion of the “Jump Trail”).
- 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.
- Continue to strengthen cooperative partnerships with State and Federal agencies, Cal Poly Humboldt, USFS Redwood Sciences Lab and College of the Redwoods to involve students, faculty and scientists in additional forest research projects. Additionally, 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.
- Obtain approval of a long-term Northern Spotted Owl management plan with State agencies including CalFire and CDFW; (specifically a Spotted Owl Resource Plan [SORP]).
- Update forest carbon inventories in the Sunny Brae Tract (CAR 575), JCF Lucchesi parcel (CAR694) and JCF Barnum parcels (CAR935).
- 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.



New “Jump Trail” and “Peanut Butter Trail” kiosk and signage (ACF Tract)



Local youth riding new “2nd leg of Jump Trail” (ACF Tract)



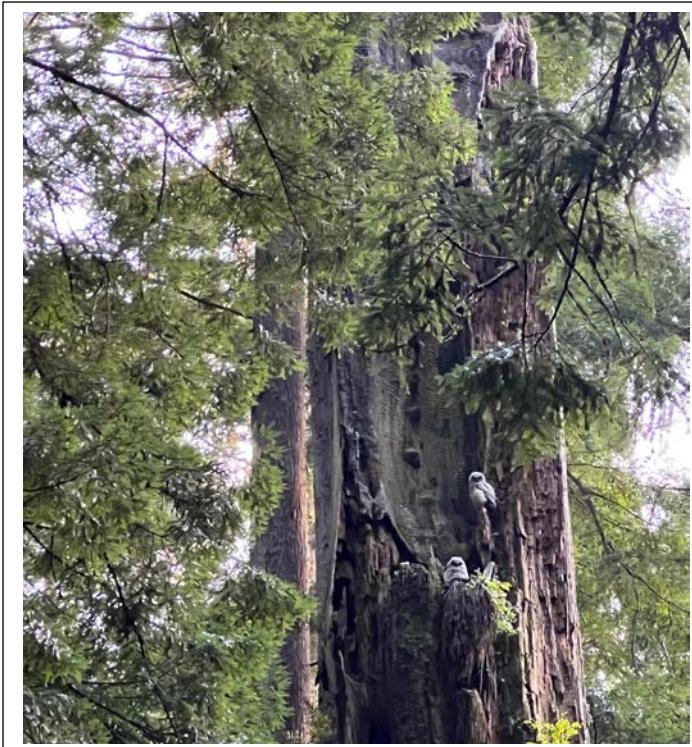
City staff measuring trees for carbon in Sunny Brae Forest (CAR 575)



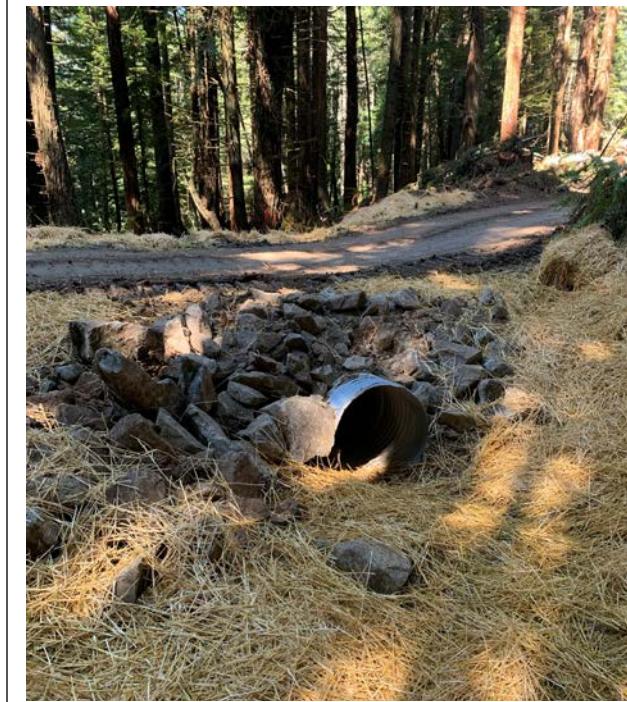
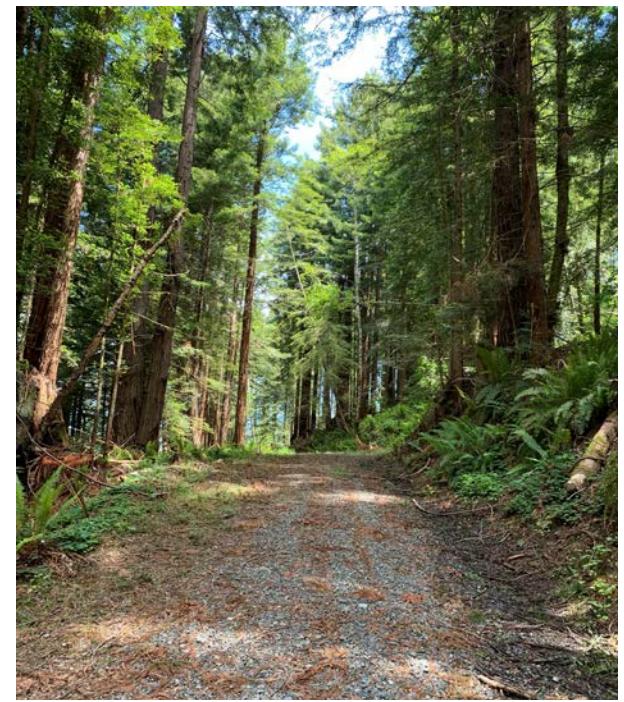
City staff hiking to carbon plot in Sunny Brae Forest (CAR 575)



Northern Spotted Owl (male) found during annual owl surveys



Juvenile Great Horned owls found during annual owl surveys (ACF Tract)



Timber Harvest 2022: New rocked road & new culvert installation
(JCF Tract; Kline LaForge parcel)



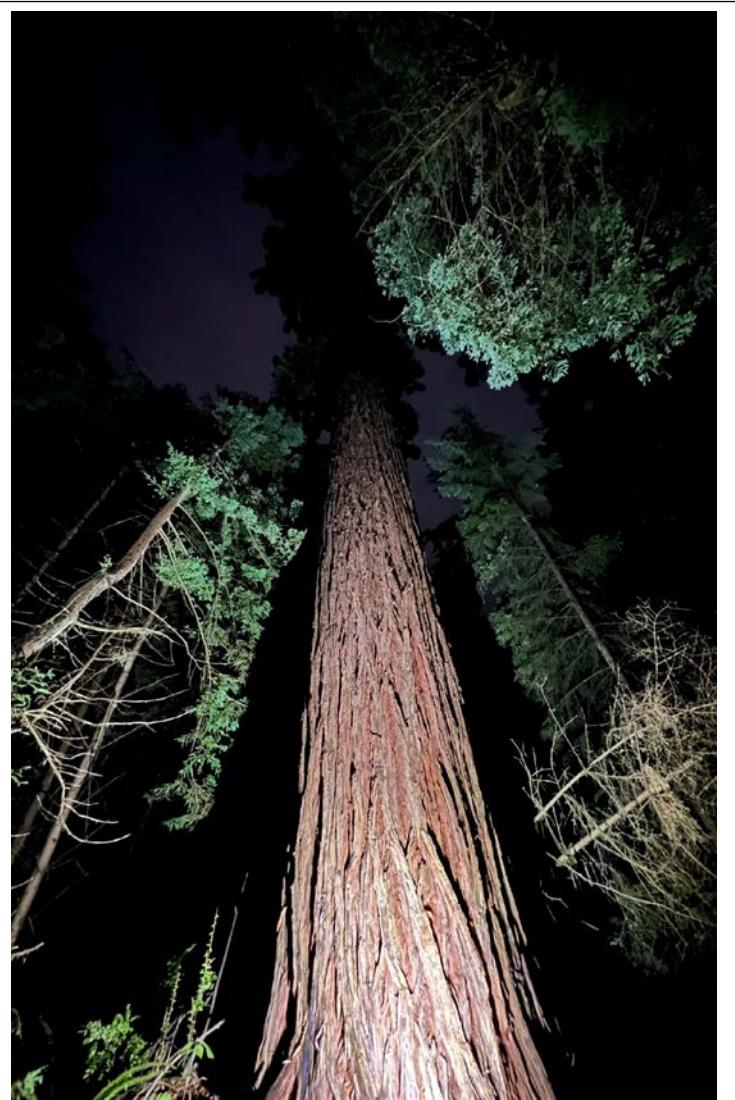
Timber Harvest 2022: Completed harvest area
(JCF Tract; Kline LaForge parcel)



Rare Pink Fawn Lily (JCF Tract)



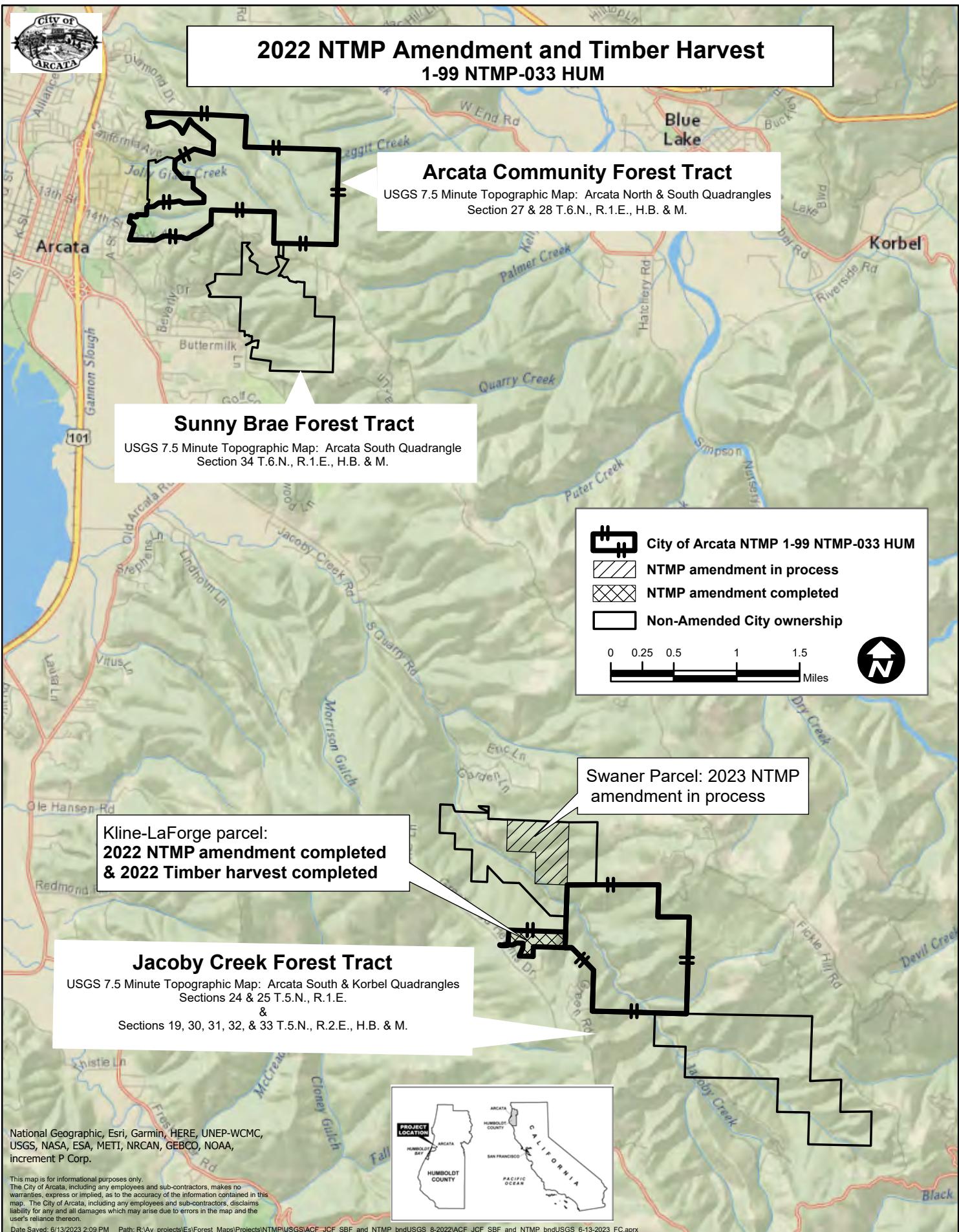
CA Red Legged Frog (JCF Tract)



Forest during owl work (ACF Tract)



Roosevelt Elk herd (JCF Tract)

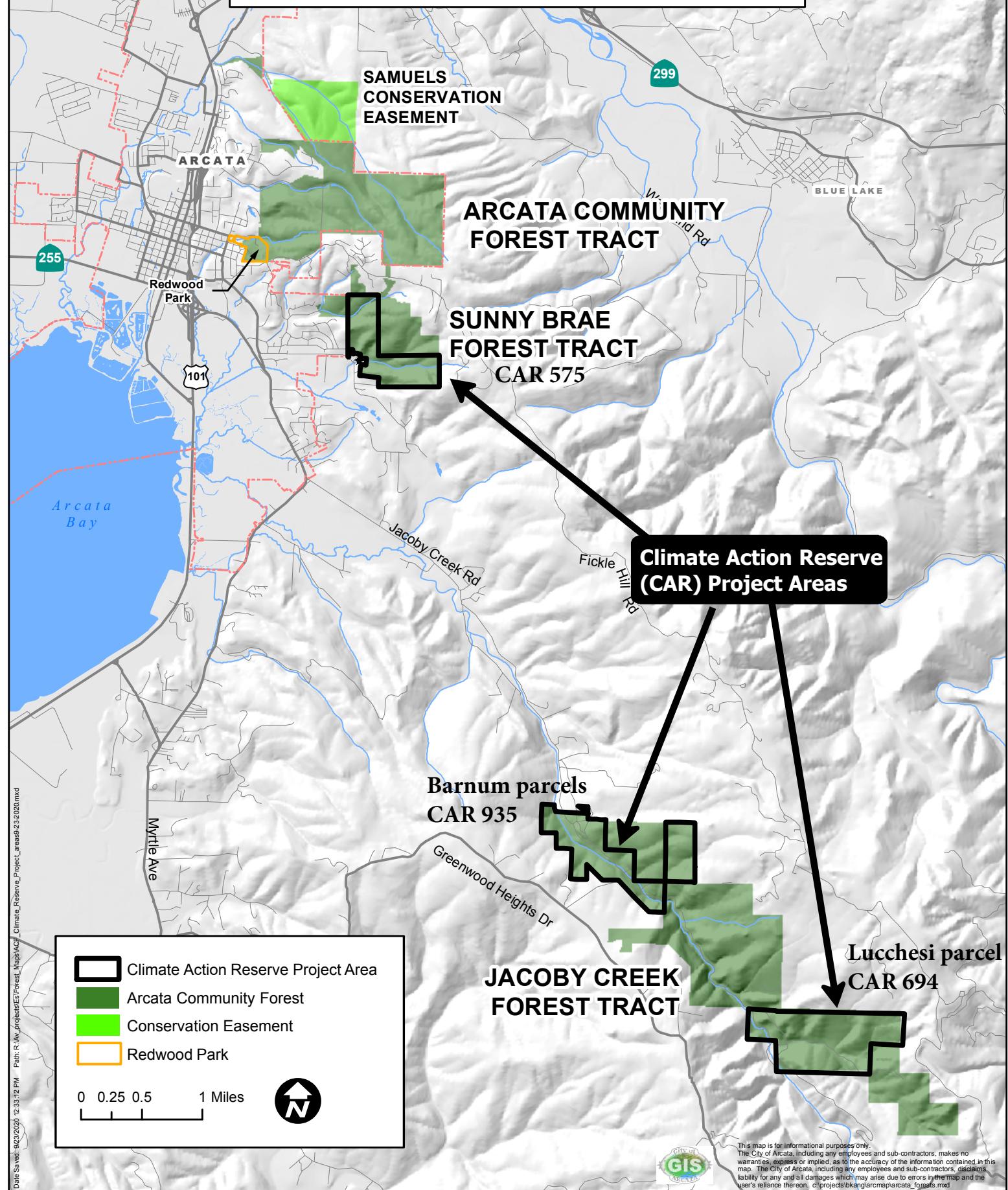




City of Arcata

Climate Action Reserve Project Areas

(City Carbon Projects)



- Climate Action Reserve Project Area
- Arcata Community Forest
- Conservation Easement
- Redwood Park

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



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