

MEMORANDUM

To be presented at the June 5, 2024 City Council meeting

Date: May 1, 2024

To: Arcata City Council

From: Forest Management Committee (FMC)

Re: Forest Management Committee Annual Report to the Arcata City Council for 2023 Activities (January 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023).

Forest Management Committee

Chair: Dennis Halligan,

Vice Chair: Michael Furniss

Danny Hagans

Ken Hoffman

Jack Naylor

Erin Kelly

Yana Valachovic

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 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 2023 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, ~614 acres), Sunny Brae Forest Tract (SBF, ~336 acres), the Jacoby Creek Forest Tract (JCF, ~1,499 acres).
- 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

- 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
- The Committee provided input and further refinement of a 5-10 year priority list for the Arcata Community Forest System and Forest Management Committee. City staff maintain corresponding maps to complement the priority list.
 - FMC project addition: ACF Forsythe parcel soil restoration and road improvement
 - FMC elevated priority status: Creation of Working Forest Management Plan (WFMP), & Fire Management Discussion.
- The Committee provided input and accepted the 2022 FMC annual report
- By unanimous vote the Committee re-elected Dennis Halligan as Chair and Michael Furniss as Vice Chair (no change).
- The Committee attended a pre-harvest field trip to the JCF (Swaner parcel; NTO #23)
- City staff completed the JCF Swaner parcel amendment into the City's existing NTMP (Non-Industrial Timber Management Plan 1-99-NTMP-033 HUM)
- City staff completed NTMP amendment for protection measures for CESA bumble bee candidate species (Western Bumble Bee & Critch Bumble Bee)

- The Committee attended a post-harvest field trip the JCF (Kline-LaForge parcel; NTO #22)
 - 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.
- City staff completed a Conservation Easement for the Davies parcel adjacent to the ACF (APN 500-011-007)
- The Committee accepted the offers by Committee members J. Naylor & E. Kelly to be part of the Special Tax Ad Hoc Group for 2024.
- The Committee provided input and accepted staff recommendations for FMC Open Space, Parks and Trails Special Tax (Measure A) 2023-2024 potential priorities.
- Delivered 147 metric tonnes (mT) of forest carbon (as per Climate Action Reserve Tonnes) to various buyers; the sales generate \$2,352 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 completed the City's second measurement of carbon plots located in the Sunny Brae Forest Tract (SBF). All field re-measurement and data modeling was completed and awaits verification; verification for the project will occur in 2025. The SBF project is registered through Climate Action Reserve as Improved Forest Management Project CAR 575.
- City staff with the assistance BBW & Associates staff completed the City's second measurement of carbon plots located on the Lucchesi parcel of the Jacoby Creek Forest Tract (CAR 694). All field re-measurement and data modeling was completed and awaits verification; verification for the project will occur in 2025. City have been working cooperatively with BBW & Associates on the fieldwork inventory process. BBW & Associates were contracted to assist with the project during December 2022.
- 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 completed field work on the second leg of the ACF “Jump Trail” and the second leg of the “Peanut Butter Trail”. New trail names and trailhead signs were installed for the completed new legs (“Lorax” and “Jelly” were chosen trail names for the completed new legs). Redwood Coast Mountain Bike Association and the Humboldt High School Composite Mountain Bike Team provided volunteer assistance.
- City staff maintained all recent safety upgrades on all mountain bike specific trail segments.
- City staff installed additional new split rail fencing adjacent to the “Jump” and “Lorax” trails.
- City staff installed crushed rock on the “Ridge Trail” (south of Fickle Hill Rd). Rocked trail surface now complete and open for multi-use

2024 PLANNED ACTIVITIES

- No timber harvest occurred in 2023. The planned 2023 harvest (NTO #23; JCF Swaner parcel) will be initiated during the summer of 2024. City staff and the FMC Committee anticipate a field trip in fall to visit the completed 2024 timber harvest in the JCF. Committee members will complete a post-harvest inspection and provide recommendations to staff as needed.
- FMC to conduct a field trip to an second proposed 2024 timber harvest area in JCF (NTO #24, Section 30). Notice of Timber Operations (NTO) preparation is currently ongoing in the spring 2024.
- A fuels reduction project is currently being prepared for 2024 operations in the JCF. The proposed small diameter fuels reduction project will occur on the Lima parcel in non-amended portion of the upper Jacoby Creek parcels.
- FMC field trip to consider addition of P.E.T. Trees (Potential Elder Trees) into City forest management.
- Planned forest projects for 2024 initiation: Margaret Lane trailhead ramp, new trail alternative to Trail 9, full completion of the “Jump Trail” (lower “Lorax” segment), and road surface rockering in Sunny Brae Forest
- FMC to continue to be involved in the Non-Industrial Timber Management Plan (NTMP) amendments.
- 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, 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 involvement with recreational trail construction and other identified trail priorities
- 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]).
- Complete forest carbon inventory for JCF Barnum (CAR935). Field work to be completed by BBW & Associates, Arcata.
- Complete all related forest carbon project deliverables for the Sunny Brae Tract (CAR 575), JCF Lucchesi parcel (CAR694) and JCF Barnum parcels (CAR935); Project verifications in 2025.
- 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.



Jacoby Creek during carbon inventory field work (JCF Tract; Sec 30)



Post-harvest field trip with Forest Management Committee (JCF Tract; Kline-LaForge parcel)
Harvest year 2022



Post-harvest stand condition (JCF Tract; Kline-LaForge parcel)
Harvest year 2022



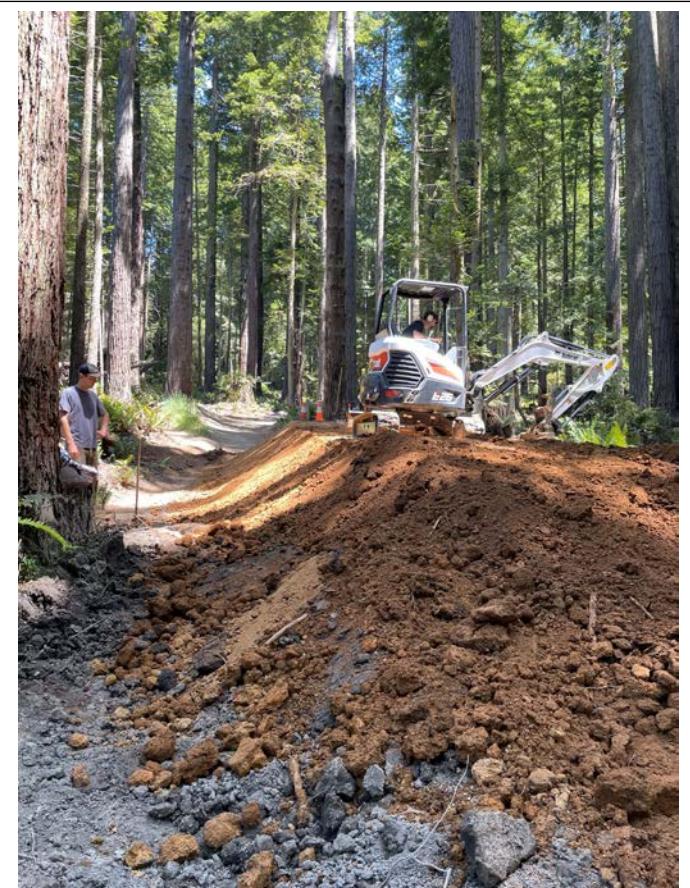
Carbon inventory during field work (SBF Tract)



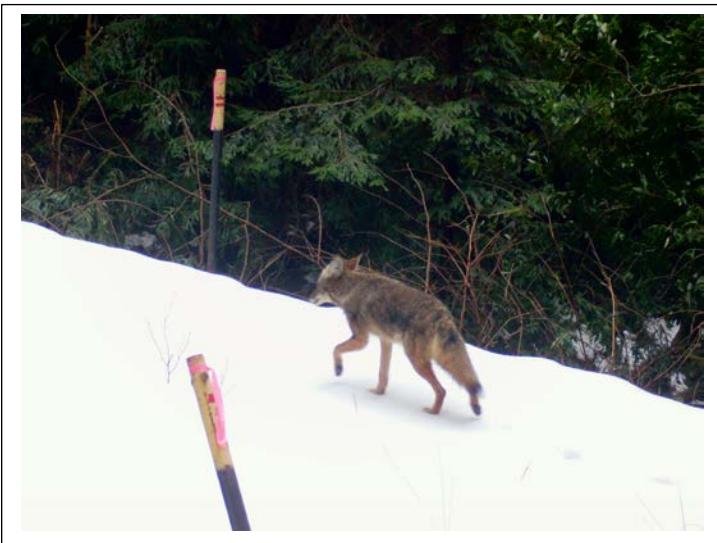
Carbon inventory during field work (SBF Tract)



Carbon plot monumentation (JCF Tract; Lucchesi parcel)



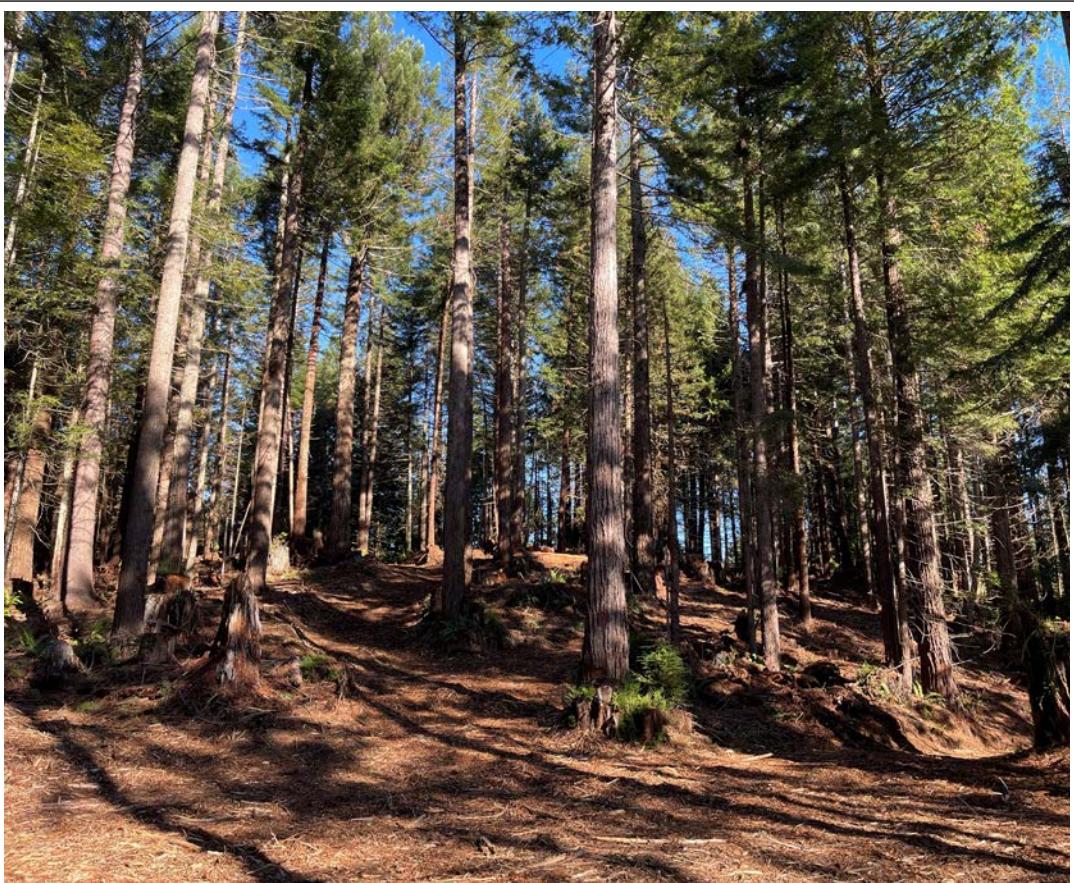
New trailhead and continued construction for "Lorax" segment on Lower Jump Trail (SBF Tract)



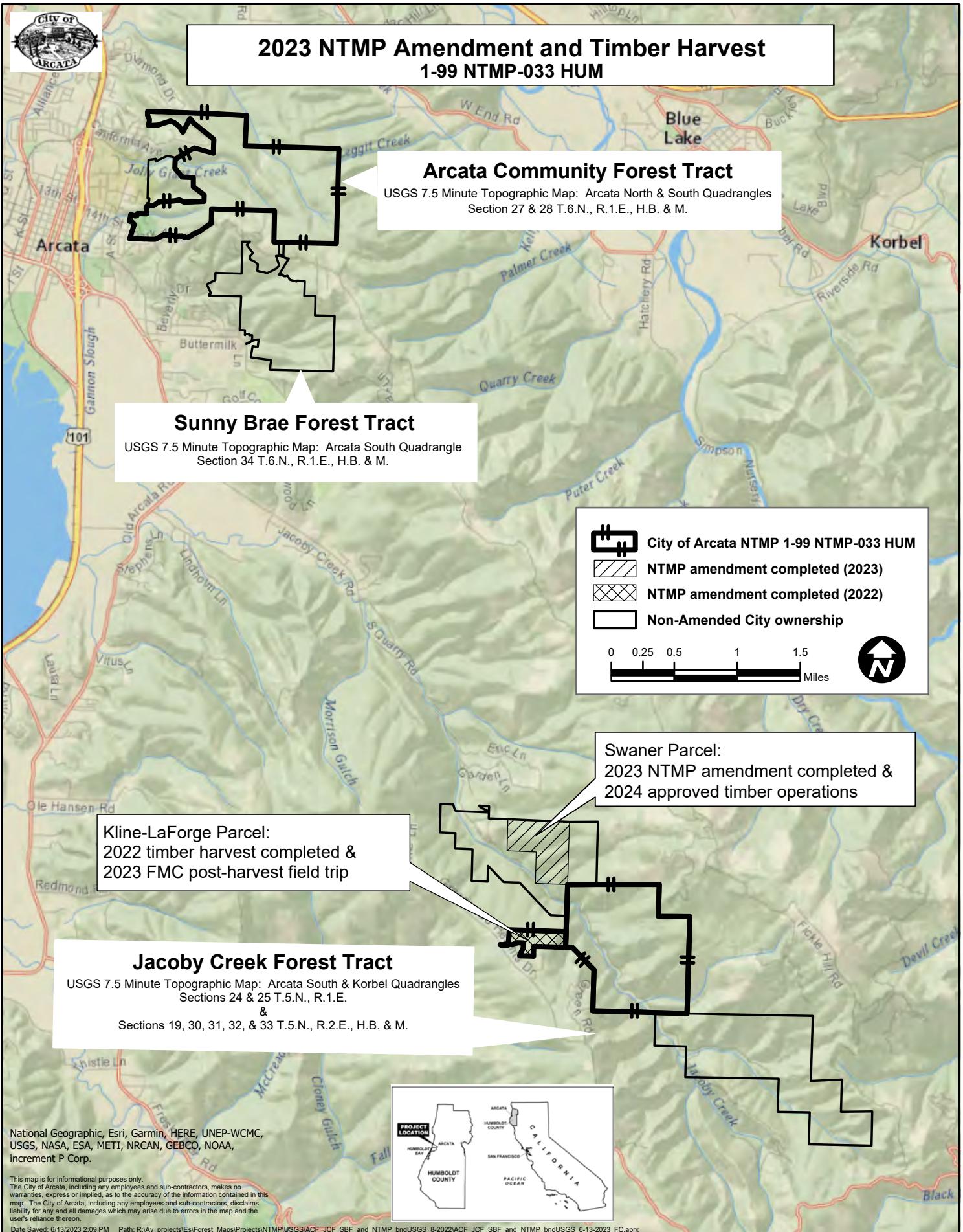
Assorted wildlife photos from motion camera monitoring (JCF Tract)



Pre-harvest bid “show me” for 2024 operations (JCF Tract; Swaner parcel)



Davies Conservation Easement; Completed Dec. 2023 (ACF Tract)

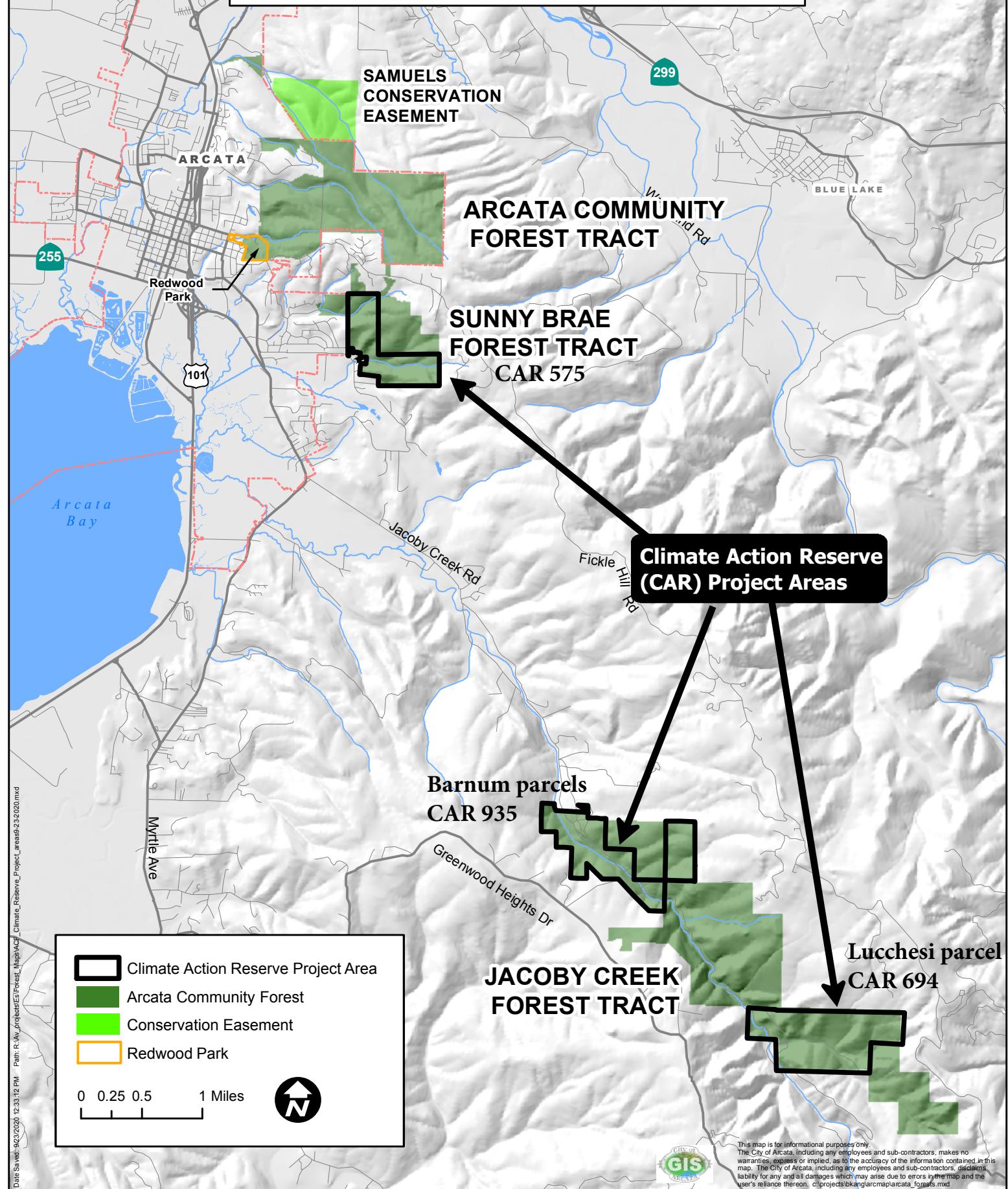




City of Arcata

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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