

# THE STATUS OF COMMUNITY-BASED FORESTRY IN THE UNITED STATES

# THE STATUS OF COMMUNITY-BASED FORESTRY IN THE UNITED STATES:

A Report to the U.S. Endowment for  
Forestry and Communities

From the  
Community Forest Consortium

By  
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*The Community Forest Consortium is a collection of individuals representing academia and non-profit organizations involved in Community-based Forestry*

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# OVERVIEW

The U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities (the Endowment) is a fledgling organization. We are marking just our second year in existence with the release of this report. Just over a year ago, the Endowment Board, staff and partner input served to provide focus to the organization's niche as the "nexus" of forest and community health....focusing our work where the true definition of sustainable forestry is grounded. The Endowment pursues its objectives by retaining and restoring healthy working forests, stimulating innovation in the capture of multiple value streams from forest-based activities and building community capacity to enhance value capture, thereby, improving social and economic condition of the forest sector in forest-reliant communities.

Our understanding of the pursuit of community-based forestry and community-owned forests closely aligns with sustainable forestry as we know it, but several questions emerged:

- What is community-based forestry and what is a community-owned forest?
- Is this practice prevalent across the nation? Where does it occur? What is the focus of the work? How mature is

this "movement"?

- What types of forest-reliant communities exist?
- What are the challenges, opportunities, and constraints experienced by these communities?
- How can the Endowment leverage this work with strategic investments?

To lend answers to those questions and to provide foundational information to undergird the Endowment's work, we commissioned the Community Forest Consortium to provide a benchmark. What follows is the result of their endeavors. They identified intriguing case studies and profiles to provide meaningful examples and they studied the work to create a typology for future use and adaptation. We are grateful for the time, expertise and energy that Consortium members invested and to those who shared their experiences and insights from the front lines. We trust you will find it useful in your work as well.

The Endowment  
January 2009

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The current state of community-based forestry (CBF) within the United States has developed from the collective vision and leadership of individuals and organizations, as well as agencies and institutions that have provided them with resources and support.

The Community Forest Consortium was organized to establish a strong and diverse team to assist the Endowment for in clarifying its understanding of the status of CBF in the United States. The Consortium represents a broad range of individuals from academia and non-profit organizations that are committed to advancing CBF. The Consortium includes a technical team that has been responsible for developing the survey, typology, case studies, profiles, and report. Members include: John Bliss, Tony Cheng, Peggy Chiu, Nils Christoffersen, Cecilia Danks, Jason Gray, Don Harker, Lynn Jungwirth, Martha West Lyman, Danyelle O'Hara, Lynne Price, Steve Rohde, and Barbara Wyckoff.

The Advisory Committee was organized to provide a role for individuals that are active in one or more aspects of CBF and whose opinion and experience have been important in supporting CBF projects. Members of the Advisory Committee include: Keith Bisson, James Daly, Maia Enzer, Anthony Flaccavento, Peter Howell, Ann Ingerson, Rodger Krussman, Mary Mitsos, Shanna Ratner, and Peter Stein.

Special recognition is due to the following: Barbara Wyckoff for managing the project and coordinating the Technical Team and Advisory Committee; Lynne Price, Cecilia Danks, Tony Cheng and Don Harker for the

development, tracking, and analysis of the survey; Nils Christoffersen, John Bliss, Jason Gray, and Don Harker for developing the typology; and Barbara Wyckoff for coordinating the case studies and profiles.

Several individuals were involved in writing case studies and profiles: Thomas Brendler, Katherine Mattor, Sam Burns, Tony Cheng, Peggy Chiu, Martha West Lyman, Danyelle O'Hara, Steve Rohde, and Barbara Wyckoff.

Recognition is also due to Thomas Brendler for work on community ownership, Shanna Ratner on woody biomass development, Danyelle O'Hara on ownership and landowner issues in communities of color, Stephen Haberfeld and Sonia Tamex on Native and Tribal lands, and Tony Cheng and John Bliss on CBF research.

Finally, we thank The Trust for Public Land and particularly Andrew DeMoulin, Smitty Smith and Mitchell Hannon not only for all of their work developing the database and maps for the case studies, as well as maps indicating the CBF initiatives, support organizations, and networks across the United States, but also their commitment to maintain a publicly accessible database of CBF initiatives long after this project is completed.

The Consortium acknowledges with appreciation the Board and staff of the Endowment for their recognition of the value and growing importance of CBF to rural communities that have depended on the forest resource for their economic vitality and community well-being.

The principal authors include: Nils Christoffersen, Don Harker, Martha West Lyman, and Barbara Wyckoff.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Community-based forestry (CBF) refers to the management of forested landscapes by community residents for community and societal benefit.<sup>4</sup> CBF is currently represented by a diverse set of practices, projects, organizations, and experiments that are based on the principle of integrating equity, sustainable forest management, and community development. CBF seeks to gain access to benefits from and engage participation in management of forestland at the community or regional scale.

While some CBF practices have historic roots in the United States, CBF was more formally reintroduced in the early 1990's primarily in response to contentious issues emerging from relationships between western communities and public land management. It has evolved into a complex mosaic of local-scale initiatives on both public and private lands that take place in rural communities across the country. While not broadly integrated into national, state, or other policies or programs, these initiatives share many common values<sup>5</sup>, including:

- Retention, restoration, and management of forested ecosystems.
- Tenure rights and access to the benefits of forests.
- Equity in distribution of benefits and value streams from forests.
- Inclusive and participatory decision-making in management of forests.

CBF projects and initiatives show promise in developing the capacity to slow the fragmentation of working forestland, redevelop the infrastructure to support forest-based economies, build community assets, restore damaged ecosystems, secure access to benefits, create new value streams, and engage local participation in the management of forestland. In many cases, CBF is the only viable option to sustain healthy forests and provide for sustainable communities and livelihoods.

The promise of CBF is that it offers a pathway for rebuilding local infrastructures of support for forest-based economies, for building inclusive forest-based communities, and for promoting the sustainable management of forested ecosystems to ensure their growth as valuable assets for future generations.

## The Report

The purpose of this report is to describe the current status of CBF and highlight potential opportunities to expand its

application in the U.S. This report includes a survey that was used to identify, describe, and categorize the range of practices and geography of CBF in the U.S.; a database of initiatives, support organizations and networks; a typology that classifies and describes different approaches to CBF; and case studies and profiles to highlight examples of best practices and emerging trends.

During the process of gathering information for the report, we conducted a survey, talked to key people engaged in CBF activities as we developed the case studies and profiles, reviewed publications, and took the opportunity to interview and canvas members of the Technical Team, Advisory Committee, and other practitioners in the field. What we learned goes beyond what is offered about the current status of CBF to include insights into the possibility and promise of CBF to evolve into a mature field with sustainable institutions, sufficient capital, and expanded capacity.

### State of Investment in CBF

Significant gaps in the investment infrastructure for CBF are characterized by:

- The lack of dedicated funding to CBF.
- Funding that often comes through different silos of equity, economy, and environment (few if any support CBF cross-sectoral priorities or capabilities).
- Limited funding for underserved communities, communities of color, and/or Native/Tribal communities where CBF offers a strategy for building assets and capacity.

Strategic areas of investment to advance CBF would include:

- Flexible and longer term capital for acquisition of forestland by communities.
- Capital for business development.
- Flexible operating support for technical assistance, facilitation, and capacity building.
- Mini-grants for communities/local projects and peer learning.
- Seed funding for endowments and/or the creation of local community foundations.
- Policy and business analysis and education to help create and facilitate learning.
- Initiatives that are regional and national in scope that support local, grassroots efforts.

<sup>4</sup> In the United States, the term "community forestry" is most often associated with urban forestry efforts aimed to enhance tree health and human connections in cities and towns. Increasingly, rural communities in the U.S. use the term "community-based forestry" to distinguish their efforts to integrate local livelihoods and sustainable forest management from urban tree-planting initiatives. They acknowledge the interconnected social and ecological goals that drive both urban and rural community forestry efforts. Both urban and rural community forestry share an emphasis on building on bonds to place, engaging diverse groups, enhancing local capacity, and promoting social and environmental health. Recognizing what urban and rural efforts have in common can help build support for CBF among a broader population.

<sup>5</sup> The Communities Committee of the Seventh American Forest Congress conducted a two-part survey in 2005/2006 to solicit the perceptions from practitioners about CBF. The results of the survey can be found at [www.communitiescommittee.org](http://www.communitiescommittee.org).

## **Fundamental Issues**

A number of issues were identified as fundamental to the current success, the further evolution of CBF in the United States, and the sustainable management of forested landscapes for community benefit (including social, economic, and environmental value streams). These are discussed in the text and reference made to the case studies and profiles that illustrate these issues and innovative solutions. Issues include:

- Governance, access, and tenure
  - o Collaboration
  - o Access and influence on public lands
  - o Access and ownership of private lands
  - o Land trusts
  - o Native/Tribal lands
- Value stream capture
  - o Ownership and business infrastructure
  - o Access to capital
  - o Market development
  - o Timber supply
  - o Technology

## **Advances for the Next Decade**

As CBF grows, there are six advances necessary for CBF to be successful in reaching social, ecological, and economic objectives, including:

1. Increased access to and influence over forest resources and relevant management decisions.
2. Building and creating access to markets and financial resources.
3. Increased institutional and leadership capacity at multiple scales, particularly among the “next generation” of CBF practitioners.
4. Increased engagement of communities of color and the marginalized.
5. More supportive, mutually reinforcing policy frameworks at local, state, and federal levels.
6. Demonstrated success at achieving environmental

goals of restoration, sustainable management and contributing to global ecological health.

## **Building the Movement: Your Role**

As part of this effort, The Trust for Public Land (TPL) has developed and will maintain a database of community-based forestry efforts, including: place-based CBF initiatives, support organizations, community-owned forests, and networks. The information is housed as part of TPL's Conservation Almanac. TPL's Conservation Almanac is the first, single, comprehensive online database of land conservation in America. The website, [www.ConservationAlmanac.org](http://www.ConservationAlmanac.org), is the definitive source of information about land conservation at the state and federal level, including acreage protected and dollars spent.

The purpose of the map and database is to show the range, complexity, and depth of community-based forestry in the U.S. By providing a central place where individuals and groups can share basic information on their work and by ensuring that these tools are maintained over time and regularly updated, practitioners, researchers, and decision-makers can continually expand their understanding of the “state of the issue” of CBF.

The database is by no means complete! If these tools are to fulfill their full potential, information on as many efforts as possible must be captured. We welcome additions and encourage you to submit information on any CBF initiative, organization, network, or community-owned forest. To do so, please go to [www.ConservationAlmanac.org](http://www.ConservationAlmanac.org) and click on the “Community Forests” tab and fill out the form that will allow TPL to enter the information into the database and locate your effort on the map. The short survey will take only five minutes to complete. If you have any questions, changes or concerns, please send them to: [almanac@tpl.org](mailto:almanac@tpl.org).

Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete the survey and become part of the growing CBF movement. We hope you will check back with the database regularly to locate and learn about additional groups in your area ... and beyond.

# COMMUNITY-BASED FORESTRY IN THE U.S.: PAST EFFORTS

CBF has historic roots in colonial town forests and watershed lands in the East, as well as in some aspects of the early periods of industrial forestry found across the country where the vitality, economic well-being, and culture of communities were expressions of a strong link between the landscape, the forest industry, and communities.

Over the last 25 years, however, as globalization has created changes in the forest products industry and federal policies have altered the relationship between communities and public lands; as competing claims on forest resources have created conflict in some communities; as significant changes in the pattern of ownership of private forestland have occurred; and as management practices on public and private lands have increasingly affected the health and vitality of forest ecosystems, it has become clear that new relationships are necessary and innovative solutions and practices are required. In response to these challenges, and in the absence of other viable alternatives, CBF as an approach was more formally identified and put into practice in the early 1990s.

A new generation of CBF began as an effort “to provide voice for local communities in the management of nearby forests, whether publicly or privately owned...to search for new, creative approaches to manage forest ecosystems...and to revitalize rural economies.”<sup>6</sup> The result has been an array of local projects that address:

- Restoration or conservation of forest ecosystems.
- Access to benefits from public lands by forested communities.
- Acquisition of forestland by communities.
- Creation of value streams from forests (e.g. wood products, non-timber forest products, recreation, and ecological services).
- Building or rebuilding the infrastructure for forest-based economic activity.
- Building or rebuilding common ground, civic capacity, and policy frameworks to yield healthy, vibrant and resilient communities.

At the same time that numerous local projects have gotten underway in response to specific issues, several nationwide initiatives have been launched, offering structure, support, learning, and momentum to advance CBF including:

**Ford Foundation’s Community-Based Forest Demonstration Program:** The Ford Foundation’s Community-Based Forestry Demonstration Program identified 13 pilot sites around the country that represented different facets of CBF. The Program provided financial support, technical assistance, capacity building, and

networking to promote shared learning. Results from the five-year demonstration project show that CBF:

- Created new jobs, value-added enterprises, and innovative solutions for the use of timber and non-timber forest products.
- Enhanced the ability of rural communities to gain access to public lands.
- Diffused long-standing conflicts within western communities over ecosystem management.
- Created new community-level institutions.
- Created new networks to share information.
- Created new sets of options for private landowners to retain their land, especially among low-resource landowners.
- Demonstrated the value of providing support services to CBF projects.

**National Network of Forest Practitioners:** The National Network of Forest Practitioners (NNFP, [www.nnfp.org](http://www.nnfp.org)) was organized in 1991 to provide a forum for the growing array of individuals, groups, and projects that were working towards forestry goals that integrate ecology, equity, and economics. NNFP has facilitated the exchange of information and experience; expanded the use of local knowledge and participatory research; provided limited technical assistance, training, and support for small groups and projects; and brought the voice of underserved communities of color and rural communities into the policy arena. The experience of NNFP underscores one of the difficult challenges for CBF in needing to both support and address issues of small groups and projects while at the same time trying to respond to needs in the policy arena, providing linkages and reinforcing connections between individual projects.

One NNFP initiative was the creation of regional National Forestry Research Centers. Centers were established in the South, Northwest, Southwest, and Northeast. They were designed to reconfigure research to address the needs of rural communities and to bring practitioners and local knowledge both into the process of formulating research questions and as a source of research data.

**Communities Committee of the Seventh American Forest Congress:** The Seventh American Forest Congress, held in 1996, established the Communities Committee ([www.communitiescommittee.org](http://www.communitiescommittee.org)) and set as a priority the importance of enhancing collaborative approaches to forest management at the national, state, and local levels. Since its

<sup>6</sup>Wyckoff, Barbara et. al. Growth Rings: Lessons Learned from the Ford Foundation National CBF Demonstration Program, Washington, DC: Aspen Institute, 2005

creation as a non-profit, the Communities Committee has focused its attention on creating and supporting a national voice for CBF, advancing and supporting policies that reinforce CBF, supporting work to establish a sustained role for collaborative public involvement in the management of public lands, producing publications and guides that explore aspects of CBF, and conducting surveys to determine needs and progress of CBF projects. Much of this work occurred prior to 2006.

**Forest Legacy Program:** The Forest Legacy Program ([www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/flp.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/flp.shtml)) was established by an act of the U.S. Congress in 1990 and revised with a 1996 amendment. The program provides grants of up to 75 percent of the cost for fee acquisition or purchase of conservation easements of valuable forestland that is sensitive or threatened by development. This program has been instrumental in the acquisition of forestland by communities.

**Stewardship Contracting Program:** In 1999, Congress authorized the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) to conduct pilot projects on up to 28 sites for a new Stewardship End Result Contracting Program ([www.fed.us/forestmanagement/projects/stewardship/index.shtml](http://www.fed.us/forestmanagement/projects/stewardship/index.shtml)). The Program was established in response to a growing need and demand for management of federal lands that would also “contribute to the economic growth of local and rural communities.”

**Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004:** Most recently, this Act authorized the USFS and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to enter into stewardship contracts proposed by Tribes on agency lands bordering or adjacent to trust or Tribal lands. ([www.fs.fed.us/forestmanagement/projects/stewardship/tribal/index.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/forestmanagement/projects/stewardship/tribal/index.shtml))

**National Forest Foundation:** The National Forest Foundation (NFF) is dedicated to engaging Americans in the conservation and stewardship of our National Forests. With the establishment of a new strategic direction in 2001, NFF’s programs were built around the belief that communities should have a strong role in determining the future of forest

resources that impact their lives in many ways.

To facilitate long-lasting benefits, NFF takes a multi-pronged approach, including: targeted funding to direct conservation initiatives and to community-based organizations for both on-the-ground forest stewardship work, as well as organizational capacity-building (from start-ups through mid-capacity). NFF also supports collaborative groups by providing technical assistance and peer learning opportunities through the Western Collaboration Assistance Network.

**Four Corners Sustainable Forestry Partnership:** In 1997, Congress authorized the USFS to invest Economic Action Program funds in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah to support the development of community-based forestry projects focused on restoration, infrastructure development, and collaborative planning. The Partnership was intended to be a pilot program to catalyze the linkage between healthy forests and healthy communities by enhancing the utilization of primarily low-value, small-diameter trees from restoration projects and develop learning networks across communities. The elimination of the Economic Action Program foreclosed future opportunities to expand the Partnership model nationally.

There are a number of additional national and regional supporting organizations including: American Forests, Pinchot Institute for Conservation, Forest Guild, The Community Forest Collaborative, Community Forest Fellowship Program, The Federation of Southern Cooperatives, the National Indian Dispute Resolution Center, The National Alliance for Community Trees, Society of American Foresters, The Trust for Public Land, The Conservation Fund, The Nature Conservancy, The Wilderness Society, Sustainable Northwest, Northern Forest Center, the Mountain Association for Community Development (MACED), and a number of other state and federal agencies, municipalities, and counties. (See the survey database for additional information at [www.ConservationAlmanac.org](http://www.ConservationAlmanac.org).)

It is important to note that the current state of CBF has been advanced and enhanced by these collective efforts. They offer a foundation upon which to make progress towards a vibrant and mature field.



# THE STATUS OF COMMUNITY-BASED FORESTRY

CBF in the U.S. is an emerging mosaic. Each CBF has its own set of approaches, processes, and practices that have evolved based on local needs, operating around locally shared values.

Some locations have developed mature and complex collaboratives that are generating significant social, economic, and ecological impacts within their communities. In many more locations, these successful CBF examples are inspiring adaptation of CBF strategies and methods, but the details are just emerging.

In still other areas, there are gaps with no apparent CBF activity or even knowledge of CBF.

Some distinct regional patterns are evident in the mosaic. In the West, a principal driver for CBF was loss of access to and benefit from public lands in the 1990's and the local conflict that developed in some communities

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as a result of competing claims on forest resources. Here, CBF initiatives emerged to restore and steward the public forestlands while securing social and economic value streams for the local community. Recent catastrophic wildfires and insect infestations have spawned additional CBF initiatives to treat forestlands impacted by decades of fire-suppression, high-grade logging, or lack of management. As these initiatives have grown in capacity, they have included more work on private lands, thus addressing the challenges of declining regional forest infrastructure, workforce and markets, conversion of forestland to development, and large-scale transitions in ownership. The growing interest in forest biomass utilization for energy presents a new set of opportunities for CBF.

In other areas of the country (East, South, and Midwest) where private landownership is dominant, CBF is newer and looks very different. Here CBF's focus is on land conservation (land trusts, community forests) in response to fragmentation, forest management education and technical assistance to landowners, and new market (and marketing

service) development. Some of these efforts have responded to the loss of family forestlands in southern African-American

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*The profile on the Weaverville Community Forest offers an example of an innovative approach for local communities to gain access to public lands.*

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communities where individuals were encouraged (and often coerced) to sell their lands to various business representatives without understanding the value and potential of forest assets. Other efforts have focused on helping new forest owners collaborate on sustainable forest management.

CBF embraces a suite of experiments, projects, and organizations that operate at multiple scales and within multiple sectors. Where CBF has been most successful and where the impact has been most noticeable, one can point to the pivotal role of targeted investment (capital and grants) and the existence of intermediary organizations<sup>7</sup> that provide support for facilitating processes, networking, and technical assistance to help augment and build capacity at the local level. At the national scale, however, the suite of CBF activities is still diffuse and unconnected. Significant learning opportunities have been realized through periodic investments in networking, peer group gatherings, and CBF workshops.

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CBF practices have grown, matured, and expanded over the last decade, and the results are promising. Local leadership, organization, and the mobilization of locally available resources are fundamental to long-term CBF success. Where public policies and programs have existed alongside private investments and initiatives connected to well-organized local collaboratives, CBF has flourished.

The promise of CBF is increasingly relevant. CBF offers the potential to restore damaged ecosystems and to

<sup>7</sup> The term "intermediary" organization is used in this report to refer to those entities that provide support to local projects and organizations.

provide long-term or permanent conservation of forestland that is both ecologically and economically significant. Because it is multi-sectoral, CBF has attracted and secured

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*The case study on Appalachia Sustainable Development and Sustainable Woods discusses creative economies and their relevance to CBF.*

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resources for conservation, community development, and economic development. It is building the infrastructure for a redeveloped forest products industry and offers a component in emerging “creative” economies<sup>8</sup> which is a term that refers to economic activity that reflects a variety of community values such as good schools, art institutions, music, open space, and locally-supported businesses. Finally, CBF shows promise as a component of strategies to revitalize rural communities and their economies by building confidence, capacity, and creating new economic opportunities.

## Impacts of CBF

CBF is a viable option, and for many, the preferred alternative when working in forest-rich communities. Models have been developed and tested yielding economic, environmental, and social benefits from CBF. CBF can now articulate and is building a case for its focus on self-sustaining, place-based solutions, while recognizing and addressing the broader regional and national enabling environment, including policy, markets, and engagement of urban constituencies.

### Diffusing Conflict

The early accomplishment of CBF, particularly in the West, was the success of collaborative processes in diffusing conflict between place-based communities, interest groups, and public agencies around the management of public lands. These processes convened diverse stakeholders and facilitated open discussions on forest and watershed conditions, management strategies, access to benefits from public lands, and the relationship between public forests and the local economy and community. In many areas, these collaboratives increased the voice and participation of local communities that have historically been politically and economically marginalized, leveraged new resources for forest restoration, and created opportunities for local business and job growth. Where successful CBF collaboratives exist, they have helped the USFS out of “analysis paralysis.” For example, planning timelines have been shortened and/or implementation has moved more quickly and smoothly when a decrease in litigation has resulted from effective collaboration. The final impact has been a more efficient and effective use of tax dollars in the management and

stewardship of public lands.

A critical element of the success of CBF collaboratives has been the willingness of each stakeholder to acknowledge their own errors and omissions of the past and then develop and own a more holistic vision of forest and community stewardship. Environmental groups have become more socially and economically aware, business and industry groups more socially and ecologically aware, and community groups more aware of their responsibility to advocate for balance and integration in outcomes. Local governments have also recognized the importance of inclusiveness — as excluded groups can leverage political power in state and national arenas and undermine the local collaborative. Furthermore, local groups have become far more inclusive of external stakeholders representing national interests,

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recognizing that the resources are both national and local assets.

### Restoring Forested Landscapes and Creating a Culture of Long-term Stewardship

CBF programs have been successful in restoring damaged ecosystems (from fire, unsustainable harvesting) and neglected public assets (roads, weeds, fences, troughs, trails, campsites, trail systems, historic buildings, etc.). They are also working to create a culture of long-term stewardship through education and training in the science of sustainable forest management. Local collaboration on mapping data and planning and demonstration projects has helped to develop and promote sustainable practices. Particular achievements include management to reduce fire risk, planting and restoration after fires, development and implementation of ecosystem-based (e.g. watershed) forest management practices leading to improved fish and wildlife habitat, as well as grazing and recreational opportunities. In the East, CBF efforts have served as models for good forest stewardship for private landowners.

As important as the actual restoration and management programs have been, the focus on local knowledge, participatory research, and educational programs has been equally significant. These aspects of CBF have played a critical role in promoting a population of knowledgeable, engaged, and committed local people to engage (or re-

<sup>8</sup> Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, New York: Basic Books, 2002.

engage) in stewardship and responsible forest management.

### **Cultivated Programmatic and Policy Change**

As more mature CBF initiatives have organized at state, regional and national scales with the help of regional and national support organizations, they have been successful in cultivating programmatic and policy change. For example, the recently reauthorized Farm Bill includes The Community Forest and Open Space Program, containing financial and other resources in support of community forest ownership.

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*The Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition (RVCC) described in the Sustainable Northwest case study provides an example of local communities coming together to influence policy.*

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The Farm Bill also includes support for community-scaled forest biomass energy development and forest management and conservation by private landowners.

The efforts of CBF groups have been instrumental in helping to achieve a number of positive programmatic changes within the USFS. Examples include: *The New Business Model* that is testing a shift in performance measures from outputs (# of acres treated) to outcomes (positive impacts on the community and ecosystem); *stewardship contracting* that promotes best value criteria and a demonstration of community benefits; and *community wildfire protection plans* that provide opportunities for local direction

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of forest fire risk mitigation. Similar and supporting changes have been enacted within USFS handbooks and program guidance. Some National Forests now prioritize experience with collaboratives in their hiring criteria for line managers. State and county development commissions are evolving from industrial recruitment to building on local assets and channeling money to smaller-scale, often community-owned, asset-based development ventures. New businesses are being designed to increase value capture from forest stewardship, optimize import substitution opportunities, and break the legacy of resource extractive industries in rural communities.

### **Rebuilding Local Infrastructures for Forest-based Economies**

On a very local scale, CBF projects have begun to

demonstrate their capacity to rebuild the local infrastructure for forest-based economies. Collaboration has helped restore access to National Forests and other public lands, preserving or creating forest-based jobs and more consistent supply of forest products to local businesses. In the East, community

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*CBF has increased ownership of and access to forestland, created and expanded jobs and job training to build individual and community wealth, developed new value streams from forests such as ecological services, new forest products, renewable energy, education, and recreation.*

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acquisition of forestland has helped secure the productive forestland base and prevent fragmentation as the first step in redeveloping the local forest-based economy.

CBF projects across the country have served as incubators for new products and businesses and demonstrated the capacity to grow new jobs. Diverse streams of financing have been secured to invest in new manufacturing and marketing systems. Dispersed, local initiatives are organizing to operate at regional scales to influence and access markets and aggregate individual landowners. For CBF, these are important trends that create opportunities for regional economic development combining traditional forest products with renewable energy, ecosystem services such as carbon credits, and other emerging markets.

### **Building Assets in Rural Communities**

CBF has demonstrated the capacity to build assets in rural communities by securing ownership of and access to forestland, creating and expanding jobs and job training to build individual and community wealth, developing new value streams from forests such as ecological services, new forest products, renewable energy, education, and recreation.

CBF also creates social capital. Social capital is the networks of association within a community that create value by building trust, encouraging reciprocity and cooperation, and facilitating flow of information. In communities with strong social capital “people are healthier, schools work better, and kids learn faster, local government performs better, [there are fewer] crimes against people and property, and a broad range of positive impacts on local business.”<sup>9</sup> CBF’s role in creating social capital includes: collaborative exercises that have brought many different (and often conflicting) parties to a common table (building trust), established connection between individuals from different sectors (facilitating information flow), and created networks and shared resources within communities and across regions (encouraging reciprocity

<sup>9</sup> Notes from email exchange with Lew Feldstein, co-chair of the Saguaro Seminar. May 2007. For more information on social capital research, see [www.ksg.harvard.edu/saguaro](http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/saguaro).

and cooperation).

### **Building Capacity in Rural Communities**

CBF offers a promising strategy for building capacity in rural communities from expanding participation, building new community institutions and leadership, promoting education and training, and expanding access to financial and technical resources. In work focused on the Black Belt in the Southeast, for example, low income landowners have increased access to federal and state agencies and their grants. CBF has strengthened resilient communities that intentionally develop personal and collective capacity to respond to and influence change, to sustain and renew the community, and to develop new trajectories for the community's future.

The success of collaboration in diffusing conflict demonstrated by early CBF projects offered a new strategy that promoted inclusive, participatory, and facilitated processes. When linked to tangible and locally-valued outcomes, collaboration helps build capacity to address contentious issues, bring new resources to the table, and engage a wider spectrum of community members.

CBF has demonstrated the importance and value of intermediary and supporting institutions that provide access to resources, facilitate community building processes, and provide technical assistance — all of which have contributed to expanding the capacity of rural communities where CBF projects have been initiated.

Finally, networks and exchanges have proven to be essential to CBF in creating learning opportunities, forums for exchanging information and experience, and providing opportunities to replicate successful CBF initiatives and approaches. They have also been critical in scaling up local efforts to address larger challenges and opportunities, including access to urban centers for markets and political support.

### **State of CBF Infrastructure**

In order for CBF to evolve into a mature field and practice, there needs to be a complex and enduring infrastructure that includes: mechanisms to gain access to

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*In order for CBF to evolve into a mature field and practice, there needs to be a complex and enduring infrastructure that includes: mechanisms to gain access to productive forestland; consistent and reliable supplies of raw materials, technical support and assistance; and markets, capital, and a policy framework and institutions that reinforce CBF initiatives at the local level.*

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productive forestland; consistent and reliable supplies of raw materials, technical support and assistance; and markets,

capital, and a policy framework and institutions that reinforce CBF initiatives at the local level.

Currently, these components exist, but only in a skeletal state and they are vulnerable to unpredictable funding or programmatic changes. While many communities have been successful in gaining limited access to public forestland, there are still significant gaps. For example, Tribal communities have only recently, through the Tribal and Forest Protection Act (2004), gained the right to enter into stewardship contracts on public lands, but only if their trust land or reservation is adjacent to BLM or USFS land. Substantial capacity building, technical support, and technical assistance are needed for many Tribes to realize the full potential of this legislation.

Tax policies and new tax instruments such as tax

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*Since CBF takes a cross-sectoral approach, technical support and assistance is required from various sectors. Most federal, state, and private programs and sources of support lack this integration.*

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abatement programs, the New Markets Tax Credits program, and renewable energy incentives have provided important resources for some aspects of CBF. State legislation has promoted ownership and management of forestland by municipalities or counties and has been an important lever in issues related to tenure, as has the Tribal and Forest Protection Act. More generally, however, local, state, and federal policy frameworks are largely antagonistic, inconsistent or irrelevant to CBF initiatives. Considerable investments are needed to stimulate new policy development appropriate to the integration of social, economic, and ecological conditions and trends of the 21st century.

Access to value streams from the nation's privately-owned forestland is increasingly vulnerable due to parcelization and landowner management objectives. The relationship between CBF and private lands is only now gaining attention while the issue of public benefits on private land remains virtually unexplored. At the same time, consistent value streams from federal lands are constrained by inadequate funding and staff at the District Ranger level. This constraint is exacerbated by the annual diversion of resources to fighting forest fires.

Additional elements of a CBF infrastructure include leadership development, organizational development, facilitation and conflict resolution capacity, open and transparent dialogue, access to information, and project management capacity. Gaps and weaknesses in the current infrastructure include geographic and demographic inconsistency including some African-American communities in the South and Tribal communities throughout the country. Since CBF takes a cross-sectoral approach, technical support and assistance is required from various sectors,

including economic and business development, community development, and conservation. Most federal, state, and private programs and sources of support lack this integration. In addition, a coordinated infrastructure of support between local, state, and federal levels has yet to be discussed.

Community-based initiatives for the development of markets and access to markets for newly created forest-based enterprises are in the early stage with notable individual success stories at the local level (Massachusetts Woodlands Cooperative, Wallowa Resources, Hayfork Watershed Research and Training Center, Appalachia Sustainable Development, Sustainable Northwest, MACED, etc.). Other projects, such as the Oregon-based Wood Products Distribution Center of Sustainable Northwest, offer new approaches and models for business and market development.

## State of Research in CBF

Participatory research, applied analyses, social learning and monitoring have all been instrumental in helping to advance CBF in the U.S. Such work has generated findings of value to specific CBF efforts, has informed policy work and policy-makers, and in some cases has helped to build the capacity of partnering among CBF initiatives. However, to date, the process of learning what is working and what is needed is considerably underdeveloped.<sup>10</sup> Traditional research has fallen short of answering some questions that are critical to the advancement of the practice of CBF, and precious little funding is devoted to CBF research.

CBF collaboratives are keenly interested in answers to specific research questions relevant to their success on the ground. Such applied analyses may deal with feasibility studies, market analyses, product development, branding, monitoring protocols, alternative fuels treatments, low impact harvest technologies, and weed eradication measures. In addition, enduring questions remain about the conditions under which CBF approaches can achieve their multiple goals. Critical, analytical, and rigorous research is needed in the following areas:

- Testing assumptions that maintaining healthy forests through community-based management can, on balance, provide clear and measurable benefits to rural communities.
- Testing assumptions that community-based management is an effective way to restore and maintain healthy ecological systems.
- Conducting careful and rigorous analysis of the distribution of benefits from CBF and participation within communities.
- Understanding the conditions under which communities develop the capacity to capture benefits and be effective stewards over the long run.
- Understanding CBF and communities within a

global, geopolitical context.

- Understanding the role of communities in “democratization of the industrial landscape,” that is, reducing parcelization of productive forestland in private ownership.
- Articulating the role of funders and support organizations in CBF and CBF research.

Many of these broader questions have been asked by researchers, but finding answers that hold across the great diversity of activities called CBF has proven challenging. Additionally, while research relationships with traditional research institutions such as universities and USFS research stations and labs have been relatively small in number, several specific partnerships have been enduring and productive. These partnerships, when conducted in a participatory way, have helped build the capacity of CBF initiatives on the ground. However, these research relationships are generally built on the strength of commitment of individual researchers and practitioners, rather than on formal agreements or institutional commitment of resources.

Support for CBF research remains scarce, possibly because there is no recognized “field” of CBF research. An exception with respect to research support has included the former Community Forestry Fellowship Program which is funded by the Ford Foundation and hosted by the University of California - Berkeley. This program was designed to advance scholarship in CBF and train scholars in participatory CBF research. Recently, the program expanded its focus beyond forestry, as reflected in its new name, Community Forestry and Environmental Research Partnerships program, and its future funding remains uncertain. Another effort was led by the NNFPP to establish regional Community Forestry Centers to develop the capacity for participatory research. While this program had a promising start in the late 1990s, it was not able to secure sustaining support after its initial five-year grant. The potential of participatory research, considered to be a powerful mechanism to access local knowledge and engage community members in CBF projects, has not been fully realized or supported.

## State of Investment in CBF

Investment in CBF is difficult to calculate in part because there has been no formal accounting or analysis.<sup>11</sup> There are few dedicated sources of capital and support for CBF. Many resources are brought to different activities by the work of CBF practitioners accessing dollars through various streams such as economic development, conservation, and community development. The grantors of most of these funds target hard economic or ecological outcomes, often with formulas tied to the amount of each grant. With the exception of NFF programs that are tied to communities around National

<sup>10</sup> Discussion of CBF research is based on conversations with John Bliss, Tony Cheng and Cecilia Danks.

<sup>11</sup> The U.S. Endowment polled 13 foundations in 2007 to get information on the level of philanthropic support for programs at the nexus of forestry and communities. The total amount was estimated to be approximately \$22.5 million with no clarification of time frame or distribution.

Forests and Grasslands, money to organize communities and staff collaborative processes is scarce to non-existent in many areas.

Sources of support come from a few private foundations, and public funding programs such as the Forest Legacy Program, National Fire Plan, State and Private Forestry, and revenue from Stewardship Contracting, etc. Public sources also include wildlife habitat mitigation funding from state transportation departments and power companies, state funds to watershed councils, and state grants and loans to small business development. Other sources of support include public/private partnerships, though there has been no coordinated analysis of the total investments in CBF from these sources.

Significant gaps in the investment infrastructure for CBF are characterized by:

- The lack of dedicated funding to CBF and CBF research.
- Funding that often comes through different silos of equity, economy, and environment (few if any support CBF cross-sectoral priorities or capabilities).
- Limited funding for underserved communities, communities of color, and/or Native/Tribal communities where CBF offers a strategy for building assets and capacity.
- Limited ability of local communities to identify and access funding that could help them.

Strategic areas of investment to advance CBF would include:

- Flexible and longer-term capital for acquisition of forestland by communities.
- Capital for business development and support for peer learning and coaching for managers of CBF projects.
- Developing a supply of technical assistance with necessary skills and perspectives to assist CBF projects.
- Flexible operating support for technical assistance, facilitation, and capacity building.
- Joint research grants to academic institutions partnered with CBF groups.
- Mini-grants for communities/local projects and peer learning.
- Seed funding for endowments and/or the creation of local community foundations and support for communities to create them using local resources.
- Support for applied research and documenting the principles and practices of CBF.

It is important to note that CBF projects will often need access to and have reason to tap two or more of these areas simultaneously to advance the work.

## Challenges to CBF

There are some obvious and difficult challenges for CBF. The diffuse and diverse nature of its small-scale

projects makes defining the whole field and movement elusive. CBF, as a strategy, is not fully applied within all forest-rich communities, particularly low capacity or underserved communities.

The work of CBF is long-term and resource intensive, as it often requires repairing ecologically-damaged ecosystems, creating new or redeveloping formerly intact infrastructures for local forest-based economies, and strengthening civic capacity and participation within small, isolated, and often underserved communities. Where such organization and capacity is lacking, initial investments must focus on their development and build capacity to generate tangible economic and ecological outcomes in the future. Survey responses suggest that there is a high need for technical assistance in the following support areas: business technical support, business planning support, model legislation and policies, scientific and analytical support, and GIS and computer database support.

CBF practices on the ground fall into three streams: community organizing, forest stewardship (land ownership, restoration, participation in management) and forest-related businesses. These three streams require different strategies or have different dynamics. Investment and support to organizations to integrate and coordinate these streams would help realize CBF's full potential. However, existing institutions, policies, and practices operating in single focus silos (conservation, community development) are ill equipped to integrate operating systems across programmatic boundaries.

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*CBF practices on the ground fall into three streams: community organizing, forest stewardship (land ownership, restoration, participation in management) and forest-related businesses.*

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Adapting existing or creating new institutions, policies, and practices is a challenge for CBF. Local CBF organizations and collaborations must often split their time between managing local projects and helping to rethink and reform the policies that affect success of their efforts on the ground.

Where CBF approaches were applied in the West as a way for communities to gain access to rights and benefits from public lands, private landowners hold half of the country's forestland. The central questions of "community benefits" from private land remain unresolved and often unasked.

Finally, for CBF organizations responding to the survey, 81 percent identified financial support as either a major or moderate challenge with all other challenges split between moderate or not a challenge. The highest financial need identified by these organizations is general operating support while other needs listed include: business capital, capital to purchase forestland and easements, and funding to support youth resource programs.

# ISSUES IN COMMUNITY-BASED FORESTRY

CBF is a maturing and promising component of a rural development strategy for forest-rich communities. While incurring upfront investment costs, the long-term benefits and impacts can exceed the returns from similar investments in sector specific areas (job creation or biodiversity conservation). Most importantly, CBF can strengthen capacity of local institutions and improve local governance by expanding the engagement and participation of community residents, learning from the facilitation and technical resources provided by outside groups, and creating transparent processes for the management of community assets and distribution of benefits.

On this foundation, CBF builds assets, creates wealth from the forest resource, and facilitates equitable distribution of benefits. CBF integrates collaboration, ownership, and access to the forest resource, and it offers the potential to capture the most value for local economic development, sustainable forest management, policy and education. The following issues are considered fundamental to the current success, the further evolution of CBF in the United States, and the sustainable management of forested landscapes for community benefit (including social, economic and environmental value streams):

- Governance, access, and tenure
  - o Collaboration and decision making
  - o Access and influence on public lands
  - o Access and ownership of private lands
  - o Land trusts
  - o Native/Tribal lands
- Value stream capture
  - o Ownership and business infrastructure
  - o Access to capital
  - o Market development
  - o Timber supply
  - o Technology

## Governance, Access, and Tenure

### Collaboration

CBF is founded on collaborative principles and strategies. New and emerging CBF initiatives devote considerable resources to developing effective collaborative processes and partnerships. The ultimate goal is robust relationships founded on mutual understanding and trust. These relationships allow for the creative exploration of issues and opportunities, the design of projects that deliver triple bottom line outcomes of economy, ecology, and equity, and the leveraging and merging of diverse financial and technical resource streams. The relationships continue to gain in strength through the collective social learning resulting from

multi-party monitoring and assessments of collaborative projects. Effective collaboratives are far more than interest-based negotiations; rather they lead to increased community capacity and healthier ecosystems. More often than not, the mutual development of goals and outcomes by diverse

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*Typically, the early stages of a CBF's trajectory focus on conflict resolution and smaller scale projects that demonstrate the potential to generate outcomes of value to all members of the collaborative. Although collaboration is essential to CBF work and philosophy, it is difficult to secure funding for because it lacks discrete outcomes yet requires high transaction costs.*

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interests lead to better, more creative solutions on the ground.

Typically, the early stages of a CBF's trajectory focus on conflict resolution and smaller scale projects that demonstrate the potential to generate outcomes of value to all members of the collaborative. As relationships, communication and trust grow, the collaborative is able to tackle larger-scale and more complex projects, which begin to generate more significant economic (jobs, incomes, etc.) and environmental (fish and wildlife habitat, forest conditions, invasive species management, etc.) benefits.

Collaboration has become the rule in CBF communities and collaborative processes have proven highly successful. More recently, they have advanced to include community initiatives to purchase and protect private land, raise capital and develop networks for policy and educational purposes.

Collaborations can be formal and informal. Seventy-seven percent of CBF groups responding to the survey indicated they are part of formal collaborations, primarily for land

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*The Framing Our Communities and Northern Arizona Partnerships case studies offer examples of the role and value of collaboration for public land communities.*

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management, but also for acquisition, research/monitoring, rural business and job development, watershed restoration, wildfire protection, marketing, education, and other purposes.

Collaboration is essentially democracy within a local framework. When it is inclusive, transparent, and sincere,

it improves local-level governance by empowering more segments of the local community, improving civility, and designing better policies and projects. Although collaboration is essential to CBF work and philosophy, it is difficult to secure funding for because it lacks discrete outcomes, yet requires high transaction costs. Despite these challenges, collaboration will continue to evolve and new models and methods will emerge.

### **Access and Influence on Public Lands**

Where mature CBF initiatives exist, they have contributed significantly to resolving public land management conflict through the collaborative strategies and principals described above. These processes allow for more issues and values to be captured in pre-National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)<sup>12</sup> planning processes, which result in more socially acceptable management activities. Successful place-based CBFs also develop the capacity and leadership necessary for follow-up.

Policy is a critical dimension of public land work. Every successful local collaborative has run into policy barriers to implementing preferred strategies. As a result, CBF must integrate policy initiatives into their collaborative framework to address community access and influence over public land resources, relationships to land management and regulatory agencies, and the ultimate distribution of benefits from public lands at the state and federal levels.<sup>13</sup>

This relationship is evolving. National and regional environmental, conservation, and recreational use groups are coming to understand the co-dependency of local forests and communities and the importance of community involvement in improving the resilience of forest resources. CBF continues to explore ways to strengthen the relationships with interest groups and benefits for communities. According to the survey, CBFs generally considered federal, state, local and Tribal policy as moderately or very supportive.

Shifting federal policy can have devastating impacts on communities. One such impact is the federal payments in lieu of taxes. Some municipalities and counties consist of 60 percent or more federal land and depend on those payments to support significant portions of their budgets. If those payments are reduced as a result of the constraints on the federal budget or alternative allocations, local communities suffer. Additionally, the original contract with these rural communities included the investment of 25 percent of the gross receipts from federal land to be used in local community infrastructure, especially schools and roads. However, local communities suffered when those revenues

declined due to extraction policy changes. Small rural communities often lack the numbers to bring voice to issues of this nature, however, CBF in its evolving forms creates the opportunity to amplify rural voices and potentially leverage change.

Similarly, the dramatic reduction in timber harvest from public land that began in the 1990's and continues today has contributed to a significant decline in forest product manufacturing capacity across all public land communities. While some harvest reduction was warranted in most areas, the speed and scale of the reduction has resulted in unanticipated impacts. The loss of mills has reduced the values of private forestland, and contributed to the conversion of this land to higher-valued uses in some

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*The loss of mills also impacts the economics of public land management, and creates higher net costs for forest stewardship and restoration activity through reduced revenue from saw log and pulp volumes.*

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amenity-rich communities.<sup>14</sup> The loss of mills also impacts the economics of public land management, and creates higher net costs for forest stewardship and restoration activity through reduced revenue from saw log and pulp volumes. While globalization may be the most important external driver contributing to these impacts, the loss of infrastructure and investment due to dramatic declines in the “available” log volumes is also a significant factor that continues to challenge many rural communities and CBF initiatives.

### **Access and Ownership of Private Lands**

Forestland ownership is an increasingly important issue for rural communities and the future of forest-based economies. It is also relevant to achieving the full promise of

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*The profile, “Opportunities for CBF in African-American Communities in the Southern United States,” provides a more detailed discussion of this issue.*

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CBF, particularly for low-income communities, communities of color, and Native and Tribal communities. Across the U.S., half of all forestland is held primarily in private ownership.

<sup>12</sup> NEPA is the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, which specifies rigorous analytical procedures with which federal agencies must comply when proposing actions that pose a significant environmental impact. In pre-NEPA processes, communities and federal agencies have more flexibility to define purposes and needs, explore alternatives, and craft appropriate management actions to mitigate environmental impacts. By building agreement upfront, it reduces the potential for conflict and delays after the necessary analyses have taken place.

<sup>13</sup> See East Branch of Fish Creek Case Study. National Community Forestry Center/Northern Forest Region [www.ncfcnfr.net](http://www.ncfcnfr.net)

<sup>14</sup> In high amenity communities, high land values contribute to high tax burdens that often cause the sale of forestland or conversion of forestland from management for forest products to other uses.



In the West, where 31 percent (113 million acres) of the land is privately owned, there is growing attention to private forestland holdings. The question is “how can the concepts of CBF generate public benefit in private forest landscapes?” In the forest-rich communities in the South, forestland ownership and management in African-American communities has been in decline. Between the end of the Civil War and Reconstruction (1867-1910), African-American families and communities assembled approximately 15 million acres of land, mostly in the South. This land represented one of the largest forms of wealth held by African Americans. Over the course of the 20th century, however, African-American landownership declined dramatically – today African Americans own less than 2.17 million acres.

CBF offers opportunities to expand the wealth of private landowners (aggregating landowners to gain access to benefits from ecosystem services, new markets for wood products),

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*The Little Hogback Community Forest case study describes a new tenure model that provides a mechanism for ownership by low-income individuals.*

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to acquire forestland by low-income, Tribal and African-American communities, and increase local value capture through import substitution in forest-rich communities in Appalachia and the South. In order for this to be successful, however, there will need to be significant resources up-front for capacity building and leadership development, landowner education, and business incubation.

For all forest-rich rural communities, recent national trends show an increasing fragmentation of the productive forestland base from real estate development and changing management. The pace of this change threatens the economies and cultures of many rural communities.

- Since 1978, 20-25 percent of all privately-owned forestland has changed ownership.
- Approximately half of industry-owned private forestland has changed hands since 1996.
- Estimates suggest that another 20 percent could change hands in the next ten years.
- USDA estimates 1 million acres/year of forestland are converted for development uses.
- An estimated 44.2 million acres (over 11 percent of the country’s commercial forestland) will be used for housing developments in the next 30 years.

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*See the profile, “Changing Land Ownership in New England: The Open Space Institute,” for a more detailed analysis of landownership trends.*

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Land is being converted to non-timber uses, the public is losing access for traditional uses and recreation, and local economies often are faced with the loss of forest-based businesses and jobs. Communities where relationships with the land are already tenuous are the first to feel the brunt of these pressures.

In many cases, the transfer of ownership is from private industrial owners to a new category of timberland investors that may include: Timberland Investment Management Organizations (TIMOs), Real Estate Investment Trusts

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*Two profiles provide specific examples:*

- *“Financing Community-Owned Forests: The Open Space Institute”*
  - *Timberland Investment Management Organizations (TIMOs) Role in CBF: The Lyme Timber Company*
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(REITs) and other institutional investors. Many of these entities hold the land for a limited period of time (10-15 years) and then sell the land — often dividing it into smaller parcels for real estate development.

While many observers are concerned about the potential negative impacts of this unprecedented change in forestland ownership, the scale at which this is occurring also offers potential opportunities for forested communities to be at the table to acquire, own, and manage forestland as a community asset. In order to address this opportunity, attention is required in the following areas:

1. Data and analysis of major timberland holding disposition.
2. Public and private funding to support communities in large land acquisition projects.
3. New partnerships between public/private sectors (banks, forestland investment entities, land trusts, communities and counties).
4. Technical support and capacity building for rural communities that want to acquire, own, and manage forestland.
5. Tax law and incentives for landowners to practice good forestry and to bring forest products and ecosystem services to the public. Many states have tax abatement programs that provide reduced tax obligations for landowners that practice sustainable forestry.

### **Land Trusts**

The land trust movement in the U.S. is vibrant and successful in conserving land at the local, state, regional and national levels. While there are several examples in our survey (Downeast Lakes Land Trust, Little Hogback

Community Forest) where a land trust is operating at the nexus of, or in conjunction with CBF, there is little formal connection between the two movements and a great deal of

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*The profile on Grand Lake Stream describes a project underway that demonstrates an evolving capacity of land trusts to meet community goals in addition to land conservation.*

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missed opportunities. A vibrant association between land trusts and CBF could be mutually beneficial:

- The Land Trust Alliance offers an excellent model of linkages between local, state, regions across a national scale.
- Land trusts are often the first contact by private landowners who want to sell land.
- Land trusts own and manage millions of acres of forestland with little attention to the cumulative benefit from those lands to rural communities.
- CBF offers economic benefits of conserving forestland.
- CBF creates opportunities for land trusts to expand constituencies by offering public benefits from privately-owned/managed forestland.

### **Native/Tribal Lands**

Native/Tribal lands present a special case of CBF work. The community is defined by the Tribe and by the reservation. The governance structure consists of a Tribal Council, and often the non-profit sector is absent as part of the equation. A number of Tribal communities have large forest holdings and are managing those holdings for the benefit of the Tribal community and beyond. These efforts are considered CBF.

For Native and Tribal communities, there is an expanding movement to gain ownership of, or access to, historic Tribal lands in order to fully participate in the

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*The profile on the Indian Dispute Resolution Center provides a description of the challenges and opportunities for CBF on Tribal communities. The case study on the Klamath Tribes describes a current effort to acquire ancestral lands and to gain access to benefits from adjacent public lands.*

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restoration and management of ancestral lands and to secure the benefits and values from the land. Opportunities exist to acquire ancestral lands (Klamath) which can enhance the ability to access benefits from public lands bordering

reservation/trust lands through stewardship contracts.

## **Value Stream Capture**

### **Ownership and Business Infrastructure**

CBF is founded on the triple bottom line of economy, ecology, and equity, so that outcomes of CBF initiatives include improvement in the economy, environment, and inclusive and equitable community systems. Issues of scale and ownership influence the ability to capture and distribute forest value streams. CBFs are concerned with

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*See the case studies on Appalachia Sustainable Development and Framing Our Community for examples of CBF Enterprises.*

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local ownership, control or influence over the forest resources and the creation of locally-owned business infrastructure, thereby keeping more benefits closer to home. Managing forests at the “appropriate scale” to ensure sustainability and sizing enterprises and infrastructure to that scale is critical to ensuring that the forest value streams are optimized according to what the resource can deliver.

Building or maintaining appropriately-scaled primary and value-adding processing infrastructure promotes

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*CBF initiatives are rebuilding local economies. They are creating new businesses scaled to the reality of sustainable forest management practices and the capture of value streams related to forest products, ecosystem services and recreational value streams.*

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sustainable forest management practices and generates community wealth. Diverse local economies can capture the dollars generated by the forest value streams, thus creating more resilient local economies. Thirty-seven percent of CBFs responding to the survey have earned income from timber and wood products sales, consulting services, stewardship contracting, habitat improvement work, hunting and fishing leases, and carbon offset sales. Specific examples of CBF economic development include the following:

### ***Smallwood and Integrated Facilities***

In the wake of nearly a century of over-story removal and fire suppression, significant amounts of the public and private forestland, specifically in the West, need to be thinned to improve forest health and reduce fire risk. The need for such treatment is increasing in areas of persistent drought and rising average temperatures. CBFs are developing a

new capacity to handle small diameter trees for posts, poles, dowels, firewood, and biomass.

Scale is often an issue for a wood products enterprise that must source from a sustainably managed forest resource. How can one get to an economically-profitable threshold? An integrated wood facility has the potential to be an efficient processor of non-merchantable timber. Bringing unsorted wood to a site provides multiple benefits to both buyer and seller. The cost of sorting and finding

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*The profile on Community Energy Systems, LLC provides an example of developing woody biomass energy production in capital poor communities.*

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multiple buyers is reduced for the seller, while also yielding an opportunity to remove wood that would otherwise be left behind or disposed of inefficiently. The buyer has the advantage of sorting to maximize value to several possible end uses (posts, poles, lumber, flooring, etc.), while supporting several possible alternative product lines (energy, chips, firewood, etc.).

### **Biomass**

A relatively small amount of biomass can produce the electricity and heat for specific facilities or even small towns. Demand for woody biomass is growing in response to higher costs of fossil fuels, increasing public interest in energy independence, and concerns about climate change and carbon emissions. State and regional policies include state renewable energy portfolios, climate change action plans, and regional policy frameworks. The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (REGGI) by Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic

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*The profile on woody biomass provides a more detailed analysis of the opportunities and challenges of woody biomass for communities and CBF.*

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states is increasing focus on woody biomass as an energy strategy. New technologies mean that cogeneration and cellulosic ethanol from wood and other biomass materials are becoming more cost-competitive.

Forested communities are beginning to recognize the potential for local energy cost savings, economic development, and environmental protection through using woody biomass. Based on the response to our survey, there is considerable interest in many aspects of woody biomass energy as a component of CBF.

CBF practitioners see woody biomass as having potential to:

- Promote and assist ecological restoration and reduce

fire risks by reducing overall treatment costs.

- Create new value stream from forests.
- Deliver cost-effective energy systems for low-income and rural communities.
- Create new sources of jobs and economic benefits for rural communities.

### **Access to Capital**

Capital is required for the purchase of forestland by private landowners, non-profits, municipalities or counties in fee or to purchase fee or other tenure rights and for starting and maintaining enterprises capturing various forest value

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*Capital will be an ongoing issue. New models of capital aggregation and patient capital (geared to the cycle of sustainable forestry) need to be tested. Venture capital models, local investor aggregation, revolving loan funds, bridge financing and micro-finance should all be examined.*

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streams. CBF groups have aggregated local capital, used foundation grants and Program-Related Investments (PRIs), federal and state grants, tax credits and other forms of private capital, including partnerships with groups like The Trust for Public Land and The Nature Conservancy. CBFs are carefully examining the potential income streams from forests they purchase.

In Northeast Oregon, Community Smallwood Solutions, the for-profit subsidiary of Wallowa Resources, aggregated public and private financing with a local investor group to build a new smallwood products company. The local investor capital covered most of the fixed-investment costs, while public capital was critical to ongoing operations, maintenance, and log inventory. Ultimately, this venture built a strong enough track record of profitability to attract a socially-responsible investor group that bought the company in its fourth year of operation.

### **Market Development**

One of the most difficult yet promising areas of CBF work is in the creative aggregation of market potential. Many marketing strategies have been successful, including labeling, product differentiation, value-added products, producer organizing, web marketing, and local purchasing.

Scale is always an issue. How do local businesses find reliable markets? How do they differentiate themselves? There are individual projects around the country that suggest a variety of approaches including cooperatives, associations, networks — each of which has different sets of practices, goals, and objectives, but all of which create different capacities through linkages between landowners, whether they be private landowners or a community, non-profit, state,

federal or county for the purpose of:

- Providing education and landowner services.
- Generating support for a local forest-based economy.
- Aggregating supply of forest products to have access to/influence markets.
- Reducing cost of certification.
- Gaining access to new value streams from forests (ecosystem services).

Cooperative approaches have value because, as Kevin Edberg from the Cooperative Development Services suggested, “they aggregate economic power on the side

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*The following profiles and case study describe different examples of linkages to assist market development:*

- *Wood Products Distribution Center and Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities Partnership of Sustainable Northwest*
  - *Appalachian Sustainable Development’s Sustainable Woods project*
  - *Massachusetts Woodlands Cooperative*
- 

of landowners...and because they have the flexibility to create ‘community action’ around the important process of changing attitudes and practices among large numbers of individuals.” The CBF survey offers examples of different approaches to landowner cooperatives, cooperation between small businesses, logger cooperatives, a cooperative kiln in Missouri, and aggregating, coordinating, and marketing supplies of forest products.

CBF works in a number of venues and has had success and holds opportunity in the following:

#### ***Local and Regional Lumber Markets***

Globalization impacts and the cost of fuel are bringing great interest in sourcing local and regional wood products. Locally-produced or custom lumber products and specialty

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*The profile of the Sustainable Forest Future’s Regional Wood Products Consortium provides insight into a process to encourage and facilitate innovation and create change within the wood products industry in the Northern Forest region.*

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wood products provide a market for some local producers.

For some regions this will require a focused effort to redevelop or restructure a locally- or regionally-based forest products industry.

#### ***Certified Wood***

Certification of forests and wood products can influence product value and does influence market share, particularly in relation to LEEDs certification.<sup>15</sup> Two CBF Native American Tribes, the Menominee and Confederated Tribes

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*A profile on the Mountain Area Council on Economic Development (MACED) describes the first non-profit effort to aggregate private landowners to gain access to carbon markets. The profile on the Federation of Southern Cooperatives illustrates this approach among underserved communities in the Southeast.*

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of the Warm Springs, have certified their forests and mills. The co-op and family forest models offer mechanisms to link landowners and create savings in the cost of certification for individual landowners. CBF participants and supporters will continue to work on cost-effective ways for small landowners and small businesses to become certified. Aggregating products and collective marketing will also be important.

#### ***Ecological Services from Forestland***

The recognized value of forestland has expanded beyond the production of forest products and recreation to include an array of ecological services, including protection of water quality and supplies, wildlife habitat and biological diversity, and carbon sequestration. While carbon markets are creating a significant buzz and much effort is being put into developing registries to support them, it is critical to change the discussion from one about carbon markets to one about broader, more encompassing ecosystem services markets.

Markets are being developed for clean water services, wetland mitigation, and wildlife and endangered species mitigation. Private entities such as Ecosystem Investment Partners and non-profits such as the Ecosystem Service Council alike are working to promote and advance the market place for ecosystem services. A number of national and international efforts are looking at how CBF can link to these ecosystem services markets.

For CBF, emerging markets for ecosystem services offer the potential for new benefits and value streams for forest-based communities and private landowners. In reviewing the survey responses, most CBF organizations indicated that within the next 5-10 years they expected to develop or advance programs that would realize benefits from the ecological services of the forest.

<sup>15</sup> See the Appalachian Sustainable Development case study.

More comprehensive research and analysis is needed to identify existing organizations and systems that have been set up to provide access to the markets. Specific attention needs to focus on:

- The scale and availability of an organizational infrastructure to assist communities and landowners (particularly small acreage landowners) in gaining access to markets for ecosystem services.
- Access to information about markets and values for specific ecosystem services.
- Education, technical assistance, and support for communities and landowners to gain access to markets for ecological services.
- Potential market niches for ecological services from low-wealth communities and landowners because of double benefits: environment and equity.
- Building capacity within existing organizations to aggregate landowners.
- Influencing policy that can reinforce and be compatible with goals of CBF.
- Creating new markets or mechanisms to capture values.

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*While the opportunity to access the value of ecological services offers a new facet to CBF, the challenge will be in helping rural communities, communities of color, and low-income landowners access these new value streams from the forest.*

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The following examples related to carbon programs offer a window into some of the activity, opportunities, and challenges related to ecosystem services and CBF:

Pacific Forest Trust secured registration with the California Climate Action Registry on one of the first two privately-owned working forests in the country. Natsource Asset Management, LLC (a leading emission and renewable energy asset manager) bought 60,000 tons from the 2200-acre Van Eyck Forest to be managed to increase CO<sub>2</sub> stores, restore biodiversity, and produce sustainable timber supplies. The emission reductions are estimated to be 500,000 tons over the next 100 years. This is one of the few programs that is working, but the system will not work for rural communities and local landowners as this program only benefits Pacific Forest Trust and the easements they hold.

White Mountain Apache Tribe: The National Football

League (NFL) purchased carbon credits from the White Mountain Apache Tribe to offset the NFL's carbon footprint from the Super Bowl. Monies from that purchase were used by the Tribe to pay for the cost of raising seedlings grown in the Tribe's nursery for restoration projects.

Maine Family Forests is a pilot project with the USDA to encourage forest management for carbon by small landowners. The project has identified 13 private landowners and, while still in the "investigatory" stage, is working to gain certification on the lands (development of management plans/enrollment with Forest Stewardship Council), trying to establish a cost basis (knowing that better forest management practices have benefits and trying to establish what practices have positive cash flow for landowners) and then to determine which platform to use to launch the program (Chicago Climate Exchange or REGGI).

The Northwest Natural Resources Group in 2008 will launch NW Neutral, one of the first carbon offset programs for small woodland owners in the U.S.

### **Timber Supply**

Communities can only capture forest value streams if they have a reliable, sustainable timber supply and access to the forest resource. Global markets, forestland ownership patterns, frequency in turnover of ownership, fragmentation through parcelization and changing priorities for landowners all influence timber supply. Most communities have a mixed-ownership pattern. As a result, obtaining a reliable supply means negotiating and maintaining relationships with federal agencies, private forest owners, and various state and local governments. In Wallowa County, for example, which is 58 percent federal land, private forests have provided the most stable supply of wood over the last 20 years, as access to federal land has been unreliable.

CBFs work to stabilize timber supply through consensus policy, landowner education, product development, marketing, and business infrastructure development. Stewardship contracting and Geographic Information System (GIS)-based forest resource assessment, landowner surveys, and mapping are used by CBFs to understand the supply.

### **Technology**

One challenge for CBF is achieving the appropriate scale for the available resource and businesses involved in value stream capture while maintaining profitability. Equipment needs to be at a community scale or sustainable scale. While not easy to define, it may be smaller than the large industrial scale equipment that has been typical for the forest products industry. Equipment financing options that support development of available resources for community benefits are also needed.

# CBF MOVING FORWARD

As highlighted in this document, CBF has come a long way in the past 15 years and is now seen as a feasible and real alternative, and for many, the preferred alternative for working in rural, forest-rich communities. Many people are now starting to ask how their communities can adopt the principles and practices of CBF to meet economic, environmental, and social goals. Significant changes in policy have the potential to change how public lands are managed and are providing the initial structures and resources to support community ownership and benefit from forests. A more engaged public is giving increasing thought to how consumer choices affect neighbors, communities, and the planet. One of the biggest challenges now is moving from a mosaic of individual projects and models to a denser suite of networked initiatives across the country. This will entail providing support to the ongoing challenges and evolution of existing efforts, as well as seeding and feeding new ones. This section outlines a number of specific outcomes that need to be achieved in order to reach social, ecological, and economic goals, an overall strategy for expanding and advancing CBF practice, and unresolved challenges.

## Outcomes for the Next Decade

As CBF grows, there are five outcomes that must be achieved, in order for CBF to be successful in reaching social, ecological, and economic objectives, including:

### 1. **Increased Access to and Influence over Forest Resources and Relevant Management Decisions:**

Access and influence are the mechanisms for communities to: ensure adequate supply of product to support local value-adding enterprises and energy production; create local employment; maintain a sense of place that is largely defined by their stewardship roles; and sustainably manage the resources to benefit current and future generations; among other functions. On public lands, continued access through collaboration and the specific mechanisms of stewardship contracting and multi-party monitoring, as well as new opportunities, will require support for both policy and bureaucratic change. On private lands, the opportunity created by the transfer of ownership of large and industrial forest parcels creates a window for communities to gain access through community-owned forests, short-circuiting the transition to real estate and other development.

CBF prompts us to think about “rights” and “access to rights” as we need to understand and clarify the values and benefits of forestland and to whom they belong. New thinking and tangible projects that demonstrate innovative concepts of “rights” to land comparable to that of “development rights” a generation ago will be critical as we address new value streams, such as ecological services, and create new products, such as energy from woody biomass. In addition, we will need

to consider, create, and adopt new forms of community ownership and/or control of resources, “rights” and enterprises that build community assets over time.

### 2. **Increased Access to Markets and Financial Resources:**

CBF enterprises must have the capacity to compete in existing markets and develop new ones. This will require reframing the rapidly expanding “green” market to also placing a premium on “local” and to connecting urban and rural constituents. Given the goals of CBF, a number of complexities in economies of scale and efficiencies exist for locally-owned, value-adding and energy-production enterprises. While the development of new business models is critical, including examples in the case studies of integrated facilities, regional clusters and outlets for distribution, innovative partnerships with the for-profit sector and others, there is a continued need for development and access to new technology that is scaled to “what the forest has to offer.” Investment capital is critical for the development of alternative enterprises that meet the triple bottom line. But as increasing numbers of businesses focus on local and community ownership, the key investment from outside of the community will be grant funds and PRIs to cover operating and inventory costs, thereby mitigating the risk for local investors.

### 3. **Increased Institutional and Leadership Capacity at Multiple Scales, Particularly Among the “Next Generation”:**

Experience over the last 15 years has repeatedly demonstrated the critical importance of individuals that have the vision, passion, and commitment to make CBF initiatives come to fruition. However, the first generation of leaders has been so focused on getting efforts up and running, that they have not always made the investments required in mentoring and supporting the next generation. Similarly, institutional and community capacity is an essential ingredient for sustainable and resilient communities. Resilient communities intentionally develop personal and collective capacity to respond to and influence change, to sustain and renew the community, and to develop new trajectories for the community’s future.

Central to the strategy for going to scale outlined below will be the developed and increased capacity of regional intermediaries. Regional entities are often able to accelerate innovation, testing, and dissemination by facilitating peer learning, networking, technical assistance, and leveraging funding. In addition, regional intermediaries are able to increase efficiencies in distribution and marketing for CBF enterprises, as well as build urban, suburban, and rural connections.

Finally, regional organizations can have greater impact at national and/or global scales by aggregating local initiatives and voices.

#### 4. **Increased Engagement of Marginalized Communities:**

At its core, CBF advocates for inclusion of diverse interests and the empowerment of all constituents. Among low-wealth African-American and other communities in the South and Appalachian regions, CBF offers an important opportunity for practices that expand the wealth of private landowners through: increasing access to services and technology, aggregating landowners to gain access to benefits from ecosystem services, developing new products and markets for under-utilized species, and acquisition of forestland. Among Tribes and the Hispanic Land Grants of the Southwest, there is an opportunity to reclaim ancestral lands and further build the capacity to manage and benefit from their resources.

#### 5. **More Supportive, Mutually Reinforcing Policy Frameworks at Local, State, and Federal Levels:**

Without some leverage/push from the policy arena, CBF will continue to be a nice smattering of good projects. CBF can establish its legacy and ensure sustained support by identifying and expanding efforts to develop a public policy agenda that solidifies a focus and priority of support for equity, locally-based sustainable development, and diverse and resilient communities. The following principles are suggested as critical to the development of any specific policies:

- **Decision-making** at the appropriate level (state, watershed, and/or county levels), depending on the issue, will enable rural communities to find solutions to their issues within local variations in ecological and social systems and communities.
- **Integration of Policies and Programs** between sector-specific “silos” is needed to reflect the interconnected nature of rural ecological and human systems in order to create effective and efficient public policy and investment.
- **Development of Appropriately-scaled Solutions** is essential to achieving sustainability goals
- **Collaboration Between Diverse Stakeholders** is essential to developing durable solutions and ensuring environmental and natural resource policy and management can meet the ecological, social, and economic needs of the nation and its rural communities.

### **A Strategy for Going to Scale**

There was consensus among the sources we consulted that the following components are necessary to any strategy moving CBF forward.

- **Continue Support for Higher Capacity Models:** While significant evolution has taken place, there

is a need to continue to invest in baseline models and processes at the ground level to both leverage the investments thus far and continue to advance learning at the frontier. Success at this level is critical to demonstrating the opportunities and, thereby, fostering interest.

- **Expand Monitoring, Assessment, and Research:**

As noted above, the process of learning what is working and what is needed is considerably underdeveloped. Many researchers come at issues in CBF from more traditional fields of research such as forestry, economics, and social sciences, rather than from an integrated approach. There is a need to test our hypotheses and assumptions, as well as better understand the intended and unintended impacts of this work, particularly of the roles of communities in a global context, the generation and distribution of benefits, and of the evidence of the influence of community access and control on sustainable forest management, among other areas.

- **Support Documentation of the Principles and Practices of CBF:**

While research is critical to developing theory, it is absolutely essential that this learning be captured and made accessible for practitioners.

- **Ensure that Learning and Knowledge is Shared Widely and that Emerging CBF Efforts have Access to this Information:**

In other words, feed the “bubble-up” of local initiatives that emerge in response to local conditions by creating “connective tissue” in the form of peer exchanges, networks and other linkages. In addition, groups need somewhere to turn to get timely, flexible, nimble help, and there is a need to build the capacity and the delivery systems for technical support, capacity building, and facilitating processes.

- **Seed Efforts through Catalytic Grants, Long-term, Low-interest Loans on Favorable Terms for the Acquisition of Community-owned Forests and Business Development, “Process Dollars,” and Operating Grants** for CBF organizations and collaboration. Also important is operating capital for businesses, particularly when local communities provide the investment capital. The key is to ensure dedicated funding streams for CBF for the longer term.

- **Build Support for CBF – as Expressed through Support for Favorable Policy Recommendations, Consumer Choices, and Financial Contributions – Broadly within the Public, Including Urban and Suburban Constituencies:** This will require stronger linkages between urban and rural constituencies and messages to media, decision-makers, etc. There is a need to develop and support nested institutions to

influence policies, markets, and public opinion.

## Unresolved Challenges

There is increasing recognition within the CBF community that **private lands** have an important role to play in providing community benefits. They offer a critical supply of wood that supports the development of locally-owned enterprises, thereby, providing an essential component of broader sustainable economic activity. Private lands also provide ecosystem services, recreational opportunities, and aesthetic values. Similarly, large transfers of ownership of private forestland present an opportunity for communities to come to the table to acquire, own, and manage forestland as a community asset. Existing institutions such as land trusts, cooperatives, and landowner associations offer entry points into discussions and projects that demonstrate the connection between CBF and private lands. How can CBF optimize public benefits from private landholdings while respecting individual rights?

CBF is, inherently, about working at the **nexus of many different fields** (forestry, community development, finance, economic development, conservation). Furthermore, with recent changes in the global economy, climate change, energy

costs, the wood products industry, etc., rural economies have to become more diversified to fully use all of their resources: natural, social, human, and financial. True resilience mirrors the ecosystems and economies of rural communities, with the goal being to move away from “forest-dependent,” to one of sustainable, forest-rich communities. This nexus needs to be reflected in our institutions and policies, including bringing resources and constituencies from different sectors (silos) into the practice of CBF and facilitating connections between efforts in different fields.

Similarly, current **policy making structures and government agencies** are not designed to support integrated activities, but rather discreet issues such as forests, wildlife, renewable energy, or community development. The frameworks that house most federal programs are a result of old models of governance and increasingly do not work in rural areas, particularly when addressing environmental and natural resource policy issues. The challenge in developing sustainable, integrated policies will be to reform government delivery, funding, and decision-making processes to support a more holistic and integrated approach to environmental and natural resource issues, ensuring that social and economic objectives are also met.



# OVERVIEW OF REPORT COMPONENTS

## Survey

The survey was designed by members of the Consortium's Technical Team in order to scan the variety and location of CBF initiatives to include in an interactive database that will be housed on The Trust for Public Land website ([www.conservationalmanac.org](http://www.conservationalmanac.org)). The survey consists of 37 questions that are designed to collect information on name, location, capacity, and mission of CBF initiatives and organizations as well as to describe models of ownership and use rights, revenue and other value streams, benefit sharing, level of community participation, types of resources and forest management structures, and anticipated future programs, activities and value streams.

The survey was designed and tested with a small group of selected respondents. It was then administered using "Survey Monkey" via the Internet between March and June of 2008. The survey was sent to over 2,000 organizations that were identified by members of the Advisory Committee and Technical Team, drawing on sources such as the Forest Guild, Communities Committee of the Seventh American Forest Congress, National Network of Forest Practitioners, Community Forestry Research Fellowship, National Forest Foundation, and The Trust for Public Land. Subsequent additions to the list were made through follow-up calls with requests for recommendations that have expanded the network of contacts with CBF projects, initiatives, and organizations. In addition, Internet search engines were used to find CBF groups.

The total population size and location of CBF organizations is not known and, from the outset, it was recognized that this exercise would not be able to compile a complete list. However, the goal of the survey was to do a scan of organizations based on the best knowledge and input of a broad group of knowledgeable practitioners in order to be able to make some informed judgments about the kinds and distribution of CBF projects and organizations in the country.

### Summary of Results

The survey results reflect a self-selected sample of the CBF field in the U.S. — those that responded to our survey. Over 200 responses were received from 25 states and offered a valuable scan of some of the features of CBF as it is practiced in the U.S. The survey responses confirmed that:

- There is a broad range and diversity of CBF projects and organizations that operate at a variety of scales.
- CBF practices vary greatly across regions, suggesting that CBF is responding to local and regional issues and imperatives.

In addition, the process of creating the list and scan revealed some notable gaps, including:

- Native and Tribal CBFs.
- CBFs in communities of color and low-income communities in the Southeast and Appalachia.

Of the 208 responses to the survey, 70 from 21 states were selected as the initial entries into the database as place-based CBFs. Members of the technical team made this determination based on a broad definition of CBF that included the following attributes:

- Management of forested ecosystems.
- Tenure and access to forest resource and its benefit streams.
- Evidence of benefit distribution to a broad range of community members.
- Collaborative decision-making.

Those responses were then classified into several categories to distinguish between different dimensions of CBF:

- Place-based CBF organizations or initiatives. (70 entries)
- Organizations (including academic institutions) or agencies (local, state, federal) that provide direct support to place-based CBFs. (63 entries).
- State, regional, or national networks for CBFs or facets of CBF work (market access, business development, policy work, etc). (7 entries)

## Typology

A nationwide survey was conducted to assess and map the breadth and diversity of CBF in rural areas of the U.S. The web-based survey instrument and the underlying definitions of CBF were developed by the core partners to the Consortium. They brought their collective experience and knowledge of CBF in the U.S. to this task. The purpose of this typology is to:

- Assist in organizing the database for exchange/communication between "like" organizations and projects.
- Facilitate the addition of new projects into the database.
- Identify the technical and financial support needed by individual projects and organizations.

The Consortium recognizes the limitations of a web-based survey in reaching certain audiences who do not have access to or make regular use of the Internet. The low response rate from Tribal organizations and Hispanic Land Grant organizations is particularly noted. A targeted effort to capture the breadth and depth of CBF activity within Tribal nations and land grants should be considered.

Not all respondents met the Consortium's definition for a CBF. However, the variety of responses was important to understanding the CBF movement. The typology ultimately distinguished between place-based CBFs, support groups and institutions that assist CBFs and networks of CBFs for purposes such as marketing. The database includes groups and organizations in the three categories listed above and the opportunity for new groups to list themselves.

The survey captured information on location; acreage (where appropriate); goals; models of ownership and use rights; institutional arrangements and capacity, revenue and other forest value streams captured by communities; benefit sharing; level of community participation; types of resources and forest management structures; and dominant social, economic, and ecological strategies; among other attributes.

The typology is based on a “tiered” approach within five categories in an attempt to organize the diversity of projects and organizations while reflecting the complexity of the movement.

1. Rural community context
2. Landownership
3. Capacity/organizational development
4. CBF methods/strategy
5. Benefit distribution

A detailed description for each category and sub-category is included in the addendum to this report: *CBF in Rural America: A Classification and Typology*. The typology document includes a matrix of organizations.

## Database

The data collected from the survey has been used to set up a database that is housed at The Trust for Public Land. Individuals can access the database by going to [www.ConservationAlmanac.org](http://www.ConservationAlmanac.org). The database was developed using results from the survey and is organized around the typology. Limiting factors in the development of the database include the following:

- There has been no comprehensive inventory of CBF projects, organizations and initiatives, so the database is considered to be the start of what will eventually become a more comprehensive database.
- The database was developed using self-selected respondents to the survey.
- The survey was administered over a short period of time (March-June 2008).
- Some respondents requested that they not be included in the database.
- Some respondents completed only portions of the survey.

The database consists of two principal components:

- A stand-alone, searchable, database of CBF projects and organizations, support organizations and networks where anyone is able, at no cost, to access the database, study the data, conduct custom searches and create custom charts. Organizations in the database can enter additional information. A protocol has been established for adding new organizations that includes a submission form for information and a process for evaluating whether the organization meets the basic attributes to be considered a CBF as outlined above.
- Google Maps: All sites identified during the survey are displayed using “bubble maps” created with Google technology showing users the location

of community forestry sites and projects as points on a map. The national maps will capture regional concentrations and offer detail as to the location of various types of CBF initiatives as identified in the typology. More detailed information from the database is accessible by clicking on the “bubble.”

In addition, the CBF database is included in The Trust for Public Land’s Conservation Almanac. TPL’s Conservation Almanac is the first, single, comprehensive online database of land conservation in America. The website, [www.ConservationAlmanac.org](http://www.ConservationAlmanac.org), is the definitive source of information about land conservation at the state and federal level, including acreage protected and dollars spent. TPL created the Conservation Almanac as a direct response to the numerous questions posed by policy makers, members of the media, and conservation leaders about the growing field of land conservation in America. The data has taken five years to collect and will be updated as new information becomes available. Features of the website include:

- **Original data from the source** — Acres conserved and dollars spent verified by over 100 public agencies.
- **Real data, in real time** — As new information becomes available, the database will reflect it.
- **Easy tools to search and compare** — Data is searchable and accessible for customized queries.
- **State-by-state descriptions** of conservation programs and policies.

The Conservation Almanac also displays in Google Maps format TPL’s LandVote database, which details the history of ballot measures supporting land conservation across America, dating back to 1988.

The design of the Almanac allows other databases to be imported and displayed, serving as a portal to databases such as the CBF database.

## Case Studies and Profiles

In order to illustrate several of the findings of the survey and this report, six case studies are included:

1. Community-Based Forestry in a Forest-Reliant Community: A Case Study of Framing Our Community, Elk City, Idaho.
2. A New Business Model for Sustainable Forestry: A Case Study of Appalachia Sustainable Development and Sustainable Woods, Abington, Virginia.
3. Stewards of Their Forest Lands: A Case Study of the Klamath Tribes, Oregon.
4. Community Ownership and Equity: A Case Study of Little Hogback Community Forest, Monkton, Vermont.
5. Regional Networks Supporting Community-Based Forest Stewardship and Benefits: A Case Study of the Northern Arizona Partnerships.
6. A Regional Intermediary’s Approach to

## Community-Based Forestry: A Case Study of Sustainable Northwest, Portland, Oregon.

These stories were selected to represent a breadth of experience from across the country. As we reviewed the field for examples, we were struck by how few “fully mature” efforts there were. Many of the ones we found had been documented before, and we wanted to tell new stories, although there is certainly a lot to learn from some of the original cases as they mature and shift to changing challenges and opportunities. We realize that we have missed some of the more obvious examples, as well as some of the more obscure, but believe the initiatives selected have significant years of experience behind them and have addressed several of the challenges of new initiatives, while having many more ahead.

We selected examples from public lands, timber-reliant communities (Elk City, Idaho) and from communities with histories of diversified resource extraction and private land ownership (Abingdon, Virginia). We selected examples of community forest ownership, including the efforts of Native Americans to reclaim and restore lands lost (Klamath Tribes) and the efforts of a diverse community group to own community forest land for the first time (Little Hogback Community Forest). Given the recommendations throughout the literature and the interest of the Endowment in exploring scaling-up CBF to the regional level, we included two stories of efforts to move beyond the community level — one of a network of organizations (Northern Arizona Partnerships) and one of a regional intermediary organization (Sustainable Northwest).

A number of profiles were also developed to demonstrate specific points and examples. Many of the profiles are emerging innovations that are yet to be fully tested. Other profiles offer a more in-depth analysis of a specific issue. We have referred to both profiles and case studies in the text to help the reader locate the relevant

information. Profiles include:

1. Financing Community-Owned Forests: The Open Space Institute.
2. The West Grand Lake Forest Project: Integrating Conservation, Economic Development and Affordable Housing
3. Changing Land Ownership in New England: The Open Space Institute.
4. Community Forests on Public Lands: Weaverville Community Forest.
5. Timberland Investment Management Organizations’ (TIMOs’) Role In CBF: The Lyme Timber Company.
6. Restoring Forests and Building Tribal Economies: The Indian Dispute Resolution Center.
7. New Business Model: Tribal, Private Sector, and other Partnerships to Support Biomass Energy Production: Community Energy Systems, LLC.
8. The Opportunity of Carbon Credits for Low-Income Landowners: The Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED).
9. Carbon Trading for Small Landowners in the Southeast: Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund.
10. New Business Model: Wood Products Distribution Center.
11. Regional Consortium for Wood Products Manufacturing: Sustainable Forest Futures.
12. A Regional Partnership: The Colorado Front Range Roundtable.
13. Massachusetts Woodlands Cooperative.
14. Opportunities for Community-Based Forestry in African-American Communities in the Southern U.S.
15. Opportunities for Woody Biomass-Based Development.
16. Land Area in Community Forests in the U.S.: A Preliminary Assessment.