



FOREST STEWARDSHIP

Half of Washington state is forest. Your woods are part of a network of over 22 million acres of an iconic range of ecosystems. Follow these tips to get started in learning more about your forest.

DISCOVER SOILS & SPECIES

Soils determine what species of trees and shrubs flourish, and which flounder. They are often complex, but there are tools available to help you get started. Capture a soils snapshot using Web Soil Survey - the nation's largest online public soils database. Design a customized soil report at websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov.



LEARN THE LAND USE HISTORY

Walk your woods. Observe if trees are similar in size, or equally spaced. Look for stumps from previous cuttings, and flat areas that may have been old log roads or landings. Back at home, peruse historic aerial photos from online platforms like Google Earth, or visit your local museum's archives, to see vegetation change from the sky over time.





DEVELOP A VISION & PLAN FOR YOUR FOREST

Using your research and observations, think about what this forest means to you. Take an honest look at what time, energy and resources you have to spend. Develop a list of three short term and three long-term goals. Starting with the longest first, work your way backwards to develop a broad timeline for implementation.



ENGAGE IN ACTIVE LEARNING & MANAGEMENT

Attend educational courses provided by your local extension office. Schedule a free site visit with a Snohomish Conservation District forester at snohomishcd.org/sound-forests. Take advantage of cost-share funding opportunities through your local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service office. Set realistic expectations and seek support when needed.

EVALUATE HEALTH & HABITAT

Every forest has its fair share of disease and decay, all are natural parts of any ecosystem. Walk your woods again. Pick a spot, or two. Observe and record. Count the number of shrub and tree layers as your eye moves from forest floor to canopy? Snags, brush piles, and nurse logs all contribute to wildlife habitat. Look for animal scat, tracks, burrows, and middens.



WANT HELP GETTING STARTED?

Conservation Districts work cooperatively with thousands of landowners a year to provide free services on private property. Learn more at thurstoncd.com