



# **Small Forest Landowner Perspective on “Long rotations and set aside forests: Economic and environmental implications”**

**Western Forest Economists Meeting**

**May 15, 2025**

**Seattle, Washington**

**Presented by  
Elaine Oneil, PhD  
Executive Director**

*Washington*  
**FARM FORESTRY**  
A S S O C I A T I O N



“Stewards of  
the land...  
for  
generations  
to come.”

Credit: Dave Townsend

# ***Celebrating our History – Embracing our Future***



***As a part of nature, rather than apart from it***



# Providing education, mentorship and experiential learning





# Longevity and Succession







**Celebrating Family, Community, & Mentorship**



# Washington Farm Forestry Association

## The Voice of the Small Forest Landowners in Washington State





# Successful Advocacy for Small Forest Landowners in Washington State



Forest Riparian Easement  
Program bill



Flame Capped Kiln Bill



Aiming for a crop today, another tomorrow  
.... through good forest management





# A Focus on Timber





# Wildlife and Water





And other  
creatures that  
share our  
forests





# Working with and learning from our participation in Sustaining our Rural Landscape





# Stewards of the Land.... For Generations to Come







Clean Water  
and Fish

But it isn't good enough for regulators

Wow - a 376,000+ strong run of  
returning salmon





# Who are Small Forest Landowners (SFLO) and what do they want?

*We are important enough that we have our own statute (RCW 76.13) and state resources dedicated to understanding what SFLO need and want to keep their forests as forests*

<https://nrsig.org/projects/small-forest-landowner-regulatory-impacts/files/Small-Forestland-Owners-ESSB-5330-Report-2021011.pdf>



## Washington's Small Forest Landowners in 2020

Status, trends and recommendations after 20 years of Forests & Fish

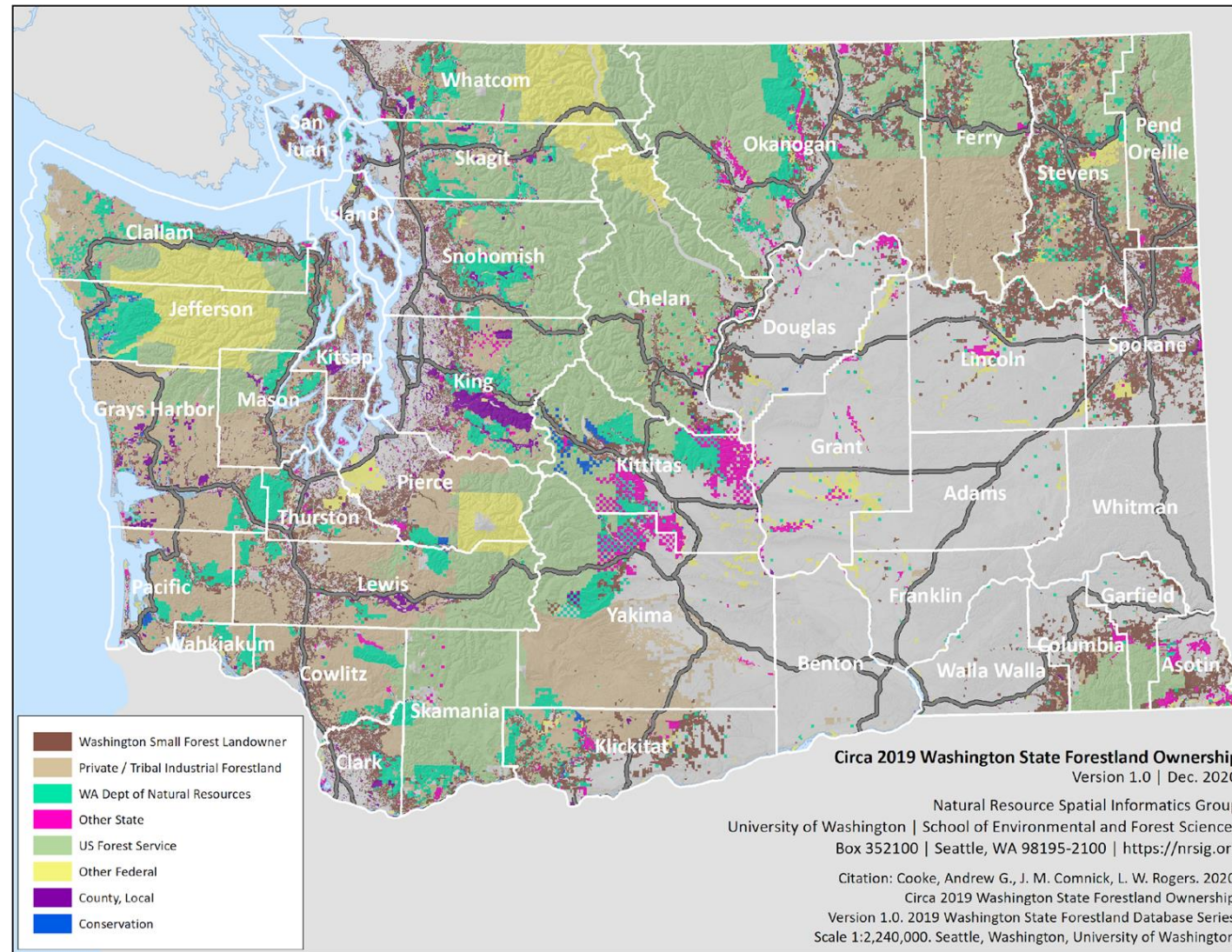
January 11, 2021



**SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND FOREST SCIENCES**  
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON  
College of the Environment



# High Quality Data on SFLO





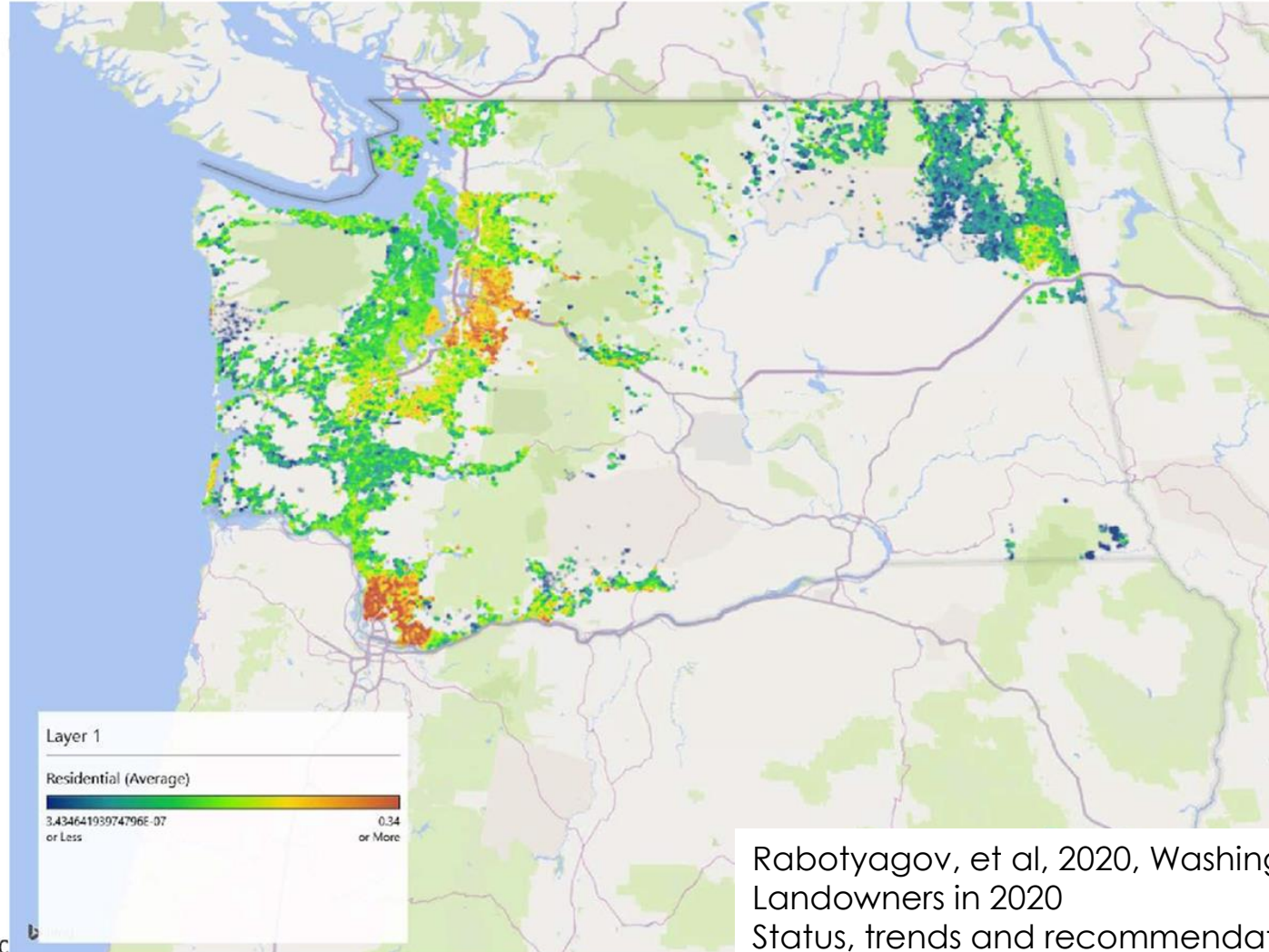
# Small Forest Landowner Statistics (2019)

Half-State	Acreage Class	Parcel Acres (2019)	Forested Acres (2019)	Number of Owners*
East	2-20	233,277	145,682	26,176
East	20-100	638,459	432,082	17,617
East	100-1000	1,131,649	608,948	5,187
East	1000-5000	689,963	233,611	618
East	5000+	109,242	39,409	32
East	All Classes	2,802,589	1,459,732	49,375
West	2-20	739,354	492,574	126,937
West	20-100	638,156	446,825	23,060
West	100-1000	541,794	402,282	4,167
West	1000-5000	102,936	82,705	124
West	All Classes	2,022,240	1,424,386	154,014



# Anticipated conversion to non-forest uses

## > Residential development





# Take Home Notes

- There are a lot of different reasons for owning forest land
- Huge variability in those goals among even a sample of the SFLO community

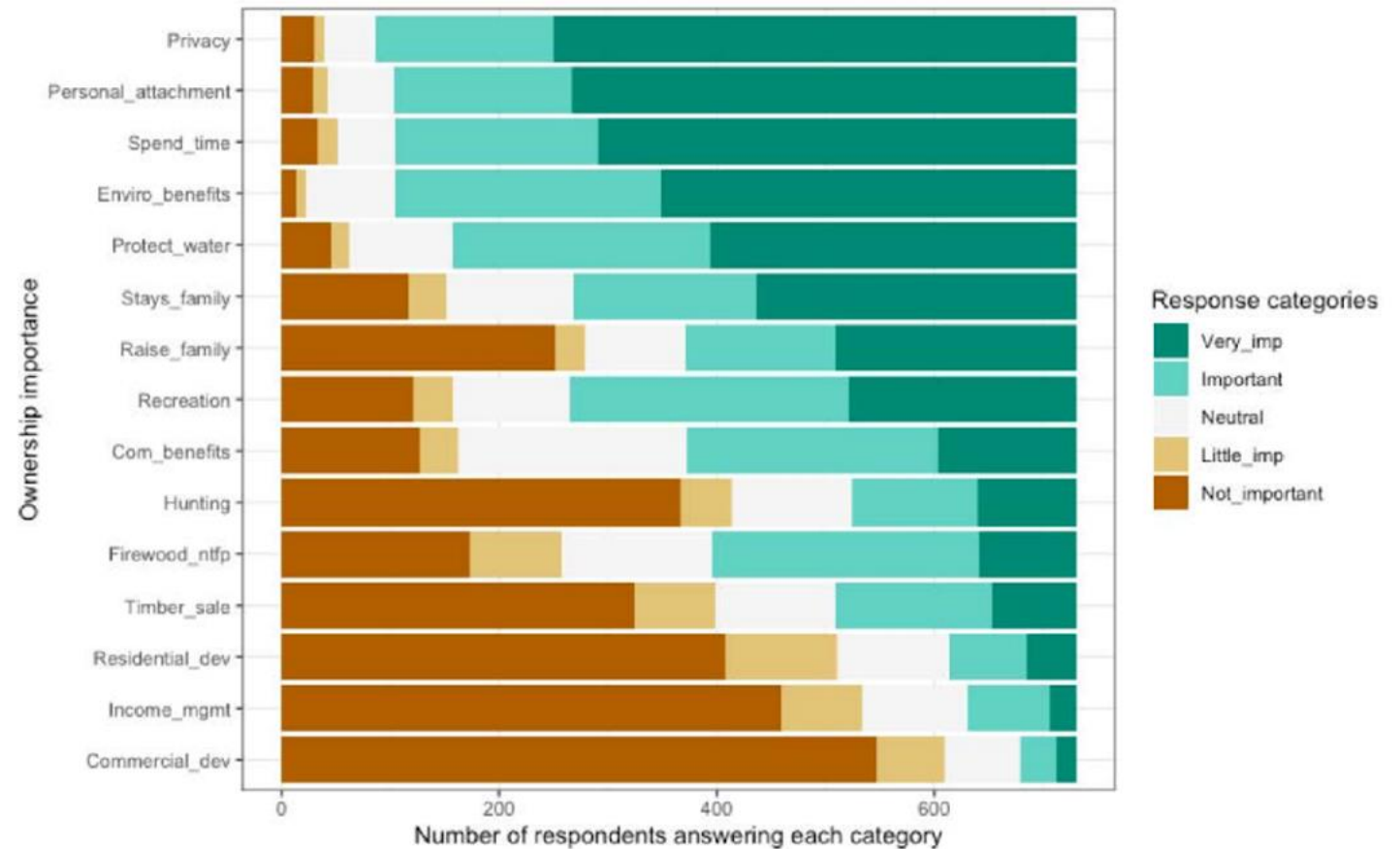


Figure 13. The distribution of answers to the importance of 15 aspects of forest ownership objectives from the 2020 GP survey. Objectives are presented in descending order of frequency of the "very important" response category.

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<https://nrsig.org/projects/small-forest-landowner-regulatory-impacts/files/Small-Forestland-Owners-ESSB-5330-Report-2021011.pdf>



**Financial Goals Matter –  
maybe not immediately, but  
over time they are always a  
consideration...**

## Take Home Notes

- HUGE variability in financial goals across owners and # acres owned
  - Huge variability in # acres owned
- Grey dots are westside owners  
black dots are eastside owners

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<https://nrsig.org/projects/small-forest-landowner-regulatory-impacts/files/Small-Forestland-Owners-ESSB-5330-Report-20210111.pdf>

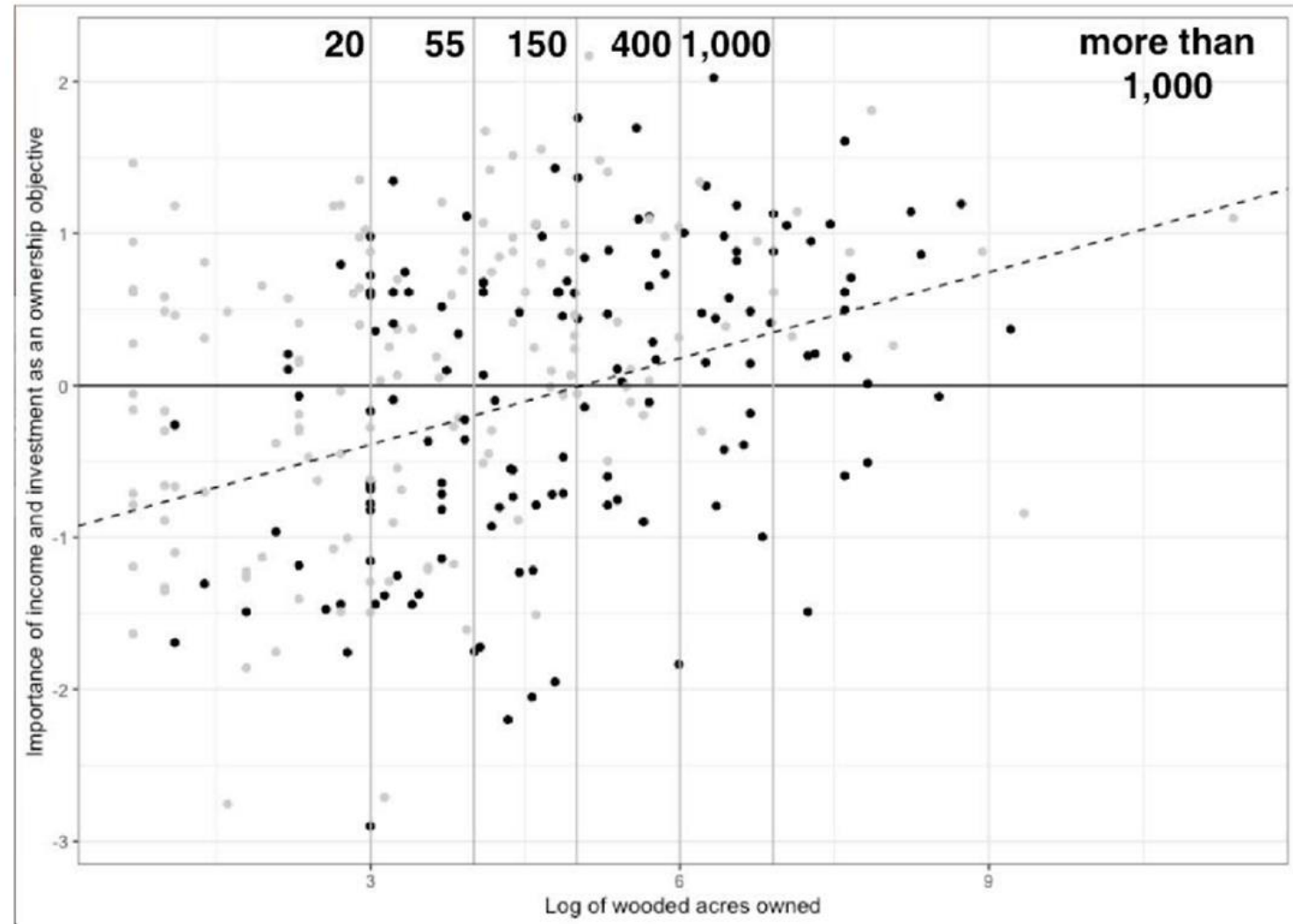


Figure 14. The relationship between the amount of wooded acres owned (log of wooded acres), and PCA scores for "Income, investment & heirs." SFLOs in the west half of the state are grey dots and those in the east half are black dots. Numbers at the top of the figure show the actual amount of wooded acres owned at various points on the log scale. The dotted line is the average association between log of wooded acres and the importance of income and investment from an OLS regression.



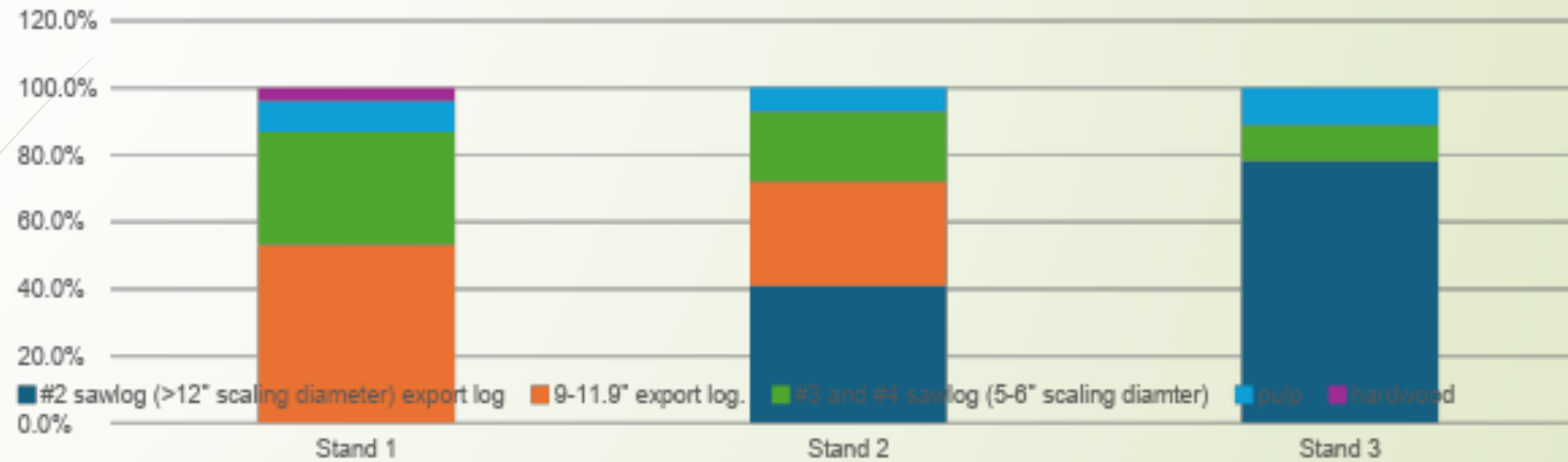
# A Tale of Three Stands: Silviculture, harvesting, and yield comparisons

Treatment Regime	Stand 1 - Low intensity	Stand 2 -Moderate intensity	Stand 3 -High intensity
Age at harvest	41	43	45
	Per acre values		
Pre-commercial thin - age 11	300	300	300
Stocking at final harvest	230	153	100
# commercial entries	1	2	3
Commercial Thin #1	0	4,500*	4,500*
Commercial Thin #2	0		4,273*
Gross Board Feet (BF)	27,972	27,629	29,935
Net BF Final harvest	25,808	26,485	27,927
Total volume removed (merch + non-merch)	27,972	32,129	38,708
Green metric tons removed	168	253	219
Metric tons of carbon removed	51	77	67
Metric tons of carbon per year in product	1.25	1.79	1.48
	Log allocation across all stand entries		
#2 sawlog (>12" scaling diameter) export log	0.0%	41.0%	78.3%
9-11.9" export log.	53.3%	31.0%	
#3 and #4 sawlog (5-6" scaling diameter)	33.6%	21.0%	10.7%
pulp	9.4%	7.0%	11.0%
hardwood	3.7%		

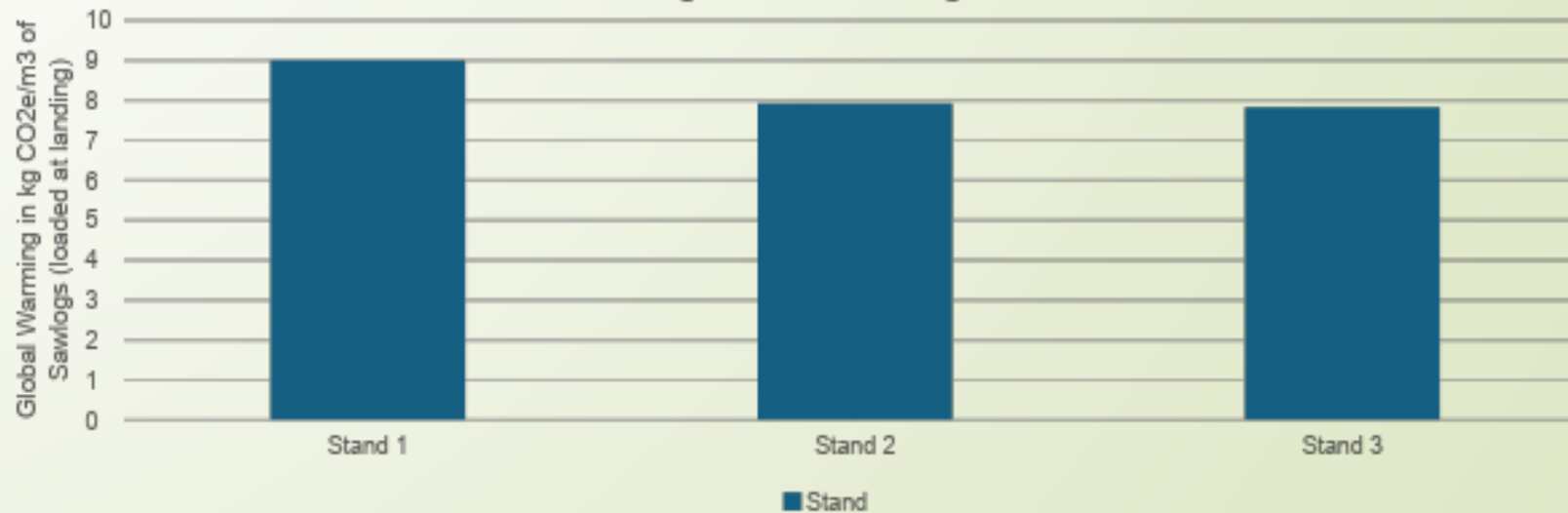


# Log Size, Efficiency, and Footprint

A tale of Three Stands Log Allocation



A tale of Three Stands Forest Resource GWP  
kg CO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>3</sup> of log





# A Tale of Three Stands: Experienced and Extrapolated (\*) harvesting and yield comparisons for extended rotation stands under managed conditions

Treatment Regime	Stand 3 -High intensity	Stand 3 – Extended Rotation Pathway*
Age at harvest	45	60
	Per acre values	
Pre-commercial thin - age 11	300	300
Stocking at final harvest	100	85
# commercial entries	3	3
Commercial Thin #1	4,500	4,500
Commercial Thin #2	4,273	4,273
Gross Board Feet (BF)	29,935	50,000
Net BF Final harvest	27,927	46,646
Total volume removed (merch + non-merch)	38,708	58,773
Green metric tons removed	219	341
Metric tons of carbon removed	67	104
Metric tons of carbon per year in product	1.48	1.73







# The 90 Year Plan





# Long term commitment and succession planning





# Ruth Chris vs McDonalds





# From planting through the diaper phase is a slog





# It takes a long time to get there



- Establishing a crop
- Helping it grow
- And after a good long while reaping what we sow



Soon you need to thin





# A market for pulp and Chip n Saw



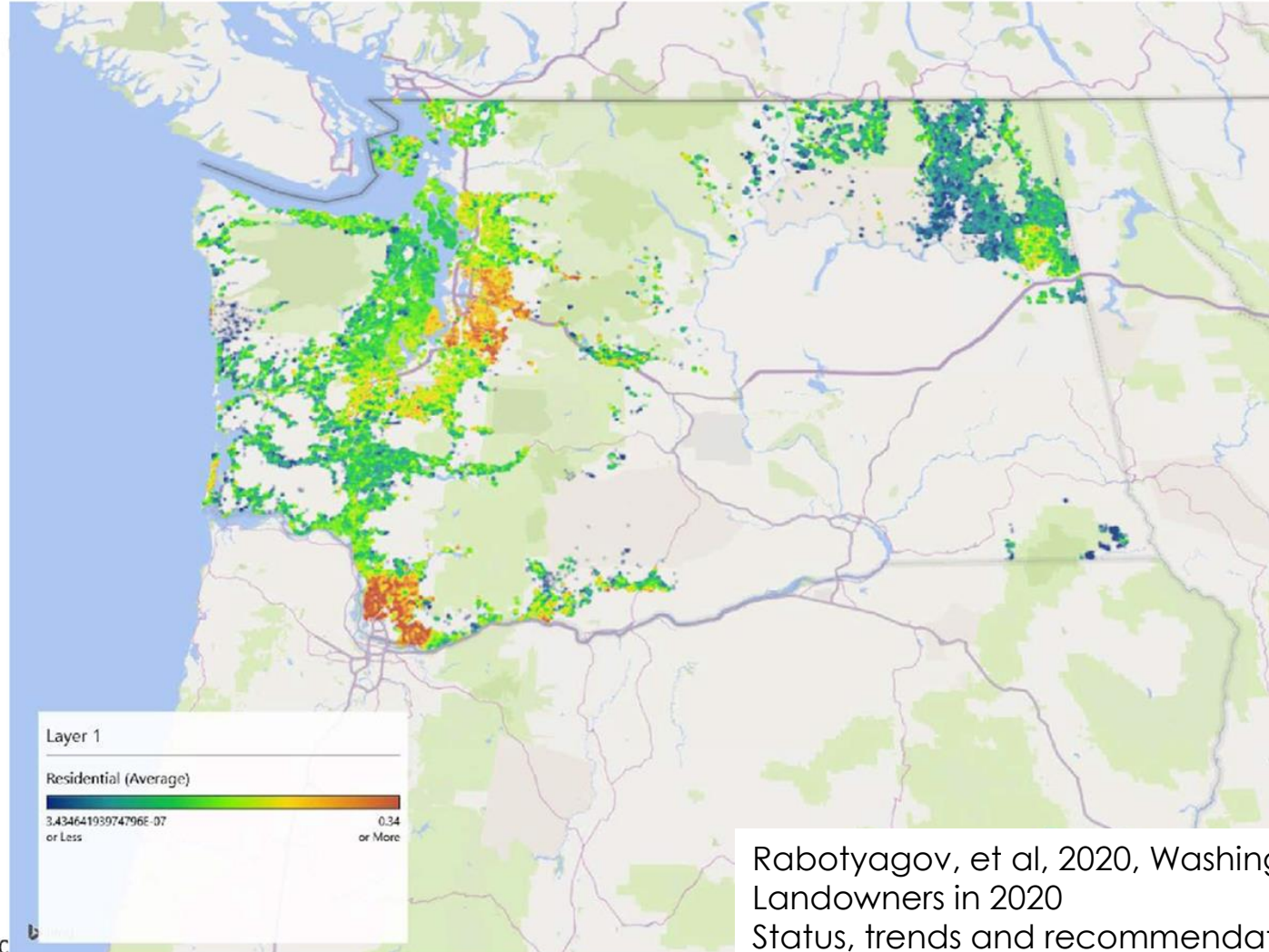







# Anticipated conversion to non-forest uses

## > Residential development







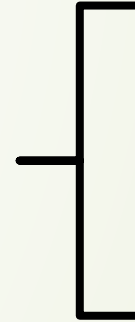
	WWA SFLO (5-2500 acres)	WWA Industry	Conservation/Utility/ Real Estate and NIPF> 2500 ac	WWA All Private
<b>total <u>lost timber value</u> to private forest landowners for parcels over 5 acres using species specific log prices</b>	<b>-\$276,884,015</b>	<b>-\$1,455,510,007</b>	<b>-\$94,779,659</b>	<b>-\$1,827,173,681</b>
<b>total <u>lost carbon value</u> to private forest landowners for parcels over 5 acres assuming \$50/ton</b>	<b>-\$69,221,564</b>	<b>-\$372,289,183</b>	<b>-\$25,764,839</b>	<b>-\$467,275,587</b>
<b>total lost timber and carbon value to private forest landowners for parcels over 5 acres</b>	<b>-\$346,105,579</b>	<b>-\$1,827,799,191</b>	<b>-\$120,544,498</b>	<b>-\$2,294,449,268</b>



# Regulatory burden is often huge ... and it impacts the long-term viability of small family ownerships

- **Morgan** - Raising timber should be encouraged, awarded, and applauded, and it must be sustainable from both an economic and resource perspective. If it is not economically sustainable, the land is just waiting for conversion. **Even the best stewards of the land have to be stewards of their families first.**
- **Bloomfield** – It has been my experience that loss of manageable acres due to regulation aimed at public resource protection is a significant consideration for landowners when assessing the value of their land and contemplating asset management decisions.
- **Lentz** - as I look out 20 years, I am concerned about my heirs being able to manage and enjoy the tree farm the way I did. **The thought of passing on something that becomes so onerous it becomes a liability.**

Pacific  
Cascade  
Region  
(38%  
SFLO  
harvests)



Westside County	SFLO parcel acres (2019)	SFLO buffer acres (2019)	% acres in buffer	rank
Pacific	49,180	13,482	27.4%	1
Wahkiakum	15,484	4,112	26.6%	2
Grays Harbor	83,681	17,856	21.3%	3
Lewis	157,052	28,993	18.5%	4
Cowlitz	88,225	16,139	18.3%	5
Clark	74,104	13,343	18.0%	6
Clallam	65,463	9,446	14.4%	7
Snohomish	124,675	17,821	14.3%	8
Skamania	30,306	4,310	14.2%	9
Skagit	75,416	10,060	13.3%	10
Mason	71,473	9,369	13.1%	11
Jefferson	53,720	6,956	12.9%	12
Thurston	83,081	9,967	12.0%	13
Kitsap	72,323	8,082	11.2%	14
King	90,399	9,926	11.0%	15
Whatcom	75,184	7,881	10.5%	16
Pierce	103,428	10,273	9.9%	17
San Juan	51,160	3,423	6.7%	18
Island	50,678	2,509	5.0%	19
total westside SFLO acres	1,415,035	203,947	14.4%	
most impacted counties	533,190	103,370	20.6%	1-7



