Stemilt-Squilchuck Community Forest
Stemilt Partnership

- Stemilt Partnership formed in 2007 to stop the proposed privatization of 2,600 acres of state forestlands in the Stemilt Basin
- Coalition of agriculture, wildlife, recreation, development, and conservation interests
- Founded on the three pillars of water, wildlife, and recreation; forest health has since emerged as a critical issue
Keeping the Forest in Public Ownership

- Chelan County Natural Resource Department facilitated the purchase of 4,600 acres from Longview Fiber in 2014 through grants and local contributions.
Stemilt-Squilchuck Community Forest

• ~15,000 acres of publicly owned land
• Management guided by Stemilt Partnership

Community Forest Planning:
- Stemilt Vision Document
- WRIA 40A Watershed Plan
- Forest Management Plan (Chelan County lands)
- Stemilt-Squilchuck Recreation Plan
- Landscape Evaluation
Forest Health and Fire Resiliency

- USFS Grant Stemilt Fuels Reduction and Forest Management Planning Grant
- DNR Competitive Grants
  - Collaborative Infrastructure
  - Cross Boundary
- Landscape Evaluation for Stemilt Planning Area
- Proposed FEMA funding for strategic fuels reduction
2018 Fuels Reduction Work
USFS Stemilt Fuels Reduction Grant

• 113 acres treated in 2018- mixture of shaded fuel break and pre-commercial thinning
• Work completed by DNR Fuels Crews and Ramos Reforestation
• Forest Management Plan for Chelan County Lands in draft stage
• 350+ acres planned for fuels reduction treatment in 2019- mixture of commercial and pre-commercial thinning
DNR Competitive Grants

- **Building Forest Partnerships Grant 2018** to support Stemilt Partnership Forest Health planning
- **All Lands Restoration Grant 2018**
  - 113 acre prescribed burn planned for Fall 2019
  - Layout and prescription for priority treatment areas identified through Landscape Evaluation
  - Landowner and stakeholder outreach
Sections are labeled by section number and ownership; sections without ownership labels are privately held. Squilchuck State Park and Scout-A-Vista thinning units will occur under separate administration. Section 19 and Upper Wheeler Rd units are proposed through FEMA funding. Chelan County GIS 2019.
Other Community Forest Projects

• Meadow Restoration
• Recreation Planning
• Roads Inventory/Assessment
• Elk Study
• Evaluation of development on private lands
  - Cherry orchard Section 17
  - Mission Ridge expansion Section 19
Steffen’s Meadow Restoration

Road Re-route and restoration work took place from Oct. 15-25th, 2018
Meadow Restoration
Road Re-route

Thank you WDFW for the road re-route work!
Recreation Vision Statement

Establish sustainable recreation opportunities in the Stemilt-Squilchuck Basin through a community based planning process that embraces community values, protection of water and wildlife resources, and collaboration with all stakeholders.
Figure 6. Recreational Use Concept Map – Winter
Landscape Evaluation

- Underway by Washington Conservation Science Institute
- Expected completion in June 2019, meets DNR LE requirements for Planning Areas under 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan
- Using indicators of Vegetation Patterns, Insect and Disease Vulnerability, Landscape Fire Flow, Stand Level Fire Risk, and Focal Wildlife Species Habitats to identify priority treatment areas.

Overall treatment needs: There is an estimated 9,200-13,600 acres of forest that could be treated to improve landscape resiliency, enhance forest health, restore wildlife habitats, and address forest fragmentation (Table 1). A combination of treatments will be needed to accomplish this goal, and may include commercial and non-commercial thinning, prescribed fire, regeneration harvests, and mechanical fuel reduction. Based on tree size class, many of the acres are commercially viable. However, road access, logging systems, habitat requirements, aquatic impacts, timber markets, and other considerations will determine treatment type. Maintenance treatments on 3,000-5,700 acres are also recommended. Individual landowners (Fig. 5) will conduct their own field assessments, planning, and decision making processes to determine acres and types of treatments they can carry out to achieve the overall landscape goals while meeting their own management objectives and regulatory requirements.

Table 1. Forest Health Treatment Need

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forest Conditions to Treat</th>
<th>Structure Class</th>
<th>Treatment Need Acres</th>
<th>Current Acres by Major Landowner*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forest Type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry</td>
<td>Med-Large Dense</td>
<td>2,000 - 2,400</td>
<td>2,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry</td>
<td>Med-Large Open</td>
<td>3,000 - 5,700</td>
<td>3,152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moist-Cold</td>
<td>Med-Large Dense</td>
<td>4,200 - 5,500</td>
<td>1,565</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Total Acres                |                 | 9,200 - 13,600       | *These are total current acres, not targets.

*Commercial thin + fuels treatment where possible. May be regeneration, non-commercial, or fire only.

Figure 5. Land Ownership
Landscape Evaluation

- A process for assessing the condition of a landscape or watershed and level of resilience to future disturbances.
- Identify restoration opportunities and priorities.
- A common basis and language for stakeholders and land managers to assess and balance a range of resources, risks, tradeoffs and treatment options.
Landscape Diagnosis and Prescription

- Create and maintain open canopy forests with large early-seral trees that are resistant to drought, insects, diseases, and wildfire.
- Maintain the amount and restore the spatial arrangement of dense, closed canopy forest habitat for focal wildlife species and elk cover.
Landscape Diagnosis and Prescription

- Restore the abundance and spatial arrangement of large-old trees across the landscape
- Restore within-stand spatial variability
  - Individuals, Clumps, Openings (ICO)
*Canopy Closure
*Canopy Layers
*Species Composition
*Tree/Snag Size
Vegetation Pattern

- Cover-type, Potential Vegetation, Structural Classes
- Insect and Disease Risk
- Departure from Reference Conditions
  - Changes in cover types and structure classes
  - Spatial patterning
  - Lack of old forest structure
Fire Regimes/Risk

- **Stand Level Fire**
  - Stand level fuel conditions
  - Rate of spread, fireline intensity, etc.
  - Compared to reference conditions

- **Fire Risk Assessment**
  - Fire probability
  - Fire intensity
  - Structures/homes
Potential Vegetation/Structure Types for Treatments

**Dry, Med-Large Dense**
- Current Acres: 2,056
- State Acres: 1,069
- County Acres: 590
- USFS Acres: 70

**Dry, Med-Large Open**
- Current Acres: 3,152
- State Acres: 762
- County Acres: 1,074
- USFS Acres: 21

**Cold, Med-Large Dense**
- Current Acres: 1,565
- State Acres: 1,575
- County Acres: 219
- USFS Acres: 1,289

Total Acres: 9,200 - 13,600

*These are total current acres, not targets.

**Treatment Needs:**
- There are an estimated 9,200 - 13,600 acres of forest that could be treated to improve landscape resiliency, enhance forest health, restore wildlife habitats, and address forest fragmentation (Table 1). A combination of treatments will be needed to accomplish this goal, and may include commercial and non-commercial thinning, prescribed fire, regeneration harvests, and mechanical fuel reduction. Based on tree size class, many of the acres are commercially viable. However, road access, logging systems, habitat requirements, aquatic impacts, timber markets, and other considerations will determine treatment type.

**Maintenance Treatments:**
- Approximately 3,000 - 5,700 acres of treatment (e.g., prescribed fire) in Dry Forest could occur in existing open forest habitats to maintain open forest conditions and promote the development of large tree structures.

**Forest Conditions to Treat**

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*These are total current acres, not targets.
Warmer and Drier Climate
Restoration Treatment Opportunities

- WA DNR Funding 2018
- 9,200-13,600 acres
  - 6,200-7,900 change in forest structure
  - 3,000-5,700 maintain open forest condition and promote development of large trees