



# JENNER HEADLANDS RESTORATION FORESTRY GOALS

Fact Sheet: June 2012



## Overview

California's coastal old-growth forests once covered thousands of square miles, stretching from the Oregon border all the way down to the southern Big Sur Region. Logging over the past 150 years has reduced these forests by more than 95 percent. As a consequence, many species dependent on mature forest ecosystems are now threatened with extinction. Our streams have also suffered from the effects of past logging practices. Increased erosion and sedimentation, and the loss of streamside trees have degraded important salmon and steelhead habitat and contributed to their imperiled status. We now understand the important benefits of intact forest ecosystems – clean water, fresh air, a home for an abundance of fish and wildlife, and solace from our busy lives.

Unfortunately, past logging practices were focused on commercially harvesting large mature trees, which left behind young and unnaturally crowded forests in need of restoration. Our ecological goals for the Jenner Headlands are focused on restoring these forests, thus, the name “Restoration Forestry.”

## Restoration forestry goals

Our goal is to transform the existing young, dense 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>-growth forest into a mature, self-sustaining, healthy forest ecosystem that is reminiscent of the past and, hopefully, resilient to the ecological conditions of tomorrow. In 150 years, we want to see a mix of large, tall redwood trees, Douglas-fir forests and diverse oak woodlands. Specifically, our restoration forestry goals are to:

- Nurture the growth of large, mature conifer and hardwood trees
- Conserve and improve habitat conditions for rare, threatened and endangered species
- Protect water resources and water quality
- Manage for wildfire resiliency

## The Jenner Headlands' forests today

Most of the 3,100 acres of forest on the Headlands today have been logged many times and consist of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>-growth trees that bear little resemblance to the stature of old-growth coastal forests. These crowded forest stands often produce thin, tall, narrow-crowned trees that can actually inhibit the development of old-growth trees — and increase the likelihood of catastrophic wildfires. This stagnated stage can last hundreds of years. Over time, these skinny trees would succumb to disease, insect outbreaks, fire, windfall and lack of nutrients, and would be slowly shaded out while a more mature forest structure slowly develops — as long as a catastrophic, forest-replacing wildfire does not occur.

## How we will grow the forests of the future

We will work to restore the larger, mature trees that we have lost — the kind of trees that provide important habitat to many imperiled species, such as the northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet. Studies conducted along the North Coast have shown that when young dense forests are lightly and carefully thinned over the years, the growth of remaining trees is released and a mature, self-sustaining, healthy forest ecosystem can develop more quickly. Along with providing homes for animals, a healthy, mature forest ecosystem will also provide important benefits to our human communities — clean air, clean water, carbon sequestration, and beautiful places for exploration and inspiration.

## Nurturing future forests

We will regularly measure the forests to ensure we are meeting our ecological goals. Along with looking at forest characteristics, we will also monitor bird populations and water quality within the creeks and streams. Based on the information we gather, we will continually revise and adapt our restoration practices to ensure we continue to enhance the Jenner Headlands' forests so that we and future generations are able to enjoy the benefits of a healthy, vibrant forest ecosystem.

**For additional reading:**

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