

ACFL Forest Monitoring Program

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Anacortes Community Forest Lands Monitoring Program

Background

- Anacortes Community Forest Lands (ACFL) 2950 acres located on Fidalgo Island
- 50 miles of trails traveling thru diverse ecosystems
 - Lake shore
 - Wetlands
 - Old growth forest – ancient firs and cedar
 - Mountain top
- Owned/managed by City of Anacortes

Forest Monitoring Program



- Primary mission- baseline and long term survey of forest health
- Signed MOU with City 8/2018
- Forest Monitoring Program started 2019
 - Develop & define projects
- 2022 transitioned to sustainable, long term program

Program Objectives

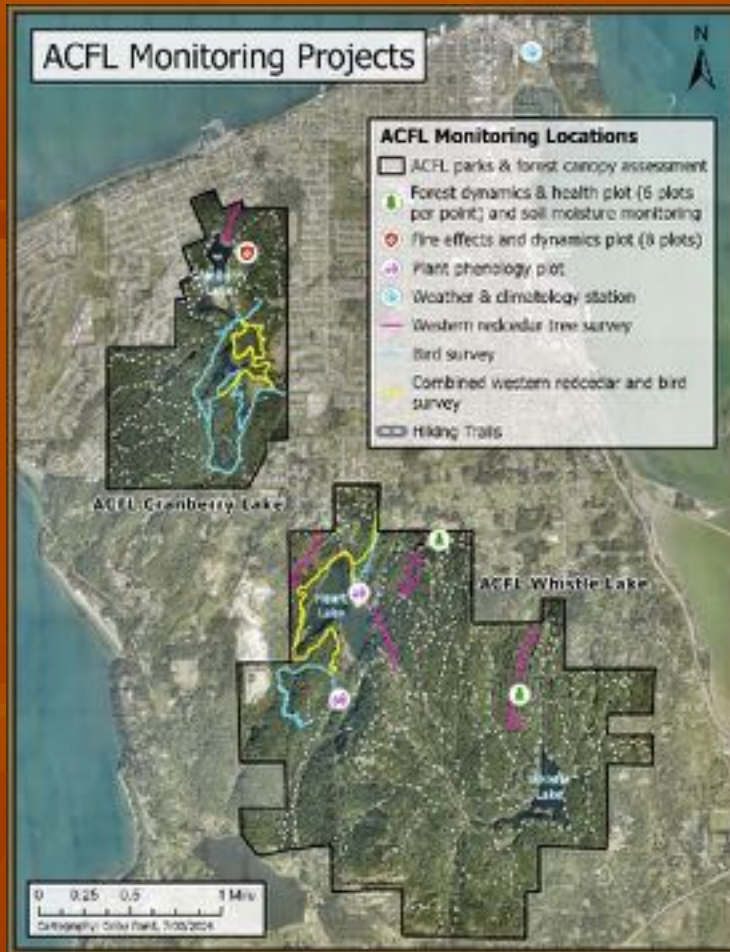
- Understand how forests are changing through time
 - Sound monitoring practices
- Opportunity to engage/educate community through citizen science
 - Volunteers gain hands on understanding of forest eco-systems
- Provide scientists, forest managers, City with data and projections of forest health



Program Framework

- Citizen Science program- designed to survey forest ecosystem
 - Science based monitoring methods
 - Program led by internationally recognized forest scientist
 - Greater scope possible

8 Forest Monitoring Projects



- Forest Plot Studies
- Western Redcedar Mortality Surveys
- Tree/Shrub Phenology
- Canopy Assessment
- Fire Effects & Recovery Monitoring
- Bird Populations
- Weather & Climate
- Soil Moisture

Project Status

- 2024 Annual Report documents progress and results
 - <https://www.transitionfidalgo.org/annual-reports>
- Sixth year of monitoring
- Data analysis producing trends
 - Subject to change over time
- Data archived on-line- Hired data manager



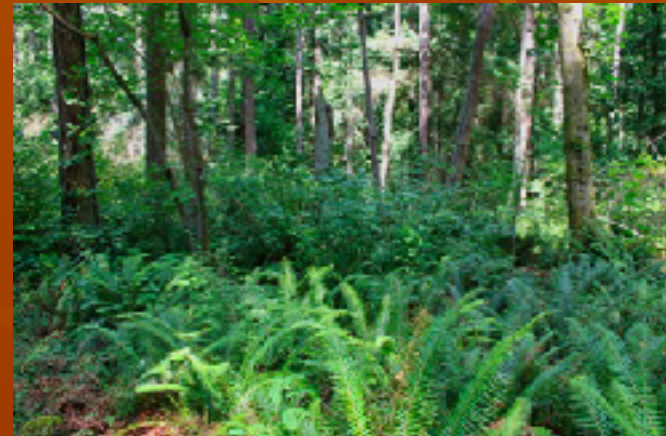
Interesting Observations



Western Redcedar
Population Stable



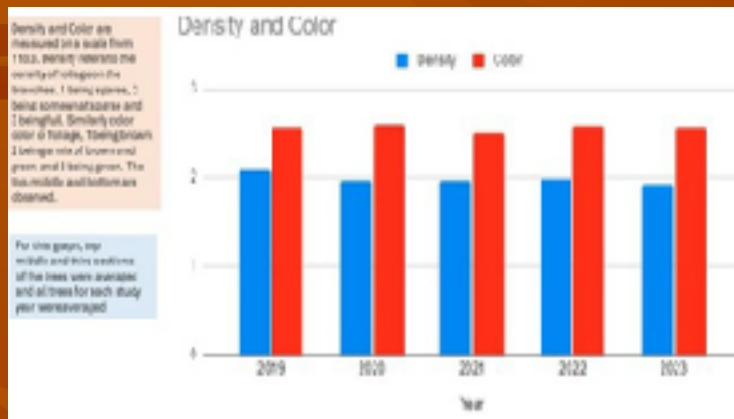
Little Cranberry Lk Fire 2016



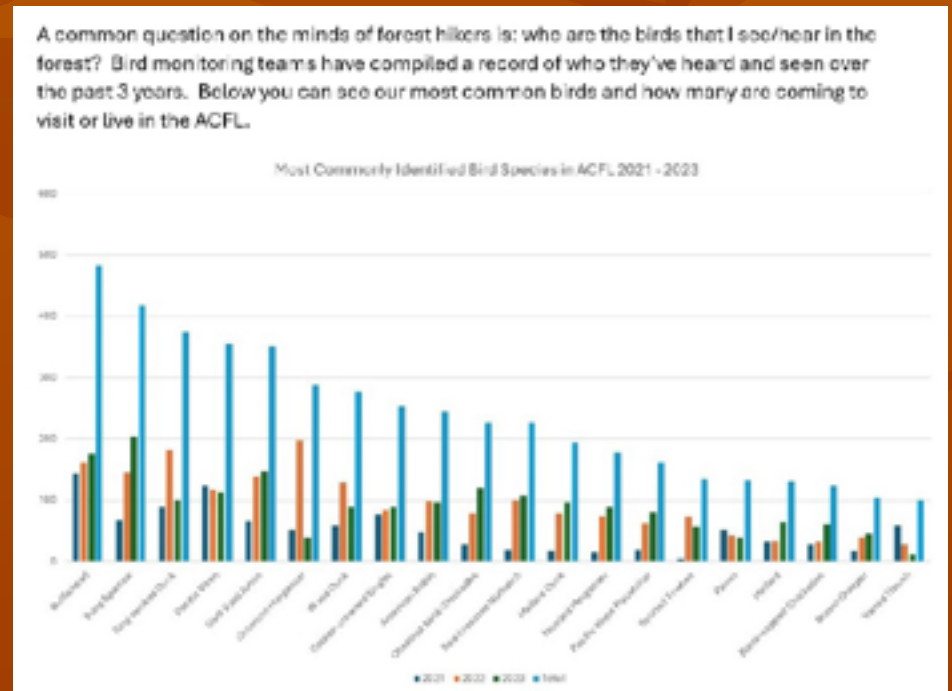
Little Cranberry Lk 2024

Trends

Birds We've Seen



- Since 2019 western redcedar health stable
- 2016 heat dome suspected of triggering die off



Other Observations & Trends

- Significantly greater diversity in burn zones
 - 58 species- burned
 - 11 species- unburned
- Annual lifecycle events are occurring earlier in spring
- Duration of soil moisture drought expected to impact seedlings



Our Volunteers

- Over 70 citizen science volunteers
- Majority of our volunteers since 2019
- Developed strong ownership of their projects
- Technical guidance from lead scientist vital



Into the Future

- Concerned about durability of Program
 - Working to start pipeline of new volunteers
 - Develop backup plans for lead positions
 - Need backup for program management & scientist
- Move into Phase 3- look outward
 - Continue developing long term partnerships
 - Expand use of data with other organizations
 - Develop more financial support
 - Reduction and analyses of long term data sets