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SPRING

Has Arrived at

Cornerstone

Naturals

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Vernonia, Oregon 97064
503-429-0335

Featured Property

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Listed at: \$1,399,900.00

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The Western Oregon Forest Health – Human Health Initiative

This project will develop the business plan for an innovative model that aggregates forestland owner carbon payments to fund family and rural community health care while servicing community thermal energy needs. This is one of several articles to follow in the Vernonia's Voice regarding the Forest Health-Human Health Initiative. We know you have many questions, and will be addressing the 10 most-asked questions about the Forest Health-Human Health Initiative in the next issue of the Vernonia's Voice. For starters – we want to share with you an overview of how this all got started.

Background: Since 2007, The Pinchot Institute for Conservation has been engaged in forestland owner offspring research projects – documenting the issues and concerns that face the next generation of family forestland owners in the US. Over 600 offspring interviews have been conducted primarily in four states: Oregon (100), Washington (100), Pennsylvania (260), and Wisconsin (260). Much has been learned as a result of those interviews, but key findings hold relevance to the Western Oregon (Vernonia) Forest Health - Human Health Initiative. Amongst the most compelling findings: much of the conversion from forest to non-forest cover will occur when offspring – who plan to inherit the family forestland - are faced with medical care expenses they do not anticipate nor can afford to pay for without selling the family forests (ranked higher than concern over tax payments in some states). Offspring across the US also identified payment for ecosystem services – particularly carbon banking – as a financial tool they would find important or most important in helping them to keep the family forests.

The community of Vernonia Oregon, located in the NW region of Oregon ~40 miles due west and north of Portland, after suffering two 500-year floods in the last 7 years, is in the process of rebuilding the entire community: relocating all schools, public buildings (including the community health clinic), and 50% of the residential homes outside of the flood plain. The community has decided to make sustainability the backbone of the rebuild effort, including rebuilding the K-12 schools to LEED-certification standards. The community was originally built around the forest products industry and today still remains one of the most productive forested areas in the state. Included in the rebuild effort is the process of using woody biomass from both public and private surrounding forestlands for thermal energy for the public facilities being relocated outside the floodplain. It has been estimated that approximately 1,000 gT of woody biomass will be needed annually to service the community facility

heating and cooling needs. Aside from the public forestlands surrounding the Vernonia area (national forests, state forests, BLM lands, university demonstration forests), there are ~700 private non-industrial forestland owners just in Columbia County with Vernonia at the center. Many of these forestland owners are at the age where their family forests will transition to their offspring in the immediate future. This Forest Health - Human Health Initiative is the first project in the US to link forestland owner offspring concerns regarding health care access to carbon banking payments, while providing additional regional markets for woody biomass from the family forestlands.

The Forest Health – Human Health Process:

Forestland owners in Columbia County would engage in carbon contract with a carbon aggregator/investor;

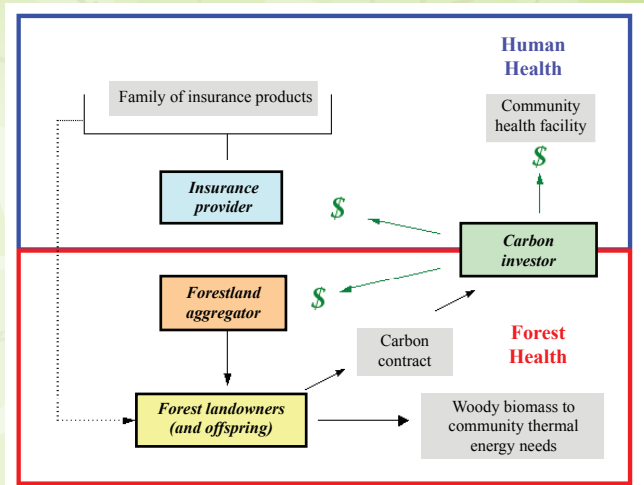
Carbon payments from investors would be derived from family forestland carbon credits. Payments would go direct to landowner-selected insurance companies and the government-funded community health care clinics;

Payments directed to insurance companies will pay for landowner-selected health insurance products for themselves and/or their offspring. A portion of these payments may be tax deductible to the landowner.

Payments to the community health care clinic would come from a percentage of the carbon credit payments derived from the same family forests as above. These payments will be earmarked for increasing access to medical care for all citizens in the community (new telemedicine technology; other). These payments may be tax deductible to the carbon investor.

In exchange for the family forestland contribution of a percentage of their carbon payments to the community

health care clinic, the community would agree to purchase woody biomass from participating family forest operations to service community thermal energy needs.



The Pinchot Institute has just been awarded \$200,000 in grant funds from Regence BlueCross BlueShield, the Kelley Family Foundation, and USDA to engage in Phase 2 of the Forest Health-Human Health Initiative in Vernonia: This includes developing the business plan for the Forest Health - Human Health Initiative in Columbia County, verifying landowner and offspring interest to participate in the initiative, determining carbon pricing and contract conditions, determining sustainable biomass supply capability from family forestlands, etc. Assuming project results document market and financial viability, the Initiative could be launched in Columbia County by the end of 2011, with expanded application throughout other regions in Oregon, the PNW, and the US.

For more information contact: Catherine M. Mater at mater@mater.com; 541-753-7335; or Brian Kittler at bkittler@pinchot.org; 202-797-6585 www.pinchot.org

