Climate Change Strategy for the Pacific Northwest Region, USDA Forest Service

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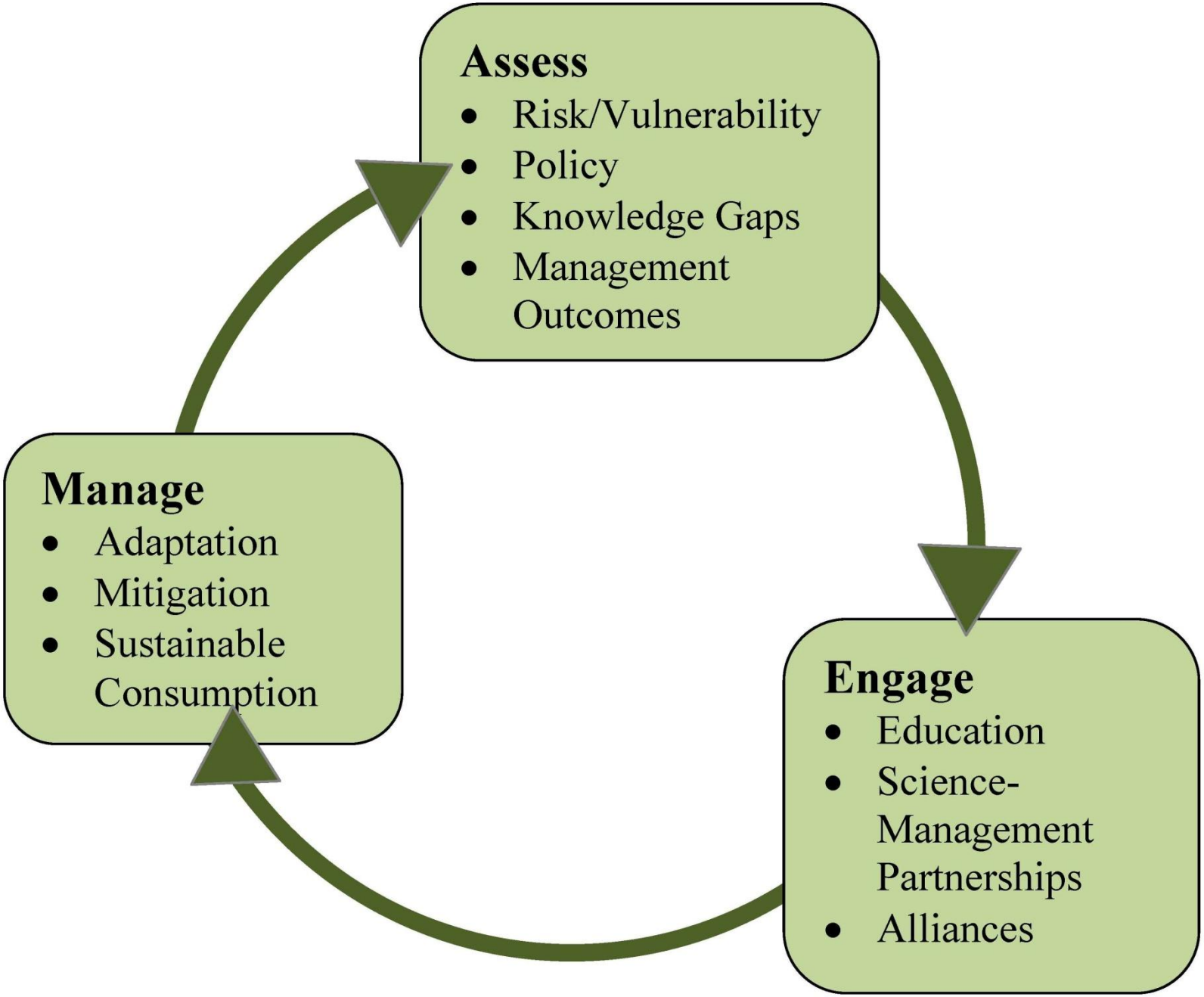
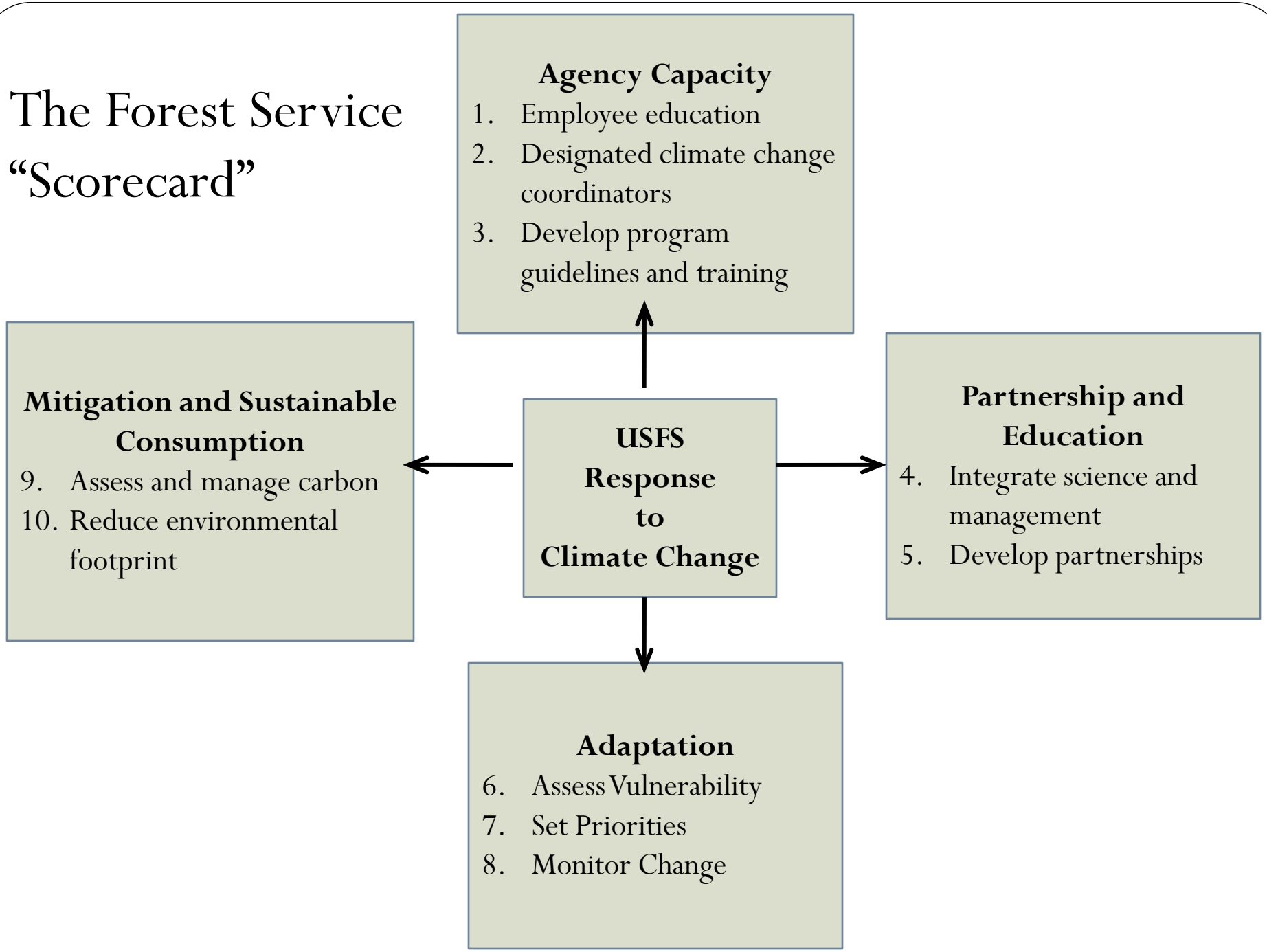
USDA Strategic Plan

- Strategic Goal 2 – Ensure our national forests and private working lands are conserved, restored, and made more resilient to climate change, while enhancing our water resources.
- Objective 2.2 – Lead efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change
- Performance measure 2.2.3- Percent of National Forests in compliance with a climate change adaptation and mitigation strategy.

National Roadmap for Responding to Climate Change
USDA Forest Service
July 2010


Assess
Risk/Vulnerability
Policy
Knowledge Gaps
Management Outcomes
Engage
Education
Science-Management Partnerships
Alliances
Manage
Adaptation
Mitigation
Sustainable Consumption

The Forest Service "Scorecard"



Scorecard elements

- 1. Improving climate change understanding
- 2. Establish climate change coordinators
- 3. Provide guidance to the workforce
- 4. Integrate science
- 5. Form partnerships
- 6. Conduct vulnerability assessment
- 7. Develop adaptation strategy
- 8. Monitoring
- 9. Carbon assessment
- 10. Sustainable operatrions

Scorecard assessment in the Region

- Goal is to have all Forests meet 7 of 10 elements by 2015, including at least one in each of the four themes
- First round March 2011: "Where are you at?"
- Second round by end of Fiscal Year 2011: "How will you get to success by 2015?"

So how are we doing ?

1. **Education 47% of Forests answered yes**

- Workshops proving popular and effective
- Climate Change Resource Center website
- Washington state assessment
- Oregon state assessment
- Continually work with Forests

So how are we doing ?

2. **Climate change coordinators**

   82% of Forests answered yes

- Should be 100% by now
- Understanding of what coordinators do is still developing

So how are we doing ?

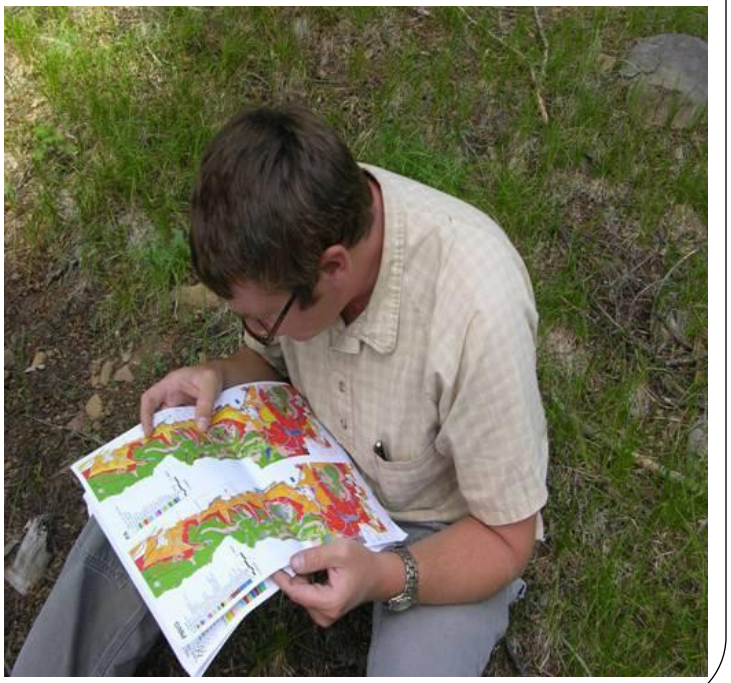
3. Provide guidance 12% of Forests answered yes

- Weakly defined, even at the National level
- Focus on assisting the planning process

  --Blue Mountains plan revision
- Regional white papers,

  e.g., Carbon assessment
- Sustainable operations.

  Green Teams



So how are we doing ?

4. **Integrate with science**

   65% of Forests answered yes

- Pacific Northwest Region has a long tradition of working closely with the research community
- Science capacity within the National Forest System
- Many examples of collaboration….such as this workshop
- Well-integrated at the Regional level

So how are we doing ?

5. Partnerships 76% of Forests answered yes

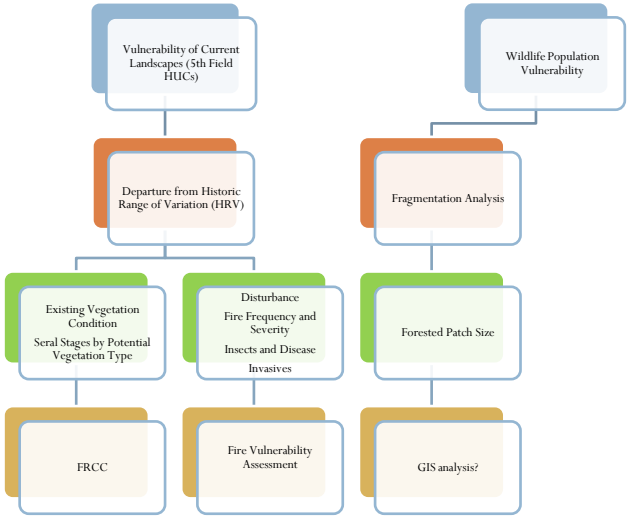
- Most Forests have a number of effective partnerships but may not have them focused on climate change
- May not be necessary to form new partnerships, but must show how existing ones are helping you meet the scorecard elements

The “sustainability elements”

- 6. Vulnerability assessment
- 7. Adaptation strategy
- 8. Monitoring

These are the most important, but also proving the most challenging. 24% of Forests responded “Yes” on these three elements.

A rigorous, defensible restoration strategy to make our landscapes as resilient as possible to adapt to an uncertain future



- Vulnerability assessment

--Development underway

--Interim products by the spring of 2011

--Final products in the fall of 2011 (terrestrial), fall of 2012 (aquatic and socio-economic). Aquatic assessment is delayed because of the national requirement for a watershed assessment.

Incidentally....

Emphasizing the restoration elements as our core strategy pretty much takes climate change skepticism off the table

Draft Terrestrial Vulnerability Assessment

- Late spring 2011
- Narrative form
- Consider integrating with adaptation strategy
- Use of current assessments (e.g., FRCC) and climate change overlays (e.g., water balance deficit)
- Incorporate subregional assessment of tree species genetics and special habitats to identify possible range shifts and ecosystems at risk (Aubry-Erickson subregional assessment)

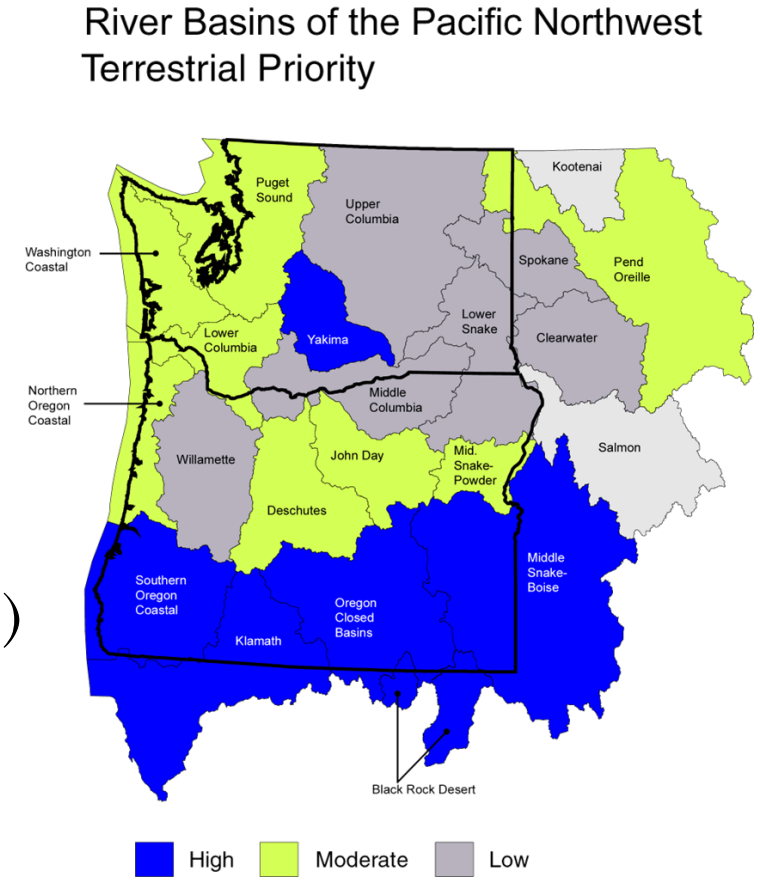
- Adaptation strategy

The best adaptation strategy is a well-thought out and defensible restoration strategy

--Need (active or passive)

--Efficacy

--Public support



So how are we doing ?

9. Carbon assessment

Reported 100% of Forests for the Region

- Assessed Regionally
- Completed and in peer review
- Regional Forester letter to be submitted May 2011

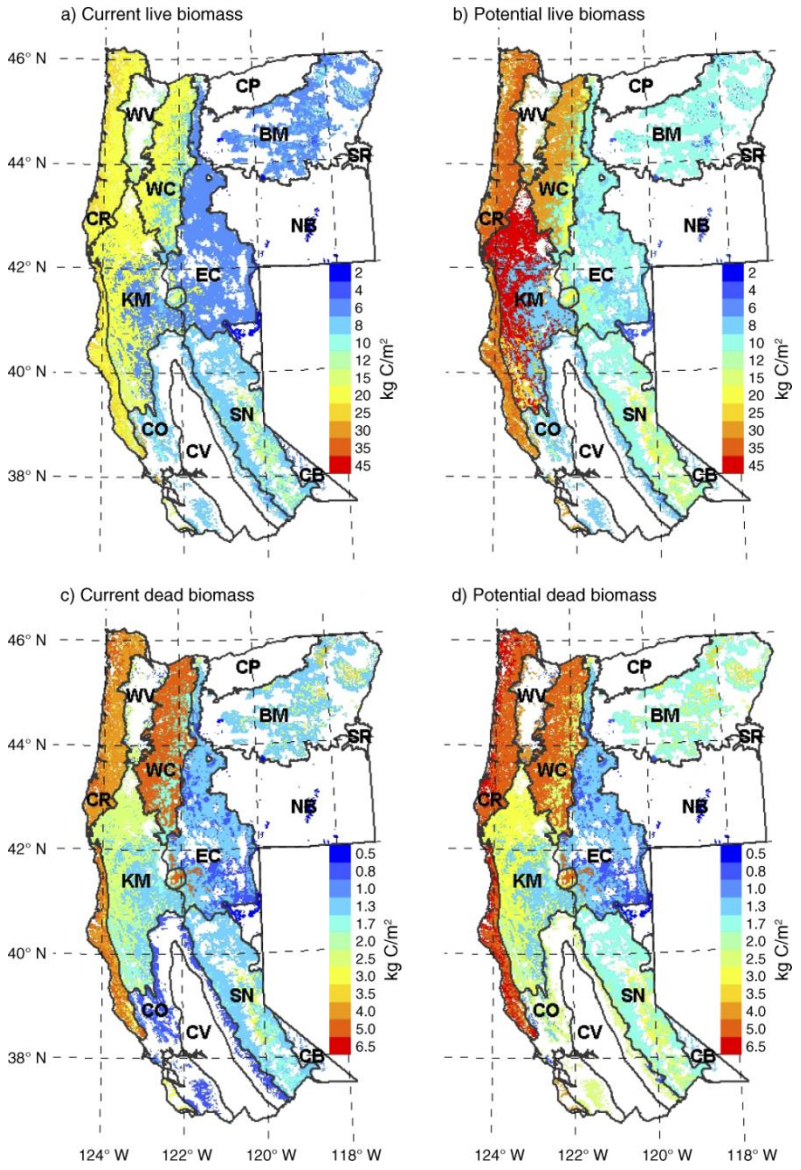
Summary of carbon by ecoregion and vegetation type

5 to 7 times as much potential carbon per unit area fixed on the westside versus eastside forests

The C density in PNW OG forests is equivalent to tropical rainforest levels

Large potential to sequester more carbon than is currently there, but must consider the range of variation

Data from Beverly Law and students, College of Forestry, Oregon State University



So how are we doing ?

10. **Sustainable Operations**

    59% of Forests answered yes

- Feedback that documentation was burdensome
- Form a Green Team if you don't already have one
- It saves us money

Where do we go from here?

- More specific scorecard guidance will be forthcoming
- Next round of scorecard assessment later this fiscal year
- Draft terrestrial vulnerability assessment
- Better involvement and writing in NEPA documents
- More Regional white papers
- New Regional coordinator arrives May 23

Any mule can kick a barn down, but only a carpenter can build one.

--Sam Rayburn