

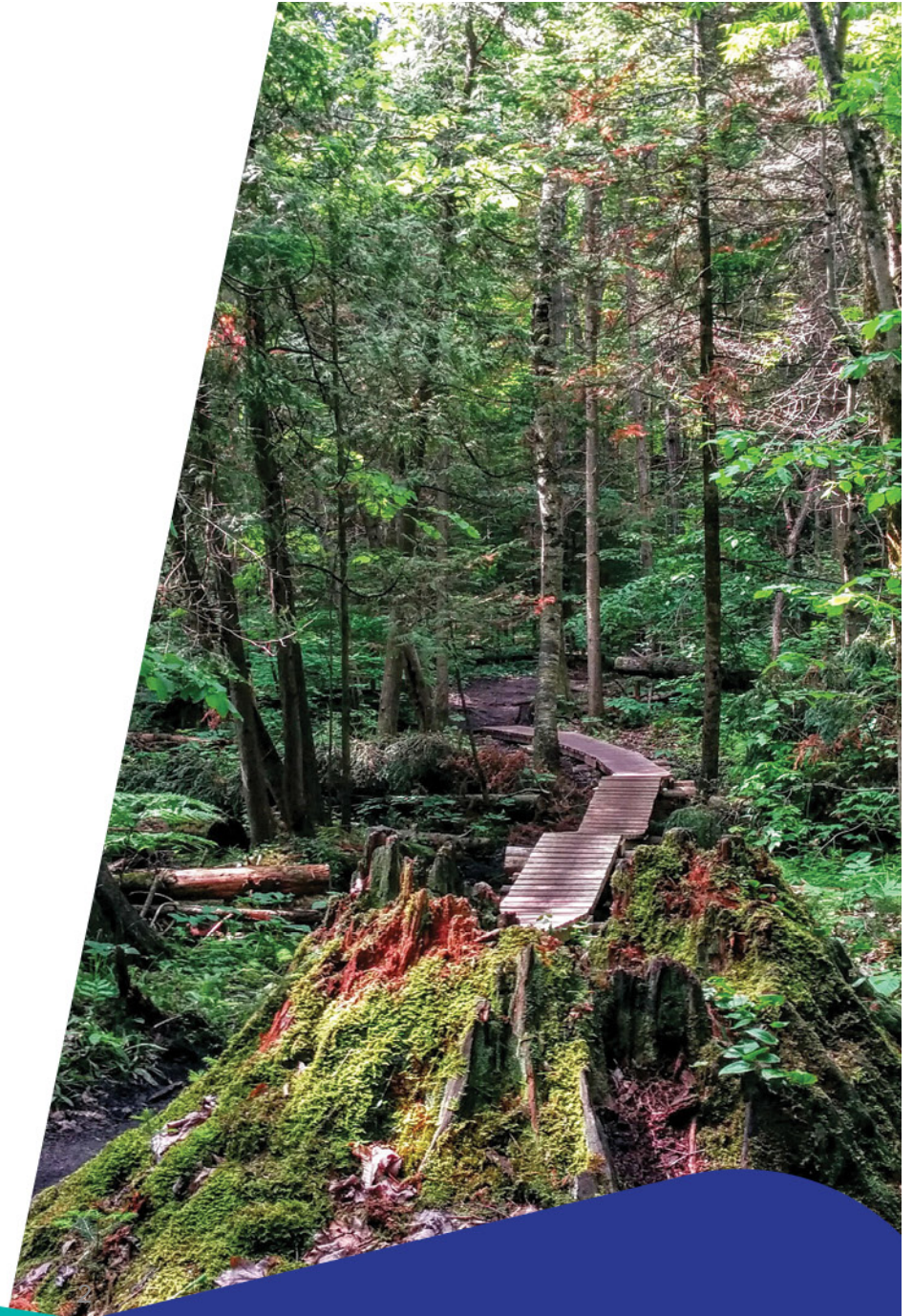
# York Regional Forest Management Plan

[York.ca/YRForestFuture](http://York.ca/YRForestFuture)  
#YRForestFuture

  
**York Region**

# Welcome

This is your opportunity to give feedback on the ideas under consideration for the Forest Management Plan.





# CONVERSATION GUIDELINES

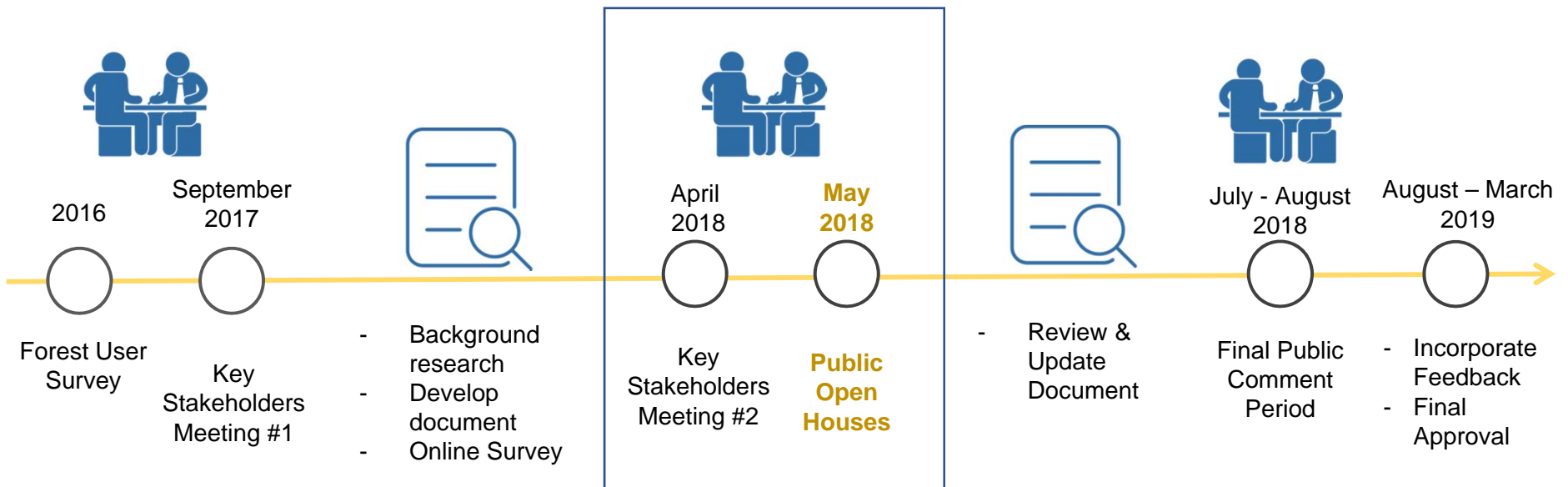
- Share ideas in a respectful manner
- Speak one person at a time
- Be brief so others can also have their say
- Listen to understand
- Be open to and value different points of view
- Ask for clarification if you don't understand

# AGENDA

- Project Timeline
- History of the Forest
- Forest Future and Vision
- Public Use Considerations

Followed by questions and answers and then more opportunities to meet with staff and consultants

# PROJECT TIMELINE



# HISTORY OF THE FOREST





# YORK REGIONAL FOREST - HISTORY

- Late 1800's: Forests cleared for farms and homes
- After the trees were removed, the entire area became a desert-like landscape
- 1920's: Agreement Forest Program allowed government to plant trees to restore the forest and soil

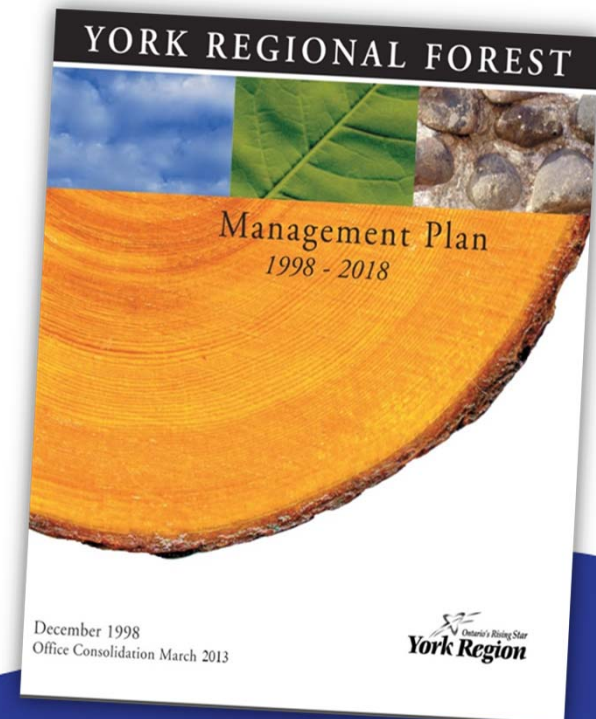


# MANAGING THE REGIONAL FOREST

For the past 20 years, the forest has been managed using the current management plan and 5 year operating plans.

The new plan will build on the success of the current plan and highlight:

- Public use
- Conservation
- Harvesting
- Tree Planting





# YORK REGIONAL FOREST — TODAY

With careful management over the past 20 years, the forest has grown and flourished.

- 23 forest tracts
- 147 kilometres of trails
- 2,300 total hectares
- First public forest in Canada certified by Forest Stewardship Council



# CURRENT PUBLIC USE AND TRAILS

More than 600,000 visitors per year enjoy using the multi-use trails for:

- Hiking & dog walking
- Mountain biking
- Nature appreciation
- Horseback riding
- Hunting
- Snowshoeing
- Cross-country skiing



# PUBLIC USE AND FOREST HEALTH



- Ecologically sensitive
- Little or no public use



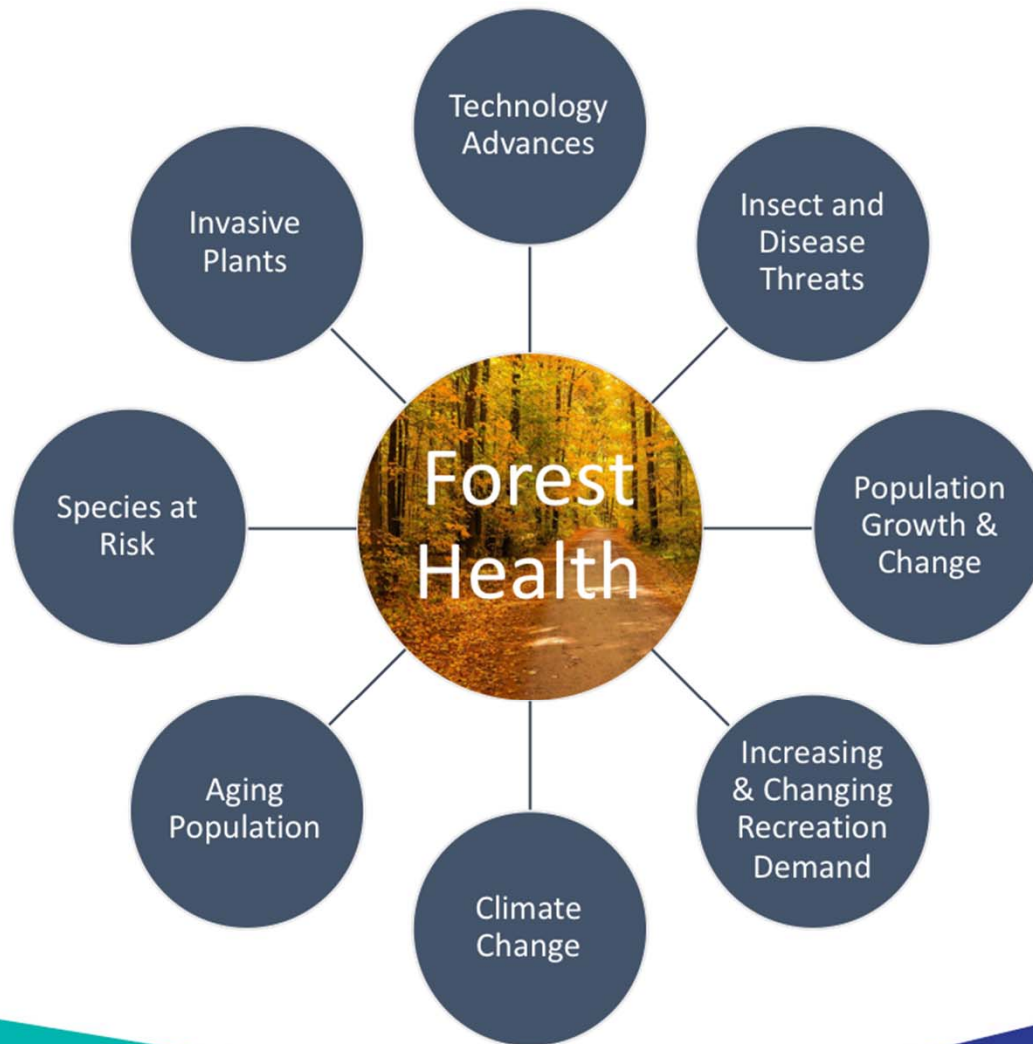
York Regional  
Forest



- Focus on intensive public use



# PRESSURES ON FOREST HEALTH







# FOREST FUTURE AND VISION

## 2019 to 2038



# YORK REGIONAL MANAGEMENT PLAN 2019-2038

## VISION

As the heart of the Region's natural landscape, a healthy and ecologically diverse York Regional Forest sustains its communities and inspires its people.

## MISSION

In achieving this vision, York Region is a leader in working with nature, communities and people.



# GOALS 2019 - 2038

Our main priority is to protect and manage the ecological integrity of the forest to maximize the benefits to the environment, community and residents.

## Goals

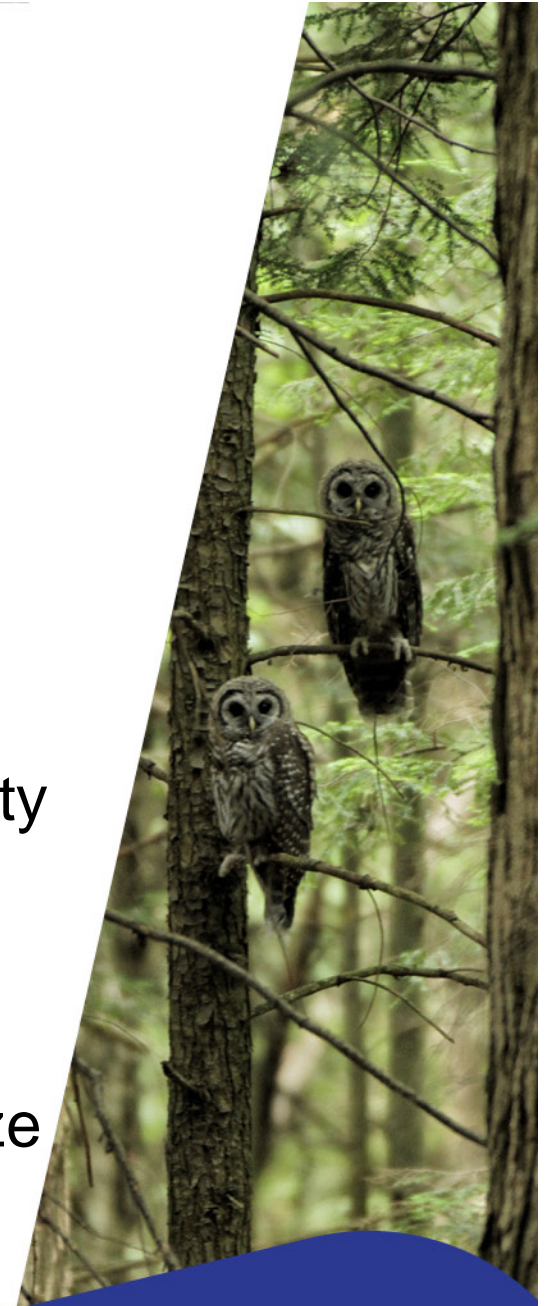
1. Strengthen Ecological Integrity
2. Build Understanding of the Broader Benefits
3. Inspire People

# GOAL 1

## Strengthen Ecological Integrity

**Continue to build the health, diversity, resiliency and sustainability of the York Regional Forest.**

- Protect ecological features, improve ecosystem health, and increase biodiversity
- Prevent and mitigate impacts of invasive species
- Increase ecological resilience and minimize the impacts of climate change



# GOAL 2

## Build Understanding of the Broader Benefits

**Show that the Forest has environmental and social benefits, making it key to the Region's vision of healthy, thriving communities.**

- Promote environmental and social benefits by engaging residents and community networks
- Demonstrate leadership through science, innovation and sharing best practices





# GOAL 3

## Inspire People

**Encourage public use that inspires respect for the Forest and a connection with nature.**

- Provide an exceptional visitor experience connecting people and communities with nature
- Manage public use and facilities to protect the Forest and provide a safe and enjoyable visitor experience



# IMPLEMENTING OBJECTIVES

**Provide an exceptional visitor experience connecting people and communities with nature**

- Review of opportunities to balance forest protection, visitor experience and dog walking
- Visitor Experience Plan
- Development of a trail strategy





# VISITOR EXPERIENCE PUBLIC USE CONSIDERATIONS





# PUBLIC USE – CRITERIA FOR DECISION MAKING

- Must have minimal or manageable **environmental impact**
- Must not have significant **impact on other Forest users**
- In determining the suitability **consider any benefits to the community**
- Must **not pose significant liability** for the Region
- Must be **manageable and affordable** for the Region
- Must be **aligned with applicable legislation and regulations**

# CURRENT PUBLIC USE

- ✓ Walking, running, hiking
- ✓ Dog walking  
(including service dogs)
- ✓ Cycling and mountain biking
- ✓ Cross-Country Skiing
- ✓ Snowshoeing
- ✓ Nature appreciation and wildlife viewing
- ✓ Organized recreational and educational events
- ✓ Scientific Research
- ✓ Equestrian / Horseback riding
- ✓ Snowmobiling
  - Only on OFSC Trails
- ✓ Hunting
  - Subject to federal and provincial legislation and local municipal discharge of firearms bylaws
  - Only permitted in Pefferlaw, Cronsberry, and Metro Road Tracts
- ✓ Fishing
  - Subject to federal and provincial legislation
- ✗ Lighting Fires
- ✗ Smoking
- ✗ Camping
- ✗ Property and trail alteration/creation
- ✗ Damaging or removing trees, plants and fungi
- ✗ Alcohol consumption
- ✗ Littering
- ✗ Paintballing or pellet gun use
- ✗ Fireworks
- ✗ Use of unauthorized vehicles including ATVs and dirt bikes

# PUBLIC USE

## RESPONDING TO CHANGE

- **Use of Pedal-Assisted Bike**  
Permitted new use
- **Geocaching**  
Permitted within 2m of trail
- **Use of Drones**  
Prohibited to limit disruption to others
- **Organized Activities**  
More guidance and oversight





# PUBLIC USE - DOG WALKING

- Currently – Dogs must be on leash or under control
- 52% of users walk with a dog
- 55% of respondents agree that dogs should be on leash except in specific areas
- Received 100 specific comments about dogs in the forest

We are seeking further feedback  
on this popular use



# PUBLIC USE - EQUESTRIAN

- Horseback riding will continue to be an approved activity in the York Regional Forest
- 5% of respondents experience the forest on a horse
- Received more than 180 comments about horses in the forest

Horseback riding will continue to be allowed in the York Regional Forest.





**THANK YOU**



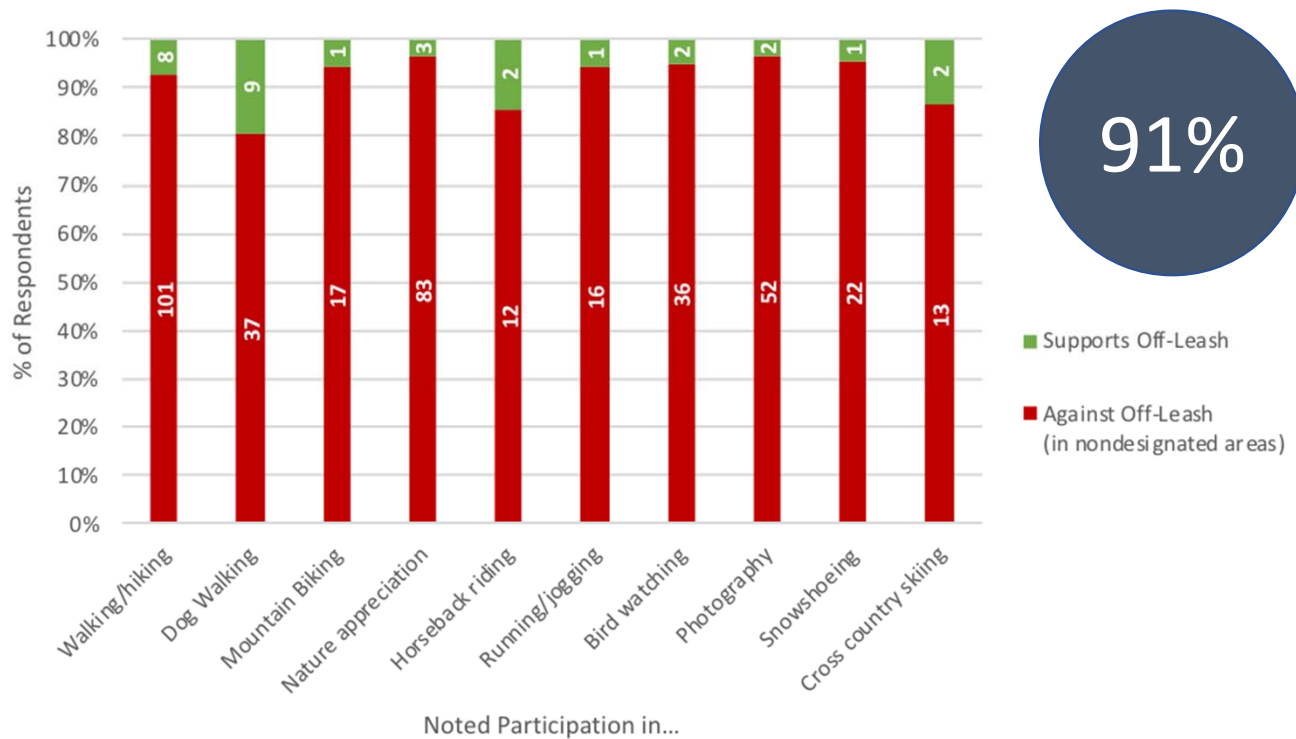


# Reference Slides

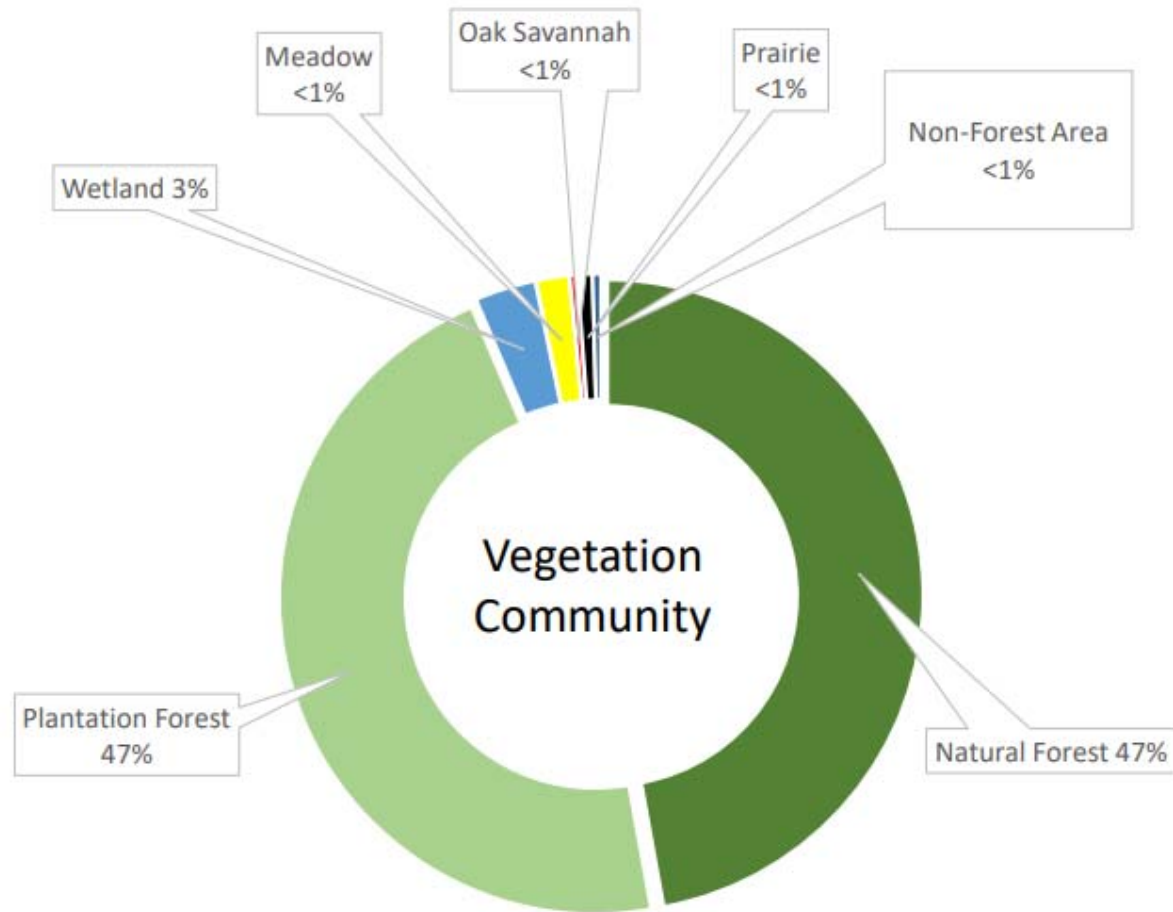


# Public Use – Dogs on-leash

- *98 comments related to dogs on/off-leash, were **against dogs being off-leash in the Forest.***



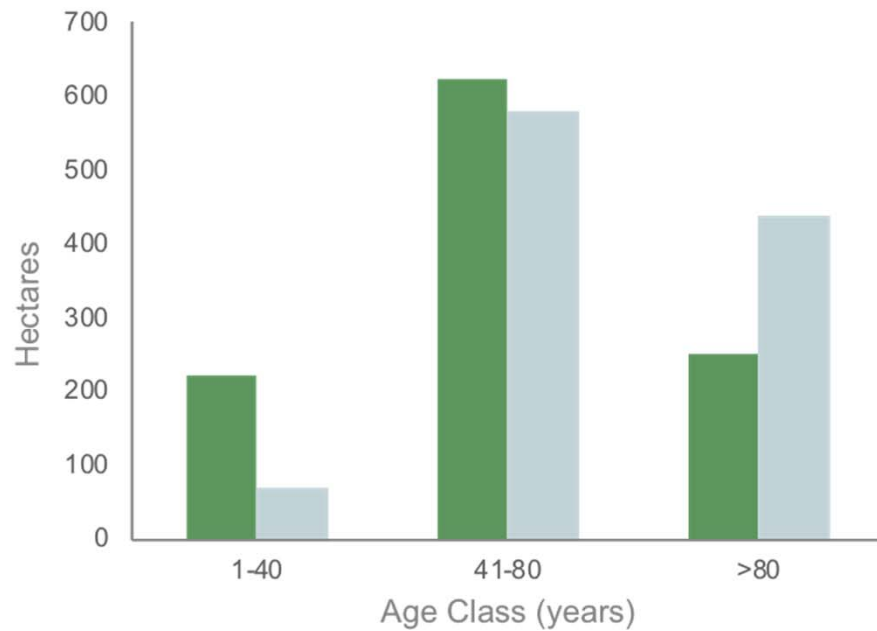
# THE FOREST TODAY



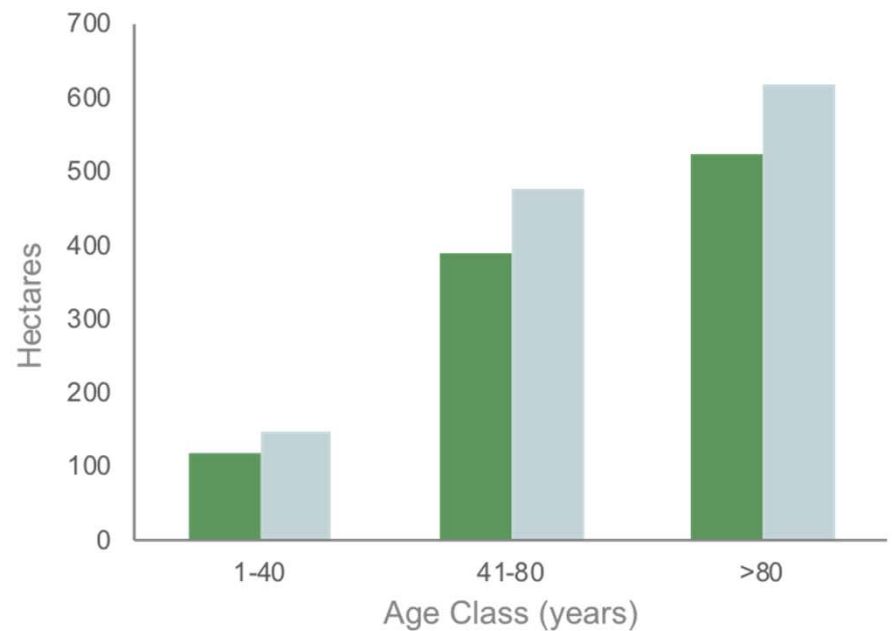


# THE FOREST IN 2038

## Age class distribution 2016



## Age class distribution 2038

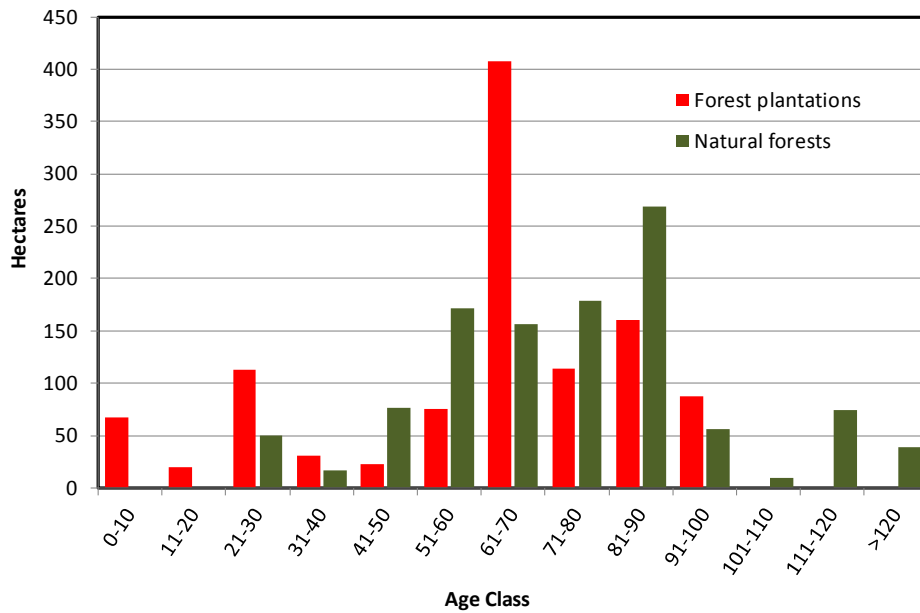


■ Plantation ■ Natural Forest



# THE FOREST IN 2038

## Age class distribution 2016



## Age class distribution 2038

