



**HILARY S. FRANZ**  
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS

# DNR's Reforestation Strategy

**We need bold action to tackle climate change with one of our most powerful natural assets: OUR FORESTS!**

With increasing wildfires and forest conversion, we need a comprehensive strategy to reforest across the state and tackle barriers to reforestation, including through expanding seed collection, increasing the capacity of the state's only public nursery, and addressing workforce needs. **This decision package will lay the groundwork to achieve the goal that the Commissioner of Public Lands set in 2021 to reforest one million acres by 2040.**

## **Webster Nursery Seed Plant Replacement and Webster Nursery Production Expansion**

The Webster Nursery is located in Thurston County. Without sufficient seeds and seedlings, we cannot meet the increasing demand to replant post-wildfire and afforesting fallow land, while still supporting post-harvest regeneration. Webster Nursery has been at or beyond capacity for a number of years already, and is in desperate need of upgrades to step up to the challenge. The capital requests address the capacity limitations of Webster by replacing our aging 1965 seed plant with a modern facility, and by scoping and designing new greenhouses and outdoor grow pads to construct in the 25-27 biennium. These investments will enable us to grow our seed collection capacity by 50%, and increase our seedling production by 50%, both of which are crucial to meeting our reforestation goals.



## **Seed Orchard Restoration**

In order to obtain sufficient seeds to scale up operations at the expanded seed processing plant and nursery and to achieve the agency's reforestation goals, DNR and the state will need a more reliable and genetically appropriate seed supply. The USDA Forest Service (USFS) has 25 seed orchard sites in Washington that can help meet this need. However, after decades of budget limitations, these orchards need restoration work to reduce vulnerability to loss from fire and insect outbreaks, and to restore them to healthy condition to promote seed production. The budget would enable collaborative implementation of a plan between DNR and USFS to restore existing federal, state, and other cooperative seed orchards that provide publicly available seed for reforestation efforts.



## **GF-S \$2M**

Funding to develop a comprehensive strategy to reforest across the state. Investment supports restoration of 25 seed orchard sites, spatial analysis to map priority areas across the state, and analysis of opportunities and barriers across all stages of the reforestation process.

## **Capital \$7.4M**

Funding to construct a new seed plant, and to plan and design new greenhouses and outdoor grow pads to construct in the 25-27 biennium. Investments will expand seed collection capacity by 50%, and increase seedling production by 50%, both of which are crucial to meet reforestation demands.

## **CONTACT**

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## Reforestation Strategy

Finally, planning and strategy development are critical early steps towards achieving the goal to reforest one million acres by 2040. DNR proposes to develop internal expertise and to conduct a reforestation needs assessment, including spatial analysis to map opportunity areas across the state. The budget will also fund a reforestation pipeline assessment, analyzing opportunities and barriers across all stages of the reforestation process, from seed collection, processing, and storage, to landowner engagement and project planning, to site prep and planting, and finally, post-planting maintenance and monitoring. Of particular focus in this assessment will be determining workforce and funding constraints at each phase, as well as identification of solutions to overcome these barriers.

The outcome of this work will be a fully developed strategy aimed at achieving the goal to reforest one million acres across Washington by 2040. The strategy will include:

- **Mapping and prioritization of opportunity areas** across the state, based on analysis of regeneration potential, climate change impacts, restoration benefits, working forest potential, environmental justice principles, Tribal consultation, and other criteria;
- **Plans to supply and source seeds and seedlings** as necessary to complete tree planting, including scaling up Webster Nursery capacity and purchasing from private nurseries;
- **Strategies for workforce development** at each stage of the reforestation pipeline;
- **Approaches to fund the implementation** of the strategy; and,
- **Performance indicators** to track implementation progress.

