



KITCHEN TABLE CONVERSATION GUIDE:

Forests in Oregon





This Guide is for anyone in Oregon who wants to organize and host a Kitchen Table Conversation with their family, friends, or neighbors about forests in Oregon.

We hope this Guide provides helpful ideas for organizing a community conversation, a structure for what to talk about during the conversation, and a clear way to summarize what people shared and get it to OKT.

If you need support or assistance, please reach out! Email info@oregonskitchentable or call (503_)725-5248

CONTENTS

Our Approach

Gathering People

Purpose / Background

Guiding the conversation

Gathering input

Tips and templates

OUR APPROACH

Oregon's Kitchen Table strives to include all Oregonians in the decisions that affect their lives, with a particular focus on reaching, engaging, and hearing from Oregonians who have been left out of traditional public processes.

We work with organizers, translators, and interpreters so materials and online and in-person consultations are available for Oregonians who speak a wide variety of languages and learn in a variety of ways.

We recognize that people bring all different levels of knowledge and familiarity regarding issues / policies. We use approaches to ensure those who may not have as in-depth knowledge can still respond and share what they believe and have experienced. People participate in many different ways: through online and paper surveys, individual or small group interviews, culturally specific and community events, festivals, listening sessions, or public meetings open to anyone.

One of the approaches we use is what we call a Kitchen Table Conversation: a group of people gathering together to learn from each other and share what they think in the language, setting, and format that is most comfortable for them.



GATHERING PEOPLE TO TALK

INVITATION

Use whatever method people will pay attention to, but make sure it feels warm, welcoming, and inviting. It might be a text, a phone call, What'sApp, a social media post, or an email. Some people set up e-invites. Make clear the time, place, purpose, what to expect (food or participant incentive), and if they need to RSVP.

GROUP SIZE

10-12 people is a nice size. But larger groups can be broken up into smaller groups. And you can still have a good conversation with 2-3 people.

FORMAT

You can meet in person, over Zoom, or group chat (people have used WhatsApp before, for example). You can talk while planting trees or clearing out invasive species. You can have the conversation on a bus during a field trip. Hold the conversation in a space that is easy and comfortable for people in your community.



WELCOMING

HOST

Think of yourself as the host, welcoming people at your table,

FOOD

If you are in person, have food! Even a simple snack (popcorn, cookies, water, fruit) will help people feel welcome.

FUN

If you're in-person or virtual, have some element of fun and joy that makes sense for your group: music, a short game, decorations.

ACTIVITY

Have an opening activity that allows for all to say something at the beginning so that they can get comfortable. For example, you could invite everyone to say one word that comes to mind when they think of forests in Oregon.



ROLES FOR CO-HOSTS

If you are working with a partner or a team to co-host a conversation, decide who will take which role. Here are some common roles. You could also invite participants to join you and take on one of these roles.

- Facilitator: Guides conversation, asks questions, and helps capture themes, commonalities, or differences.
- Notetaker: Captures what people say. Bullet points are fine! If the notetaker can get any good quotes, that's great but not required.
- Timekeeper: Use a clock (phone works!) to help make sure that there's enough time for each part of the conversation. Give facilitator / group time warnings.
- Reporter: If there are small group discussions, shares a summary of what the group discussed for the whole group.
- Observer: Helps the Facilitator make sure everyone gets a chance to talk or that no one person takes up too much time.



PURPOSE FOR GATHERING

Explain why you've invited people in your community to gather together to talk about forests in Oregon. Below is a description of what the decision is and why it matters. You can read this or summarize in your own words.



The Oregon Department of Forestry and the Board of Forestry are in charge of managing forests in Oregon. Now they are updating their strategic plan for the forests.

ODF and the Board's plan includes the mission, values, and goals that they use to make decisions about our state's public and private forests. It was last updated in 2011. You can read more about how they are updating the plan here:

<https://www.oregon.gov/odf/board/Pages/forestry-program-for-oregon-subcommittee.aspx>.

They want to hear what matters most to you about forests. Your input will help the state make decisions about forests in Oregon.

GUIDING THE CONVERSATION

1. BACKGROUND

People have different experiences and knowledge about the topic. We honor all of those experiences and knowledge. Share the basic background provided in the "Purpose for Gathering" section.



2. QUESTIONS FOR CONVERSATION

OKT has developed a few questions with the decision maker. We usually have a few main questions to pose along with follow up in case people need some direction in responding or in case there's extra time.

3. HOW TO SPEND YOUR TIME TOGETHER

It's ok if people want to spend time on just one or two - we want to know where their interests and energies are, so that's fine!

4. CONFIDENTIALITY

Let people know that their names or anything that identifies them won't be shared. You'll give OKT a summary of what you all talked about. OKT will combine all the input from different conversations, surveys, and other ways people share what they think.

CONVERSATION QUESTIONS

How or in what ways are you connected to Oregon's forests?

- How would you want to be more connected to forests?
- What would make more connections possible for you?

Take a few minutes to listen to 3-5 audio stories from people in Oregon about their connections to Oregon's forests.

Listen to the audio stories here:

<https://www.oregonskitchentable.org/forests-in-oregon>

- What did the stories make you think about?
- What did you learn from listening to the stories above?

You heard some of the different interests or concerns about forests - economic / jobs, ecological, recreational, cultural, spiritual or educational - what seems most important to you?

- Are there other aspects or considerations that you think it's important for the Board of Forestry to think about?



CLOSING

CONNECTING BACK

Let people know where their input will go and how it will be used. You can use the timeline on the next page. Also let them know that you will connect with Oregon's Kitchen Table with whatever questions came up and circle back to people with any answers.

INVITING MORE VOICES

Share information about ways that people can invite others they know to share what they think. Use the postcards with the link and QR code included after the templates.

APPRECIATIONS

Let people know how important their input is and we appreciate hearing their ideas, thoughts, experiences and time on this important issue. You can invite everyone to share their appreciations for each other.

ACTIVITY

If there's time, you can invite people to share aloud. If there's not time, have post-it notes or cards for people to write or draw their response to a closing question:. One example: "What is one thing you want people from other parts of the state to know or understand about our community?"



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

1. INVITE YOUR NEIGHBORS TO PARTICIPATE

Engagement will happen September 7 - October 10.
Invite other people you know to share what they think!

Visit <https://bit.ly/oregon-forests>

OR

Scan here with your phone:



2. OKT REPORT ON WHAT WE HEARD

OKT will provide a report of what we heard to the Board and ODF. We will post the report and a summary of that report in 9 languages on the OKT website. We will also share it with anyone who gave us their contact information.

3. HOW ODF AND THE BOARD WILL USE THE INPUT

ODF and the Board will use this input as they make decisions about the plan's update. They will share a draft with the public 2024.

4. HOW ODF AND THE BOARD WILL USE THE UPDATED PLAN

The Board and ODF will make decisions on different activities and projects to meet the goals of the plan.

TIPS FOR SUMMARY

- ~ Bullet points are fine! This is a summary not a formal report.
- ~ Let us know any areas where there is agreement or disagreement in people's perspectives.
- ~ Let us know if there are any unique perspectives (an idea / experience / belief one person shared even if others didn't have it).
- ~ Add your observations/reflections: Feelings, sense of issues, concerns, positive experiences.
- ~ Let us know if there's anyone we ought to follow up with on any ideas they shared.
- ~ Share any questions about the project that you couldn't answer and who to follow up with.
- ~ Include any pictures from the conversation. Make sure to ask permission first!



SUMMARY TEMPLATE

Date / Place:

of people:

General description of the group (age ranges, languages spoken, any ways the group might identify themselves):

Opening activity (what you did, anything anyone shared):



SUMMARY TEMPLATE

Connections

Responses to Audio Stories

SEND YOUR SUMMARY BY OCTOBER 10TH TO SAGILES@PDX.EDU



SUMMARY TEMPLATE

Other aspects or considerations that people want the
Board of Forestry and ODF to think about

Closing activity (what you did, anything anyone shared):



SUMMARY TEMPLATE

Areas of agreement among the group

Areas of disagreement among the group



SUMMARY TEMPLATE

Unique perspectives

Areas where someone was persuaded by someone's
else's point of view



SUMMARY TEMPLATE

Direct quotes

Any observations you had

**SEND YOUR SUMMARY BY OCTOBER 10TH
TO SAGILES@PDX.EDU**



The Oregon Department of
Forestry and Board of Forestry
want to hear from you:

WHAT DO YOU
WANT TO SEE
FOR THE
FUTURE OF
FORESTS IN
OREGON?

Share what you
think!

<https://bit.ly/oregon-forests>

Scan here with
your phone:



Hosted by Oregon's Kitchen Table





QUESTIONS?
IDEAS?
NEED SUPPORT?
CONTACT US!

 503-725-5248

 INFO@OREGONSKITCHENTABLE.ORG

 WWW.OREGONSKITCHENTABLE.ORG

