

What is your business idea? (250 words max) *

Our business idea is to develop a *Natural Building Arts and Innovations Center (NBAIC)*, a cooperative enterprise based on the utilization of the abundant material thinned from forest restoration and fire mitigation projects. The NBAIC will be a model for reciprocity-based industries that can be replicated in other bioregions demonstrating the value and uses for small diameter Douglas fir poles and other forest thinnings. The NBAIC will grow incrementally through a series of development phases. The 1st phase is to establish a Forest Thinning Distribution Center where land stewards and land stakeholders can deliver appropriate stewardship by-products. The raw material will be available to craftspeople, innovators, wood working teachers and the like. The 2nd phase is to construct on-site demonstration pole structures and kits available for sale. The 3rd phase is to develop an education component to provide training in all aspects of building with small diameter poles, from furniture to homes. Saleable products produced at this site include but are not limited to: designs, materials and components for fire-safe housing, utility sheds, gazebos, playground equipment, furniture, fencing; substrate for mycelial and mushroom cultivation; bio-char; and fuel for electrical energy production through gasification generators.

The site of the NBAIC is a 6.5acre easement on Hensley Creek Road in Ukiah being offered for use to FRG by the Metta Foundation as it is their desire this land be used to benefit the community.

In addition we collaborate with experts in fields related to restorative forestry and assist with guiding in obtaining forest improvement grants.

What have you done to date in developing your business or business idea? (250 word max) *

Since FRG's inception to date:

- Won a \$20,000 grant from The Rose Foundation's, *Just and Resilient Future Fund*
- Advanced round pole timber frame development by funding engineering for architectural design in collaboration with Polecraft Solutions
- Given 5 presentations, including to the Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council, the Sonoma County Resource Conservation District and the United Pomo Nations Council
- Organized and presented a Pole Frame Raising Demonstration where participants erected the frame of the Salt Box Design kit with 75 people in attendance
- Developed Web and social media presence
- Selected to present at the 2019 Soil Not Oil International Conference in SF in September based on the potential for human and forest ecological benefit of the FRG vision
- Set up FRG booth, and participated in round table discussion with CalFire, the MC Fire Safe Council and foresters from the tri-county region at the Embracing Fire event hosted by the Institute of Sustainable Forestry

- Engaged an attorney to draft a *Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Intent to Enter into Lease or Purchase Agreement* between FRG and Metta Foundation
- Engaged in building a strong base of collaborators from round wood builders and home designers, to round wood furniture makers, small pole utilization business developers and environmental organizations who support the FRG mission
- Hosted round pole furniture building workshops led by the esteemed John Cunnan

What has been the greatest challenge to date in developing your idea? (250 word max) *

The vast supply of small diameter trees have largely gone under utilized, either remaining as fuel for wildfires in the forest after being cut, chipped into low value mulch, or burned for disposal. We can do better! More markets for round wood products need to be developed. What is currently waste can become value added products. The challenge is how to bring greater awareness about the versatile utility of forest thinnings to the general public and the marketplace.

What impact might your business have on our community or society? (250 word max) *

We have the potential to:

Provide economic incentive for forestland owners to engage in restoration and improvement projects, thereby creating fire-safe communities and healthier fire resilient forests.

Reduce risk of catastrophic fires, improve watershed and forest health and increase the long-term carbon sequestration capacity of forests.

Demonstrate there is less need for cutting large, carbon sequestering trees for dimensional lumber.

Demonstrate the utilization of small round poles can create sustainable, local, economic resilience through the revival of forest worker jobs but *now in forest improvement rather than extraction*.

Create jobs in the trades of round wood and natural home building and design, transportation, round pole processing, and sales.

Revive and innovate traditional wood products and aid in the development of new products and uses for wood such as bio char and biomass for gasification and gasification generators electrical energy.

Brand products sourced from forest restoration projects will assure consumers they are doing their part in supporting regenerative forestry practices and solutions.

Promote construction of affordable, fire resistant homes and housing developments.

Set an example of a worker owned and operated cooperative business model.

All of this sourced in sustainable forest restoration and fire mitigation projects.

How would you use \$10,000 to advance your business idea? (250 word max) *

We see the development of our business site beginning with careful planning, followed by access development, creation of a material storage facility, and coordinating with interested parties. In addition, we recognize the importance of electrical power supply and water development. Procuring funds for these planning and infrastructure advances will allow this facility creation to proceed, propelling a new industry based on collective ecological security and economic revival. We would like to hire professional consultants to develop a site plan for the business location and to guide us in the formation of a cooperative business structure.

Do you currently have a business? *

No. We are an educational initiative of Cloud Forest Institute (www.cloudforest.org), a 501c3 educational and scientific non-profit corporation. It is a grant objective to write a business plan and secure additional grant funding to establish the co-op business.

If yes, are you actively marketing your business right now? If so, how? (250 words max) *

We are promoting small pole utilization and the vision of Forest Reciprocity through our Web site, social media, public presentations, conferences, local radio interviews (see www.forestreciprocity.org home page for links), and public events demonstrating small pole utilization. Please visit <https://www.forestreciprocity.org/events> to read about public events and presentations we have engaged in since our inception.

Briefly, tell us about yourself and the origins of your idea? (250 word max) *

The Forest Reciprocity Group is a collective of natural builders, environmental educators, and forest land owners who came together in March of 2018 as an initiative of Cloud Forest Institute. Members of our group have been working to support the health and utilization of overgrown forest lands since before the catastrophic fires of the last 10 years. We have observed through personal forest stewardship that when we act to prevent fires by thinning overgrown small diameter poles we are reciprocated with an abundance of valuable raw building material. We have used small diameter Douglas fir poles to build high quality, code approved, timber frame homes, Native American style earth lodges, wood sheds, storage sheds, fencing and furniture. We recognize the great value and potential for using small diameter poles and would rather see them thinned from forests and used for building rather than wasted or ignored and left as fuel for the next fire. Our mission is collaborating with our community to tend forests for health and fire resilience. In reciprocity, we are provided with an

abundance of raw materials to build a revitalized, forest product based economy. We envision healthy forests and healthy communities supporting each other.

What excites you most about your idea? (250 word max) *

1. Resilient Fire Safe Housing & Communities
2. Job Creation
3. Revitalized Local Forest Products Industry
4. Taking action to help reverse climate change
5. The opportunity to incentivize more private forest improvement projects through an industry based in thinned materials

This moment in CA's forest evolution is seeing a massive overgrowth of fire fuel load as a result of even age grow back from clear cut forestry practices. Small Douglas fir trees are being thinned for fire mitigation by the BLM, CalFire, the U.S. Forest Service and private land owners alike. Crew leaders of all stakeholders have expressed deep frustration with what to do with all the perfectly good wood. Currently the thinned trees are mostly being stacked and burned. FRG recognizes this burden as a solution! The suppressed growth small trees are tight ringed and superior in strength to the young dimensional timber you will find in most lumber stores. It is also a resource that is currently in mass abundance. This material is viable for use in all the products listed above and so much more. This carries the potential of generating a revitalized local forest products industry; creating jobs in forestry, transportation, processing, carpentry, design and more. We encourage industry *sourced* in sustainable forest restoration and improvement projects that will have the effect of long-range carbon sequestration, fire mitigation, fire-safe housing alternatives, sustainable local economic development, and community resilience. It is a win, win, win!

Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about you or your business or business idea?

Dimensional lumber has only been used within the last hundred years, yet small poles have been used as the framework for housing and shelter for millennia in forested areas around the world. In the early years of milled lumber derived from old growth trees, the growth rings were compact and many thus providing superior strength and structure. Today the quality of lumber found in retail stores has been compromised in the wake of clear-cut forestry, the extractive unsustainable management of many of our forestlands. The lower quality of this product is a result of utilizing fast growing trees which form larger growth rings. An abundance of that high-quality wood is now found in suppressed growth small diameter trees for utilization in housing without the laborious step of dimensional milling. Housing that utilizes small poles and includes earthen materials to enclose/encase the framing produce structurally sound, fire-resilient buildings in compliance with CalFire's Urban Forestland Interface standards. We recognize that

materials thinned for forest restoration have multiple advantages of fire prevention, forest health, and local economic development.