

Section 1: Report on Previous Goals & Requests

Please limit your response to 250 or fewer words.

Previous APR Goal	What Happened (with supporting data/evidence)
Develop an Outdoor Forestry Workshop	Detailed plans created; ~\$20,000 raised; community and Advisory Board support secured. COCC has delayed feasibility for several more years.
Expand Online, Hybrid, and Special Interest Courses	FW257 <i>Hunting in Modern Society</i> developed and successfully enrolled. COVID-era online and hybrid offerings tested, then phased out based on student preference for in-person instruction.
Increase Outreach and Visibility	Faculty participated in trade fairs, school events, and volunteer teaching. Collaborations include Oregon Outdoor Partners in Education and community engagement in natural resource education.
Align Curriculum with COCC Academic Structures	FOR211 reinstated on Related Instruction list. FOR208 and FOR260 revised for Sustainability (SUS) cross-listing. Curriculum continues to align with general education outcomes.

Section 2: Fulfilling Your Mission

Please limit your response to 500 or fewer words.

The mission of the FRT program is to provide students with a strong foundation in forestry knowledge, hands-on field-based skills, and a deep understanding of professional and ethical responsibilities. This mission is realized through a comprehensive curriculum, immersive lab and field experiences, and strong ties with the local forestry industry.

Students engage in courses focused on navigation, forest measurements, silviculture, plant and wildlife identification, and ecology. These courses are paired with collaborative labs and fieldwork that cultivate both technical expertise and teamwork. Faculty foster a learning environment where applied experience is central, helping students internalize the discipline’s expectations and challenges.

The program has also strengthened relationships with local, state, and federal forestry professionals. Advisory committee meetings, guest lectures, and on-site visits provide students with direct industry exposure. In addition, students frequently engage with professionals through Society of American Foresters (SAF) meetings hosted on campus, creating organic mentorship opportunities.

FRT has remained committed to experiential learning. While the pandemic prompted a temporary expansion into online formats, the return to in-person instruction has reinforced the program’s core identity. Courses like FW257 have been added to diversify the curriculum, while legacy courses have been restructured to align with COCC's evolving academic framework.

Although the proposed outdoor workshop has yet to materialize, faculty efforts to secure funding and build community support speak to the program’s dedication to hands-on, practical forestry education. The program continues to prepare graduates to manage forested ecosystems while balancing ecological, economic, and social imperatives—fully aligned with COCC’s mission of providing career-focused education and community enrichment.

Alignment with COCC’s Strategic Plan

The FRT program’s mission aligns with COCC’s broader institutional goals by fostering workforce development, hands-on technical education, and community partnerships. The program equips students with practical skills that translate directly into employment, supporting COCC’s mission to provide career-focused education and lifelong learning opportunities.

Overall, the FRT program continues to evolve and adapt, ensuring that graduates are well-prepared for careers in natural resource management while maintaining strong ties to industry and community stakeholders.

Several community members in the timber industry—including Shanda, owner of Skyline Forest, and representatives from Cascade Timber Consulting—as well as professionals from federal and state forestry agencies, serve on the FRT Advisory Board, helping guide curriculum and program development. FRT graduates and current students are employed by a wide range of organizations, including the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODF&W), Discover Your Forest, and Heart of Oregon Corps. Notably, our CTE students have been described by federal forest management agencies as preferred hires compared to graduates from other regional natural resources programs. These efforts align with the Workforce Development goal of COCC’s strategic plan.

Section 3: College Goals and Initiatives

Please limit your response to 500 or fewer words.

FRT actively supports COCC’s institutional goals through workforce development, industry engagement, and participation in college-wide initiatives.

The program prepares graduates for meaningful careers in natural resource management by providing practical, field-based training. Students learn essential skills in navigation, forest measurement, silviculture, and plant identification—skills that translate directly into employment. Faculty regularly share job opportunities, host guest speakers from federal and state agencies, and offer professional guidance throughout students’ academic journeys.

Community engagement is another program cornerstone. FRT faculty routinely participate in outreach activities, including job fairs, CTE summits, and high school visits coordinated with the High Desert Education Service District (HDES). Faculty also deliver presentations to civic and environmental groups, promoting public awareness of forestry careers and conservation.

The program is committed to equity and inclusion. Outreach efforts specifically target underrepresented populations, including rural students and members of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. Faculty integrate diverse cultural and ecological perspectives into their teaching and highlight inclusive practices in land stewardship and resource management.

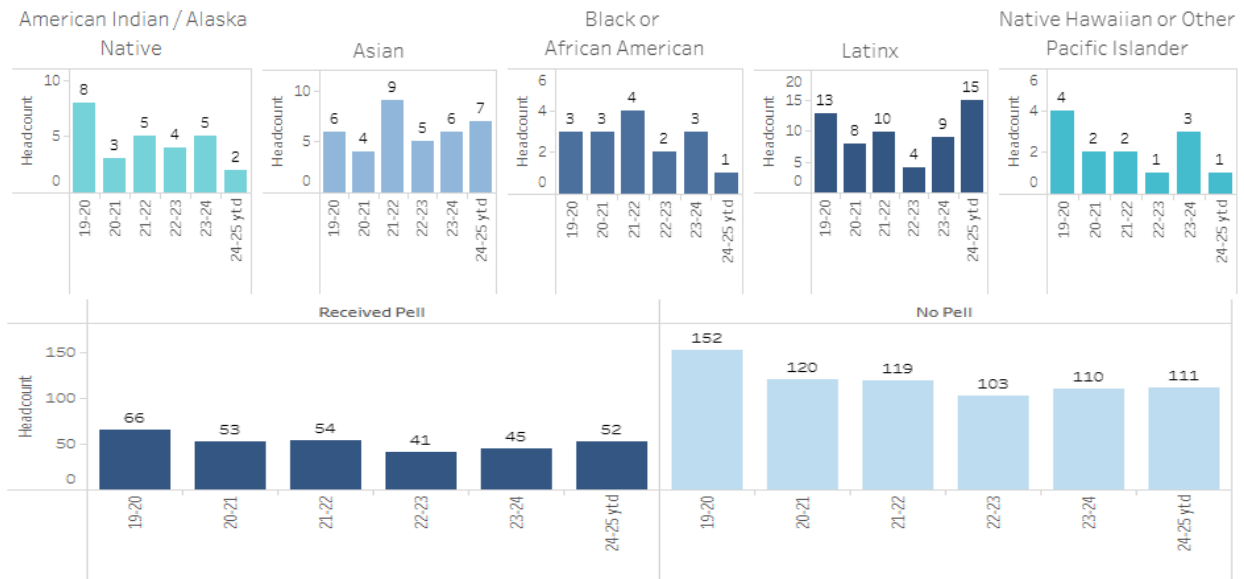
Faculty remain engaged in professional development through attendance and presentations at SAF meetings and other regional conferences. Additionally, students benefit from field research opportunities funded by the Roundhouse Foundation, including collaborations with OSU, the USFS, and The Nature Conservancy. These projects enhance student resumes while reinforcing classroom concepts in real-world contexts.

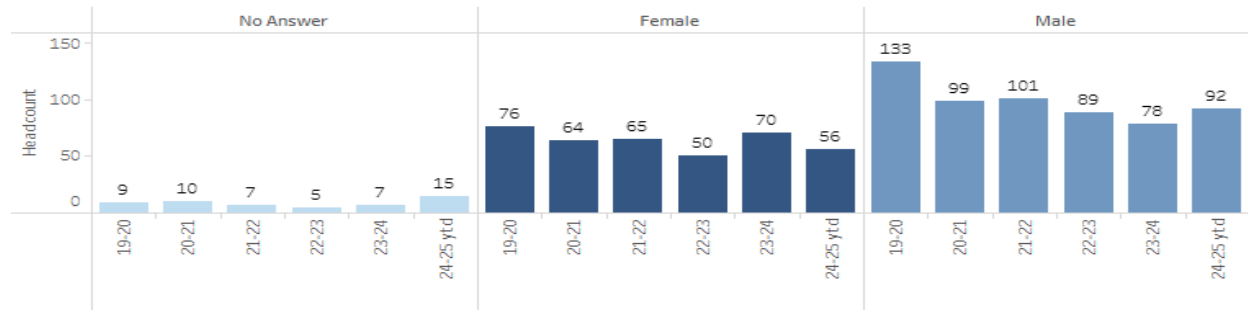
FRT’s work directly advances COCC’s strategic goals by fostering student success, supporting workforce readiness, expanding community partnerships, and promoting inclusion.

Section 4: Diversity and Inclusion Insights

Please limit your response to 500 or fewer words.

Representation by BIPOC, by financial need, and by gender are as follows:





The FRT program continues to reflect and respond to the diverse needs of its student population. While small enrollment numbers make broad trends difficult to track, recent years have shown notable increases in enrollment by Latinx students and students with financial need.

Gender equity has also been a point of progress. Although male students typically represent the majority in early courses, the ratio evens out—and in some cohorts reverses—by the time students reach capstone classes. This suggests that the program is successfully supporting the persistence and success of female students.

The program actively cultivates equity by targeting outreach efforts to rural high schools and underrepresented communities, including the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. Faculty maintain inclusive teaching practices and incorporate diverse cultural, ecological, and socioeconomic perspectives into course content.

Nonetheless, challenges remain. Ensuring continued progress in equity and representation will require sustained attention. Professional development around diversity, equity, and inclusion remains a priority for faculty, especially as the program prepares for transitions in staffing.

FRT is committed to evaluating its efforts through both qualitative feedback and Institutional Effectiveness data, and it will continue to refine its practices to ensure that every student has the opportunity to succeed.

Section 5: Strengths and Accomplishments

The Forest Resources Technology (FRT) program at COCC continues to excel in workforce preparation, community engagement, and curriculum development. By providing hands-on, field-based education and fostering strong industry partnerships, the program ensures that graduates are well-prepared for careers in forestry and natural resource management.

Key Strengths and Accomplishments

1. Workforce Development and Graduate Success

A core strength of the FRT program is its ability to produce workforce-ready graduates who possess technical skills and industry knowledge. Students receive extensive hands-on training in

plant and wildlife identification, forest measurements, silviculture, and navigation. They also engage directly with employers, gaining valuable professional connections.

- Impact: Graduates from the program consistently secure positions with federal and state agencies, private forestry firms, and conservation organizations. Advisory committee feedback confirms that COCC's FRT graduates enter the workforce highly prepared compared to peers from other institutions.

2. Enrollment Growth and Curriculum Innovation

To enhance accessibility and student engagement, the program has revised its curriculum to align with COCC's academic structure.

- FOR211: Supervision and Leadership was reinstated as a Related Instruction course.
- FOR260: Conservation of Natural Resources and FOR208: Soils were revised to allow cross-listing under the Sustainability (SUS) prefix. These updates, along with efforts to reclassify FOR208 under the Discipline Studies Science requirement, have resulted in a notable increase in enrollment from AAOT students.
- The program also introduced FW257: Hunting in Modern Society, which continues to attract strong interest and regularly fills to near capacity.

Additionally, while online and hybrid courses were offered in response to COVID-19, the program has since transitioned back to in-person instruction due to student preference for hands-on learning.

3. Strong Industry and Community Engagement

FRT faculty actively participate in outreach and professional development, strengthening the program's presence in the community and the industry.

- Faculty deliver guest lectures and workshops for outdoor groups, primary schools, and natural resource education summits.
- The program maintains partnerships with agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Oregon Department of Forestry, and private timber companies.
- The program has partnered with the Greenlee Preserve Trust, administered by a former FRT instructor, Rich Niederhof, to provide lab access, data collection, and research on 30 acres of preserved land about 15-minutes travel from campus.
- Faculty represent FRT and COCC at job fairs and Career and Technical Education (CTE) events, including those hosted by the High Desert Education Service District (HDES).
- FRT students engage with Society of American Foresters (SAF) events, providing networking opportunities with industry professionals. Students have participated in the Oregon SAF state conventions, and the SAF Pacific Northwest leadership conferences.

- Field trips are a significant point of community engagement. Advisory Board members frequently participate as facilitators, offering students direct exposure to real-world forestry practices and industry expectations. These experiences allow students to build meaningful relationships with professionals, gain insight into potential career pathways, and see firsthand how classroom concepts translate into practical application.

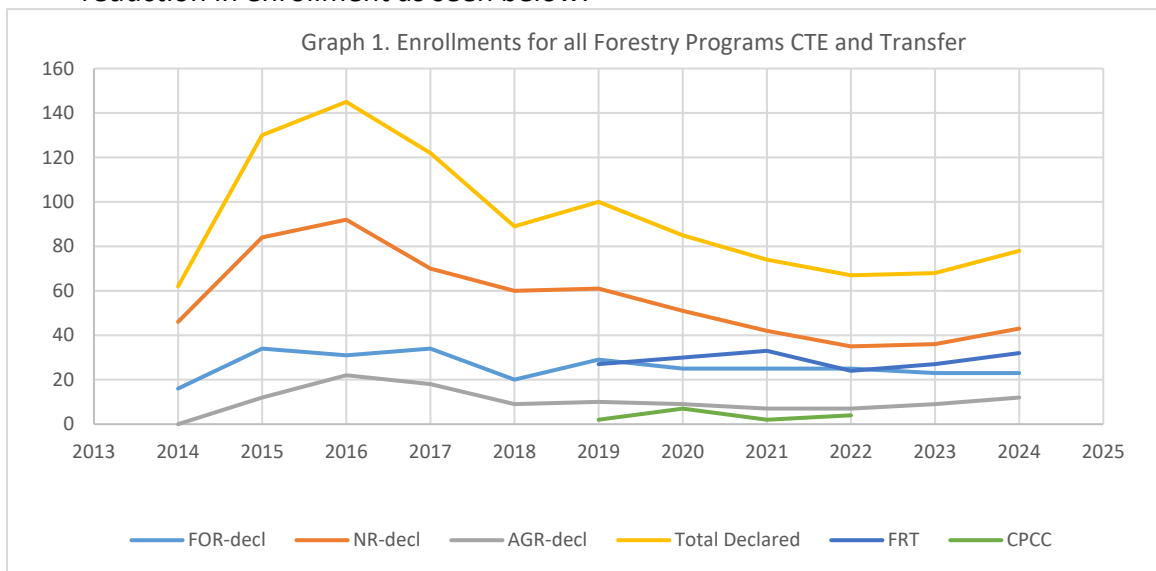
4. Progress Toward an Outdoor Forestry Workshop

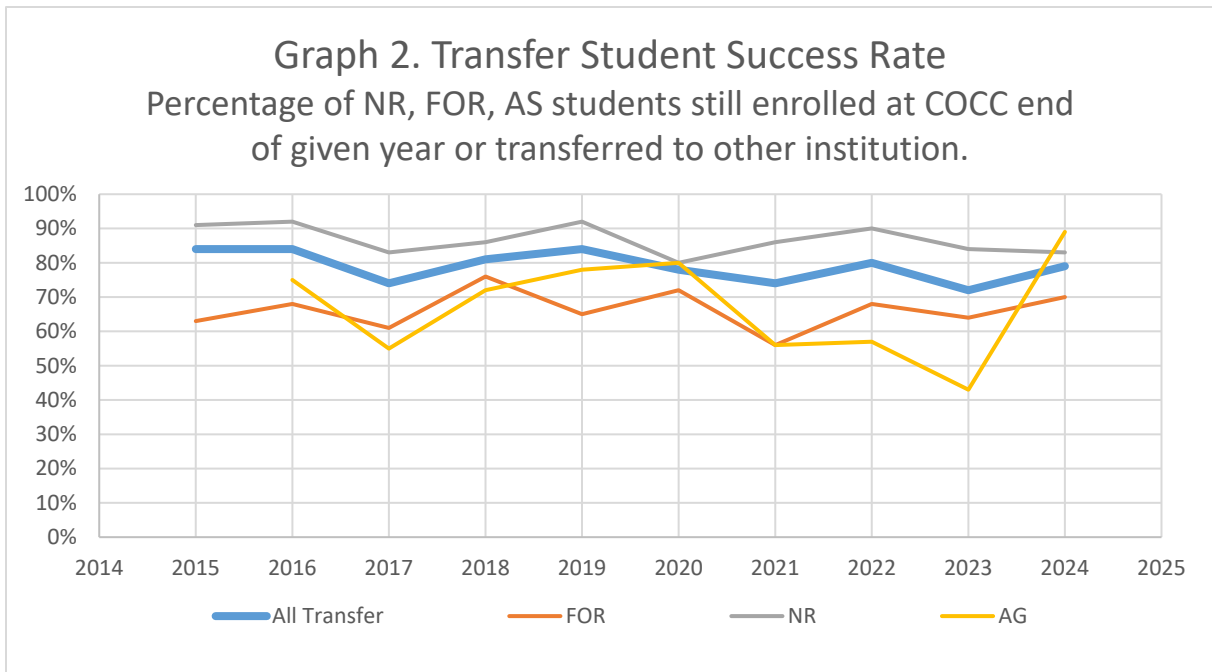
While COCC has not yet approved the development of an outdoor forestry workshop, FRT faculty have secured approximately \$20,000 in external funding and developed detailed design plans. This workshop remains a high-priority initiative for hands-on skill development in chainsaw operation, tool maintenance, and forestry lab work.

5. Quantitative Evidence of Success

Despite challenges in overall community college enrollment, FRT student retention and completion rates remain strong.

- From 2014 to 2023, over 160 students transferred to four-year forestry or natural resources programs after starting at COCC, demonstrating the program's role as a pipeline to advanced education.
- The program maintains an average class size of 12:1, ensuring personalized instruction and hands-on learning.
- Participation in outreach events (e.g., trade fairs, skilled trade events, and natural resource education summits) has increased, strengthening recruitment efforts. The forestry program will benefit greatly from increased public relations work done by COCC in addition to the large amount of work the FRT faculty contribute to outreach.
- FRT enrollment is stabilizing and starting to grow again after recovering from a COVID reduction in enrollment as seen below:





Graph 2 illustrates a key metric developed by the FRT program to measure student success over time. It shows the percentage of transfer-track students considered “successful completers” each year. This includes students who are either still enrolled in the COCC FRT program or have transferred to a four-year institution, such as OSU Cascades. Many students transfer before completing every required course for their associate degree—often missing only one or two classes—but are well-prepared to continue their education. We consider these students successful because they’ve received the foundational training they need and have chosen to advance in their academic careers. Without including this group in our success metrics, the data would inaccurately reflect a decline in program completion. Therefore, we propose that these students be counted as having successfully completed our program, even if they did not formally earn an AS degree at COCC

Conclusion

The FRT program’s strengths lie in workforce preparation, curriculum innovation, industry engagement, and hands-on learning opportunities. By continuously refining its curriculum, expanding professional connections, and pursuing funding for facility improvements, FRT remains a leader in forestry education in Oregon. These accomplishments demonstrate the program’s commitment to student success, industry relevance, and community impact.

Section 6: Challenges

Despite its many successes, the FRT program faces several key challenges.

Foremost is the continued absence of a dedicated forestry workshop. The current reliance on two unlit, unheated shipping containers limits student access to tools, complicates equipment maintenance, and restricts lab activities. The proposed Forestry Education Workshop remains a high priority, with strong community and advisory support, but progress hinges on institutional commitment.

Enrollment remains variable, reflecting broader trends in higher education and employment. During strong job markets, some prospective students opt to enter the workforce rather than pursue education. Although the program has seen signs of recovery post-COVID, maintaining enrollment requires ongoing outreach and marketing.

Faculty succession is an emerging concern. Two long-serving full-time instructors are expected to retire in 2024–25. Recruiting experienced forestry educators—who can teach, advise, and maintain industry relationships—will be critical for program stability. A formal succession plan is needed to support knowledge transfer and mentoring of new hires.

Budgetary constraints continue to impact program growth. Field equipment and digital mapping tools need updating. Additional support is also needed for recruitment efforts, alumni engagement, and the integration of new instructional technologies.

Section 7: New Goals and Resource Needs

Looking ahead, the FRT program has identified the following goals for continued growth and alignment with institutional priorities:

Goal	Timeline	Resources Needed
1. Increase enrollment in FRT and transfer-track natural resource programs. Expand community and K–12 outreach, especially to underrepresented populations. Collaborate with COCC Public Relations and Media to amplify program visibility.	Ongoing	Collaboration with COCC PR/Media; continued faculty outreach; recruitment materials and support.
2. Construct the Forestry Education Workshop. A functional space for tool use, equipment maintenance, and lab instruction remains essential for meeting program learning outcomes.	By 2027	Institutional prioritization; administrative support for site identification and bid procurement; continued fundraising.
3. Recruit two full-time tenure-track faculty to maintain program quality and continuity. With two senior faculty retiring by 2025–26, recruitment of high-quality instructors is vital.	2025–26 Academic Year	Approval and funding for tenure-track lines; support for a timely search and hiring process.

<p>4. Modernize mapping and navigation technology. Enhance field courses with GPS-enabled tablets and updated GIS tools to support instruction in key technical areas.</p>	<p>2025–26 Academic Year</p>	<p>Funding for equipment; input from new faculty; consultation with forestry professionals to ensure industry relevance.</p>
<p>5. Continue evaluating and submitting courses for the Discipline Studies Science and Science Lab designation. Many Forestry course outcomes already align with General Education Science learning outcomes, and formal approval would enhance their applicability toward degree requirements of the AAOT.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Time and support for curriculum development; collaboration with the Curriculum Committee and Academic Affairs.</p>

These goals reflect the FRT program’s commitment to academic excellence, hands-on learning, and student success, while strengthening institutional alignment and preparing the next generation of forestry professionals.

