



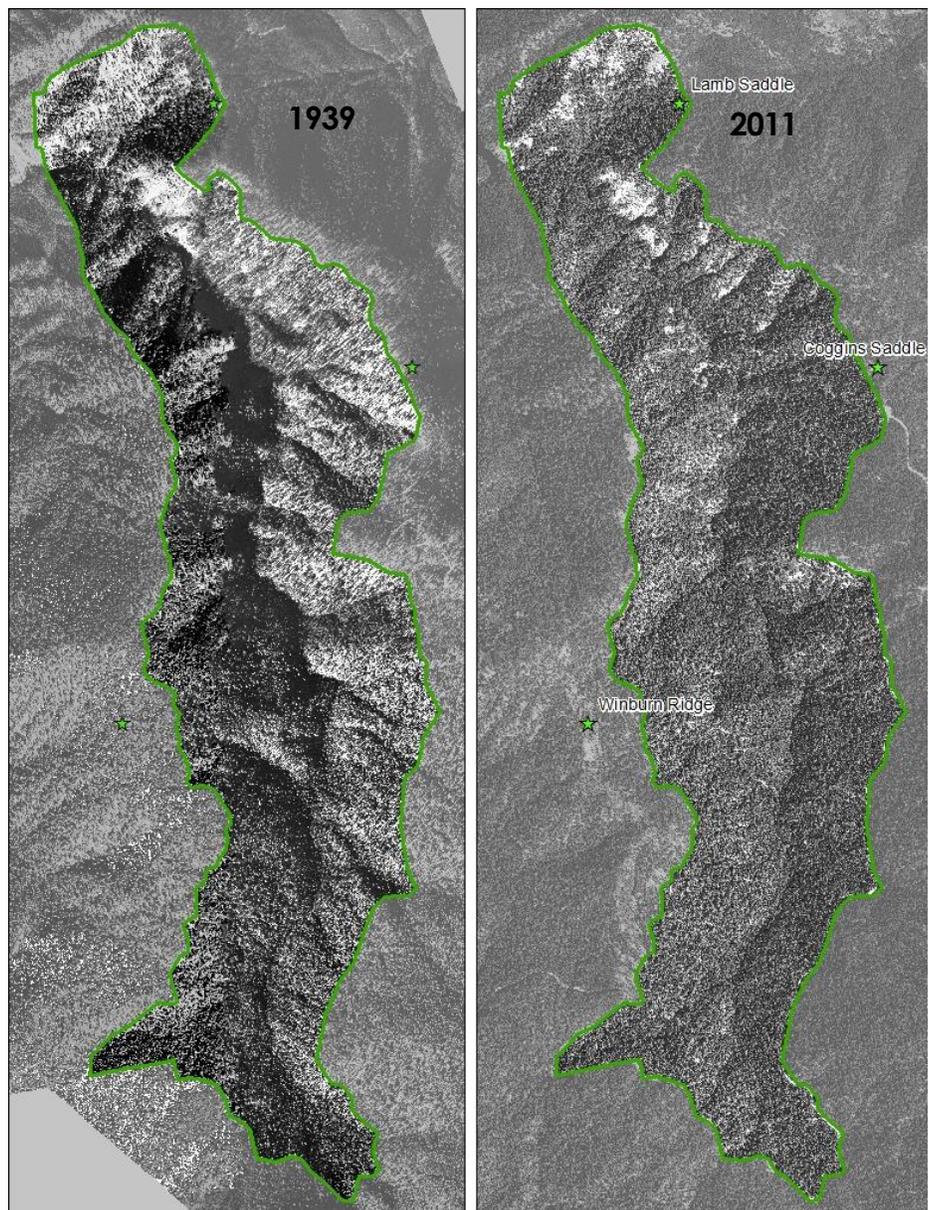
## Ashland Forest Resiliency and the Ashland Research Natural Area

Research Natural Areas (RNAs) have been designated by federal agencies since 1927 to preserve representative natural ecosystems and inherent natural processes.

Ashland Research Natural Area described by Dr. Jerry Franklin in 1972. The 1408 acre RNA protects "*Pacific ponderosa pine* and the *ponderosa pine – Douglas fir* forest on the rugged slopes and spur ridges of the East Fork of Ashland Creek canyon in the eastern Siskiyou Mountains. Dr. Franklin noted "...abundant evidence of wildfire occurrence within the natural area prior to the initiation of fire control programs about 1910."<sup>1</sup> Absent fire, densely packed Douglas-fir and true fir filled in, and large tree mortality has increased. Below: changing forest density 1939 and 2011.

RNA management is directed by the Rogue River - Siskiyou National Forest in consultation with the USFS Pacific Northwest Research Station Director. The objective is to preserve natural conditions and processes, and prevent activities that degrade integrity. Today, scientists and land managers work to restore open forest structure and a natural fire regime to the RNA.

RNA restoration treatment selectively removes ingrowth of smaller trees competing with larger ponderosa, sugar pine and Douglas-fir. Opening small canopy gaps allows pine regeneration, which has declined without fire. Thinning treatments and prescribed burning sustain fire resilient species and natural diversity.



<sup>1</sup> Franklin, J. F. 1972. Ashland Research Natural Area. Portland, OR: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Forest and Range Experiment Station. 11 p. [A separate from: Federal Research Natural Areas in Oregon and Washington: a guidebook for scientists and educators.]