

## **STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Item No.:	6
Work Plan Title & #:	State Forest Management – Issue 2
Objective # & Title:	Objective 1 – Adapting the Forest Management Plan, Annual State Forests report on Research and Monitoring
Date of Presentation:	April 29, 2008
Contact Information:	Jeff Brandt, Adaptive Management Unit Manager 503-945-7228 <a href="mailto:jbrandt@odf.state.or.us">jbrandt@odf.state.or.us</a>

### **SUMMARY**

The Board will be presented with the annual progress report of the State Forests Research and Monitoring program.

### **CONTEXT**

The annual report is a requirement in the State Forest Management Plans (FMPs) for NW and SW Oregon.

### **BACKGROUND**

Chapter 3 of the NW Forest Management Plan presents the guiding principles, forest vision, and resource management goals, which set the overall direction for the management plan. This chapter also presents the working hypotheses that lead us to believe that we can indeed achieve the future vision and resource goals and are at the very heart of the FMP, and fundamental to the adaptive management program (Attachment 1, p. 1).

Collectively, these working hypotheses form the basis for the set of FMP integrated forest management strategies described in the Chapter 4 of the NW FMP. They also provide the foundation for the key questions that must be explored through time, as the plan is implemented, to assure that change occurs in an appropriate and timely manner.

Chapter 5 of the FMP describes guidance and standards for processes and activities that will be undertaken to implement the strategies, and includes guidelines for monitoring and adaptive management that are designed to evaluate the working hypotheses and key assumptions/questions over time. One of the guiding principles of the FMP commits the Department of Forestry to using an adaptive management approach, with monitoring and research as part of that approach. Over time, monitoring and research will indicate the extent to which the assumptions underlying the strategies are correct and if the strategies are accomplishing their intended purpose.

As described in the FMP, information from monitoring and research will be planned for and used to assess the following items:

- *Assumptions and hypotheses* —Are the basic assumptions and hypotheses that support the strategies scientifically valid?
- *Resource condition* —Can historic and current conditions serve as a basis for estimating desired future conditions and likely trajectories of changes in resources?
- *Ecological/cultural trends* —Are resources changing due to ecological, social, political, and economic influences outside the scope of the plan's management actions?
- *Management actions* —How are the plan's strategies being implemented?
- *Management effects* —How are the resources changing in response to management actions?

These questions serve as the basis for developing specific monitoring projects or research needs. As information becomes available from the monitoring program, as well as from researchers and others working on forest management issues, it will be evaluated to determine additional information needs and necessary changes to the management strategies. The current research and monitoring plan includes conducting implementation, effectiveness, and validation monitoring that concentrates on a series of key questions (see Attachment 1, p.5).

## **ANALYSIS**

Staff will provide an overview of the program, including research and monitoring themes being addressed, staffing, and funding (Attachment 2). Additionally, staff will provide a summary of how our research and monitoring efforts have been prioritized, and how the prioritization of these efforts are aligned with the key working hypotheses, assumptions, and monitoring questions within the FMP. Finally, staff will provide more detailed information on projects focused on young stand management that are providing important information for the adaptive management process.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The Board will be addressing the use of research and monitoring results in the adaptive management process through the planned discussion on the Board's decision framework at the June and fall meetings.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- (1) Key Working Hypotheses, Assumptions, and Monitoring Questions: NW FMP Excerpts
- (2) *State Forests Research and Monitoring Program: Program Summary*, August 2006 – December 2007. (Printed copies will be available at the Board meeting.)