

2.0 Problem Statements/Potential Solutions

2.1 Natural Processes

Problem Statement: Natural processes have been disrupted in Oregon forests. Problems are most extreme in the dry forest types where unprecedented landscape scale forest health problems are resulting in the loss of key ecological components. Hydrologic regimes have been altered and conditions may not protect beneficial uses like water quantity and quality. Climate change is and will continue to tax the resiliency of federal forestlands and identifying the impacts is challenging. An integrated approach to forest restoration and fuels management that considers historic conditions, natural hydrology and adequate streamflows, fish and wildlife conservation, natural fire intervals, and silvicultural techniques is necessary to achieve long term management goals.

Problem Description: Natural processes on Oregon's federal forests have been modified by a number of factors. For example, decades of fire suppression and silvicultural practices on some federal forestlands have modified fire regimes and behavior producing changes in vegetative conditions – including changes in species composition, increased stand density, and a reduction in the large tree component – ultimately reducing forest resiliency and impacting aquatic habitat. Growth has dramatically exceeded removals on federal lands during the past decade causing a build up of fiber across the landscape. The results have been high tree mortality and fuels build-ups due to insects, disease and invasive species, and large un-natural wildfires resulting in impacts to wildlife habitat, water quality, private timber investments, structures in the wildland-urban interface, and public impacts from smoke. Without an increase in active management these conditions are expected to continue.

~~(Comment from Ralph – Growth has not necessarily exceeded the total removals through thinning, logging, and decay. There is a natural flux on the forest. There are far more smaller-diameter trees than larger-diameter trees on the forest than existed historically. (Eastside Science Panel Report) As for active management, there needs to be a decrease in the existing road network and more active management to do so. On the other hand, there needs to be less fire suppression, old growth logging, and road building.)~~

Water quantity and quality are inseparable issues. Adequate streamflows and natural hydrology help maintain high water quality in Oregon's rivers and streams. Water quality and quantity issues are linked to changes in land uses, increasing intensities of land management, growing demand for water, and uncertainty about the role climate change will play in long term supply. In the Pacific

Northwest, watershed health also is directly related to healthy populations of migratory salmon. Many measures of ecosystem performance, water quality, and watershed health have been linked to salmonid populations.

Climate change may be affecting forest and hydrological conditions in Oregon. If trends continue, changes from dry temperate forests to grasslands, moist forests to dry woodlands, and high-severity fires may eliminate entire forest types. This type of change would increase risks of species extinction, and reduce economic and social values derived from the forest. Management decisions will determine if federal forests will serve as net carbon sinks or carbon sources.

Potential Solutions

	Potential Solution	Add/Delete	Changes – issues to FFAC for Discussion
	<p>2.11 Issue/ impediment – 2.11a - Lack of understanding about large scale dynamic ecosystems and their management.</p> <p>2.11b - Currently many legal, economic, and administrative frameworks limit the ability to manage large scale dynamic ecosystems to provide for certainty at the expense of managing for dynamic ecosystems.</p>		
1	<p>Create clear goals for the restoration of dynamic processes through landscape level management plans that minimize static strategies, are highly prioritized, place based and based on the best available science. Collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration of priority landscapes that encourages ecological, economic and social sustainability through place-based proactive management and improved agency capacity.</p>	<p>Modified - Potentially delete</p>	<p>Modified – added additional clarification and removed references to specific plans (land management plans and regulatory agency implementation plans).</p> <p>Rationale: <u>Encourage collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes that:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <u>Encourages ecological, economic, and social sustainability;</u> o <u>Leverages resources – local, national, private</u> o <u>Reduces wildfire management costs various tools (i.e., reducing risk of uncharacteristic fire; reestablishing natural fire regimes). Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to identify and prioritize treatment opportunities across the landscape and across ownership boundaries with outcome based performance measures.</u> o <u>Minimize static strategies</u> o <u>Consider collaborate efforts, e.g., a statewide task force to evaluate where work is needed. Collaboration can consider the who, what, when, where of needed work; identify forest types, areas; and recommend map-based assessment and constraints.</u> <p>Comments: <u>Demonstrates ecological restoration strategies that achieve ecological health; affect wildfire activity & management</u></p>

			<p><u>costs; and use of forest restoration byproducts to offset treatment costs while benefiting rural economies and improving forest health.</u></p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Commission a study to review the current state of northwest forest law as it has been implemented through litigation against the federal agencies. Obtain an independent assessment that is informed by input from local and regional practitioners to determine which on-the-ground issues are driving the litigation and whether there are patterns to the court rulings against the agencies. <u>Identify and implement avoidance and alternative dispute resolution strategies to minimize and/or remove issues that may lead to conflict and litigation.</u></p>	<p>Modified</p>	<p>Added clarification and independent assessment</p> <p>Rationale <u>Federal forest should consider “avoidance and alternative dispute resolution strategies agencies to minimize conflict.</u></p> <p><u>Avoidance strategies could:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <u>Consider “Options Forestry” that expands the range of management options and actions and learning opportunities. (For example: The Siuslaw National Forest’s Five Rivers Project provided multiple strategies, proposed by different constituent groups to address controversial EIS).</u> o <u>Include an upfront assessment of scientific uncertainties, and a selection of management options designed to reach the same goal</u> o <u>Structure monitoring in a rigorous statistical design to test the effectiveness of each option in meeting project goals.</u> o <u>Encourage collaborative opportunities (such as the Lakeview Oregon Solutions Project).</u> <p>Comments <u>. State of Law, Court Decisions, Can we Learn Something. Respond differently. Highest standards for NEPA compliance RH – expressed concern</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Many issues are known and have been identified; litigation summaries are available</u> • <u>Why people litigate is frequently different than what has been litigated</u> • <u>The region has the highest standards for NEPA requirements due to litigation</u> • <u>If goal is to reduce litigation, one must understand what is happening in the landscape</u>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Courts want ground-based data; tools exist to determine old growth habitat needs for dependent species if data can be pooled</u> • <u>Commissioning a study is time consuming</u> • <u>Enabling conditions must be in place to minimize litigation in the first place – all opinions must be considered fairly, in an open process</u> • <u>Identifying and promoting best practices can help avoid litigation</u> • <u>Collect information for the purpose of understanding how to create best practices, and what information can be supplied to address those concerns</u> • <u>Identify long term responsibility</u>
3	<p>The federal agencies should increase the use of “Options Forestry” to create and act on learning opportunities. “Options Forestry” expands the range of management options and actions selected in controversial Environmental Impact Statements. (The Siuslaw National Forest’s Five Rivers Project provides an example where multiple strategies, proposed by different constituent groups, were selected as part of an alternative.) This approach includes an upfront assessment of the scientific uncertainties, and selects a variety of management options all designed to reach the same goal. The approach structures monitoring in a rigorous statistical design to test the effectiveness of each option at meeting the project’s goals.</p>	<p><u>Modified Combined with 2</u></p>	<p>Issue: Skeptical about the ability of the concept to function under very controversial situations.– <u>TV</u> - Worry that people will begin to accept the misconception that NEPA decisions should be based on compromise instead of environmental analysis.</p>
4	<p>The federal agencies need to invest in creating and then acting <u>Expand and fund research to guide future management strategies. Engage private and public partners to expand knowledge on learning opportunities. They should invest in research (pilot projects) to address the scientific uncertainties and benefits of controversial dual purposes management practices. Pilot projects need to be able to test key hypothesis with guaranteed long term funding, long-term restorative benefits, hydrologic dynamics and regulatory flexibility that allows for short term and localized impacts that may provide long term</u></p>	<p><u>Modified</u></p>	<p><u>Rationale:</u> <u>There is a need for re-investing in creating and acting on learning opportunities. There is a need for expanded research (pilot projects) to: 1) address scientific uncertainties; 2) the benefits of controversial dual-purposes management practices; 3) identify potential law exemption exclusions that may provide localized long-term restorative benefits; and 4) test key hypotheses with guaranteed long term funding.</u> <u>Federal land management agencies should:</u></p>

	<p>restorative benefits. The federal agencies should become strong partners in the Watershed Research Cooperative paired watershed studies to establish cause and affect & effect relationships among physical and biological parameters.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <u>Become strong partners in the Watershed Research Cooperative paired watershed studies (intended to establish cause and affect relationships among physical and biological parameters).</u> o <u>With federal and state regulatory agencies, cooperate in assessing current water quality standards to ensure that they reflect knowledge of dynamic ecosystem processes and ensure landscape resiliency including response to disturbance.</u> o <u>Integrate innovative forest management approaches that look beyond land uses and ownerships by participating in innovative collaborative processes, developing IMAP methodologies, and integrating OWEB watershed assessment protocols that support the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds.</u> <p><u>These processes should recognize opportunities for enhanced water management, through water storage, and an overall net reduction of the negative hydrologic impacts of roads.</u></p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Federal land management agencies and federal and state regulatory agencies should work together to assess existing water quality standards to ensure they reflect knowledge of dynamic ecosystem processes and ensure landscape resiliency. These standards should consider disturbance and resultant variability of conditions across the landscape. Land management agencies could better integrate innovative forest management approaches that look beyond land uses and ownerships by participating innovative collaborative processes, development of IMAP methodologies, and integrating OWEB watershed assessment protocols that support the "Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds." These processes should recognize opportunities for enhanced water management, through water storage, and an overall net reduction of the negative hydrologic impacts of roads.</p>	<p>Modified & added to no. 4</p>	

6		Combined with #5	
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	Potential Solution	Add/Delete	Changes – issues to FFAC for Discussion
	<p>2.18 Issue/impediment – s that are impediments to needed action. Lack of Funding, incentives and structural support are not available to prepare and execute a strategic plan for a effort to address the transportation system (e.g., roads, culverts, ditches) in federal forests; impact, how maintain, funding. The legacy federal forestland road networks, culverts, stream crossings and associated development are aging and in need of rehabilitation (existing roads, fire roads); how temporary are temporary roads in terms of their effects on the landscape; impact on county roads to access forest roads (maintenance); and connect to stewardship contracting (link to culvert replacement, etc.) and biomass attention. Local and State government is not being leveraged, nor is there mandated funding to address critical issues in an efficient and timely manner.</p>		
7	<p>Separate mandated funding should be found to survey and upgrade the existing forest road network. Legislation should direct federal agencies to assess fish passage, stream crossing, and road location problems, road density in the watershed, fiscal maintenance capabilities, and develop road maintenance and abandonment plans. Congressionally directed restoration efforts should direct strategic assessment of the road system to improve fish passage and stream crossings, road location and density issues in the overall watershed. Incentives, structural adjustments and receipts from goods are needed for road maintenance and abandonment. Federal agencies should in Oregon must work cooperatively with the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, the key Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Oregon Department of Forestry agencies (OWEB, ODFW, ODF, DEQ, other) to support the continued implementation of basin and watershed-scale assessments and. Efforts should be directed to meet the goals of the “Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds.” After careful study, roads that are found to have no long term value or pose a threat to watershed values, should be decommissioned or abandoned. Funding is needed to decommission roads that pose a threat to watershed values and overall hydrologic health in the face of increasing climate variability. The bill should have sufficient congressionally directed restoration effort should provide funding, on parity with other priority issues, to hire best value and most, capable and local crews to decommission the road system. The result should be a “key” or administrative road system that is permanent and all weather. The road system should be located</p>	Modify	<p>This issue is budget driven. There needs to be There is a need for: 1) a key road system that is permanent and all weather to serve all needs (strategically placed fire protection system, anticipated managements that employs standard definitions for key terms to describe the road system, (system, non-system, administrative, temporary (as to use), etc.) and 2) funding to meet the challenge of the legacy road system, 3) a more variable climate and 4) an overall decrease in the density of the system and its impact on the ecosystem.</p> <p>Collaboration with State, County and Tribal governments is essential because roads cross jurisdictional boundaries and these governments have systems and crews in place to undertake this work. Restoration efforts must include separate funding and a mandate for an assessment of conditions and planning for a permanent road system that decreases the fragmentation in the transport system, addresses legacy roads and is a forward looking management plan.</p>

	strategically to provide for fire protection and other anticipated management actions, while producing as little impact on the natural ecosystem as possible. Collaboration with County and Tribal governments is essential when roads cross jurisdictional boundaries. <u>undertake restoration.</u>		
8	<p>Congress needs Congressional action is needed to develop a new system to fund roads. There should be a separate line item in the budget to maintain a "for the development of key" or administrative road system that <u>reduces density, is permanent and all weather.</u> This should include sufficient funding for properly trained crews to maintain and improve the road system. Non-timber projects such as fire suppression, fuels reduction, recreation, and others, which depend on the key road system, should <u>must have an explicit budget component to support maintenance of the "key" transportation system.</u> In addition, policies need to be changed to allow <u>Fees charged on road use and other fees to be retained must be directed locally for maintenance.</u> Collaboration, and Federal Agencies should be directed to prefer to work with County and Tribal state, local and tribal governments is essential when roads cross jurisdictional boundaries <u>to address the legacy road system.</u></p>	Modify	<p>The Solution needed additional clarification and funding mechanisms.</p> <p><u>Reducing the costs associated with building new roads might provide a way to reduce costs of maintenance and increase funding for decommissioning and network reduction. The goal should be identifying ways to reduce costs of the roads system by limiting its growth all together.</u></p>
9	<p>To accomplish project work, a new "paradigm" for the use of low-impact temporary roads for projects should be developed (i.e., local projects road systems that may or may not be all weather but are low-impact, temporary (e.g. no pipes, gravel removed, replanting, etc.), and removed after the project is completed). This plan needs to address how these roads will be built, and if classified as temporary, how to remove these roads from service and rehabilitate the forest to minimize impacts.</p>	Modify Combined with 7 & 8	<p>The Solution needed additional clarification</p> <p>No road is "truly temporary" as far as the effects upon aquatic ecosystems. ORVs exacerbate this problem, and thinning (opening up the forest) will as well, particularly in Eastern Oregon.</p>
9a	<p>As part of legislation on forest roads, Congress should identify ways to reduce the costs associated with building and maintaining</p>	Add Combined with 7 & 8	<p>Need to reduce costs and identify ways to work cooperatively on road maintenance with state and county.</p>

	<p>the road system. This should include a comprehensive examination of the federal road standards and identifying and removing barriers to developing cooperative relationships with states and counties for maintenance agreements that cross ownership boundaries.</p>		<p>Reducing the costs associated with building new roads might provide a way to reduce costs of maintenance and increase funding for decommissioning and network reduction. The goal should be identifying ways to reduce costs of the roads system by limiting its growth all together.</p>
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	Potential Solution	Add/Delete	Changes – issues to FFAC for Discussion
	<p>2.19 <u>Issue/ impediment</u> – Certain federal forestlands (including juniper woodlands) in Oregon are over-stocked and are experiencing changes in species composition contributing to the threat of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncharacteristic wildfire • Forest insect pest and disease outbreaks • Losing key ecological components • Impact on the hydrologic cycle and watershed functions <p>Large areas of overstocked juniper woodlands also need treatment to limit the spread of juniper and restore healthy range conditions. During outbreaks, widespread tree mortality alters the forest ecosystem and makes it more susceptible to large scale wildfires.</p>		
10		Delete	
11	<p>Management plans must provide a legitimate <u>Identify and reliable definition of clearly define the interface of public-private interface land ownerships to develop and encourage private owners to take</u> implement <u>strategic actionactions</u> through “good” neighbor policies and incentives.</p>	Modify	<p>Identify “Good Neighbor” <u>Rationale:</u> <u>Public land management should identify, implement and model policies to that encourage (i.e., “Good Neighbor”) private land-owners to take action on their land and the expanded application of apply state fire safety policies, especially in rural residential areas.</u></p>
12	<p>Ensure that <u>Assess and enhance management does not introduce strategies that prohibit or reduce the introduction of non-native plants, insects and disease and that planning efforts assess the existing condition and invest in a plan to eradicate existing introductions.</u></p>	Modify	<p>The use <u>Rationale:</u> <u>Clearly understanding that some management practices can lead to the unintended consequences. For example, the creation of a new roads (whether road (temporary or not) may contributes to the spread of invasive weeds non-native plants, disease, and insects.</u></p> <p><u>Properly constructed roads can be instrumental and a good tool in curing the problems of invasive weeds, disease and insect. Planning should recognize the risks.</u></p>
13		Delete	
14		Delete	
15	<p>Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to identify and prioritize treatment opportunities across the landscape and across</p>	<p>Modify <u>Combined with 2.11 (2).</u></p>	<p>Consider recommending statewide task force to consider the who, what, when, where of the needed work. Identify forest</p>

	ownership boundaries with outcome based performance measures to track and monitor accomplishments.		types, areas, map-based assessment and sideboards.
16	Develop programmatic assessments (EIS) with a purpose and need to increase landscape resiliency through a wide-range of alternatives. The assessment must be performed at the regional and landscape scale and provide for the tiering of action-oriented projects to increase the effectiveness of the recommendations and reduce overall planning costs. The more alternatives the better, including active restoration with/without removal of material and the reintroduction of fire. Fund long-term (10-20 year) community-based solutions (e.g. Oregon Solutions Projects in Lakeview) to prioritize treatments and to attract investments at the local level to address variety of landscape conditions.	Modify	<p>Rationale: <u>Oregon Solutions is an excellent tool for getting competing interests working with one another. The total volume of thinning/biomass removal must be a component, not in addition, to the total sustainable volume targets in the NW Forest plan and ICBEMP/Eastside Screens. Prioritize projects that pay for the maintenance of key roads and the decommissioning of legacy roads.</u> <u>Prioritize treatments based on: 1- collaborative process with support from all interest groups. 2- long-term map-based plans that a) properly manage road networks, b) protect key ecological features (endangered species, old-growth forests, aquatics, 3) meet outcome based landscape resiliency and 4) provide long-term stable, sustainable supply of harvestable timber and biomass from public lands.</u></p> <p>1) Develop a list of scientifically controversial issues regarding the effectiveness of thinning treatments, 2) compare and contrast the advantages of road network reduction, range management modification to determine maximum gains in landscape resiliency per dollar invested, 3) examine past programmatic work to increase success of high-value projects.</p>
17	Fund long-term community-based solutions (e.g. Oregon Solutions Projects in Lakeview) to prioritize treatments and attract investments at the local level to address the unique characteristics and variety of landscape conditions through the development of short term (2-5 year) and longer term (10-20 year) treatment plans prioritized based on: 1) presence of collaborative process with strong support from all interest groups, 2) Long term map-based plans that a) decrease the road network, b) protect key ecological features (endangered species, old-growth, aquatics), 3) meet outcome based landscape resiliency metrics and 4) provide a long-	Modify Combined with 16.	<p>Oregon Solutions is an excellent tool for getting competing interests working with one another. The total volume of thinning/biomass removal must be a component, not in addition, to the total sustainable volume targets in the NW Forest plan and ICBEMP/Eastside Screens. Prioritize projects that pay for the maintenance of key roads and the decommissioning of legacy roads.</p>

	term stable, sustainable supply of smaller diameter logs and biomass from public lands.		
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