

FEDERAL FORESTLANDS PROJECT

Board of Forestry – Forest Vitality Work Plan Objective 2: Create a unified vision of how federal forestlands should contribute to the environmental, economic, and social sustainability of all Oregon forest resources.

Background

Federal forestlands make up 57 percent of Oregon's forests. Even though federal forests are critical to Oregon's environment, economy and quality of life, state government has historically had very little influence over how these lands are managed. A united voice and coordinated strategy is needed to increase the effectiveness of the Governor's Office, Legislature, Congressional delegation, state agencies, and federal agencies when dealing with federal forest policy issues. To be effective, the state's strategy should be based on sound environmental, economic, and social principles that are applicable to the diverse set of issues facing Oregon's forests and communities. As a citizen body representing the public, the Oregon Board of Forestry is the appropriate place to develop a coordinated state strategy and has been charged by both the Governor and the Oregon Legislature to play that role.

Board Products

The Board will produce a document for the Governor's adoption that articulates the State's vision for, and provides guidance on changes to forest policy and management direction that would help contribute to the sustainability of Oregon's forests. The Board's *Federal Forests Guidance Document* will have two general sections: the first section should provide a vision and clearly articulated goals for how federal lands in Oregon should be managed to contribute to sustaining important environmental, economic, and social forest values. The second section should deal with specific recommendations for policy changes needed on pressing issues to achieve the vision.

Process

The Oregon Department of Forestry has been working with the Oregon Consensus Program to develop a process to create the guidance document. With recommendations from the Oregon Congressional Delegation, the Board has formed an Advisory Committee to assist with the project. The goal of the Federal Forestland Advisory Committee is to assist the Board by developing a draft vision and strong implementation recommendations for how federal forestlands can better contribute to the economic, social, and environmental values Oregonians want and need.

The vision should clearly articulate a small number of goals that are useful in crafting policy. The goals should also be useful for reviewing federal forestland management policies to see if they are consistent with the state's vision. The Advisory Committee should identify the strengths and weaknesses in today's approaches, and develop implementation recommendations for improvements that will be supported by the majority of Oregonians. Complete consensus is not the goal. The collaborative process used to produce the guidance document should support rather than hinder a rich deep

discussion of the issues.

The process will include the following steps:

1. The Advisory Committee will assist the Board of Forestry by developing a draft vision, within the context of the Forestry Program for Oregon, for how federal forestlands can better contribute to the economic, social, and environmental values Oregonians want and need. The vision should clearly articulate a small number of goals that are useful in crafting policy and reviewing federal forestland management actions.
 - a. Agency staff, invited interest groups and researchers, will present information on the current conditions and trends of forest resources and highlight the contributions federal lands are making to sustain the production of a range of forest values.
 - b. Advisory Committee members will develop a vision for federal forestlands and identify the points where agreement exists. The vision should clearly articulate a small number of goals that are useful in crafting policy. The goals should also be useful for reviewing land management plans and other projects to see if they are consistent with the state's vision.
 - c. The Board will hold joint work session(s) with the Advisory Committee on the vision (goals) and, if necessary, address areas where the Advisory Committee could not develop consensus, consider additional public testimony and adopt a final vision.
2. Identify a list of Issues that need to be Resolved to Achieve the Vision (goals)
 - a. The Board, Governor's office, and Congressional delegation will suggest potential issues to be considered by the Advisory Committee.
 - b. The Advisory Committee will add to the issue list and identify the most pressing issues (i.e., top 10) that need to be resolved to meet the vision.
3. Joint fact finding and Developing Guidance (implementation recommendations)
 - a. The Advisory Committee will identify available information and experts on each the issue.
 - b. A one-day meeting will be held to develop guidance on each issue (i.e., 1-hour review on write-up of previous issue, ½-day presentation of information, and ½ day discussion).
 - c. Advisory Committee members will try to reach consensus on the guidance for each issue.
4. Drafting Guidance on the Pressing Issues.
 - a. ODF staff will write up a position on each issue based on agreement at the Advisory Committee meetings.
 - b. Advisory Committee members will review the write up for consistency with agreements made at the meetings.
 - c. The Board holds joint work session(s) with the Advisory Committee on the guidance and, if necessary, assesses areas where the Advisory Committee

could not develop consensus, consider additional public testimony and adopt a decision on the issue.

5. Final Vision and Guidance Document

- a. A draft of the vision and guidance document will be sent out for public review and comment.
- b. In consultation with the Advisory Committee, Board, and Governor's office, staff will make final changes to the vision and guidance document.
- c. The Board will adopt the final product and submit it to the Governor for approval.

Stakeholder/Public Involvement

There are several places that the public will have opportunities to provide input into the process. The Advisory Committee members will be asked to keep their constituents informed and engaged as appropriate. A process of joint fact finding will be used where all Committee members will have the opportunity to bring technical information and the views of their constituents and others with similar interests to the process. The Advisory Committee will also set aside time to hear public comments at selected meetings.

As sections of the guidance document are produced, they will be sent to interest groups and interested individuals for review and comment. Those comments will be provided to the Board of Forestry in preparation for work sessions the Board will hold on the documents. The public will also be invited to testify at the work sessions before the Board makes final decisions on adopting the committee's recommendations.

Anticipated Time Frame

2006

- November: Advisory Committee Kickoff Meeting

2007

- January: Charter finalized by Advisory Committee
- March: Draft vision developed by Advisory Committee
- May: Draft list of key issues created by the Advisory Committee
- June: Board holds work session with Advisory Committee on vision and selected issues and, if necessary, addresses any obstacles to moving forward
- June to December: Exploration of approximately 10 key issues in depth, information development and gathering, presentations by technical experts, preparation of draft policy options and recommendations (one meeting, one issue per month)

2008

- January through March (one meeting per month): Continue exploration of key issues
- April: Draft policy recommendations on issues completed and submitted to the Board

- June: Board work session on policy recommendations
- July: Advisory Committee revisions to policy recommendations based on Board review
- August: Draft State Guidance Document prepared
- September: Draft State Guidance Document sent out for public review and comment
- November: Board and Advisory Committee review public comments and finalize Guidance Document

2009

- January: Board adopts State Guidance Document and sends to Governor for approval