

BOARD ISSUES WORK PLANS

Issue #4: Outreach to Urban Populations

Work Plan Approved: April 29, 2005

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<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
BACKGROUND	3
Historical Context	3
Current Issues.....	4
Issues Pertaining to Objectives One and Two (Urban and Community Forestry)	4
Issues Pertaining to Objectives Three, Four, and Five (Agency Affairs)	4
Issues Pertaining to Objective Six (Forest Education, Interpretation& Recreation	5
GOAL.....	5
FLOWCHART	5
MONITORING ACHIEVEMENT	6
OBJECTIVES	6
OBJECTIVE 1: Serve as a catalyst to facilitate the development of sustainable and comprehensive urban forestry programs in Oregon communities through urban forestry planning and municipal program development.	6
Board Products.....	6
Research and Information Needed.....	6
Stakeholder/Public Involvement	6
Timeframe with Milestones.....	7
Resources Required	7
OBJECTIVE 2: Expand the visibility of the urban forestry program among local and state elected officials to enable community leaders to better understand the Department of Forestry’s role in promoting sustainable forest management.	7
Board Products.....	7
Research and Information Needed.....	7
Stakeholder/Public Involvement	7
Resources Required	8
Timeframe with Milestones.....	8

OBJECTIVE 3: Promote an understanding within urban communities of the role, identity, and value added by the Department of Forestry as an organization that serves the interests of all Oregonians...... 8

Board Products..... 8

Research and Information Needed..... 8

Stakeholder/Public Involvement 8

Resources Required 8

Timeframe with Milestones..... 9

OBJECTIVE 4: Working with the Oregon Forest Resources Institute, Oregon State University Extension, and other partners, cultivate public information and education opportunities that help urban Oregonians understand the connection between the sustainable management of Oregon's forest resources and their own quality of life....9

Board Products..... 9

Research and Information Needed..... 9

Stakeholder/Public Involvement 9

Resources Required 9

Timeframe with Milestones..... 10

OBJECTIVE 5: Develop Agency Affairs outreach efforts that connect urban populations with both rural and urban forestry issues......10

Board Products..... 10

Research and Information Needed..... 10

Stakeholder/Public Involvement 10

Resources Required 10

Timeframe with Milestones..... 10

OBJECTIVE 6: Provide and promote a variety of forest education and interpretation opportunities on state forest land and in Oregon communities that connect urban populations with both rural and urban forestry issues......11

Board Products..... 11

Research and Information Needed..... 11

Stakeholder/Public Involvement 11

Resources Required 11

Timeframe with Milestones..... 12

BACKGROUND

Historical Context

Public understanding and support of sustainable forestry underlie all of the *Forestry Program for Oregon* strategies. Broad understanding and support make implementation of sustainable forest management principles possible. As such, there are public information, public education, and public participation components inherent in nearly all of the Board's initiatives. The Board's urban outreach initiative brings together those concepts into one concerted effort, one that involves using the Department's Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program, the Tillamook Forest Center and the Agency Affairs Program as vehicles for cultivating public understanding.

Forest management issues often have been thought of as rural issues, primarily involving rural economies, rural landowners, and rural landscapes. Oregon's growing urban population has historically had little involvement in public dialogue about the management and future of Oregon's forest lands. However, management of forestland raises issues of statewide significance. The loss of viable rural economies and industries, for instance, ultimately affects the economy of the entire state. Policies involving fire management, endangered species, recreation, and other issues also affect the state's overall quality of life, the cost of its government, and its future direction. Additionally, while these forest management issues have traditionally been thought of as rural issues, in reality, they transcend the imaginary urban-wildland "boundary".

Most Oregonians live in urban areas. Accordingly, they have a strong voice in the state's political and policy choices. It is important that they feel a sense of ownership in the state's forestland, that they make a connection between forest management and their quality of life, and that they understand, accept, and support sustainable forest management strategies. The *Forestry Program for Oregon*, with its emphasis on public consensus about the value and management of forest land, requires this broad dialogue and consensus. Such consensus and dialogue also are consistent with the Governor's direction that the Board functions as an open, central forum for crafting Oregon's forestry policies.

The Board's challenge is to find ways to strengthen the connections between urban Oregonians and forest issues, and to solicit their involvement in developing a statewide shared vision of forest management. In part, this involves information and education about the importance and statewide value of Oregon's unique forest resource. It also requires understanding on the part of urban Oregonians that they, too, live in forests - urban forests that contribute to their quality of life in a variety of ways. By helping Oregonians understand forest management principles in their own "backyard", the parks and streetscapes of our cities, we can enhance understanding of how all forests, including rural, state, and private forests, can be managed in a sustainable manner. Healthy forests, both urban and rural, need to be identified as a key component of what makes Oregon a desirable place to live. When the public better understands their contribution and role in managing Oregon's forests, they can better appreciate the contribution healthy urban and rural forests make to their own quality of life

The six objectives listed in this document encompass the breadth of the Department's efforts in outreach to urban populations as currently focused in three programmatic areas. Objectives 1

and 2 pertain directly to the Department's urban and community forestry assistance program, while Objective 6 pertains directly to forest education, interpretation and recreation programs, which are currently focused on State Forest land in northwest Oregon, but could be broadened in geographic scope. Objectives 3, 4, and 5 are cross-program responsibilities, and are chiefly led by the Department's Agency Affairs Program, with contributions from other programs. However, it should be recognized that all of these objectives are inextricably linked to each other

Current Issues

A. Issues Pertaining to Objectives One and Two (Urban and Community Forestry):

1. Limited funding for staff and grants constrain current efforts to meet statewide needs. The state is currently dependent upon federal funds as its primary, and at times, the sole funding mechanism. Federal funds for this program are currently declining, thereby limiting program accomplishments, and creating under-served areas of the state.
2. No dedicated source of urban and community forestry funds to directly match federal urban forestry funds. Congress and the USDA Forest Service are expected to soon require that states provide funds to match the federal portion.
3. Many cities lack a comprehensive vision and policies for managing their urban forest. Left unmanaged, our urban forests can create health and safety problems for our communities. Damage to public infrastructure, personal property, and even danger to people can be reduced through the proper planting and management of the urban forest.
4. Tree related research in Oregon is focused on nursery production or on traditional forest management and is supported by institutional systems and interest groups that have been slow to recognize the benefits of urban and community forests.
5. Urban forestry issues can not be separated from rural forestry issues and management needs. Issues such as salmon restoration, community and economic development, and wildland fire prevention all have urban forestry facets to them. There are tremendous yet often unmet opportunities to develop urban forestry components to efforts addressing broader natural resource situations.

B. Issues Pertaining to Objectives Three, Four, and Five (Agency Affairs):

1. The public is exposed to many competing messages. Gaining and holding public attention is difficult (particularly with limited resources), and the potential for confusion and information overload is great.
2. There are many public education events, including Arbor Week, the State Fair, and others, that provide a vehicle for conveying forestry education messages. There are also many land management agencies and organizations seeking to deliver those messages. The Department must work cooperatively with other entities to avoid duplication of effort and to leverage time and resources to effectively deliver forestry education.
3. Department lacks a significant presence and visibility in Oregon's urban areas. This situation has resulted in the agency being viewed as one that primarily serves rural interests, rather than one that contributes to the quality of life of all Oregonians.
4. Work plans for several of the board's priority issues call for communication plans, including Regulatory Regimes and Implementation of the *Forestry Program for Oregon*. There is a need to ensure that these are integrated (or possibly combined), to avoid

conflicting messages, to make most efficient use of limited staff resources, and to prevent multiple, poorly coordinated contacts with media, opinion leaders, etc.

C. Issues Pertaining to Objective Six (Forest Education, Interpretation & Recreation):

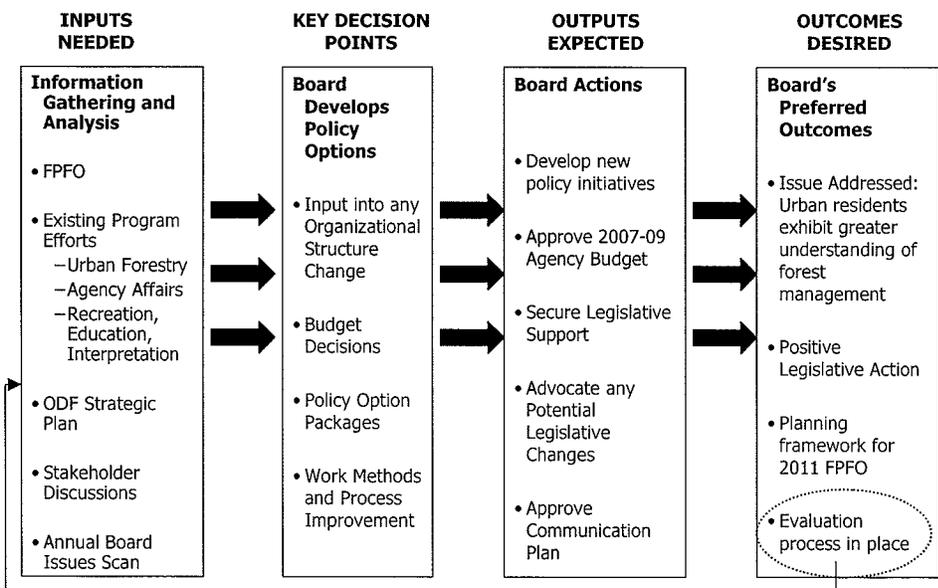
1. Current interpretation and education program offerings in the Tillamook State Forest are booked up to six months in advance with waiting lists for teachers and students who wish to participate. The Department and Board may wish to consider ways to increase the capacity and reach of these programs into the urban public.
2. An opportunity exists to expand broad public awareness about the availability and unique character of education, interpretation and recreation opportunities on State Forest lands.
3. With the nearing completion of the Tillamook Forest Heritage Trust’s mission related to accomplishment of the Tillamook Forest Center, the Board and Department have an opportunity to consider the type and scope of partnership with a non-profit organization that can operate in support of department programs.

GOAL

To help urban Oregonians understand sustainable forest management, and to cultivate support for principles of sound forest management in both rural and urban forests in order to achieve the vision of the *Forestry Program for Oregon*. (Based on *Forestry Program for Oregon*, Vision Statement #5, Action B.11, C.4)

FLOWCHART (This flowchart pertains to all Objectives 1-6)

Proposed Flow-Chart of Outreach to Urban Populations Work Plan



MONITORING ACHIEVEMENT

- The Board can monitor achievement of this Work Plan by reviewing the timeline and milestones, and ultimately reviewing the Board actions
- Review periodic polling information to review alignment of communication plan efforts with public attitudes

OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1: Serve as a catalyst to facilitate the development of sustainable and comprehensive urban forestry programs in Oregon communities through urban forestry planning and municipal program development.

Board Products

- Based on information and recommendations from staff and stakeholder reports, consider future program direction and develop action plans related to:
 - Expand the U&CF program in targeted areas
 - Diversify the program's funding base by supplementing federal funds
 - Develop a strategy for integrating urban forestry services and other Department programs targeting the Portland metro area.

Research and Information Needed

- City Survey 2004
- White paper outlining urban forestry program options
- Organization Development Review
- Results of PCF land owner survey
- May need additional data gathered from 1-10 acre landowners, particularly in the Portland metro area

Stakeholder/Public Involvement

Given the broad nature of this issue, the Board will want to hear from a cross-section of interest groups and stakeholders that contribute to or are impacted by the Department's programs. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Oregon Community Trees – a non-profit organization that serves in an advisory role to the Department.
- League of Oregon Cities – consortium of cities throughout the state.

Timeframe with Milestones: The timeframe will be from April 2005 through June 2007.

April 2005	Work plan reviewed by the Board and UCF tour
July 2005	Progress report to Board - City Survey 2004
November 2005	Progress report to Board - White paper on UCF
January 2006	Approval of legislative concepts
Mar./April 2006	Approval of policy option package for 2007-09 budget
September 2006	Status report on accomplishments related to this issue
Jan./June 2007	Legislative action on Board's proposals

Resources Required: None at this time.

OBJECTIVE 2: Expand the visibility of the urban forestry program among local and state elected officials to enable community leaders to better understand the Department of Forestry's role in promoting sustainable forest management.

Board Products

- Based on information and recommendations from staff and stakeholder reports, consider future program direction and develop action plans related to:
 - Expand the U&CF program in targeted areas;
 - Diversify the program's funding base by supplementing federal funds
 - Develop a strategy for integrating urban forestry services and other Department programs targeting the Portland metro area.

Research and Information Needed

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- Organization Development Review
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- League of Oregon Cities – consortium of cities throughout the state.

Resources Required: None at this time.

Timeframe with Milestones: The timeframe will be from April 2005 through June 2007.

April 2005	Work plan reviewed by the Board and UCF tour
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November 2005	Progress report to Board - White paper on UCF
January 2006	Approval of legislative concepts
Mar./April 2006	Approval of policy option package for 2007-09 budget
September 2006	Status report on accomplishments related to this issue.
Jan./June 2007	Legislative action on Board's proposals

OBJECTIVE 3: Promote an understanding within urban communities of the role, identity, and value added by the Department of Forestry as an organization that serves the interests of all Oregonians.

Board Products

- Based on information and recommendations from staff and stakeholder reports, develop key messages to be delivered through a communication plan and partnerships. This discussion should consider the communication objectives of other work plans as well.
- Consideration of strategies for strengthening ODF presence in the Portland metropolitan area.
- Approval of communication plan.

Research and Information Needed

- Overview of existing and planned polls that deal with knowledge and attitudes of urban Oregonians
- Ongoing monitoring of effectiveness of outreach efforts (to include anecdotal feedback from opinion leaders or members of target audience, possible follow-up polling).

Stakeholder/Public Involvement

Given the broad nature of this issue, the Board will want to hear from a cross-section of interest groups and stakeholders that contribute to or are impacted by the Department's programs. This input will come from public comments and environmental scans. No specific groups are targeted at this time.

Resources Required: None at this time.

Timeframe with Milestones: The timeframe will be from April 2005 through June 2007.

April 2005	Work plan reviewed by the Board
July 2005	Progress report to Board - Communication Plan concepts
November 2005	Progress report to Board - Key messages for overarching communication plan , polling review..
January 2006	Approval of Communication Plan
April 2006	Approval of Outreach to Urban Populations communication strategies
September 2006	Status report on accomplishments related to this issue

OBJECTIVE 4: Working with the Oregon Forest Resources Institute, Oregon State University Extension, and other partners, cultivate public information and education opportunities that help urban Oregonians understand the connection between the sustainable management of Oregon's forest resources and their own quality of life.

Board Products

- Based on information and recommendations from staff and stakeholder reports, develop key messages to be delivered through a communication plan and partnerships. This discussion should consider the communications objectives of other work plans as well.
- Consideration of strategies for strengthening ODF presence in the Portland metropolitan area.
- Approval of communication plan.

Research and Information Needed

- Overview of existing and proposed polls that deal with knowledge and attitudes of urban Oregonians.
- Ongoing monitoring of effectiveness of outreach efforts (to include anecdotal feedback from opinion leaders or members of target audience, possible follow-up polling).

Stakeholder/Public Involvement

Given the broad nature of this issue, the Board will want to hear from a cross-section of interest groups and stakeholders that contribute to or are impacted by the Department's programs. This input will come from public comments and environmental scans. No specific groups are targeted at this time

Resources Required: None at this time.

Timeframe with Milestones: The timeframe will be from April 2005 through June 2007.

April 2005	Work plan reviewed by the Board and UCF tour
January 2006	Progress report to Board - Key messages for overarching communication plan , polling review..
April 2006	Opening of the TFC
September 2006	Status report on accomplishments related to this issue.

OBJECTIVE 5: Develop Agency Affairs outreach efforts that connect urban populations with both rural and urban forestry issues.

Board Products

- Based on information and recommendations from staff and stakeholder reports, develop key messages to be delivered through a communication plan and partnerships. This discussion should consider the communications objectives of other work plans as well.
- Consideration of strategies for strengthening ODF presence in the Portland metropolitan area.
- Approval of communication plan.

Research and Information Needed

- Overview of existing and proposed polls that deal with knowledge and attitudes of urban Oregonians
- Ongoing monitoring of effectiveness of outreach efforts (to include anecdotal feedback from opinion leaders or members of target audience, possible follow-up polling).

Stakeholder/Public Involvement

Given the broad nature of this issue, the Board will want to hear from a cross-section of interest groups and stakeholders that contribute to or are impacted by the Department's programs. This input will come from public comments and environmental scans. No specific groups are targeted at this time.

Resources Required: None at this time.

Timeframe with Milestones: The timeframe for Objective 5 will be from April 2005 through June 2007.

April 2005	Work plan reviewed by the Board and UCF tour
July 2005	Progress report to Board - Communication Plan concepts
January 2006	Progress report to Board - Key messages for overarching communication plan , polling review..
April 2006	Review of Outreach to Urban Populations communication plan
September 2006	Status report on accomplishments related to this issue.

OBJECTIVE 6: Provide and promote a variety of forest education and interpretation opportunities on state forest land and in Oregon communities that connect urban populations with both rural and urban forestry issues.

Board Products

- Based on information and recommendations from staff and stakeholder reports, consider capacity building needs and develop requisite action plans related to:
 - Tillamook Forest Center operations;
 - Education & Interpretation program outreach
 - Non-profit partnership.

Research and Information Needed

- Information and input covered in staff and stakeholder reports to the Board, specified above. More specific list of research and information needs may flow from consideration of the issues and opportunities, and based on the input from staff and stakeholders

Stakeholder/Public Involvement

Given the broad nature of this issue, the Board will want to hear from a cross-section of interest groups and stakeholders that contribute to or are impacted by the Department's programs. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Oregon Forest Resources Institute – a primary educational partner.
- Tillamook Forest Heritage Trust – collaborative partner organization – will report to the Board on its role in facilitating public/private partnership and potential future roles.
- Education Forum provides an opportunity for discussing forestry education with partners.

Resources Required: None at this time.

Timeframe with Milestones: The timeframe will be from April 2005 through June 2007.

April 2005	Work plan reviewed by the Board
July 2005	Progress report to Board - Update on TFC construction/operation and current education & interpretative efforts,
November 2005	Progress report to Board - Role of a non-profit
January 2006	Role of a non-profit
April 2006	Opening of TFC
September 2006	Overview of forestry education provided by partners and status report on accomplishments related to this issue.