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June 3, 2008 Meeting

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Attachments below are available on the web @ <http://oregon.gov/ODF/Board>

1. Flip Charts – Facilitated Workshop
2. Key Discussion Questions, Agenda Item 1

OREGON STATE BOARD OF FORESTRY

June 3, 2008 Workshop and Joint Meeting Minutes

In accordance with the provisions of ORS 526.016, a meeting of the Oregon Board of Forestry was held at the State Forester's Headquarters, 2600 State Street, Salem, Oregon. In the absence of an appointed Chair, Board member Cal Mukumoto agreed to facilitate the workshop. The joint meeting with the Board's Federal Forestland Advisory Committee was facilitated by Robert Fisher, Fisher Collaborative Services, Oregon Consensus Program.

Board Members Present:

Larry Giustina	Bill Hutchison	Peter Hayes
Jennifer Phillippi	Barbara Craig	Cal Mukumoto

FFAC Members and Staff:

Steve Hobbs, Chair	Ken Williamson	Mary Schmelz, ODF
Ralph Bloemers	Tim Vredenburg	Jeri Chase, ODF
Allyn Ford	Lisa Freedman	David Morman, ODF
Chuck Graham	Dan Edge	Robert Fisher, Facilitator
Russ Hoeflich	Cal Joyner, guest - USFS	Rob Williams, Facilitator
Bill Kluting	Ed Shepherd, guest - BLM	
Annabelle Jaramillo	Kevin Birch, ODF	

Others present:

Paul Adams, OSU
Elaine Hallmark, Oregon Consensus Program
Chris Jarmer, OFIC
Jose Linares, USFS
Van Manning, O&C Counties
Terri Moffett, US Senator Gordon Smith's Office
Turner Odell, Oregon Consensus Program
Mateusz Perkowski, Capital Press
Dick Posekany, Frank Lumber Co.
Ralph Saperstein, Boise Cascade
Gary Springer, Starker Forests
Bob Van Dyk, Wild Salmon Center
Diane Vosick, TNC
Marvin Brown, State Forester
Gayle Birch, Board Assistant
Dan Postrel, Agency Affairs
Clark Seely, Associate State Forester
Jim Paul, Div. Chief, Private Forests
David Morman, Resources Planning
Walter Schutt
Nancy Hirsch, Div. Chief, State Forests
Mike Cafferata, State Forests
Barbara Lee

** APRIL 30, 2008 WORKSHOP FOLLOW-UP

Elaine Hallmark and Turner O'Dell, Oregon Consensus Program, facilitated the Board's continuing discussion of effective consensus decision-making. Ms. Hallmark provided an outline describing "Steps in Consensus" (Attachment 1) from which the Board conducted a "mock" decision process.

1. JOINT MEETING WITH THE BOARD'S FEDERAL FORESTLAND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Following introductions, Steve Hobbs, Chair of the Federal Forestland Advisory Committee, began the joint meeting by reviewing the day's objectives:

- Come to agreement on the **problems**.
- Come to agreement on the **strategies** to address those problems.
- Come to agreement on the **actions** required.
- Come to agreement on an **implementation** strategy or strategies.

Robert Fisher, Fisher Collaborative Services and Oregon Consensus Program, facilitated the day's discussion, following the outline contained in the **Key Discussion Questions** (Attachment 2).

Bulleted items reflect comments by either the Board or FFAC during discussion of each topic.

Vision and Goals

- Would require a significant commitment of natural resource agencies' resources [funding] to be part of a facilitated dialogue in landscape scale conversations to improve forest health.

Facilitator's Overview:

Participants indicated that the vision and goals appeared reasonable and congruent with expectations. Some ambiguous words (e.g. "adequate") could use some more attention and definition, but the tone and message generally resonated. It was recognized that implementation may be difficult since it would require a significant commitment of resources at a larger scale than considered before.

Sense of Urgency

- Too many value statements, i.e., catastrophic/uncharacteristic fire.
- Make it more Oregon-centric, while recognizing the national and global context.
- Must be explicit that improvements of conservation-ecological values are urgently needed.
- Statements must be accurate and specific.
- Well-being of rural communities should be explicit.
- Develop a diversification economy around stabilizing the forests.

- Re: federal disinvestment - more than forest health is unfunded; also water quality, roads, wildlife habitat, and recreational facilities.
- Water supply viability on federal lands.
- Agreement can be reached at a non-specific level; leadership necessary to assist communities. *[The FFAC chose to provide general guidelines and avoid specifics, to provide sufficient flexibility to carry out operations.]*
- Northern Spotted Owl Recovery Plan identified east-side active management as the only way, long term, to preserve spotted owl habitat.
 - Too site specific – make it broader, i.e., opportunity for wildlife or ecological values or opportunities.

Facilitator's Overview:

The section generally conveyed a sense of urgency, though concern was expressed over the inclusion of some value statements conveyed by word choice (e.g. “catastrophic”) and the omission of some points. It was confirmed that the final draft would include additional statistics and all would be cited to ensure accuracy and credibility. It was also clarified that FFAC frequently chose to provide general guidelines and goals instead of specifics in order to provide sufficient flexibility to implement recommendations

Problems

- Must be an economic return from the growth of timber.
- Beef-up the statements, i.e., roads, water quality, loss of receipts to counties and schools, and the reduced timber harvest.
- Add information to The Desired Amount of Older Forests to reflect the recommendations.
- Forest Health is a symptom of a larger problem rather than the problem itself.
 - Addressed in the Situation Assessment which set the stage for addressing the current situation, and deals with the historical perspective.
 - Was originally titled “Natural Processes Have Been Disrupted”; FFAC chose Forest Health which is generally recognized and understood.

Facilitator's Overview:

The group addressed the question of forest health as a problem itself or the symptom of many problems. The FFAC had originally titled the problem statement “natural processes have been disrupted” but chose to change the name to “forest health” because it is generally recognized and understood. It was clarified that the larger issues relating to the forest health problem will be addressed in the situation assessment along with a historical perspective. Participants also suggested including additional information in some of the problem statements (e.g., roads, water quality, loss of receipts to counties and schools, and reduced timber harvest) to make them more compelling. It was also suggested that additional information be added to emphasize the need for economic returns from the growth of timber and to provide more specifics on the desired amount of older forest to reflect the recommendations.

Recommended Solutions: State and Local

- Older Forests definition dilemma cannot be solved by the State of Oregon; California and Washington must be included.
 - Issue of scale: local partnerships should decide what constitutes “older forests” in their regions; will be different in other parts of the State.
 - There are ecological issues and values that transcend local sub-regions, i.e., conservation strategies for species that move over broad landscapes.
 - Seeking to address regional scale problems, while allowing local groups to have influence and input in the process.
- Need for local/state, **regional** and national Recommended Solutions.
- Must not put the State in the position of mandating to local communities; must be from the community. FFAC proposes the State will *help* local collaborations efforts happen.
- Room for agreement on “old growth” – “older forests” means 14 inches dbh and higher; afraid that terminology could backfire.
 - To address the documented degradation of forestlands, focus must be on building diversity and resiliency. Business-as-usual will not break through the barrier. Communities must be empowered to design a *desired future condition* within their geographies.
- Must move away from the politics of limits to the politics of solutions. State should take the lead.
- Trust must be built at all levels, which takes a long time. Motivations are diverse.
- Protecting older forest types must be managed over time and space, and must be articulated.
- Dilemma of site specificity requirements relative to a NEPA document.
- Regulatory agencies must be at the table for collaboration.

Facilitator’s Overview:

The group indicated this effort provides an opportunity to move away from the politics of limits to the politics of possibilities and solutions. The State can play an active and helpful role in this process. The issue of scale, however, is of particular importance and there are particular needs at local, state, regional, and national levels. It was specifically suggested that a regional level of recommended solutions should be added. The general challenge was articulated as a need to address issues at all scales while maintaining local ability to tackle problems relevant to their situations. This was also articulated as an opportunity to move away from a prescriptive top-down approach and try something new that might better enable collaboration and trust building. It was suggested that a focus on rebuilding diversity and resiliency, while restoring economically viable timber harvest, was a logical starting point and opportunity for successful collaborative efforts. The recent agreements on the Malheur National Forest (Thorn and Egley timber sales) were posited as a successful example of collaboration with the agency serving as a convener. Future efforts could take a larger landscape scale to the degree tolerated within the NEPA site specificity concerns.

In the interest of time, Chair Hobbs suggested that specific questions be addressed, rather than the full list.

Does the Board agree that focusing on the forest health problem is appropriate and that by necessity, will require addressing the other problems identified in the outline to varying degrees?

- The “wolf at the door”; common solutions and interests.
- Point out that forest health and the health of communities are interrelated.

Facilitator’s Overview:

The group appeared supportive of this focus as a good place to start since it is “the wolf at the door” and an opportunity to build trust in communities. It was suggested that the message should be reiterated that the health of the forest and the health of communities are interrelated.

Does the Board agree with the concept of State facilitation and support of local partnerships or advisory committees (i.e., unit of state employees with clear direction and budget sufficient to carry out the mission)?

- The one “bold” move
- Third-party facilitator is critical.
- Structure and support needed from the State.

Russ Hoeflich, FFAC member, proposed the following concept for group consideration:

With the assistance of professional facilitators, local communities would design a consensus/outreach process, based upon its forests’ unique characteristics, to reach consensus on a desired future condition. Once consensus was reached, the federal agencies would craft NEPA documents for project-level work.

Robert Fisher called for discussion/comment:

- Would require quadrupling the Department’s policy option package for federal lands.
- Unclear how the Bureau of Land Management would fit.
- How separation would be maintained between a desired future condition and a community based assessment document, and then transitioned into a NEPA document would have to be determined.
- The Board has its hands full dealing with State Forests’ issues. The proposed project does not have a budget.
- Concept is good – takes dollars. Expensive and a big job. Lets the Federal Government off-the-hook. State has a big enough problem deciding how to manage its own forests.
- Costs must be weighed, pro and con. Much hinges on the willingness and ability of the Federal government to change its management habits and work with local interests with success.
- The line between appropriate boldness and irresponsible nuttiness depends upon the vehicle in which to get there. Could use existing structures.

- Concept briefly discussed by the FFAC on June 3.
- Should take lead; Federal government must participate.
- Federal managers are ultimately responsible for the decisions. Local partnerships will provide the guidance and advice to federal managers that will help set priorities and reinforce or meet community needs, and provide the political capital needed to carry out the operations.
- Money is available; priorities can be changed.
- Conservation community understands that assessments must happen at a large scale with respect to fire and fire ecology.
- Independence is critical. Oregon Consensus Program is considered “independent.”
- Having the State as intermediary between the local communities and federal agencies would enhance the collective capacity.
- The USFS is currently working on Forest Plan revisions; which is another vehicle, over the next decade.
- Must have professional, well-trained and prepared State staff in addition to NOAA, Water Resources, USFS, EPA resources. Will push planning shops to the limits. Money will follow results. Have an obligation to prepare for climate change; troubling to see firefighters from other states fighting Oregon’s fires.

Facilitator’s Overview:

Discussion began by recognizing that the allocation of funding to facilitate and support an aggressive level of collaborative efforts was a significant part of FFAC’s bold statement to address needs on the landscape. The general idea expressed was to establish six community dialogues in the first year that would initiate large scale projects (approximately 250,000 acres) from conception, through NEPA assessment, to implementation. Six additional efforts would be initiated in the second year. These twelve concurrent efforts would encompass approximately three million acres and make Oregon the first state in the nation to reach this scale. There was general support for a large scale focus and timely action across the state. There was also concern about the cost and the concern about the cost of not taking dramatic action.

Should the State become directly involved in the NEPA process as originally envisioned by the FFAC Synthesis Subcommittee, or should it focus its energy on supporting increased funding dedicated to increased federal training and personnel for NEPA work?

- Federal agencies have more expertise and experience dealing with NEPA documents – it is their role.
- Great need for State support in specific areas.
- Look at it as statewide economic development; long term benefits.
- State institutes of higher education could provide scientific support for local partnerships and local agencies.
- Federal agencies have not been adequately funded by Washington D.C. to deal with the magnitude of the problems faced, i.e., training and personnel shortages.

Facilitator's Overview:

During the conversation it was clarified that this was not intended to allow State agencies to take over responsibility for the NEPA process or Federal agency roles. The intention was to provide additional State agency capacity (e.g., a NEPA strike team) to help make NEPA compliance more expedient, robust, and able to withstand legal challenge. Some State agencies and institutions of higher learning might be able to provide additional competency on some specific issues (e.g., soils, species, etc.) with additional funding. This additional support would also help address the concern that Federal agencies have been defunded and face personnel shortages.

Timing: Schedule for completion of the report, and how it does/does not fit with the Legislative schedule. [Project will require resources. Budget processes for the next Legislative session are underway. The project is scheduled for completion in January 2009; which is too late for the budgeting process. Appropriate funding request must be made for the Governor's consideration.]

- One of the Department's three key policy option packages is related to Federal lands. Board and FFAC could have further discussions.
- Asking for dollars and budget priorities takes "homework" – strategy/communications plan necessary. Must have political buy-in before asking for funds.

Should the draft be vetted through public review, or does public input received by the FFAC suffice?

- FFAC should pursue and incorporate public reaction before it is submitted to the Board. Time is running out for another joint meeting with the FFAC. The Board should receive a final document for review.
- The Synthesis Subcommittee will work on the draft document, send it to the Board and FFAC at the same time, and request written input.
- More thought to be given to political buy-in.
- The document must "live" past the current Governor's administration.

Following adjournment of the joint meeting at 4:00 p.m., Marvin Brown presented Steve Hobbs, past-Chair of the Board of Forestry with a plaque and gift recognizing his contribution and service to the State of Oregon.

Doug Decker, Northwest Oregon Area Interpretive Program Director, gave a presentation illustrating changes in science, policy and culture through citations from statute, the State Foresters' annual reports, Board of Forestry minutes and personal interviews. For nearly a century, the work of Board and Department of Forestry has evolved over time in response to changing environmental, social political and economic needs.

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Marvin Brown, State Forester and
Secretary to the Board

GB