

Summary of Committee for Family Forestland's Recommendations

This document summarizes the Committee for Family Forestland's (CFF) recommendations made to the Board of Forestry at the July 2009 Board meeting. The CFF recommended the addition of two objectives, modification of wording on existing objectives, initial priorities for the objectives, and a way to organize these objectives.

New Policy Objectives

The CFF created two new policy objectives, viewed as highly important, and requested that the Board consider adding them to Private Forests' policy objectives.

11. Rebuild the Insects and Disease (I&D) program. In addition to fire protection (covered within the Protection from Fire Program), infestations of insects, diseases and invasive species remain ongoing concerns of private forestland owners. Recent budget cuts will considerably shrink this piece of the Private Forests Program. Rebuilding the I&D program in order to protect private forestlands from non-human pests is a CFF priority.
12. Rebuild resources for forest practices research and monitoring. The FPA can only retain its credibility and its position of national prominence for balanced forest resource protection if it is adequately enforced (by a complete force of Stewardship Foresters) and continually assessed (through adequately funded research and monitoring). Like the I&D program, the Department's monitoring program has been whittled down to a stub. Similarly, funding for forest practices related research (such as the paired watershed studies in Hinkle Creek, Alsea and Trask basins) has been shrinking of late. Completing current forest practices research projects and rebuilding ODF monitoring capacity should be a high priority and a listed policy objective in the Private Forests Program work plan.

Modification of Existing Objectives

Policy objective #5 addresses Oregon's place in wood markets. This objective is a high priority for the CFF, but suggests rewriting the statement to say (edits italicized):

5. Place a high priority on long-term strategic investments to support Oregon's forest industry to ensure that Oregon maintains *the flexibility necessary to achieve* a competitive advantage and a diversity of forest products and *new markets like forest biomass for energy production*. Oregon should continue to be a net exporter of wood product and make a significant contribution towards meeting the nations wood product needs.

Priorities for Policy Objectives

The CFF discussed the policy objective priorities and identified high priority objectives, both on the staff's original list of ten and the two additional objectives more that we recommend you consider. The CFF considers that the number one near and long-term policy objective priority must be to maintain a stable private forestland base (#1 on the current list).

1. Identify current and future risks of forest fragmentation and the conversion of forests to non-forest use as the primary, overarching challenge to sustainable forestry and keeping working forests working.

In reality, all of the other objectives listed, from a more stable public funding source for the department budget to a stable regulatory environment to improved forest markets can only help to support this top objective. The other high priority objectives include:

2. Explore alternative, more stable funding mechanisms for the public share of the department budget directed at keeping forests in forests.
5. Place a high priority on long-term strategic investments to support Oregon's forest industry to ensure that Oregon maintains *the flexibility necessary to achieve* a competitive advantage and a diversity of forest products and *new markets like forest biomass for energy production*. Oregon should continue to be a net exporter of wood product and make a significant contribution towards meeting the nations wood product needs.
6. Place a high priority on dedicating resources towards the development and support of future non-timber markets that will increase forestland value.
10. Landslides and public safety: promote fulfillment of shared responsibility for any additional action to reduce public safety risks (existing statutes). Effective protection of the public requires the shared responsibilities of homeowners, road users, forestland owners, and state and local governments to reduce the number of persons living in or driving through locations prone to shallow, rapidly moving landslides during periods when they are likely to occur. Promote statutory changes consistent with this objective.

In summary, then, the CFF supports all the policy objectives on your current list for this program and would focus highest priority at this time on numbers 1, 2, 5, 6 and 10 and then ask you to consider new numbers 11 and 12 as additional priorities.

Categories for Policy Objectives

Finally, the CFF suggests that the Private Forests Program policy objectives list be categorized and rearranged to make it a bit more reader-friendly:

“Protecting a Stable Private Forestland Base” would have objectives # 1 & 4 listed under it.

“Developing Stable Public Funding” would have objective #2 under it.

“Establishing Predictable Forest Regulation” would have objectives # 3, 7, 8, 10, 11 & 12 under that heading.

“Protecting and Improving Markets” would have objectives # 5, 6 & 9 under it.