

A Report to the Oregon Board of Forestry
From the NW and SW Regional Forest Practice Committees
July 23, 2015

Presented by Brian Schlaefli, SW RFPC Chair and Mike Barnes, NW RFPC Chair

Chair Imeson, Board Members, State Forester Decker:

Good morning. I am Brian Schlaefli and I am here with Mike Barnes to give a report on behalf of the NW and SW Regional Forest Practice Committees (RFPCs). I serve as the SW Committee Chair and Mike serves as the NW Committee Chair. As you know, each of the RFPCs are nine-member advisory committees appointed by the Board of Forestry to assist you in developing rules appropriate to the forest conditions within its region. Members of each committee are qualified by education or experience in natural resource management.

During the last several Board of Forestry meetings you have heard us give reports in response to your direction to work with ODF staff to develop Riparian Protection Rules designed to meet the Protecting Cold Water (PCW) criterion to the Maximum Extent Practicable. At your last meeting, we presented our recommendations. These are part of the record and we will not repeat them today.

Since our last report at the June Board of Forestry meeting, you received a Riparian Rule Analysis from ODF staff. The Regional Committees saw this analysis for the first time last week. We convened a conference call two days later to discuss this document, and especially the Riparian Prescription Packages found on pages 34 through 36. At the end of the conference call meeting, the NW and SW Committees directed us, as their chairs, to report to you our reaction and response to this analysis paper and the three prescription packages.

In short, we are disappointed, and frustrated, that the three prescription rule packages in the analysis paper disregard all of our recommended prescriptions presented in June. Significant human capital went into our work which is absent from the three packages. Please recall that our recommendations targeted and addressed the site-specific conditions that we identified as possible contributors in the private RipStream sites meeting, or failing to meet, the PCW standard under the current riparian rules. And, for the private RipStream sites having a 60% modeled probability for meeting the PCW under the current riparian rules.

Specifically, our recommendations target and address:

- The possible effects of two-sided harvest units.
- The reduction of gaps and mitigating pre-existing gaps within the riparian canopy.
- The possible tapering of riparian buffers as basal area requirements are met on long buffer segments.
- Maintaining and incentivizing the retention of hardwoods that contribute to stream shading.
- Maintaining, increasing, and incentivizing more effective, south-sided buffers.

We believe we have provided to you prescription options to address meeting the PCW to the Maximum Extent Practicable, and that also help to address “least burdensome”, “proportionality”, and “Desired Future Condition”. As your advisory committees, as set for in ORS 527.660, we respectfully request due consideration of our recommended prescriptions during your discussion and decision in regard to a new riparian protection rule.

Brian Schlaefli
SW RFPC, Chair

Mike Barnes
NW RFPC, Chair