

Smoke Management Review Committee Meeting
Oregon Department of Forestry
Operations Conference Room, Salem
January 16, 2003
0930-1530

In attendance: Stephen Fitzgerald, Stan Benson, Gregory R. McClarren, Lee Miller, Geoffrey Babb, Erik Christiansen, Jim Russell. Gary Stevens, Jim Brown, Mike Dykzeul, Brian Jennison, David Collier, Mike Ziolko and Cindy Smith (note taker).
Visitors: Felica Sonnenschein, Patti Gentiluomo, Jim Little, Harold Merritt, Mike White, Chris Cline, and Brian Finneran.

1. Administrivia

Mike Ziolko

This is a public meeting and the minutes are being recorded. Proxies need to be turned in to Mike Ziolko. It is your job to keep your proxy up to date. Mike Ziolko distributed ODF boundary maps as requested by Gary Stevens at the last meeting.

2. Minutes

Gregory McClarren moved that the minutes be accepted. The motion was seconded and carried.

3. Federal Land Burning

Erik Christiansen, BLM
Jim Russell, USFS

Erik Christiansen is a Fuels Management Specialist with the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. Both BLM and the FS use FASTRACS database for all fuels work. He explained that numbers change everyday as information is entered into FASTRACS

Erik will email a copy of this presentation to Mike Ziolko.
Presentation is based on the Federal fiscal year ending Sept 30.
Discussion:

- Mike Dykzeul asked if there is an effort to remove material rather than burn.
 - Erik responded that there are mechanical treatments and an effort is made to market and utilize the materials rather than burn.
 - Mike Z – This issue may come into play as we look at alternatives.
- Greg McClarren asked if the data represented about 5-10 % of what the numbers were 10 years ago (for treatment).
 - Erik replied that it is a big reduction.
- Deschutes had lots of piles last year.
- Jim Russell – Our treatments are determined by labor supply, funding, etc.
- On the BLM side, Medford does the most work – a different fire regime and condition class. More logging, fire hazard and risk, and has developed a capacity for fuels work in that area
- Erik added that a key example of that was last fire season - the Squire Fire. And said we have a good century of altering fire regimes.
- Stephen F – Some of these treatments take three years to accomplish and fire can catch you in the middle.
- Erik – 2003 figures reflect the capacity of what we would like to get done. Doesn't mean that it will all get done.
- Jim Russell – The Squire Fire showed how the fire stopped on the federal side where treatment had occurred but on the private side kept going.
- Mike Z. inquired if the underburning data included some mechanical treatment or if was it all natural underburn.
 - Erik - It could have included some.
- Jim Russell would like to see a lump sum fee for federal burning.
- Greg asked about the fees and Mike explained the fees now in place.
 - A wildlife burn is subject to fees, rangeland burning is outside of our jurisdiction.
- Gary – said he foresees problems if cutting is increased without increasing management.
 - Erik replied that he expects treatment to increase with cutting.
The Umatilla NF chose not to do a lot of treatment last summer because of the fire season. He expects to see more underburn treatment on the east side in the future.

- Mike Z. pointed out that there is an emission limit on four national forests units in NE – They may be approaching that in 2003 with the projections Erik is showing.
- The fees for those units are currently collected via an MOU with BLM and the Forest Service.
- Asked if they are expected to burn in the spring? Erik replied that most of that burning is done in the spring, some in the fall, and virtually none in the summer.
- Federal capacity to do work has not changed recently – the potential shows increase but don't know how much will actually get done until we get a budget.
- Erik – Burns, Prineville and Vale show lots of Broadcast burning which is primarily brush (depending on the location, the term broadcast burn could refer to brush or grass.)
- Mike Z. referred members to the Directive – Appendix 5 for specifics.
- Erik asked members to ignore the data on the South central area as it reflects incorrect data. He will provide a corrected copy.

Erik next distributed a Brio report of FASTRACS data, which reflects potential fuel treatments for 2003. (The work they would like to get done if they could do it all).

Discussion:

- A visitor commented that there appeared to be a significant difference in the impact of the various types of piles burned.
 - Jim Russell responded – we strictly enforce that when our operators take material from an area to a central processing plot, the acres reported is the number of acres that were treated and piled and the fees are based on the number of acres treated rather than the number of acres where the treatment was hauled to.
- Lee Miller asked if tonnage was tracked.
 - Erik replied that ODF does and Mike Z. added that it could be found in the annual report.
- Greg asked for a definition of “fire regime” and “condition class.” Erik defined “fire regime” as, essentially the fire return interval and “condition class” as, how far out of the normal range of variability of fuel loading a piece of land is.
- Mike Z. said the primary fuel type is in ODF's smoke management reporting requirements.
- Asked if all mechanical treatments result in burning, Erik explained that it depends on the project.

Cost for 2003 season for BLM was \$25,000,000 including OR and WA – we treated just under 85,000 acres and obligated funds to treat another 10,000 acres. About 60% of that goes to actual treatment and the balance to overhead/administrative costs. FS was about \$22,000,000 and think it was on about 60-65,000 acres. About half of that was in Oregon.

Jim Russell – 46 million acres have been identified just for the FS

BREAK

4. DEQ Open Burning

Felica Sonnenschein, DEQ

Mike Z. explained that we coordinate with DEQ but we don't dictate to them what they do.

Felica Sonnenschein, DEQ Air Quality Specialist, is responsible for the open burn program for six counties in the Willamette Valley.

Felica explained that she is very strict about enforcing the rules and looks for alternatives to burning. She prefers to not issue permits. Felica provided the following handouts:

1. List of DEQ Open Burning contacts
2. Open Burning Regulations for the Mid-Willamette Valley Fact Sheet
3. OAR 264 Rules for Open Burning

Felica responded to numerous questions as she explained the Open Burning Program. In her position with DEQ, she manages residential burning and commercial burning but is not involved in agricultural burns except for prohibited

materials. She works with the fire departments and strives for a good working agreement with them. Felica applauds the fire departments for their assistance.

Who needs a permit? Someone who has clean up, etc. Before issuing a permit Felica tries to help them find a way to get things taken care of rather than burning.

She stressed that inside the city limits you also need to contact the fire department to get approval and need to check the rules for your location. DEQ rules are not the same throughout the state. Prohibited materials are the same statewide. I.e. Burning tires, plastic...

Salem has a burn ban, Stayton and Silverton have shown an interest. Felica added that the Open Burn Control Areas are moving further out into rural areas as the population has increased. I.e. from 3 miles to 6 miles outside of the city limits.

Asked about a statewide backyard burning regulation to reduce the impact on air quality from PM25, Felica said she did not foresee it at this time. That would require enforcement resources as well as support for it.

Mike Z. pointed out the exemption from DEQ Rules for slash burning on page 7 of the DEQ rules where the slash comes under ODF's smoke management program.

In closing Felica explained that though she would be unlikely to issue a permit to burn materials resulting from thinning or other management practices on forested lands within her jurisdiction, she would consider allowing a fire department to use it for a training burn.

5. Statute/Rule/Directive

Mike Ziolko, ODF

- Recommendations of this committee probably won't affect the current legislative session because of the time it takes to develop legislative proposals, with the possible exception of the aspect of fees being changed dependant upon budget discussions.
- Legislators, the public or lobbyists could request law changes, however.
- Rule making is a different story – the requirements for rules are detailed in the handout Mike provided.

We do have to go through the public hearing process. Rule making has a definite process it goes through.

- The directive is policy from the State Forester, but has been a part of the package submitted by DEQ as part of the Clean Air Act Implementation Plan.
- If we make changes to the directive, it will require a change to the SIP as well.
- Brian – if the committee decides a revenue increase is needed – will that require a change in legislation?
- Mike – Probably. No legislation is needed to raise fees to the maximum allowed, but legislation is needed to change the maximums or fee structures.

6. ODA Field Burning

Patti Gentiluomo/Jim Little, ODA

Field burning is operated under an interagency agreement with DEQ. (Chapter 603, Division 77)

Patti Gentiluomo operates the Field Burning Program as well as the Alternatives Program and Tax Credit Program.

Patti distributed copies of the "Summary of the 2002 Field Burning Season" and explained that meteorology applies primarily to the Willamette Valley but does supply meteorological support to Jefferson and Union counties.

In a brief history of the program, Patti explained that in 1948 field burning was recommended by OSU agronomists. In 1968, 315,000 acres were burned and the infamous Black Tuesday in Eugene resulted in a burn ban by the Governor. The August 3, 1988 multiple car pile up on I-5 resulted in major changes including HB3343 in 1991 which established an open field-burning phase down.

The program is managed by registration and is fee supported which is fixed by statute.

Allocation is determined by acres registered and fees are charged according to the acres registered. Additional fees are applied to late registrations after June 1. Fees for open field burning are \$2 per acre for registration and \$8 per acre to burn. A late fee for registration after June 1st is an additional \$1 per acre. Fees for propane flaming are significantly less at \$1 per acre registration and \$2 per acre to burn, but has a limitation of 37,500 acres and is time consuming.

Insurance rates are another incentive not to burn.

NOTE: ODF does not have a registration period or late fees but the landowner is expected to register 7 Days prior to burning – can be waived by the district.

Even if the DEQ allows a burn, a permit is also needed from the fire department, which may impose additional regulations.

Growers must have a working radio for reception of emergency broadcast in case DEQ needs to contact the grower in an emergency that could require the burn be canceled or put out.

Pibals (pilot Balloons) are used to determine wind direction. They can be released from the roof of the ODA as well as from mobile unit.

Jim Little, ODA Meteorologist, continued the discussion with a brief introduction to the role of meteorology in the open field burning program.

- Jefferson and Union counties get a weather report from him daily.
- Jefferson county pays for an airplane to take weather soundings daily.
 - Greg- Jefferson Counties program was not mandated by the legislature.
- Union County does Pibals as does Jefferson County. They have a less sophisticated program than Jefferson county but they do less burning also.
 - ODA receives Pibal results for building their database.

7. Working Lunch

Mike Ziolk distributed copies of the 2003 Forestry Program for Oregon and asked Board members to review and consider making recommendation /comment to the board. Comments could be individual or as a group. Recommendations from the Committee may prove more effective.

Discussion:

- Jim – Who handles the grassland?
- Greg – DSL is responsible for grazing on all state lands.
- Mike Z – pointed out several areas where the group may want to provide input. They are:
 - Page 16, #9 – appropriate to do something here?
 - Page 31 – Goal 3 deals a lot with what we are talking about here specifically on page 32. Suggest read all of Goal 3.
 - Page 35 – section on air pollution.
 - Page 36 – talks about prescribed fire.

Mike Z. suggested committee members read the Draft 2003 Forestry Program for Oregon, especially the sections mentioned above, and decide at the next meeting if the committee would like to make recommendation or comment. Open comment is through approximately April 12. The committee would have to come to agreement by then.

Mike Z. will put it on the agenda for the next meeting.

Rick Smedley – National Park Service – an ad hoc presentation on NPS fuels programs. The NPS will give a more detailed presentation at a future meeting to discuss fuels and air quality issues.

John Day burns about 1000 acres per year, mostly sagebrush. Crater Lake burns another 1000 acres per year – a mixture of burn types. Prior to the burning of Yellowstone, Crater Lake had been more active. You will see more burning but not a great deal more. Any pile burning will primarily be for hazardous fuel reduction, there won't be any harvesting/logging. Most of the Crater Lake burning is in the fall for piles with underburning through June

Discussion:

- Mike Z – If visibility is designed to protect the air shed, is this a conflict with burning?

- Gregory McClarren – Use the Oregon Smoke Management plan to see if can achieve the air quality goals. Eagle Cap has a burn plan that includes air quality. This approach to using the summer burn period often leads to the burn on best day approach.
- Jim Brown – Is it difficult to work around Crater Lake because of the terrain?
 - Rick – no it's not too steep
- There is a real concern to do things the right way.
- Erik – Are timber sales prohibited in the parks?
 - Rick – Each park has it's own legislation.
- Gregory – What relationship is there between ODF and the Parks System
 - Mike Z – Yes there is. They are part of the Smoke Management Plan.

8. DEQ Visibility Protection Plan

David Collier, DEQ
Brian Finneran/DEQ

Copies of the presentation were distributed by Brian Finneran, DEQ.

The Oregon Visibility Plan was adopted in 1986 and has periodic review. Most of the focus was on slash burning and field burning as it would impact visibility in national parks. Oregon has 12 class one areas designated by Congress and 11 Class 1 wilderness areas.

Discussion:

- The visibility committee has a strong interest in promoting the use of alternatives to burning.
- Jim Russell – what instructions are you going to give this group?
 - Brian - Haven't decided.
- Greg – There was a considerable amount of discussion of the possibility of a year round visibility program from the summer visibility plan now in effect.

Brian volunteered to give a presentation on the implementation of the Regional Haze rule at a later date. He added that the Regional Haze Rule is going to overcome our current processes. It is a year round program. Currently the Visibility Plan focuses only on Class 1 areas only.

The Regional Haze meeting is scheduled for Portland on February 26, 2003 with meetings yet unscheduled to be held around the state. The purpose of the meeting is to point out that the regional haze rule has two distinct paths including strategies for implementation. The first option puts you on track quickly. It looks only at the potential impacts Oregon has on the Grand Canyon in implementation of the first SIP. The second option would have the states working with their neighbors to develop their own SIP, which is basically starting from scratch.

Brian then presented information about Air Quality Advisory Committees that DEQ established in Southern Oregon. The Medford based Committee developed recommendations pertaining to prescribed fire and the smoke management plan. The recommendations will be sent by Brian to Mike Ziolk for distribution to this committee.

Discussion:

- Geoff Babb - Why are the Freemont and Winema NF voluntary participants in the smoke mgt program?
 - BRIAN - Most of the impact then was primarily on the 24 hour standard.
- Brian – The non attainment side looks ok for now but the regional haze rule will have more impact on prescribed burning. There is a concern about future increases in burning on federal land.

9. AQ Status/Planning Requirements

David Collier, DEQ

David Collier distributed a handout and presented a brief overview on Air Quality. PM10 has both a daily and an annual standard as does PM 2.5

- Regarding the Winema/Freemont Issue Collier said they are doing well so far on a voluntary basis. He believes that since it's not broken, there is no need to fix it. If it changes, that is the time to go back and reconsider.
- Collier would like to see this group take a fresh look at the agreements ODF has with commercial forest landowners for Smoke management.
- He is looking for improvements and changes to approaches to smoke management without losing what is in place.

