Smoke Management Review Committee Meeting
Oregon Department of forestry
December 5, 2002
Operations Conference Room - Salem, OR

In Attendance: Stephen Fitzgerald, Gary Stevens, Jim Russell, Brian Jennison, Stanley Benson, David Collier, Lee Miller, Sue Stewart, Peter Sikora, Gregory R. McClarren, Jim Brown, Kim Metzler, Steve Garza, Rex Storm, Mike Ziolko, and Cindy Smith (note taker).

Agenda Items:

1. **Introductions** Mike Ziolko, ODF
   Mike Ziolko, Oregon Department of Forestry, opened the meeting at 0930 with introductions of committee members and a brief welcome followed by Chairman Stephen Fitzgerald.

2. **Welcome** Bill Lafferty, ODF
   Bill Lafferty, Oregon Department of Forestry, Director, Protection from Fire, welcomed committee members.

3. **Administrative Info** Cindy Smith, ODF
   Following a short explanation of the reimbursement system used by Oregon Department of Forestry, committee members were provided packets for use in filing their travel expense claims and asked to submit them to Cindy Smith each time they have a travel expense claim.

4. **Committee Purpose** Mike Ziolko, ODF
   In a brief review of the Purpose of the Smoke Management Committee, Mike discussed the Charter and protocol to be used, Mike reminded committee members that changes to the Smoke Management Plan require the approval of the DEQ.
   (Refer to white handouts titled "Charter of the Smoke Management Review Committee")

5. **Program Overview** Mike Ziolko, ODF
   In a presentation of the evolution of the Smoke Management Program within Oregon Department of Forestry, Mike explained how the program came about as well as the Statutes, Administrative Rules and Directives that regulate it. Mike suggested that the committee might want to consider looking at the Directive because the PM10 attainment status of cities has changed and may affect the Special Protection Zones.
   (Refer to green handouts titled Oregon Smoke Management Program Overview")

6. **Program Accomplishments** Jim Trost/Nick Yonker, ODF Meteorologists
   Jim Trost presented a review of the most current and the past ten plus years burn data, followed by Nick Yonker's discussion of burn audits over the same time period. Jim pointed out that over the years there has been a significant

decrease in the number of acres burned with West Oregon and Coos being the "Big Burners" on the West Side. He also pointed out that pile burning is the predominant type of burning used on the East Side and is becoming so statewide.

Discussion:

- Nick explained that 1% of all units burned in Western Oregon are audited. Asked to explain how the audit process works, Nick said the District goes out to the burn and looks at it using a form for the audit with consumption being the area of concern. Pre-burn audits are conducted to ensure that fuel loading is being calculated consistent with Smoke Management Plan requirements. Nick added that Paul Bell was the first fuels specialist who acted as a liaison between meteorological staff and the field. The fuels position has been vacant for a number of years because of budget issues.
- Nick was also asked about “slopover” and he explained that care needs to be taken during the audit to ensure that the exact same area of the unit is considered for the report.
- Is there a chance to miss an intrusion? Nick replied that though it is possible, the public tends to let you know when smoke enters an area. A nephelometer would also catch it if there was one in the area since slash burn impacts have a fairly set pattern on the nephelometer. (LRAPA nephelometer readings are available on the internet and utilized as well.)

(Refer to the handout titled "Smoke Management Review Committee Burning Summary")

7. Working Lunch

8. Western Regional Air Partnership (WRAP) Mike Ziolko, ODF

Mike explained how WRAP, a regional organization (Western US) formed in 1997, was established to implement recommendations of the Grand Canyon Visibility Transport Commission. He further explained who participates and the scope of the program.

Discussion:

- Stephen Fitzgerald questioned the difference between Sections 308 and 309.
  - Section 308 applies nation wide, while Section 309 focuses on and includes provisions for fire including prescribed burns.
- Condition Classes – Discussion followed on the determination of fuel condition classes and the relationships to WRAP policy on natural fire. Jim Russell stated that the purpose of determining if the fire is natural or anthroprogenic under WRAP policy is for tracking purposes in determining if progress is being made towards the 2064 Goal and added that the determination is not what started the fire but what caused it to burn.

(Refer to yellow handouts titled "WRAP")

9. Oregon Air Quality David Collier, DEQ

- David Collier reported that Brian Finneran is working on the first phase and will soon have a fact sheet for the model 309 SIP for the regional haze.
- The State Visibility Plan is a second part of Air Quality.
    - Working at protecting air quality and visibility in the Columbia River Gorge.
    - It is undetermined how much prescribed burning is involved.
- DEQ is developing maintenance plans for PM10
    - PM 10 tends to be a wintertime problem in Oregon. The challenge for PM 2.5 will be more in meeting the annual standard than in meeting the 24-hour standard.
    - Most communities are running below the standard but we have to be prepared for what could occur, especially with projected increases in burning.
    - A year or more ago, there were groups in South Central Oregon and Central Oregon that sent some ideas to ODF – may be able to draw on some of their ideas for burning alternatives.

- Conflicting AQ committee recommendations on the need for a mandatory smoke management plan in Klamath Falls? The DEQ Southwest Oregon committee was divided and deferred to the K-Falls group and that group voted to keep it voluntary.

Discussion:

- Regarding PM10 attainment plans, Mike Ziolko asked if they already contain smoke management plans – will they have to be changed? Dave- only if they don't meet the standard set.

10. Urban Interface Initiatives Rick Gibson, ODF

In an overview of the Urban Interface Initiatives, Rick Gibson included the following comments:

- About 70% of the fires in Oregon are man caused and most of them involve landowner activity.
- Interface fires are common now – rarely have a pure forested fire - the Awbrey Hall Fire in 1990 that destroyed 23 homes was the straw that broke the camel's back and resulted in SB 360, which passed nearly unanimously.
- The act calls for 3 things
    1. Identification of the areas.
    2. Classification of the areas .
    3. Develop standards that the landowners will need to implement.
- No money was provided to implement this bill (SB360). Everything accomplished so far has been with National Fire Plan Grant Funds.
- A method to fine those who fail to comply, i.e. a fine was set up. Potentially they could become liable for a fine.

  - Jim Brown asked, "Is the fine a reimbursement?" to which Rick replied that it really is reimbursement for the cost fighting the fire.
- Implementation will begin in the most fire prone areas of the state – Deschutes and Jackson counties – but will eventually encompass the entire state.
- The Act applies only to ODF protected lands and only to owners of property where there is a specific concentration of structures.
- Burning is not the preferred method to dispose of fuels. For example Deschutes County waives the tipping fee at the county dump a couple times a year and they have a tremendous amount of material brought in.

Discussion:

- Sue Stewart asked - How do you determine the interface areas?
  - Rick explained that the counties will using tax lots maps, etc
- Jim Russell asked- If SB360 has 2 years to implement – should we give consideration thru this committee? Is it a catch 22? What does it mean in terms of the two year window ? Pete Sikora added – It's worth a discussion.

11. Forestry Program for Oregon (FPFO) Dave Morman, ODF

- FPFO is revised about every 8 years.
  - Looking at all of Oregon's forestlands. Even if the Board of Forestry doesn't have control of the federal lands they would have a role in at least advising the federal agency.
- One new concept is recognizing that not all forests should be managed the same. (See page 3 of handout – "Board of Forestry Mission Statement")
- The Board of Forestry has identified key priorities such as promoting active fuel and vegetation management along with aggressive wildfire suppression as key tools to manage forest health - see page 5-6, especially item 9
- What is our role in fire protection – ODF has a different goal in fire protection that does the federal government.
- www.oregonforestry.org is web site for the BoF

Dave concluded his discussion by adding that he would be pleased to come back at any future meetings. Dave suggested that the committee may want to provide comments to the Board regarding the FPFO draft.

Comments:

- Jim Russell said it would be an uphill battle for the state to manage federal land.
- Sue Stewart said life-resources-property is the state order of priority while life – property - resources is the federal order of priority
- Want the Board of Forestry to be saying the right thing – our actions need to reflect the direction of this agency.

- The issue of protecting a landowner's home vs. fighting the fire is a real political issue.
- Jim Brown – SB 360 may help resolve the issue.
- Sue Stewart – Is there a similar group focusing on rangelands? At least part of Oregon is not forest.
  - Dave M. – That is Dept of Ag jurisdiction – certainly there are things that could be done. Don't know how far it has advanced.
- Many folks in Oregon would rally around the sustainability concept.
- Mike Z – Are there are specific comments in this document this committee should focus on?
  - Dave pointed to Goal 3, promoting development of a coordinated, collaborative statewide Oregon biological diversity policy and plan assessing all ownership and land uses with specific targets and actions, and Goal 5, Supporting and contributing to continuing statewide efforts under the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds to protect and restore Oregon's native fish populations and water quality, while sustaining a healthy economy.

12. Public Comments

Geri Cholewinski, resident of Idanha, OR, came forward to express her concerns over the air quality issues in her community. As the parent of a 4-year-old, Ms. Cholewinski was dismayed that she found it necessary to keep her son inside most of the time.

"There are burns everyday." Ms. Cholewinski claimed and went on to describe three burns she had documented. "About a year ago, they cleared three acres and the fire burned for 6 weeks, the second one was near the PPO and it burned for three weeks and we couldn't go outside. The third one was at the old veneer – it stunk and burned 3-4 weeks. There is another one still burning and recently you could not breath because of it."

Ms. Cholewinski would like to see permits required and suggested that they (permit holders) should have to call a smoke management number to make sure it's ok to burn.

"I'd like just to see it (burning)more managed. It seems like they're always burning something. I'm a mother and I want my little boy to have good air to breath. It's worse up there than here (Salem). I will continue to come to these meetings. No one in my area seems to care what they burn. I don't know what's wrong. ODF does a good job, I feel sorry for the loggers but they are making money …" added Ms. Cholewinski. "I just want clean air up the canyon. – I have a purpose and this is to have clean air."

Mike Ziolko asked Ms. Cholewinski to supply the dates of those burns and reminded her that this committee has no control over trash and wood stove burning.

Ms. Cholewinski agreed to send the requested material. (See attached letter dated December 17, 2002)

13. **Committee Comments / Issues**

A round table discussion of issues that the committee may want to address included the following items. The issues were not prioritized or discussed in detail by the committee at this meeting.

1) Slash burns are initiated and continue to smolder and burn beyond acceptable limits.
2) Emphasis on alternatives to burning.
3) Essential to have adequate funds.
   - Legislative proposal to increase fees?
4) Conflict between burning on hillside and on valley floor.
5) Need for statewide emissions tracking (Permits)
6) Define "monitoring"
   - Ambient air
   - Permit
7) Would like to see a presentation from DEQ and Ag re: burning.
8) Would like to see a presentation by USFS/BLM re: NFP/Fuels treatment plans.
9) Definition of forest health and fee structure, particularly with federal forests (lump sum rather than per acre fee?)
10) Low intensity burns and local smoke.
11) Review smoke management strategies re: forecasting, instructions.
12) Interface with regional organizations/other states.
13) Availability of burning opportunities and flexibility.
14) How to dispose of fuels in the urban interface areas?
    - Outreach efforts
    - Funding
    - NFP Grants?
15) Review Southwest/South central recommendations from DEQ groups
16) Would like to see a presentation form DEQ
    - Maintenance Plans
    - NAA status
    - Prevention of future problems
17) Would like to see a presentation from WRAP forum on non-burning alternatives
18) Types of Smoke columns
    - How far does smoke go?
    - What happens to the smoke?
19) Would like to see a presentation on Blue Sky /RAINS

20) Look at smoke drift from underburning.
21) More flexibility in smoke management system.
22) Dirty Piles – Forest Practices (construction)
23) Track Emissions - from rangeland and other burning
    - Statewide restrictions?
24) Standardize fees, permit tracking (California?)
25) Outreach regarding Smoke Management Plan (SMP) or changes in SMP.
26) Definition of intrusion VS complaint.
27) Review definition of designated area and smoke sensitive area
28) Paperwork holding up burning.
29) More aggressive use of mop up (mandatory) – smoldering produces smoke that stays on the ground.
30) Look at the politics of smoke in general – is there a smoke number for the public to call – people don't know where to call and forestry gets the rap for it. Coordinated (CENTRAL) call center?
31) The Process – logical way for the committee to deal with the issues. – an overall agenda. What to handle first? Work with department to identify.
32) Prioritize work.
33) Understand our charter.
34) Review Appendix 3 and update especially for emissions.
35) Bring forward visibility plan recommendations.

It was suggested that If any of the above issues are not within the mission of this committee, approval would be needed to hand it over to the appropriate agency

14. Future Meetings

Meetings were scheduled for January through June 2003 as follows:

JAN 16, 2003
FEB 20, 2003
MAR 20, 2003
APR 17, 2003
MAY 15, 2003
JUN 19, 2003

All meetings are scheduled to be held in the Operations Conference Room, Oregon Department of Forestry, Salem, OR.

Identification of proxies for committee members is due to Mike Ziolko by January 1, 2003. All committee members are expected to attend meetings or ensure that a proxy attends for them. There will be only one proxy for each committee member. The committee member and his/her proxy are expected to communicate with each other on issues and forward information about committee actions to each other.

It was mentioned that Dept of Ag be included on this committee – Mike said the committee is as large as the agency would like, but they are welcome to attend. All meetings are public.

15. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:30

The following is a typed copy of the letter received from Geri Cholewinski following the Smoke Management Review Committee meeting. The original is filed at Oregon Department of Forestry, Salem, OR.

Oregon Department of Forestry
Attn: Cindy Smith
2600 State Street
Salem, OR 97310

Dear Cindy, *12-17-02*

As requested, here are the dates of the burns I mentioned at the Smoke Management Meeting held on 12-5-02.

Within or near the City of Idanha;

10-2001 thru 11-2001	*Across bridge – east end of Idanha. Burned 4 to 6 weeks, private land. Cleared for development.*
6-17-01 thru 6-21-02	*Behind Post Office. Private land – had permit.*
10-12-02 thru 11-20-02	*Old Green Veneer Mill. Very bad smell – toxic? Unknown what was burned. Have video.*
10-2002 thru 11-2002	*South side of Idanha. Logging slash burn – burned approx. one month.*
11-14-02 thru 11-25-02	*North side if highway. Private land. Clearing for development. Have video.*

I will be at the next meeting provided I can fin someone to watch my son. He is 4 years old and I don't think he'd sit still.

What I would like to see the Smoke Management Team implement is:

a. *Permits required when burning in populated areas.*
b. *Public notification when burning in populated areas.*
c. *Written description of what will be burned and for how long.*
d. *Consideration of what other air pollutants are in the area. i.e. factories, mills, etc. before the permit is issued.*

As I mentioned in my presentation at the Smoke Management meeting, garbage burning, yard debris burning and uncertified wood stoves smoke up the area all the time. There is also the Torman Plant in Idanha. All summer and into the fall they spewed sawdust all over the area. Terry Obteshka from DEQ was instrumental in getting the Torman Plant hopper fixed so that it didn't coat the area in sawdust.

I moved to the mountains for clean air – what a joke, the air here is horrible, much worse than Salem, Portland. I don't want this area to become like the Great Smokey Mountains where the air is worse than L.A.
Thank you for taking Public Input. I hope to see policy changes to protect the air we breath and need.

Geri Cholewinski
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PO Box 216
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