

Forestland Classification Review Committee  
Oregon Department of Forestry  
2600 State St., Bldg. C, Salem, Oregon  
February 6, 2007  
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

**Present**

Paul Nys, landowner  
Dan Ross, Association of County Assessors  
Alan Nichols, Homeowner Association President  
Mark Copeland, landowner  
Greg Davis, deputy State Fire Marshal  
Mike Dykzeul, Oregon Forest Industry Council  
Jim Stearns, Hermiston Fire Chief  
Lee Fledderjohan, Collins Company  
Barte Starker, Starker Forests  
Milt Moran, Cascade Timber  
Mary Ellen Holly, Keep Oregon Green  
Nancy Orr, Office of State Fire Marshal  
Scot Langton, Deschutes County Assessor  
Dan Fink, Longview Fibre Company, tree farm manager  
Melvin Thornton, Douglas Forest Protective Association  
Paul Bell, Assistant State Forester, Oregon Department of Forestry  
Bill Lafferty, Protection Program Director, Oregon Department of Forestry  
Dan Shults, Southern Oregon Area Director, Oregon Department of Forestry  
Travis Medema, Central Oregon District Forester, Oregon Department of Forestry  
John Buckman, Northeast Oregon District Forester, Oregon Department of Forestry  
Mike Totey, Assistant District Forester, Oregon Department of Forestry  
George Ponte, Oregon Department of Forestry  
Teresa Vonn, Oregon Department of Forestry  
Greg Alexander, Oregon Department of Forestry  
Rod Nichols, Oregon Department of Forestry

Paul Bell brought the meeting to order at 9 a.m. and introductions were made. He expressed gratitude on behalf of the department for each person participating on this committee. He delivered the committee's charge: to provide a comprehensive review of Oregon's forestland classification system. Oregon's current system consists of statutes, rules and policies that have not been comprehensively reviewed since their inception more than 40 years ago.

## **Background and Overview**

During the 2004 Fire Program review, it was determined that forestland classification needed to be reviewed for these reasons:

- Not clear at what density of structures, and at what level of protection, the Department of Forestry no longer has a role in providing wildland fire protection.
- Classification system has evolved over time in a decentralized way and many inconsistencies exist around the state (14 fire protection districts).
- Lack of criteria for determining where and to what extent, wildland adjacent to forestland should be protected by the department.
- Statutes are disorganized.

Travis Medema led a scoping effort with field staff to identify issues and possible solutions regarding land classification across the different landscapes. A complete review of the Oregon Statutes and Administrative Rules was also conducted prior to formation of this committee.

A general overview of the forestland classification issues was provided to the committee by Dan Shults and Travis Medema through a PowerPoint presentation. Committee members asked clarifying questions throughout the presentation.

The committee is charged with conducting a comprehensive review of the statutes that govern forestland classification in Oregon. This process should be completed by January 2008. With the large amount of work to be done, it will be necessary to identify subcommittees to handle the various tasks.

## **Statute and Rule Review**

Review of Oregon Revised Statutes and Oregon Administrative Rules pertaining to the department (forestland and the urban interface), counties, and rural fire districts.

Applicable ORS 476 State Fire Marshal and Counties  
476.280, 476.310, 476.320 and 476.330.

Applicable ORS – Chapter 477

- 477.001 Definitions
- 477.005 Policy
- 477.015 Definitions
- 477.017 Policy and Purpose
- 477.023 Integration of Fire Protection with Existing Laws
- 477.025 Classification for Different Protection Problems
- 477.027 Rules for Classification of Lands
- 477.029 Local Land Classification Committee Rules and Members
- 477.052 Hearings on Proposed Classifications
- 477.054 Appeal Process
- 477.057 State Forester to Classify
- 477.205 Definitions
- 477.220 Land not Provided Protection
- 477.225 Establishment of Districts
- 477.315-.320 Rangeland Associations

Applicable ORS 478 – relating to rural fire districts

- 478.010
- 478.120
- 478.130
- 478.140
- 478.150
- 478.665

The Forestland-urban interface situation will continue to grow, and structures, property and natural resources will be subject to increased risks of catastrophic damage by wildfire. The purpose is to provide a fully coordinated forestland-urban interface fire protection system in Oregon.

Nancy Orr, State Fire Marshal, inquired if there was a definition of fire protection in the statutes that will be reviewed. If not, there is an opportunity to focus on protection and how to build protection into the statutes. Counties are beginning to develop ordinances that focus on prevention.

Mary Ellen Holly, Keep Oregon Green, reported that she is holding a meeting in two weeks to discuss the role of education in the wildland-urban interface. She offered to report back to the committee and determine options for the respective committees to work together to avoid overlap, especially in education and outreach.

## **Land Classification**

There are two types of classification systems. This committee will look at combining them.

Objective: Review Oregon's forestland classification system and recommend revisions and improvements where needed.

The role of the steering committee will be to:

- Provide oversight and direction to subcommittees
- Ensure consistency
- Identify/resolve overlap issues
- Assure deliverables are accomplished in the established timeline
- Coordinate development of the final report

The steering committee determined that four subcommittees are needed to handle the various tasks that need to be completed by January 2008. Each subcommittee will have appointed co-chairs to coordinate and lead its work.

Each subcommittee has the same assignment:

- Form subcommittee and identify co-chairs
- Better define the issues
- Identify possible additional issues
- Develop a work plan

The role of the subcommittees will be to:

- Analyze/investigate issues
- Develop recommendations
- Report to steering committee on progress
  - Raise policy questions
  - Do “pick and shovel work”

The subcommittees include:

### **Wildland-Urban Interface Subcommittee**

- Wildfire protection role in the urban interface
- Consistency/criteria for assessing forestland in the wildland-urban interface
- Wildland-urban interface classification

<b>Wildland Urban Interface</b>		
Co-chair	Melvin Thornton	DFPA
Co-chair	Jim Stearns	Hermiston Fire Chief
	Mary Ellen Holly	KOG
	Greg Alexander	ODF
	Alan Nichols	
	Mark Copeland	
	Greg Davis	Deputy State Fire Marshal

**Non-Forest Cover Lands Subcommittee**

- Consistency/criteria for providing protection
- Consistency/ criteria for classification
- Lands adjacent to the district
- ODOT and railroad rights of way

<b>Non Forest Sub Committee</b>		
Co-chair	George Ponte	ODF
Co-chair	Lee Fledderjohann	
	Milt Moran	Cascade Timber Consulting

**District/County Forestland Classification and Assessment Subcommittee**

- Consistent process
- Minimize district differences
- Dual assessment consistency (structural exemptions)
- Central archiving

<b>ODF/ Assessor</b>		
Co-chair	Mike Totey	ODF
Co-chair	Mike Dykzeul	OFIC
	Scot Langton	
	Gil Riddell	AOC
	Paul Zolezzi	

**Statute Reorganization Subcommittee**

- Re-organization/consolidate
- Legislative direction

<b>Statute Reorganization</b>		
Co-chair	Rick Gibson	ODF
Co-chair	to be determined	
	Teri Glocar	OSFM

**Tools Group Subcommittee – lead has not been determined**

- Develop tools for implementation.

This subcommittee will be developed later in the process.

**Timeline**

The committee agreed to hold one meeting a month for the full committee, and the subcommittees may meet more regularly or less, depending on need.

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