

Oregon Roundtable on Sustainable Forests Meeting Summary

9:00 to 3:30p.m. May 12, 2010
World Forestry Center - David Douglas Room
Portland, OR

Introductions and Agenda

Brief introductions and introductory comments were made. Attachment A provides the participant list.

April 22 Board of Forestry Discussion and Actions

David Morman reported on the Board of Forestry discussion at its April 22 meeting that resulted in endorsement of the Oregon Roundtable on Sustainable Forests Charter and the Board Chair's signing of the Roundtable Declaration of Cooperation. Audio of the Board of Forestry discussion can be accessed at:

http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/BOARD/BOF_042210_Meeting.shtml (Agenda Item 6).

Roundtable Organization, Governance, and Decision-making Guidelines

The following Roundtable participants have agreed to serve on the Leadership Group for the Oregon Roundtable on Sustainable Forests under the endorsed charter: Jennifer Allen, Paul Barnum, Janet McLennan, Craig Patterson, John Poppino, Keith Reynolds, and Rex Storm. Other participants are welcome to join the Leadership Group. The Leadership Group will meet via conference call soon after the meeting to plan the next steps for the Roundtable.

The role of the Roundtable in relation to the Board of Forestry and thoughts on how to engage a diverse array of participants were topics of discussion.

Meeting summaries for the Roundtable will strive to generally characterize the meeting discussion but will not document every comment made. Presentation materials and web links to important documents can be posted on the ODF website and web links can be included in meeting summaries.

Opportunities to make greater use of social networking tools to communicate and share Roundtable information were discussed. Augmenting the ODF website with other networking tools to promote ongoing discussion of issues should be explored and considered for future use.

Copies of the Department of Forestry's Working Guidelines were distributed and suggested as a starting point for Roundtable operating procedures. No further action was taken on governance and decision-making guidelines, but it was recognized that future issues the Roundtable works on may necessitate revisiting and refining these processes.

Roundtable Process to Evaluate the Oregon Indicators of Sustainable Forest Management Information and Staff Conclusions

The request from the Board of Forestry to the Roundtable is to provide advice to the Board on implementation and data evaluation for the 19 indicators. Sideboards for this project include:

- The Board intent statement on the use of indicators should be adhered to
- The existing set of indicators will remained fixed until after the Board adopts the 2011 *Forestry Program for Oregon*
- Existing desired trend statements and (where established) indicator targets are fixed until after the Board adopts the 2011 *Forestry Program for Oregon*
- The technical indicator report approved the Board in 2007 remains the foundation for indicator implementation
- The policy implications of the indicator results is outside the scope of the Roundtable's current assignment but will be central to the public comment process later in 2010 for the 2011 *Forestry Program for Oregon*

Suggested questions for the Roundtable to answer for each indicator are:

1. Is the purpose and intent for the indicator clear?
2. Is the protocol for indicator data collection clear and technically sound?
3. Are indicator data being reported at the appropriate spatial and temporal scales?
4. Has the Department appropriately assessed the quality of the indicator information?
5. Has the department appropriately assessed the conditions measured by the indicator?
6. Has the department appropriately assessed the current trend measured by the indicator, when compared to the Desired Trend Statement?
7. What improvements would you like to see in future reporting for the indicator?

Future Roundtable work may examine how the indicators are integrated and influence each other and overall sustainability outcomes.

Indicator background information and reports can be accessed via:

<http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/indicators/index.shtml>

Note: Staff Interpretation with Leadership Group Input of the May 12 Indicator Discussion Points and Conclusions

After the May 12 meeting, staff and the Leadership Group reviewed the discussion points raised during the meeting and staff later assigned them to the seven questions that the group has been asked to respond to for the Board of Forestry. This was done to assist the Roundtable members in formulating draft responses to the seven questions. Everyone may not agree with the assignments and the Roundtable participants are encouraged to make alternative assignments or use the comments as makes sense to them as they consider responses to the seven questions. A follow-up survey will be distributed to all May 12 meeting participants asking them to respond to the seven questions. These additional responses will be compiled by staff and reviewed by the Roundtable at the next meeting to be held on July 21, 2010. A short summary report for each indicator will be generated to summarize the Roundtable responses to the seven questions and list any additional observations, recommendations, or conclusions that the Roundtable chooses to offer.

It is anticipated that the Roundtable will proceed with discussions on all the indicators and will then discuss the body of indicators as a whole – looking for common themes and synthesizing conclusions about the indicators project.

*Listed below is the staff's best determination as to how to assign the comments from the May 12 meeting to the seven questions for the two indicators that were discussed. Statements in **Bold** type are points of emphasis and possibly points of agreement that appeared to emerge during the meeting. The survey to the Roundtable participants who attended the meeting will ask for their response to each of the seven questions and whether or not they agree/disagree each of the statements in bold type.*

Presentation and Discussion

Indicator C.a.: Area of non-federal forestland and development trends

Gary Lettman (ODF) presented the indicator report. The presentation will be posted on the Roundtable website, <http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/indicators/roundtable.shtml>.

During the group discussion, the participants asked clarifying questions about the indicator, discussed its strengths and weaknesses, and generated ideas for possible improvements.

There was insufficient time to specifically discuss the seven questions that the Roundtable was asked to respond to for each indicator. It was agreed that the Leadership Group would take the information from the meeting and develop responses to the seven questions at a later date.

Is the purpose and intent for the indicator clear?

- Forests are complex ecosystems. Clearcuts are more like agricultural land. Why are they still considered still forest use? (See Bancroft in: <http://www.safnet.org/fp/documents/PerspectivesOnAmericasForests.pdf>)
- There is some confusion because this indicator is looking at forest use and not forest cover. Indicator E.a.: *Composition, diversity, and structure of forest vegetation* will complement Indicator C.a. by providing additional information about changes in the composition, diversity, and structure of forest vegetation.
- The Montreal Process indicators track the conversion of native forests to plantations. With the exception of hybrid poplar plantations, Oregon planted forests are typically native tree species rather than exotics and often it is difficult to distinguish planted and naturally regenerated trees in established new forest stands.

Is the protocol for indicator data collection clear and technically sound?

- The same indicator protocol is used in Washington.

Are indicator data being reported at the appropriate spatial and temporal scales?

- How can sub-state information for this indicator be conveyed to counties and communities? An ftp site is already available on request. Final products can be provided to local governments.

Has the Department appropriately assessed the quality of the indicator information?

No specific group comments

Has the department appropriately assessed the conditions measured by the indicator?

- Are we really being sustainable if we are just transferring development and forest loss into Washington?

Has the department appropriately assessed the current trend measured by the indicator, when compared to the Desired Trend Statement?

- **Consider changing the trend rating for Indicator C.a. from “uncertain” to “improving, but” based on data since land use planning has been in effect and since the original Progress Board Benchmark was exceeded. Accompanying text can speak to future uncertainties.**
- **The Board target of no net loss of wildland forest between 2009 and 2020 may be too ambitious and unrealistic.**
- Do private property rights get considered?
- **Look at mean structure count trends on wildland forest so we will know if we are getting closer to five per square mile.**
- We need to remember the future development projection ns are based on models-- different assumptions would lead to different model outcomes.

What improvements would you like to see in future reporting for the indicator?

- **All forest cover is not equal. If possible, development trends should be tracked by forest cover type.**
- **If possible, incorporate correlations are needed between forestland conversion and other important resources such as, water quality, biological diversity, and economic impacts.**
- What do we know about forest cover 100 years ago? What was already lost by 1974? (For information about Oregon's west side forests, see the OFRI study at: http://www.oregonforests.org/assets/uploads/What_do_western.pdf)
- Look at activities that influence this indicator trend.
- We should look at each indicator in an environmental, economic, and social sustainability context.
- Consider zoning trends as another metric for the indicator.
- **We need to do more to get forestland conversion data out into public discussion about land use.**
- Tie indicator projections to the Willamette Basin Rivers and Streams Assessment Study (<http://www.deq.state.or.us/lab/wqm/assessment.htm>).
- The implications of ownership conversion to timber investment management organizations and real estate investment trusts needs to be studied.
- How would the indicator results differ if federal forest contributions were different? There is additional pressure on private forests to provide a variety of benefits due to a lack of federal forest contributions.
- Look at economic constraints--how does the recession affect development trends?
- Site productivity—is preserving higher productivity sites a priority?
- Transferable development rights will play a role in future development trends.

Presentation and Discussion

Indicator D.a.: *Water Quality in forest streams*

Aaron Borisenko (DEQ) presented the indicator report. The presentation will be posted on the Roundtable website, <http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/indicators/roundtable.shtml>.

During the group discussion, the participants asked clarifying questions about the indicator, discussed its strengths and weaknesses, and generated ideas for possible improvements.

There was insufficient time to specifically discuss the seven questions that the Roundtable was asked to respond to for each indicator. It was agreed that the Leadership Group would take the information from the meeting and develop responses to the seven questions at a later date.

Is the purpose and intent for the indicator clear?

No specific group comments

Is the protocol for indicator data collection clear and technically sound?

- There are no physical habitat metrics in Indicator D.a. They can be indirectly addressed by Indicator D.b.: *Biological integrity of forest streams*.

Are indicator data being reported at the appropriate spatial and temporal scales?

No specific group comments

Has the Department appropriately assessed the quality of the indicator information?

- Summer sampling period is better for some water quality parameters than others.
- **Funding limitations have prevented a desired level of probabilistic sampling for this indicator.** The indicator uses the best data available, but there are concerns about the adequacy of the number of sample sites and their distribution and the ability to assess trends due to funding losses for future data gathering. The staff determination that data are adequate seems questionable. (Note that staff has already reported information quality as “partial,” not “adequate.”)

Has the department appropriately assessed the conditions measured by the indicator?

- One-time sampling limits our capability to tell the story about a specific site. But 400 samples can tell story about the landscape.

Has the department appropriately assessed the current trend measured by the indicator, when compared to the Desired Trend Statement?

- **The Oregon Progress Board target of 45 percent of monitored stream sites with water quality in GOOD OR EXCELLENT condition encompasses all land uses – the indicator report should more clearly describe this fact.**
- If applied solely to forestland – the target would seem too low. This raises the question—should water quality expectations for forestlands be higher than for other land uses?
- Alternatively, are forestlands are unfairly held to a higher standard?.
- All Oregon landowners should be required to meet land-use specific and land-use appropriate water quality standards.

What improvements would you like to see in future reporting for the indicator?

- **Need common data standards and methodologies across agencies and land uses for water quality monitoring.**
- Measures that evaluate riparian zones are very important. Encouraging good management practices helps alleviate problems – even if the funding to do monitoring is not available.
- Forest pesticides are applied on a very small proportion of the forest landscape and are a very small proportion of the total amount of pesticides applied in

Oregon.

- Distinguish between legacy and current practices. Some toxics like DDT residues are legacy effects and background toxics like mercury appear in the soil from air pollution from outside Oregon. The best control for these is keeping soil out of streams.
- There is interest in also looking at toxic chemicals and water quality. However, tracking sediment movement in water can be a surrogate for tracking toxics. Toxics are likely better addressed through specific monitoring work tailored to measure them rather than through the existing water quality index approach. DEQ has other approaches that specifically look at toxics.
- **More and reliable funding is needed for water quality monitoring.**
 - **We have ten-years of data but no guaranteed future funding for this monitoring work. Expect the information quality for this indicator to be inadequate in the future. We need to look for other funding sources as well as partnerships with other agencies, municipalities, and volunteer organizations.**
 - **Good progress has been made in the past 10 years. The achievements through the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds are examples. We should ask policy makers and funders to fund/support continued progress. Despite the expectation that funding will be hard to find, we should ask for what is needed to provide information at desired levels of precision.**
- **Interpreting index information by combining land use information and other knowledge about specific watersheds would help us understand possible causal relationships and identify remedies. Suggestion - Look at the Oregon Watershed Research Cooperative (<http://watershedsresearch.org/>), the Willamette Basin Rivers and Streams Assessment Study (<http://www.deq.state.or.us/lab/wqm/assessment.htm>), and the Department of Forestry's Riparian Function and Stream Temperature (RipStream) Project (http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/BOARD/docs/September_2009/5_Att_1.pdf) to relate indicator results to current forest practices.**
- Consider further tailoring the indicator for forestlands—develop a “forestlands water quality index”.
- Strategize on what is sufficient to track trends.

Indicators Review– Key Questions Discussion/Implications for Roundtable Process

After hearing the first indicator reports and experiencing the initial indicator discussions by the Roundtable, the participants brought forward the following ideas for continuing

the indicator discussion:

- Good discussion today – enjoyed hearing the different points of view. After going through each of the specific indicators a “synthesis” discussion will be necessary.
- Continue the discussion on indicators C (a) and D (a) with the Leadership Group. Today’s discussion did not get down to specifics on condition, trend, and information quality.
- If desired, conversation on these two indicators can continue at the next meeting
- Allow opportunity for further online comments and dialogue.
- The handouts and web links were useful. Provide similar handouts for other indicators.
- As more indicators are discussed the big picture will begin to take shape. Relationships among indicators will emerge. The Roundtable will need to have a comprehensive and probably longer discussion about sustainability once all the indicators have been evaluated. Leading and trailing indicators analysis is needed.
- There is unease with reported trend information. Trends are uncertain for 13 of 14 of the reported indicators. This is not very useful information for decision-makers. Need to sharpen the discussion on trends. What are the needed confidence limits to determine trends? Distinguish between mixed trends due to data versus mixed trends due to possible future policies. Exploring “what ifs” with different assumptions/approaches may help decision-makers use the data.
- Recommendations on further indicator actions are needed to address uncertainties.
- The current report language may be too technical – we need a clearer statement of what we know.
- We must learn from the past. Over the last many years, we have identified many “restoration needs” – what approaches led to the need for restoration? Look into the past to evaluate current conditions and trends. Put restoration costs on the front of analyses and not on the back end.
- The discussions today were very good. Continue to get the right people in the room for future indicator discussions.
- Enhance information about related initiatives on the indicator website.
- The seven questions were useful.

Methods for Ongoing Communications and Outreach to Roundtable Participants

Participants proposed the following ideas for broadening participation in and support for the Roundtable process:

- Consider having a Roundtable meeting every two months with three indicators discussed per meeting. Prepare a schedule for discussing all the remaining indicators. Advertise in advance so the right people can attend.
- Consider aligning meetings with other events to boost participation.
- Outreach is needed to Oregon tribes.
- The Nature Conservancy would be a good addition to the Roundtable.
- At future meetings create an opportunity for first-timers to receive a short pre-meeting orientation from a couple of Leadership Group members or other

volunteers.

- There seems to be evidence of a current lack of Executive and Legislative Branch support for Department of Forestry funding and broader natural resources monitoring – funding and general support for both is important.
- Need to get urban perspectives involved.
- It is important that the USFS participate in this process. Continue to ask the agency to submit a declaration of support and to encourage increased participation in meetings.

Reports From Roundtable Participants - Recent Sustainable Forestry Developments

- The Department of Forestry has published an online Oregon Forest Atlas: http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/RESOURCE_PLANNING/forestatlas.shtml
- The Department of Forestry will be submitting Oregon's Statewide Forest Assessment and Resource Strategy to the US Forest Service in June, as required by the 2008 Farm Bill.
- The public review draft of the 2011 *Forestry Program for Oregon* should be available in the fall of 2010.
- The Department of Forestry is working with the PNW Research Station on scheduling forums for Research Station staffs and other interested parties on our collaborative work sustainable forestry topics. A June 7 meeting is planned for La Grande.
- David Morman has been invited to speak at the 2010 Society of American Foresters National Convention about Oregon's sustainable forestry technical and policy frameworks.
- OSU is coordinating with other academic institutions on a distance learning consortium and is providing sustainable forest management degree programs.
- The Research Station has developed "wall to wall" current condition fire danger potential maps at the approximately 20,000 acre watershed scale.
- The Oregon Forest Resources Institute has published a new report on federal forestland in Oregon.
- The Oregon Forest Resources Institute and the Department of Forestry are cooperating on values and beliefs polling and focus groups regarding Oregon forestry issues. Results will be available this summer.
- Susan Morre is working with diverse focus groups to further study the Montreal Process indicator documenting the importance of forests to people.
- The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board is working to produce a ten-year assessment of accomplishments resulting from OWEB investments. A separate study on the economic benefits of restoration efforts is available.
- PSU is interested in engaging with the Roundtable on Sustainable Forests on a variety of fronts -- multiple disciplines, research questions, student engagement outreach to new stakeholders, meeting hosting.

Attachment A - Participants

Jennifer Allen, PSU Hatfield School of Government
Paul Barnum, Oregon Forest Resources Institute
Aaron Borisenko, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
Eric Crum, PSU Hatfield School of Government
Katherine Daniels, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development
Lee Folliard, USDI Bureau of Land Management
Shannon Hubler, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
Katherine Jesch, Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns
Jim Just, 1000 Friends of Oregon
Teresa Kubo, US Environmental Protection Agency
Jose Linares, USDA Forest Service, Region 6
Janet McLennan
Greg Miller, Weyerhaeuser Co.
Susan Morre, OSU College of Forestry
Michael Morrissey, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development
Don Nearhood
Craig Patterson
John Poppino
Keith Reynolds, PNW Research Station
Dillon Sanders, Inbound, LLC
Robert Scheller, PSU
Josh Seeds, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
Greg Siegletz, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
Gary Springer, Starker Forests
Rex Storm, Associated Oregon Loggers

Oregon Department of Forestry Staff: David Morman, Gary Lettman, Cathy Clem

Mediator: Mike Schnee