

## State Forests Program Operational Policy

<b>Annual Operations Planning Policies</b>	Number: 3.4.0
	Effective Date: August 1, 2007
	Revision: 1.1
Authorizing Signature:	Nancy Hirsch, Program Director
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### 3.4.1.0 Purpose

This policy describes how the State Forests Program will develop District-specific annual operations plans (AOPs), and modify those AOPs. AOPs are planning tools for the State Forests Program and are linked to policy documents and revenue projections. Operations described in the AOPs are an attempt to achieve greatest permanent value, balancing the economic, social, and environmental interests on Oregon state forestlands. State Forests Program fiscal budgets are expected to be a direct reflection of the work that is described in AOPs.

### 3.4.2.0 Goals

The State Forests Program's goals for applying the policies that follow are to:

- 2.1 Clearly describe planned, major forest operations;
- 2.2 Communicate how these planned operations will contribute to the accomplishment of Forest Management Plan (FMP) goals and objectives and/or Implementation Plan (IP) objectives.

### 3.4.3.0 Policy Statements

It is the policy of the State Forests Program to conduct the multi-year AOP development process that concludes June 30 of each fiscal year by applying the following policies and standards:

#### ***Pre-planning for AOPs***

- 3.1 Use a collaborative approach that is inclusive of district staff, and Area and Salem resource specialists throughout the AOP development process, which includes but is not limited to:
  - 3.1.1 Conducting field reviews.
  - 3.1.2 Discussing landscape design and the achievement of desired future conditions.
  - 3.1.3 Coordinating T&E species survey requirements.
  - 3.1.4 Determining implementation and effectiveness monitoring projects.
  - 3.1.5 Reviewing operation areas for high landslide hazards.
  - 3.1.6 Coordinating Stand Level Inventory activities.
- 3.2 Ensure the AOPs are consistent with planning goals and objectives.
- 3.3 Establish *Annual Harvest Objectives* and fiscal budget investment levels for silvicultural- and recreation-related activities by July 1 of the fiscal year when AOP planning occurs.
- 3.4 Prepare an AOP in accordance with program operational policies and the annual program director guidance when proposing a major forest operation on the district.
- 3.5 Distribute guidance on the development of AOPs by July 1 of the fiscal year when AOP planning occurs.

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### ***Pre-planning for AOPs continued***

- 3.6 Conduct an annual training forum regarding: AOP planning and associated guidance; the annual Program Director guidance; FMP goals, objectives and strategies; and other identified needs.

### ***Developing Preliminary Annual Operations Plans***

- 3.7 Select and develop an adequate number of operations to meet annual district harvest objectives, and sufficient alternates in the event a planned operation is withdrawn due to an unforeseen circumstance.
- 3.8 Prepare a biological assessment for operations proposed in northern spotted owl circles and marbled murrelet management areas, and other operations as appropriate.
- 3.9 Prepare and distribute for comment “preliminary” pre-operation reports and those subsections of the summary document that provide context (e.g. overviews of timber harvest operations, recreation management, young stand management, etc.), prior to an annual meeting.
- 3.10 Submit policy-related comments on “preliminary” pre-operation reports to the districts in a written format.
- 3.11 Review operations that have policy-related concerns with the District Forester, Assistant District Forester, the Operations Coordinator and the Program and Area Directors.
- 3.12 Conduct an annual meeting between October and December 15 of the fiscal year when AOP planning occurs.
- 3.13 Document comments received at annual meetings, ensuring operations that require specific follow up with resource specialists are noted, and respond back to meeting attendees on these comments.

### ***Conducting Public Involvement for DRAFT AOPs***

- 3.14 Distribute the revised (“draft”) AOP document by January 15 for review, and provide comments to districts by January 31.
- 3.15 Prepare and submit a “final” draft AOP to the Operations Coordinator two weeks prior to the public comment period.
- 3.16 Conduct a 45-day public comment period, during which comments will be accepted in a written format via hand or postal delivery, fax, and/or email.
- 3.17 Ensure a 60-day information-sharing period with the USFWS per the *Agreement for the Conservation of Northern Spotted Owls*, and coordinate a written response to the USFWS comments.

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### ***Continued – Conducting Public Involvement for DRAFT AOPs***

- 3.18 Conduct a *Public Comment Evaluation Team* meeting with districts by May 15 each year.
- 3.19 Respond to AOP-specific public comments, incorporate comments from the USFWS as appropriate, coordinating further review with resources specialists when necessary, and document changes to an operation plan.

### ***Approving Annual Operations Plans***

- 3.20 Provide to the Program and Area Directors for review responses to the public and USFWS comments, and the final AOP drafts.
- 3.21 Approve the final district AOP, and draft a cover memo by June 30 of each fiscal year.
- 3.22 Notify program staff of the approved AOPs.
- 3.23 Maintain electronic and printed versions of approved AOP documents.

### ***Modifying Approved Annual Operations Plans***

- 3.24 Discuss modifications to operations in an approved AOP with resource specialists as appropriate.
- 3.25 Document changes made to an operation that meets the criteria for a major modification through a modification memo, new pre-operation report, updated AOP tables and maps. Minor modifications will be documented through a cover memo.
- 3.26 Review major modifications with the Area Director prior to approval.

### ***Additional Operational Policies***

- 3.27 Resubmit major forest operations not sold within two years of AOP approval during the next fiscal year AOP with an updated pre-operations report.
- 3.28 Update the State Forests AOP intranet site on a regular basis to ensure employees are informed of the procedures needed to effectively implement this policy.
- 3.29 Review this policy for currency every three years at a minimum.

#### **3.4.4.0 Key Parties**

District Foresters, Assistant District Foresters, Staff and Area Biologists, Unit Foresters, Area Planner, District Planners and T & E Coordinators, Area and Program Directors, District GIS Coordinators, State Forests GIS Specialist.

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### 3.4.5.0 Authorities

- 5.1 ORS 530.050 – Management of lands acquired; power of forester.
- 5.2 ORS 530.490 – Management, control and protection of Common School Forest Lands and Elliott State Forest; easements.
- 5.3 ORS 530.500 – Authority of State Forester in management, protection, utilization and conservation of lands and waters.
- 5.4 OAR 629-035-0000 through 629-035-0110 – Management of State Forest Lands, including the Northwest, Southwest and Elliott State Forest Management Plans. Specifically:
  - 5.4.1 (1) ... The State Forester shall develop implementation and operations plans for forest management plans that describe smaller-scale, more specific management activities within the planning area.
  - 5.4.2 (5) The Board's approval of the plan represents its determination that activities carried out or allowed by the State Forester under subsection (6) of this section meet the obligation to secure the greatest permanent value to the state as defined in OAR 629-035-0020.
  - 5.4.3 (6) Once the management plan is approved by the Board as provided in subsection (5) of this section:
    - 5.4.3.1 (a) The Board shall adopt the plan as an administrative rule.
    - 5.4.3.2 (b) The State Forester shall implement the plan through more specific, small scale or time limited plans that are consistent with the Forest Management Plan.
- 5.5 Common School Forest Land Agreement – A contract between the Oregon State Land Board and Oregon Departments of Forestry and State Lands.

### 3.4.6.0 References

- 6.1 *Northwest Oregon State Forest Management Plan.*
- 6.2 *Southwest Oregon State Forest Management Plan.*
- 6.3 *Eastern Region Long-Range Forest Management Plan.*
- 6.4 *Elliot State Forest Management Plan.*
- 6.5 *Implementation Plans for Northwest and Southwest Oregon Forest Management Plans.*
- 6.6 *Agreement for the Conservation of Northern Spotted Owls, USFWS and ODF, September 5, 2001.*
- 6.7 *State Forests Program Public Involvement Plan, ODF.*

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6.8 *Guidance Document 3.4.G1.0.*

6.9 ODF Directive #0-7-0-030 *Geographic Information System (GIS).*

6.10 State Forest Program T & E Handbook, NSO link and MAMU link policies.

6.11 State Forest Program *Sale Preparation (\*\*)* and *Contract Administration* policies (\*\*, \*\*).

### 3.4.7.0 Definitions

7.1 Annual Operations Plan (AOP) Document: Provides an overview of the major forest operations to be conducted in a fiscal year and their relationship to other plans (IP, FMP, etc.). An AOP will consist of a summary document, summary tables, and individual pre-operation reports and maps.

7.2 AOP Tables: Combines and summarizes numerical outputs from the major forest operations.

7.3 Cover Memo: Documents District Forester approval for the district AOP.

7.4 Major Forest Operations: Operations intended to accomplish mid-range and long-range FMP goals and objectives, and IP objectives. These include AOP harvest operations, reforestation projects, recreation projects, road construction and maintenance, and other major projects that require significant commitment of personnel or funds.

7.5 Minor forest operations: Operations that may not be specific to the achievement of FMP goals and objectives, and IP objectives, such as negotiated sales, salvage sales, easement rights-of-way, and miscellaneous or special forest product sales.

7.6 Modifications are any change made to a planned operation, and include both “minor” and “major” modifications:

7.6.1 Minor modifications are planned operations modified in a manner that does not meet the criteria of a major modification.

7.6.2 Major Modifications are planned operations modified:

7.6.2.1 To the extent that the operation is affected by policy not previously considered in the pre-operation report.

7.6.2.2 By adding, deleting, moving and/or changing the location of an entire operational area.

7.6.2.3 By significantly changing the prescription of a harvest area (for example changing from a partial harvest to a regeneration harvest).

7.7 Modification Memo: Summarizes changes made to the planned operation between the time the AOP was approved and the timber sale going to contract.

7.8 Pre-Operation Report: A document describing a harvest operation and providing information on other resources. The pre-operation report identifies what is known about the operation and what additional information needs to be gathered, and summarizes the expected outputs of the operation.

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- 7.9 Resource Specialists: Individuals who have expertise and training in a specific discipline of forest management, including: ODF and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife biologists; silviculturists; engineers; public use coordinator; monitoring coordinator; Area planning coordinators and geotechnical specialists; district T&E Coordinators; insect and disease specialists; and others as appropriate.

### 3.4.8.0 Responsibilities

- 8.1 Area Director(s) – Establishes Annual Harvest Objectives and fiscal budget investment levels for silvicultural- and recreation-related activities with the State Forests Program Director. Reviews major modifications prior to District Forester approval, and reviews with District Forester, prior to approval, certain types of operations that are determined by the District Forester to have policy-related concerns, such as those associated with threatened and endangered species.
- 8.2 Area Planner – Assists the districts with guidance interpretation throughout the planning process. Assists the Operations Coordinator with preparing the draft AOP documents for the public review process, and with comment evaluation committee process. Assists with preparing documents for web posting.
- 8.3 Assistant District Forester (ADF) and/or Unit Forester(s) (UFs) – coordinates AOP preparation; ensures district-level collaboration throughout the AOP process; ensures compliance with policy and guidance;. Responsible for initiating discussions with Resource Specialists, and Salem and Area staff to resolve issues that may arise throughout the development of the AOP, and considers and incorporates where appropriate comments from Resource Specialists, the USFWS, and the public. The ADF and/or UF are responsible for AOP implementation and monitoring.
- 8.4 District Forester – ensures AOP is consistent with the planning goals, objectives and strategies; considers written comments from resources specialists and the public; reviews and approves a District AOP; and reviews major modifications with the Area Director prior to approval. Determines which operations, if any, have policy-related issues, such as those associated with threatened and endangered species, and reviews with Area Director prior to approval.
- 8.5 Operations Coordinator – coordinates the preparation and distribution of the annual guidance; and maintains communication between districts and resource specialists throughout the process. Assures the AOP process is on schedule; informs the Program Director and Area Directors of policy issues prior to public involvement; coordinates the public involvement process; and facilitates a review of the AOP process, and makes revisions to the process as appropriate based on team input.
- 8.6 Resource Specialists – collaborates with a district throughout AOP development and implementation and performs responsibilities as defined by procedures.
- 8.7 State Forests Program Director – establishes annual operations plan policy; distributes annual guidance. Establishes Annual Harvest Objectives and fiscal budget investment levels for silvicultural- and recreation-related activities with the Area Directors. Reviews with the appropriate Area Director, prior to District Forester approval, certain types of operations that

are determined by the DF to have policy-related concerns, such as those associated with threatened and endangered species.

8.8 Unit Forester – see 8.3.

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### 3.4.9.0 Revision History

August 1, 2007	1.0	New Document

### 3.4.10.0 Procedures

Procedures have been developed to support this policy: \*\*.